

April 30, 2023

The View

“Sir, we wish to see Jesus” - John 12:21

Welcome Visitors

Our goal at the Folsom church of Christ is to do everything according to God’s word, including respecting its silence. We are not a denomination, not part of anything larger than this local church; we have no earthly “headquarters. “ The six elders oversee this church and, ultimately, we answer only to Christ. The comments you hear today are primarily for the benefit of our own members, as we examine Scripture and seek to be built up in our faith in Christ. If you don’t understand something, please do not hesitate to ask the preacher or one of the elders. We welcome and appreciate your comments and questions on any issue and especially if you see or hear anything that you feel does not correspond to God’s word. We are here to serve; please help us do that.

**Please fill out a visitor’s card and put it in the collection plate when it is passed.
We do not solicit donations from visitors. See page 4 for more information.**

Schedule

The Lord’s Day

9:30 AM Bible classes

Auditorium: “Love Your Bible” (Part II)

Young Adults Class (room 12: “A Study of Ruth, and 1 John: Trust & Love”

10:30 AM Assembly

Preaching Today

Scott Gardner

“Fools for Christ”

Livestream at 10:30AM at <https://tinyurl.com/5f2cbm3y>

Bible Class: 5PM @ the Building

“Praying the Psalms” (Auditorium)

High School Class @5 PM - at David & Christie’s home

Middle school class: monthly, contact David Sanderson (david.r.sanderson@intel.com)

or Seth Reagan (sethreagan@gmail.com)

There are several on-going Bible classes in the homes of members. Check with David Posey or one of the other elders if you would like to join one of those classes.

Wednesday 7PM @ Building

Bible classes for all ages

Auditorium: “Love Your Bible” (Part II)

Young Adults Class (room 12: “A Study of Ruth, and 1 John: Trust & Love”

The First Requirement for Spiritual Growth



Gary Henry

Daniel J. Boorstin, the former Librarian of Congress and author of *The Discoverers*, said, “The greatest obstacle to discovery is not ignorance — it is the illusion of knowledge.” The problem, for example, with the flat-earth folks was not that they were ignorant of the truth; it was that they weren’t aware of their ignorance. Comfortable with the knowledge that the earth was flat, they would never have been the ones to discover otherwise. It took somebody who saw the need to know more about geography than was presently known.

It may seem obvious, but it needs to be pointed out anyway: the first requirement for spiritual growth is recognizing our need for spiritual growth. It’s not our ignorance that holds us back; it’s the false confidence that we’re farther down the road than we really are. If we see the need for growth at all, we don’t see it as urgent. And so, we don’t work on it.

Are we poor in spirit? Jesus said, “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of God” (Mt. 5:3). Being poor in spirit means being humbly aware of our own personal deficiencies before God. In matters of the spirit, the word bankrupt would not be too strong a word to describe our condition. If we’re poor in spirit, we recognize how poor we are. We see not only that human beings in general are inadequate in their knowledge of God, but that we ourselves have not grown as we should have. And this contrite awareness makes us want to grow.

On the other hand, if we’re pretty much satisfied with the progress that we’ve made, and we’re comfortable that we know most of what we need to know, spiritual growth will probably not be felt as a pressing priority.

Would we be offended? Most of us would say, “I know I’m not where I need to be. I know I need to grow.” Those are easy words to say, and they have the ring of humility to them. But do we really believe them? Suppose we said those words to someone, and rather than complimenting us, they agreed with us. Suppose they said, “I’m afraid that’s right. You’re not where you need to be. You do need to grow.” Would we be offended? Or worse yet, suppose someone came to us privately and expressed concern about our need for spiritual growth. Would we be offended? The poor-in-spirit person wouldn’t be. He’d know that the friend had merely verbalized what he himself knows: that he’s certainly not where he needs to be. And he would not only appreciate the friend’s concern; he’d do something about it. He’d make some changes in his daily spiritual discipline.

If we are among those who labor at teaching and preaching God’s word to others, we may have grown so accustomed to exhorting others that we’ve lost touch with the poverty of our own spirits. In our role, we may find ourselves talking ninety percent of the time and listening only ten percent. But talking ninety percent of the time doesn’t mean that we are ahead of ninety percent of the population in our spiritual growth. And if one of our “students” came to us on

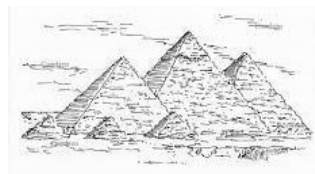
Saturday night and exhorted us in the matter of spiritual growth, it would behoove us to do with that exhortation exactly what we want them to do when we’re exhorting them on Sunday morning.

Paul said, “If anyone thinks that he knows anything, he knows nothing yet as he ought to know” (1 Cor. 8:2). The longer we’ve been in Christ and the more time we’ve had to grow, the harder it is to maintain a sense of urgency in our spiritual growth. If we’re not careful, the “illusion of knowledge” will keep us from making the new discoveries that we need to make.

The truth is, every one of us needs to be working on our spiritual growth every day. When we compare ourselves among ourselves, some may seem to be farther ahead than others, but that is the wrong comparison to make. What we’re trying to do is “grow up in all things into Him who is the head — Christ” (Eph. 4:15), and given the distance between ourselves and that goal, none of us has anything to feel complacent about just yet.

Egypt and Life

Mike Thomley



Egypt is a part of the Bible world from Genesis to Revelation. More than 500 times one will read references to this religion and nation. The first occurrence is in Gen. 10:6 when the generations of the sons of Noah are listed and Mizraim (some translations read Egypt) is there among the sons of Ham. Psalm 105:23 refers to Egypt as the land of Ham. Egypt is a transliteration of the Hebrew word *Algypton*. And we still call it Egypt today.

Although Egypt is no longer the dominant force in the world as in ancient times, it is still a thriving country pivotal in many international concerns. It is also one of the most popular tourist destinations.

For most people, to mention Egypt conjures thoughts of the pyramids. The pyramids boggle the mind. Not all the pyramids were grandiose and many of them no longer exist. But among the ones that do, they are sites to behold. As modern people gaze upon these mighty monuments, their minds are transported back many millennia to those times when Egypt played a major part in the lives and events of Biblical characters with whom we are familiar.

Among those Biblical people who went to Egypt, one must wonder, “Did Abraham and Sarai, did Jacob and Joseph, did Jesus, Mary and Joseph see the pyramids?” Were they as awe-struck as we are today? Some people have the erroneous notion that the Israelites, while slaves in Egypt, were among those who built the pyramids.

Even more significant that the amazing, architecturally inexplicable pyramids, Egypt is a source of life. At one time, Egypt was understood simply as the land around the Nile River. Egypt was the Nile, and the Nile was life. It is not merely coincidental that so much of Biblical history occurred in or was affected by Egypt. Note these three occasions:

Abraham and Sarai journeyed to Egypt to escape the severe famine that threatened their lives (Gen. 12:10-20).

Jacob sent his sons to Egypt to buy grain because of the famine from which they were suffering severe extinction. This grocery-run resulted in the relocation of the entire family to Egypt, brother Joseph's home (Gen. 42-47).

After the visit from the wise men, Joseph in a dream was commanded to take his wife and child and go to Egypt to escape Herod's death decree (Matt. 2:13-15).

"Go down and buy grain for us there, that we may live and not die" (Gen. 42:2). It is fascinating how Jacob's reasoning about going to Egypt in order to live and not die seems to be true in all three of these episodes. Was traveling to Egypt just a fortunate coincidence in these incidences or was it the providence of God? Clearly God's hand was in it all. Egypt was not what saved them. It was God, Who through the action of their faith in Him, provided life.

God is the giver of life (Gen. 2:7; Job 33:4). God sent Jesus into this world to give us eternal life (John 3:16). Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life (John 14:6). Jesus tells us He came that we may have life and have it abundantly (John 10:10).

We are thankful for the role of ancient Egypt in its part of bringing the Christ into this world to bring life and light. However, Egypt is no longer the place to go for those seeking life. We are commanded to go to Jesus to live (John 1:4; Matt. 11:28-30). He calls His children to "come out and be separate" and live holy lives in His kingdom (2 Cor. 6:17).

Israel's freedom from Egypt metaphorically represents our deliverance from sin and death through faith in Christ Jesus (Gal. 3:13, 4:5; Titus 2:14). Although initially Egypt is seen as a place of refuge in famine or threat, it became a place of oppression and slavery. Egypt represents our old life of slavery to sin. God redeemed His people from slavery in Egypt by the blood of the lamb (Exodus 12), He now redeems us from sin by the blood of Jesus, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world (John 1:29; 1 Pet. 1:18-19).

"The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The Lord is the stronghold of my life; of whom shall I be afraid? Though an army encamps me, my heart shall not fear; though war arise against me, yet I will be confident. One thing I have asked of the Lord, that I will seek after: that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to gaze upon the beauty of the Lord and to inquire in His temple" (Psa. 27:1-4).

Idolatry

Miles Crume

James 1:18 affirms, "He chose to give us birth through the word of truth, that we might be a kind of first fruits of all He created." You are God's most valuable creation, His prized possession. Why, then, do we, as Christians, wrestle with idolatry? Our occupational callings, past time hobbies, or anything we give importance to more than Jesus Christ is an idol. In the account of the rich man in Luke 18:23, upon being told to sell everything he had and follow Jesus, we are told, "he became very sad, because he was very wealthy." When you have an idol and are unwilling to relinquish it, it's telling your Creator that you know better. "But who are you, a human being, to talk back to God" (Romans 9:20)? What is something in your life you are willing to surrender to Him? The image of a girl holding a teddy bear unyieldingly with Christ asking her to give it up comes to mind. Nothing else should take the place of God in our lives, "...for the Lord, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God" (Exodus 34:14).

Being grateful and recognizing that everything we have is from Him can help us keep idolatry at bay. A heart of thanksgiving acknowledges that what we have is not our own. "But godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into the world, and we can take nothing out of it" (1 Timothy 6:6-7).

King Solomon denied himself no pleasure, yet he proclaimed, "'Meaningless! Meaningless!,' says the Teacher. 'Everything is meaningless'" (Ecclesiastes 12:8)! He admonishes, "Fear God and keep His commandments, for this is the duty of man" (Ecclesiastes 12:13). The wisest man in the Bible was not satisfied with earthly gain but chose to fear the LORD. This ought to help us fix our eyes on heaven, the home of the soul! Christians are admonished not to love the world nor the things of the world (1 John 2:15-17) because they are passing away, "but whoever does the will of God shall abide forever." Where are you storing up your treasure?

The relationship you have with Jesus Christ transcends anything and everything you have in this life—with the promise of eternal life when this life ceases. "But whatever were gains to me I now consider loss for the sake of Christ" (Philippians 3:7). We are to "set our mind things above, not on things of the earth" (Colossians 3:2).

As our beloved brother Dee Bowman expressed, "If you miss heaven, you've just missed all there is." Is your idol more important than heaven? Jesus commands us to deny ourselves and take up our cross (Matthew 16:24).

May we deny ourselves and take up our cross as we walk daily with the LORD.



Read your Bible