

July 16, 2023

The View

"Sirs, 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 five 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 is passed.

We do not solicit donations from visitors. See page 4 for more information.

VBS: Begins Today! July 17th, -21st 9:30am-11:00am

Schedule

The Lord's Day

9:30 AM Bible Classes

Auditorium: "Jesus at work in the Gospels."

Young Adult Class (room 12): "Jesus: making the best use of the time." Ephesians 5:15-17 *(no class today)*

Room 15/16: "Building a Great Marriage" *(no class today)*

10:30 AM: Assembly

Preaching Today

Jay Simmons: "Valuing Christ's Church"

Livestream at 9:30 & 10:30 <https://tinyurl.com/5f2cbm3y>

Bible Class: 5:00 PM @ the Building

"Praying the Psalms" (Auditorium)

HS/College Class, 5 PM @ David & Christie Posey'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 7 PM @ Building

Bible classes: 5th grade and lower

6th grade and up, auditorium: Praising God in Song

Articles published in the View reflect only the thoughts and opinions of the author alone, not necessarily the editor, the elders or any member of the church at Folsom.

Paradox

A common problem in Bible study is a failure to recognize the many paradoxical statements and concepts in Scripture. A paradox is “a statement or proposition that seems self-contradictory or absurd but in reality expresses truth.” We have to sort these out to arrive at truth but doing the work leaves us with a deeper understanding of God’s will. I learned a long time, “*the truth is in the tension.*”

Here are a few of the many paradoxical concepts we find in Scripture: one God in three; Christ as God and Christ as man; salvation is by grace, but faith without works is dead; judge not, but don’t cast your pearls before swine.

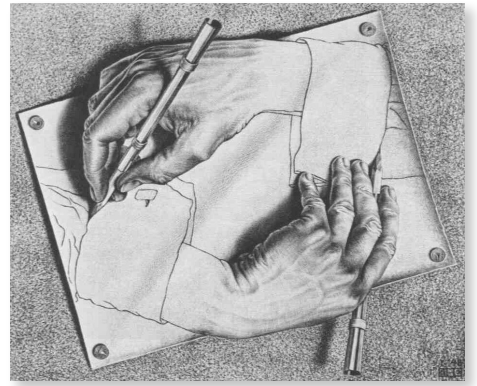
The prophets used paradox: “*I have been found by those who did not seek me*” (Isaiah 65:1, quoted by Paul in Romans 10:20). Many of Jesus’ statements are paradoxical. For example he says in Matthew 10:39, “*Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses His life for My sake will find it.*” Paul said, “*when I am weak, then I am strong*” (II Cor. 12:10). The book of Proverbs is full of paradoxes (e.g., 26:4, “Answer not a fool according to his folly, lest you be like him yourself” and 26:5, “Answer a fool according to his folly, lest he be wise in his own eyes”).

Some paradoxes are more “paradoxical” than others. An example of a particularly sharp paradox is that we are saved by grace (and faith) but under the “law of Christ” (I Corinthians 9:21). There must be a balance in our understanding of law and grace. If I rely totally on the law of God, I will discount the place of God’s grace and may only serve God out of fear of the consequences that the law requires. But if I rely totally on grace, I will not fear the consequences of sin at all. For example, the Corinthians seemed to wink at sin, taking grace for granted (see I Corinthians 5).

Some biblical concepts seem to be paradoxes but are not. For example, the terms “predestination and free will” is not a paradox. “Predestination,” as used in the New Testament, is not individual, but corporate (i.e., God predestined that a certain category/class of souls will be saved and lost. It would be a paradox to say the “God loves the world (John 3:16) but God has predestined some before they are born, to go to hell.” God has predestined that those who exercise their free will and come to God in faith will be saved and those who do not will be lost.

Some church divisions can be traced to a misunderstanding or ignorance of paradox. People may have a tendency to overemphasize one side of a question at the expense of the other. We can only understand a biblical statement if we look at everything the Bible has to say on the topic and then base our conclusions on a common sense application of the texts.

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More Paradoxes

- We see unseen things.
- We conquer by yielding.
- We find rest under a yoke.
- We reign by serving.
- We are made great by becoming small.
- We are exalted when we are humble.
- We become wise by being fools for Christ’s sake.
- We are made free by becoming bondservants.
- We gain strength when we are weak.
- We triumph through defeat.
- We find victory by glorying in our infirmities.
- We live by dying.

Can you think of some others?

News, Quotes & Notes

Thinking “Christianly”

“There is therefore a uniquely wise—a uniquely Christian—way of doing everything. When we talk with our neighbors, instruct our children, eat our meals, do the dishes, engage on social media, think about politics, date, spend our money, receive insults, save for retirement—we should be thinking, “What is the uniquely wise—uniquely Christian—way of doing this?” We can be certain the proper answer, whatever it is, is *never* that there is no uniquely Christian way. *There is!*”

SAMUEL PARKISON

THINKING CHRISTIANLY: BRINGING SUNDRY THOUGHTS
CAPTIVE TO CHRIST (P. 15)

The REAL Crisis in America: The Absent Dad

You can blame poor education, mental illness, teen pregnancies, crime, drug use... you name it... on a host of causes. But the real cause seems to be apparent: *disappearing dads*.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, 18.4 million children under 18 Years old—that’s **1 in 4**, live without a biological, step, or adoptive father in the home. That’s enough children to fill New York City twice or Los Angeles four times over.

Good News for Christian Workers

The U.S. Supreme Court has ruled unanimously for a postal worker in Pennsylvania in an important religious liberty dispute, over how far employers should go to accommodate faith-based requests in the workplace.

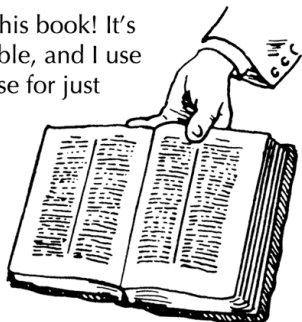
Gerald Groff, a religious mail carrier from Pennsylvania, asked the court to decide whether the U.S. Postal Service could require him to deliver Amazon packages on Sundays, which he observes as the Sabbath. His attorney, Aaron Streett, argued in April that the court should revisit a 50-year-old precedent that established a test to determine when employers should make accommodations for their employees’ religious practices.

In ruling for the government worker, the high court overturned its 1977 precedent that said employers had to “reasonably accommodate” an employee’s religious beliefs and practices, so long as that would not create an “undue hardship” on the business.

The new decision tightens the “undue hardship” standard, and could make it easier for some individual employees to secure a religious accommodation in the workplace.

This is “functional atheism.” Purposely using the Bible to support ungodly actions, as many do today, is just another form of atheism. This is not just a book; it is God’s word.

Try reading this book! It’s called the Bible, and I use it as an excuse for just about everything I do.



Italy Implements Stricter Dress Codes

Having been to Italy recently, I found this interesting. Just so you know, no-one in our group was denied entrance or made to “cover up.” Can you imagine how embarrassing that would be?

Here’s the article (how would this go over in the US?)

Italy is putting fashion on trial, and the verdict is clear: dress to impress respect, or face the consequences! When visiting Italy’s famous attractions like the Pantheon, St. Peter’s Basilica, and Florence’s Duomo, it is crucial to adhere to proper clothing attire and maintain modesty at these religious sites.

Although these regulations have been in place for a long time, certain Italian communities have recently introduced additional dress codes for walking around town. This further adds to the cultural fabric of the country and helps keep tourists in check. Here’s what you need to know when visiting religious sites:

- Pay attention to signs indicating acceptable attire to avoid being turned away at entrances.
- **Both men and women are forbidden from exposing their shoulders, midriffs, or knees.**
- **Avoid wearing spaghetti straps, sleeveless tops, crop tops, shorts, or above-the-knee dresses.**
- Some attractions may offer cover-ups if you’re dressed inappropriately, but others may deny entry altogether.

Other recent developments include Sorrento’s mayor banning walking in swimwear in the town center, with fines of up to \$546. Lipari, the largest island in Sicily’s Aeolian archipelago, has had a similar rule since 2013, penalizing the wearing of swimwear or flip-flops. In Venice, sightseeing in swimwear or being bare-chested can also lead to fines of up to \$546. Remember, even in Italy’s fashion-forward destinations, rules are rules. To avoid fines and unwelcome stares, show respect to the country you’re visiting.

[Banning the wearing swimwear (in other words, bikinis, speedos, etc.) in public places is a really good idea... but flip flops?]

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