

August 20, 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.

Mark Your Calendars

Bible Exhibit, with Mike Wilson, October 21, 2023

Invite your friends and relatives.

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

Room 15/16: "Building a Great Marriage"

10:30 AM: Assembly

Preaching Today

David Posey: "Ohana"

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.

Access to Truth & Our Responsibility

BY DAVID POSEY

I'm old enough to tell you that there was a time that the only way we could read God's word was with a bound Bible. But today, we have more easy access to the truth than at any time in history. We have our paper and ink Bibles that come in all sizes with all kinds of covers: hardback, paperback, faux leather, genuine leather, cowhide and goatskin. But the Bible is also available on our computers, on tablets (iPad, Kindle and Surface) and on our mobile phones. In other words, we literally have access to the truth all day, every day.

Isn't that wonderful?! Not so fast.

Jesus warned that, "everyone to whom much was given, of him much will be required" (Luke 12:48). That statement is a summary of a speech given by Jesus about being ready at all times (see Luke 12:35-48). Doesn't being "ready" require being as familiar as possible with what the Bible says to make sure we are pleasing God (Romans 12:1-2)? We have access to the Bible 24/7. So, the question is, what responsibility does that impose on us?

I'm confident that everyone reading this article has ready access to God's word. So, the question is not about whether we have access, the question is, what are we doing with that access?

If I'm waiting in the doctor's or dentist's office what am I doing with my time? I have my iPhone with me so I can check the baseball/football scores (my achilles heel), or we check out Facebook or Instagram or Twitter or pass the time playing a game. There is nothing wrong with that, necessarily, but the Bible is *right there* — a click or a swipe away. If Christ "lives in me" (Galatians 2:20), I'll remember that he said, "everyone to whom much was given, of him much will be required." He's not just talking to his apostles here; he says "everyone."

If Bible reading and study is not a priority when I have time to do that, what will God do with me at judgment? Let's take a closer look at Luke 12 where Jesus makes that statement about what he will require of us.

1. [12:1-21] Jesus warns his disciples to avoid hypocrisy and greed, and *to be mindful of the dangers of materialism and worldly concerns*. The search for worldly riches and what we can buy with them (think Amazon) can easily draw us away from God's word. The parable of the rich fool is found here.
2. [12:22-34] Jesus encourages his followers to trust in God's care for them, and *not to worry about their basic needs such as food and clothing*. How much thought goes into what we will wear and what we will eat? Is that our priority?
3. [12:35-48] Jesus emphasizes the importance of being prepared for his return, and warns his followers to *be vigilant and faithful in their service to God*. It's logical that if we really believe Christ will come back like a "thief in the night" then we'll think seriously about what we are doing at any given time.

Jesus teaches in Matthew 6:33 that the most important thing in life is to seek first the kingdom of God, and to prioritize spiritual matters over worldly concerns. We are not doing this unless we take the time to know the Bible teaches. That means Bible reading must be a priority or we are putting our souls in danger.

This may sound harsh, but some of us don't even study before a class.

It comes down to time management. It is easy for me to sit down in front my 55-inch Smart TV for a few hours and watch the Dodgers or the Rams play a game. But, comparatively, how much time do I devote to Bible reading and study? The answer to that question, if I'm honest, tells me where my priorities lie.

What about you? What do you spend most of your free time doing? The veritable plethora of entertainment options, from movies, to sports, to social media, to video games, board games, etc., etc. — all so readily available — may be the most serious temptation we face in life these days. It's so easy to burn 3-4 hours at a time being entertained. But that contributes nothing to my readiness for Christ's return.

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Maui

As I write this, on Saturday, August 19th, the death toll in Maui is over 100 people but they are still searching for many who are listed as "missing." 60% of the area has been searched. It's the deadliest U.S. wildfire in a century. We have brothers and sisters in Christ in Maui but, thus far, we have no news of loss from any of them. Continue to pray for those who have suffered loss. Meanwhile, there are many charitable organizations that you can choose to contribute to, if you are so inclined. One, "Legacy of Aloha," is reputable and centered in Hawaii: <https://www.tsrestaurants.com/legacy-of-aloha/>

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The Most Bizarre “Church Services”

AN EXCERPT OF AN ARTICLE ON CHURCHLEADERS.COM (ORIGINAL TITLE: “WORST CHURCH SERVICES”)

What follows is *almost* unbelievable. I've preached a few sermons on the entertainment mentality of some churches but I couldn't have imagined that it could get as bad as what is described here. Individuals may find these vignettes humorous but, in truth, it is a shameful display of a lack of respect for God and the purpose of assembling: to worship God in spirit and truth (John 4:24) and exalt Christ in every aspect of it. I have put “preached” and “sermon” in quotation because what is describe here are neither sermons nor preaching. Even the dictionary defines a sermon as “a talk on a religious or moral subject, especially one given during a church service and *based on a passage from the Bible.*” I have also put “pastor” in quotes because a preacher is not necessarily a “pastor.” In the Bible, the term “pastors” (plural) is used only in reference to elders (plural) in the church. I have also withheld the mention of any specific person or church since they would not have the ability to respond. As you read this, think about this text (Hebrews 12:28):

And this: *“Therefore let us be grateful for receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, and thus let us offer to God acceptable worship, with reverence and awe”* (Hebrews 12:28) – DAVID POSEY]

“What is the most bizarre ‘church service’ you’ve ever attended?”

This question was recently posed on Twitter/X by Carlos A. Rodríguez, founder and CEO of The Happy Givers, a Puerto Rico-based nonprofit organization seeking to fight poverty. Many followers were quick to chime in with their worst church service experiences. Here are some examples:

- A priest preached a “sermon” that consisted of standing in the pulpit with two sock puppets and having them sing Bette Midler’s “From a Distance” to one another.
- Another person described a superhero-themed church play, which included the character Loki hanging Ironman on a crossbeam while singing R.E.M.’s “It’s the End of the World As We Know It (And I Feel Fine).” Clips from that performance have long circulated online and have become the object of numerous jokes.
- Another person spoke of a “Bible class” where the elder teaching the class talked mostly about the “War of Northern Aggression.”
- There was also an evening service where the “pastor” ordered the doors to the auditorium be shut until they met their fundraising goal (*it seems Malachi 1:10 fits here, dp*).
- There was another where the “sermon title was “You Must Dominate Your Wife” and a Sunday evening “sermon” where the “pastor” spent the whole time explaining the grammar/punctuation in “My Country, ‘tis of Thee” because when he was a child he believed anything that said “thee” referred to God and he assumed we were likewise uninformed.
- On Mothers Day the “preacher” preached a “sermon” on the woman at the well and compared her sin to the “sin of obesity” and went on to talk about Lizzo and how she embraced her weight and how wrong that is.
- Then there was the time the “preacher” threw the Bible on the ground and said he would preach about whatever chapter it landed on. Turns out it didn’t matter because “it literally took him two sentences to pivot to shouting about [Hillary Clinton’s] emails for a full 40 minutes.”
- One person reported that the “preacher” did a whole comedy routine about a call center using a foreign accent in his “sermon.” The man who reported this said, “I’m still mad at myself for not speaking up or walking out.”
- There was a July 4th service at a megachurch in Texas where men in military clothing were rappelling from the rafters.
- Then there was the time a whole “sermon” was devoted to recalculating the rapture date (after a previous “sermon” proved incorrect).
- In another sham “service,” the “pastor” “preached” on tithing and had three of the “worship team” dressed as the Bee-Gees to do “Payin’ Your Tithes” to the tune of “Stayin’ Alive.”

Compare this with Hebrews 10:24; Malachi 1:6; I Corinthians 14:33 (“God is not a God of confusion...”).