

September 24, 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: Hebrews Series: “Jesus, Better than Angels” (Hebrews 1:4-2:4)

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 Every Sunday @ David & Christie Posey's home (unless notified otherwise)

**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

2nd Saturday Men's Bible Study: 7 to 8 AM

Bel Air Market on Bidwell in Folsom.

“Iron sharpens iron” (Proverbs 27:17). Mentoring (Titus 2:1-6).

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.

Quotes & Notes

On Angels

The sermon today, from Hebrews 1:1-14, is not about angels but about how Jesus is *superior* to angels. Therefore, I'm not going to do a deep dive into "angelology" (the study of angels) in the sermon but here are some quick facts, if you're interested:

The Greek word *ángelos* means a *messenger* (*delegate*) who is either human (Matthew 11:10; Luke 7:24, 9:52; Galatians 4:14; James 2:25) or, more commonly, a heavenly being sent by God to proclaim his message (used 176 times in the NT). Distinct from *ánge-los*, Cherubim and Seraphim (the latter only in Isaiah's vision) are winged creatures, technically guards or attendants of the divine throne. Cherubim are always representative of the presence of God (cf., images of them over Ark of the Covenant in Numbers 10:35. And, there are good angels and bad angels...II Peter 2:4), envisioned in passages like Ephesians 3:10. [from various sources, including *The Discovery Bible*].

The "million dollar question" of whether angels are sent by God to intervene in our lives depends on our interpretation of passages such as Hebrews 1:14 or Matthew 18:10. My best guess is that they do intervene but I cannot say with any certainty how or when that may have occurred in my life. I have been snatched out of dangerous situations many times but while I thank God for everything that happened in my life that has contributed to my growth in Christ, I am not comfortable attributing actions to God that have not been revealed by him. That, in my opinion, can lead to using God's name in vain.

In other news...


- **SEEN ON SOCIAL MEDIA:** "The first time I prayed, I made a bargain with God. If he got me out of the fix I was in, I'd pray every day for the rest of my life." He goes on to describe several success stories which he attributes to God. I'm not judging the man's heart, but this sounds like *quid pro quo* — "do this for me and I'll do that for you" — but there's nothing in the Bible that says God needs our prayers or that we can use prayer as a bargaining chip.
- **"The best surfer is the one who is having the most fun,"** said the most famous surfer, the late Duke Kahanamoku. I love this quote as it applies to surfing or other recreational pursuits. If it's "recreational," then proficiency is secondary to enjoyment. However, some of us need the reminder that Duke's epigram does not apply to teaching or preaching God's word. The best preacher is not "the one who is having the most fun." Paul said to Timothy: "I charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by his appearing and his kingdom: preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with complete patience and teaching. For the time is coming when people will not endure sound teaching, but having itching ears they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own passions..." (II Timothy 4:1-3).
- **I mentioned to a young preacher friend recently that the Folsom church is not a "preacher-oriented" church.** He looked at me quizzically so I explained that the work going on here is not orchestrated by nor revolves around the preacher(s). The elders lead the congregation and every member has a role. Stated another way: the preacher preaches and teaches and teachers teach and deacons deak and elders eld...

It wasn't always that way in the churches I grew up in. The preacher seemed at the center of everything. He baptized almost everyone; he made almost 100% of the talks that needed to be made; and he preached at least two sermons every Sunday and often taught the auditorium Bible class, too. Preachers were also given to asking each other "how's your flock?" I know they asked that with an honest heart but... "**your** flock?" All would argue correctly that the preacher is not the "pastor" but if the preacher has a "flock" then that makes him the shepherd ("pastor"), doesn't it? I could be missing something. But that question seems to suggest that the preacher is regarded as the central figure in the church.

In our case here at Folsom, I have my name on the door and I'm up front most Sunday mornings. And Scott and I are compensated: Paul said, "those who proclaim the gospel should get their living by the gospel" (*I Corinthians 9:14*). But a preacher getting a paycheck from the church does not exalt him to some special place in the church (although there have been many who apparently think it does just that). As you may have noticed, many of our men here are preaching sermons these days; of course, that's by design and they are doing a great job.


It's encouraging to hear positive comments on a sermon or a class we teach. But no one in a local church should get special attention that detracts from the attention we are to give Jesus Christ our Lord, our Savior and the head of the church. We are just fulfilling a role for a purpose, as Paul explains in Ephesians 4:12, "to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for the building up of the body of Christ."

DAVID POSEY



HOW DID WE GET THE BIBLE?

Join us for a
1-DAY POP-UP EXHIBITION



When: SATURDAY, OCTOBER 21st
9:00am - 3:00pm

Where: FOLSOM CHURCH OF CHRIST
980 E. NATOMA
FOLSOM, CA 95672

More information:
www.folsombiblemuseum.com
www.folsomchurch.com

This is a unique opportunity to meet Mike Wilson, author of *Inspiration to Ink: The Big Picture of How We Got the Bible*. He will be here, with a collection of his ancient Bibles and other artifacts, and available to answer any questions you may have about how we got the Bible. Don't miss it!

FREE ADMISSION

“Sunday Night Sermons”

Several years ago the church made a decision to change our service times. We settled on meeting on Sunday morning only for the assembly and promoted Sunday afternoon home studies. Later, we added a couple of classes at the building on Sunday evenings. The result of this move is, of course, that there is no Sunday night sermon. So what? Well, since we generally had fewer – if any – visitors on Sunday night, I would often preach on topics that were specifically applicable to the local congregation or topics that were controversial or that needed more than one sermon to fully develop the topic – in other words, sermons that could easily be misconstrued by a visitor who is not familiar with churches of Christ. I was talking to Ben Woodside about this and he suggested a column in the *View* with the above title, using the column to do what preachers used to do on Sunday nights. If you don't like this new wrinkle, please blame Ben. Thank you. – dp

The Forgotten Command?

There's a command in the Bible that, it seems, has become the “forgotten command.” It's a command that makes people and churches uncomfortable, so it is ignored. This is the command to churches that, under certain circumstances, we must separate from those who have been members of a local body. It's often been called “withdrawing fellowship” but “church discipline” is better. Why? Because it's possible for a person to be “disfellowshipped” by the church (i.e., severing partnership with that person) yet still be in fellowship with God. For example, in III John 10, John warned his readers about Diotrephes who was “putting ‘brothers’ out of the church.” Those “put out” were still in fellowship with God.

Discipline is important but must be carried out prayerfully, patiently and after every effort is made to restore the person's relationship with God and his people. The chart below is a summary of the Bible's teaching on church discipline. Here are a couple of things to keep in mind: (1) church discipline does not apply to those who are weak or “fainthearted”; see I Thessalonians 5:14. (2) We should be patient with a member of the church who may not be attending, but agrees to study with us. This assumes that none of the five factors below are applicable. (3) Church discipline is not a mechanism for “cleaning up the directory.” In other words, lack of regular attendance at the assemblies is not, by itself, a reason for discipline — at least not early on. Lack of attendance is almost always a symptom of something more serious and it behooves us to do our best to find the underlying cause. In the past, a person who didn't attend was often “withdrawn from” without anyone finding how if there was something that caused it. For example, what if someone stopped attending because of abuse by another member? What a terrible injustice it would be to discipline the abused but not the abuser. In this, as in all issues that come up in churches, we must pray for wisdom (James 1:5).

The Purpose of Church Discipline

To restore the sinner. | **Corinthians 5:5; Galatians 6:1**

To maintain/restore the purity of the local church. | **Corinthians 5:6-8**

To demonstrate that the church takes holy and righteous living seriously. | **Peter 2:11-12**

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| The Factious Person | The False Teacher | The Idle or Unruly Person | The Unrepentant Person | The Immoral Person |
| “mark and avoid,” “reject” Romans 16:17 Titus 3:10-11 | “do not receive” II John 9f. | “withdraw from” II Thess. 3:6-15 | “like a heathen and tax collector” Matthew 18:15-18 | “deliver to Satan; do not keep company; do not eat...” 1 Cor. 5:1-13 |

The Parables

TERRY RAPOSA

Introduction

Parables were used in the ancient world as a literary teaching tool. In ancient Greek literature the word “parable” was used to describe the concept of objects moving side by side. Parables were used to emphasize a principle or a lesson. They were used similarly to a metaphor, but a parable tends to use more information and is more expansive in application. Also, parables use examples that are familiar to the particular culture and situation.

The word “parable” comes from the Greek word: “*parabole*”, which can mean the following:

- A placing of one thing by the side of another, juxtaposition; as of ships in battle.
Examples are, The Two Debtors, The Two Sons, The Ten Virgins.
- A comparison of one thing with another, it highlights a likeness or similitude.
Examples are, The Mustard Seed and the Leaven, The Hidden Treasure.
- Duties of people are portrayed figuratively.

Nathan the prophet presented a parable to King David that is recorded in 2 Samuel 12:1-4. This narrative has features of all three of these definitions above.

While the meaning was stated plainly by Nathan to David, parables do not always state explicitly their intended meaning. We will look at this more closely as we study the parables of Jesus in the Gospels.

Characteristic features of the parables in the Gospels:

They tend to be short and incisive. There is often a sharp focus on a particular lesson. They are different than an allegory which tends to be longer and more complex.

An example of the above is the parable of the Two Debtors:

- there is a particular situation set in time and culture
- there is the behavior of a woman and a Pharisee positioned side by side
- there is also the disposition of two debtors which creates a double parallel
- the lesson is immediately brought into sharp focus and teaches a broader principle

George A. Barton, Ph.D., wrote: “The parables of Jesus are so unique that they form a class by themselves. After reading these, one hesitates to call anything a parable which does not come up to their standard, and yet parables exist in other religious literature, though they do not approach in excellence those of the gospels”¹.

Why did Jesus teach with parables?

The disciples asked Jesus this question. It is recorded in Matt. 13:10-17, Mk 4:10-12, and Lk 8:9-10.

We observe in the following statements from the passages above:

- “to you it has been given to know the secrets of the kingdom of heaven” (Matt. 13:11, Mk 4:11, Lk 8:10)
- Mark adds it was when Jesus “was alone” with the twelve (Mk 4:10)
- Matthew included the heart of the people had grown dull (Matt. 13:15)

From this, we can conclude Jesus taught in parables to teach long-held secrets about the kingdom of God. He explained the parables to His disciples when He was alone with them. Further explanation was not given to everyone because the hearts of the people had grown dull and they closed their eyes. He cited prophecy was being fulfilled as recorded in Isaiah 6:9-10.

In the upcoming quarter which starts on October 1st, we will be studying the parables in the auditorium class. The value of studying the parables is seen when we gain a deeper understanding of the mystery that has been revealed. Apostle Paul mentioned a mystery has been revealed that was kept secret for long ages (Rom. 16:25).

Developing further our understanding of the parables grows our understanding of a mystery that was under veil for millennia. The parables unveil the mystery of the kingdom of God to those with open eyes and hearts. This brings joy, gratitude, and value to our lives in Christ.

All are invited and welcome to this class.

1. George A. Barton, *The Biblical World*, May 1909, Vol. 33, No. 5, pp. 305-313. *The University of Chicago Press*.