

September 22, 2024

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 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: I Corinthians

Young Adult Class (room 12)

Room 13/14: "Encounters with Jesus"

10:30 AM: Assembly

Preaching Today: David Posey

"Open Hearts For Those in Need, Part III"

I John 3:16-18

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

Bible Class: 5:00 PM @ the Building

Praying the Psalms (Auditorium)

Additional Classes

High School Class, 5 PM on Sundays @ David & Christie Posey's home

Young people monthly meeting (middle school): 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.

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).

Wednesday 7 PM @ Building

Classes: same as Sunday 9:30 AM

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.

Hope

BY ASHTYN CAIN

HOPE: "TO HAVE CONFIDENCE IN, TO TRUST."

Hope is a word we hear often, that can mean different things to different people. It's a huge part of our walk with God. It's important to think about what hope really is. "Where do we get hope?" "Who or what do we have hope in?" and "Why do we have hope?" These are all questions we should think about.

So **where do we get our hope?** Well if hope is putting our confidence and trust into "something," what should that "something" be and where do we find it? Promises are the "something" that we should get our hope from and we can find God's

promises all throughout the Bible. He has promised in I John 1:9 that "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." And he's promised that we can live forever with him in Heaven, "In hope of eternal life, which God, who never lies, promised before the ages began" (Titus 1:2). God has fulfilled his promises in the past like with the flood, Abraham and Isaac, Moses, sending Jesus to earth and his death and resurrection. Because of this we can have hope in the future that God will forgive us of our sins and we have hope even after death to spend eternity with him if we abide by his word. So if God's promises are our source of hope, then that means God is who we have hope in.

Sadly, many people in the world don't have a strong source to put their hope in. They often end up disappointed and weakened when worldly hopes of riches and fame and happiness from worldly pleasure don't do the things they hoped they would. Fortunately for Christians, we have a strong Godly hope. Our hope as Christians strengthens us and doesn't disappoint because even though we go through trials and tribulations in this life we know that "suffering produces endurance, endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not put us to shame" (Romans 5:3-5).

How great is it to have a hope that does not put us to shame or disappoint us! Our hope in God and his promises of eternal life is what makes suffering endurable because we as Christians can see a way out of the suffering, we know the end result of our work on earth will be Heaven, whereas many people of the world can't see a way out of their suffering. This is why hope is a fundamental part of Christianity — we know that everything we go through and endure on earth will pay off in the end when we are all in paradise with God forever.

I think one of the biggest parts of our hope is that hope gives us a purpose, a purpose to live a life for Jesus, modeling his behavior and being a light in a world of darkness. A beautiful part of being a Christian is that we live a life that serves a purpose, we have a constant motivation to live a certain way that many people search their entire lives for. People try to answer the question of "why am I here?" Having a Christian hope answers this question by saying "to serve God and strive to live like Jesus everyday." I'm reminded of this hope in God every time I

hear God's word and I see his word in action. It reminds me of why I do what I do. I strive to serve God to the best of my ability because I hope that one day I will be in Heaven with him just like I know all of you do too because that's our purpose. People can see our hope; it sets us apart from the world because we have a different mindset when it comes to suffering, leading others to ask "why do people who believe in God have a certain happiness to them?"

Hope is a very powerful thing. As Christians we should be reminded of our hope because while we can't physically see God, we can see what he has promised us through his word and we can know that even in suffering, our hope in God will never fail us because he never has and he never will. God's love is so immense for us he has created a hope that is everlasting and stronger than anything we face. It was said in a sermon once that, "Faith makes hope, and hope creates the expectation." We expect to get to Heaven and to be forgiven of our sins because our faith and hope in God, working together, have told us it is true.

My parents tell me a lot to be a "glass-half-full" type of person. This is their version of telling me to be more hopeful and whenever they say this it reminds me to trust in God and his word because it's the strongest and surest thing to lean on. Becoming a more hopeful Christian is a worthwhile cause that we all should do. I encourage each and everyone of you to think about where or in what you place your hope and to let your hope in God influence everything you do in pursuit of serving him.

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Politics & Jesus

There are many Bible-believing people, especially on social media, who believe that church leaders should be outspoken on politics. Some go so far as to claim that if you are not making your voice heard in opposition to or in favor of some politician then you are “succumbing to Satan’s schemes” as one preacher said. If you read the *View* regularly, you know I speak out on moral issues such as abortion, LGBTQ issues, etc. But I avoid “politics,” as we typically think of it.

Feel free to speak to me about this, but here’s the problem with the idea that preachers should endorse politicians and policies: I can’t cite a text in the New Testament where Jesus ever confronted anyone from a purely political point of view (read that carefully: “*purely political point of view*”). It’s true that in the first century politics and the Jewish system were bound together — in fact, Judaism was more political than religious but that wasn’t a good thing (see John 11:45-53).

“Politics” is defined as, “the activities associated with the governance of a country or other area, especially the debate or conflict among individuals or parties having or hoping to achieve power.” Look at the words: “governance...hoping to achieve power.” My question is simply this: where does Jesus or his apostles ever (a) engage in this kind of political conflict or discourse or (b) seek to change the balance of power in a country or anywhere else? I’ve always tried to keep politics out of the pulpit, even out of the church building, because (a) I’ve never read where Jesus or any writer of the New Testament spoke from that perspective and (b) it is inherently divisive.

If I can conscientiously vote for any candidate, I choose the one who I feel will most likely defend the rights promised to us in the Constitution, especially freedom of religion and freedom of speech. Both of those rights affect our ability to meet together and speak the truth as revealed in scripture. I’ll never support a candidate that aims to restrict those rights. That’s the best I can do. If I based my voting on who is most like Jesus, I would never vote for anyone.

Let’s face it: if Jesus ran for office he would be defeated in a landslide. Can you imagine citizens of a country voting for a man who said to turn the other cheek or love your enemies or who demanded that people call him “Lord”? And how would this go over in America today?

...if your hand causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter life crippled than with two hands to go to hell, to the unquenchable fire. And if your foot causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter life lame than with two feet to be thrown into hell. And if your eye causes you to sin, tear it out. It is better for you to enter the kingdom of God with one eye than with two eyes to be thrown into hell, where their worm does not die and the fire is not quenched. — Mark 9:43-48

Then there’s this:

So everyone who acknowledges me before men, I also will acknowledge before my Father who is in heaven, but whoever denies me before men, I also will deny before my Father who is in

heaven. “Do not think that I have come to bring peace to the earth. I have not come to bring peace, but a sword. For I have come to set a man against his father, and a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law. And a person’s enemies will be those of his own household. Whoever loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me, and whoever loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. And whoever does not take his cross and follow me is not worthy of me. Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it. — Matthew 10:32-39

It doesn’t take any imagination to know that very early on, people would be looking at themselves and then hissing and booing this speech. It happened to Jesus in his hometown of Nazareth. When he began his speech, “all spoke well of him and marveled at the gracious words that were coming from his mouth” (Luke 4:22). But he didn’t stop there, like politicians do. He went on:

And he said to them, “Doubtless you will quote to me this proverb, “Physician, heal yourself.” What we have heard you did at Capernaum, do here in your hometown as well.” And he said, “Truly, I say to you, no prophet is acceptable in his hometown. But in truth, I tell you, there were many widows in Israel in the days of Elijah, when the heavens were shut up three years and six months, and a great famine came over all the land, and Elijah was sent to none of them but only to Zarephath, in the land of Sidon, to a woman who was a widow. And there were many lepers in Israel in the time of the prophet Elisha, and none of them was cleansed, but only Naaman the Syrian.” When they heard these things, all in the synagogue were filled with wrath. And they rose up and drove him out of the town and brought him to the brow of the hill on which their town was built, so that they could throw him down the cliff. But passing through their midst, he went away. — Luke 4:23-30

Jesus was no politician. He never chased popularity. He wasn’t looking for a mandate. His poll numbers would be abysmal if they were doing polls in those days. Another way of saying this is that no man who runs for office and speaks like Jesus will never hold the office he runs for. Does that mean we should never vote? No. It means that if we vote, we vote for the person who will uphold the constitution — if they win, that’s what they raise their right hand and promise to do after all. Politicians may have some immoral views or have deep character flaws that you cannot support. Fine. Don’t vote. But I think it makes sense to remember we are not electing religious leaders and no one is perfect. And *someone* is going to be elected.

We live in a country that gives us a say in how we are governed — that’s not true everywhere. First century Christians didn’t have that option. It’s certainly not a perfect science, but I feel I’m obligated to vote for candidates and propositions that most closely reflect our values and, ideally, seem to care about what God approves and criticizes. But, in the final analysis, Christians are not governed by political figures; we are governed by our King, Jesus Christ.

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