

September 29, 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)

“Acts, Sharing Our Faith”

Room 13/14: “Encounters with Jesus”

10:30 AM: Assembly

Preaching Today: David Posey

Helping Those in Need IV

Romans 12:9-18

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: Singing (October 2nd)

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.

Biblical Viewpoints

COMMENTARY & OPINION ON CULTURE

Abortion & Christianity

Four-time NBA champion Steph Curry calls himself a “Christian” yet, he just informed the world that he’s voting for Kamala Harris *because* she promotes abortion. Say what? Harris is on record saying, “*One does not have to abandon their faith or deeply held beliefs to agree: The government should not be telling a woman what to do with her body.*” In the first place, when a woman is pregnant, that baby inside her is not *her* body. It is a *separate* body. Then, to say you can somehow maintain your “faith” while accepting the killing of that baby is beyond ludicrous. Legendary coach and professing believer, Tony Dungy asked Harris point blank:

“Dear VP Harris: I hear you make this statement all the time,” he wrote on X. “Exactly *what ‘faith’ are you talking about when you say you don’t have to abandon it to support abortion?*”

Being a “Christian” (a follower of Jesus) and endorsing “abortion” (intentionally killing a baby in the womb) are not now and never will be compatible under any circumstances. We shouldn’t even have to say that.

Proponents of abortion, especially under *Roe v. Wade*, convinced many prospective mothers that abortion was not a homicide. The argument was that the fetus was not yet a human being. That has long since been debunked. A child is, indeed, a human being *at conception*.

According to a statement from the American College of Pediatricians, “human life begins at conception when the sperm and egg unite to create a unique and individual organism” (American College of Pediatricians, 2017). This statement is supported by medical research, which shows that at the moment of conception, a unique genetic makeup is formed, different from any other human being (National Institutes of Health, 2021). This new life has the potential to grow and develop into a fully formed human being.

See <https://tinyurl.com/5683zyas>

In 38 states, including California, a murderer of a pregnant woman is charged with *double* homicide. Most, if not all, of the other states have similar homicide laws. “Homicide” is the killing of a *person* by another *person*. Words that defend, approve or, as we are seeing during this election season, *applauding* abortion and the word “Christian” should never occur in the same sentence unless the sentence is describing a Christian condemning abortion. It’s interesting to me that politicians and radical feminists prefer to use the term “reproductive health” while denying that *reproduction* is what is actually taking place. Reproduction is literally the producing of a new person through conception and birth.

There is no way around it: abortion is the intentional killing of a human being while in the womb. With the sixth commandment, God made it perfectly clear: “You shall not murder” (Exodus 20:13). There is no other proof necessary to establish the reality that, to support abortion, you must “abandon” your faith.

One other thing: due to the ready access to abortion after *Roe v. Wade*, and the well-publicized lie, promoted primarily by Planned Parenthood, that abortion did not involve the killing of a human being but “just” the termination of a “fetus,” (falsely described as “not yet a human being”) we can assume that some Christian women ignorantly had abortions in the past. We can also assume that these Christian women who got abortions, whether ignorantly or not, repented when they learned the truth. Like any other sin, confession and repentance brings full forgiveness for these women; this forgiveness is, as Psalm 103 assures us, “as far as the east is from the west, so far does he remove our transgressions from us” (v, 12).

DP

Roman Catholics, are you listening to what your “Pope” just said?

For some reason, many people are enamored with Roman Catholicism, even those who have been exposed to the truth in the past. It’s a mystery to me. How can anyone who knows anything about what the Bible says believe Catholic doctrine? The veneration (reverence, worship) of the mother of Jesus should be enough to cause some second thoughts. Then there’s hierarchy of the priesthood, with a “pope” at the top of the pyramid. A pope is described as a sovereign/supreme “Bishop of Rome,” “Holy Father,” “Vicar of Christ” that people call “His Holiness.” That violates several passages in the Bible — you can start with Matthew 23:6-12 which forbids taking on the name of “Holy Father.” But now the Pope has said something that *should* disturb every Roman Catholic. Pope Francis recently said this (speaking to children in Singapore):

“All religions are paths to reach God. They are — to make a comparison — like different languages, different dialects, to get there. But God is God for everyone. If you start to fight saying ‘my religion is more important than yours, mine is true and yours isn’t’, where will this lead us? There is only one God, and each of us has a language to arrive at God. Some are Sheik, Muslim, Hindu, Christians; they are different ways to God.”

“Where will this lead us?”??? Let’s start with John 14:6, “I am the way, the truth and the life. *No one comes to the Father except through me.*” Muslims and Hindus and other false religions do not accept Jesus as the way to God.

And, false religions are nothing like “languages”; they are false paths that lead to hell, not to God. The only way to God is through Jesus Christ.

DP

“The Truth is in the Tension”

We are smack-dab toward the end of the every-four-years’ “circus” known as the Presidential Election. It’s a time when we are inundated with slogans, signs and being tempted to adopt a “bumper sticker” mentality.

This is not an article on the election however. It’s a warning to beware of those who use the same tactics in religious discussions. Pat answers, slogans and “bumper stickers” are convenient and, sometimes, state a truth but they never quench the thirst of true kingdom thinkers. This is not to say that teaching is never “black and white” — sometimes it is. He-

brews 13:4 says, “*Marriage is to be held in honor among all and the marriage bed undefiled. But fornicators and adulterers God will judge.*”

There’s no wiggle room there, just a clear statement of fact: sex is reserved for marriage. Peri-

od. But even with that, there is “more to the story.” Like everyone else, fornicators and adulterers will be forgiven if they repent.

Jesus, in the Sermon on the Mount, stretches our minds. The sermon is recorded in Matthew 5-7. Luke 6:20-49 contains similar teaching but is often called the “sermon on the plain” (see Luke 6:17). This sermon requires that we — as our teachers used to say — “put our thinking caps on.” Otherwise, we can fall into the trap that many have by refusing to dig a little deeper.

It requires that we remember who Jesus is primarily speaking to: Matthew 5:1 and Luke 6:20 tell us he is speaking to his *disciples* — his followers. In both cases, there was a crowd who, we might say, was “overhearing” Jesus’ words to his followers. This is important because a “disciple” (*mathētēs* — “mental effort that thinks something through”) is a learner, a follower of Christ who learns the doctrines of Scripture and the lifestyle that is required to maintain the position of a “disciple.”

Somewhere along the way, I discovered an important truth that applies to many of Jesus’ teachings — “*the truth is in the tension.*” Sometimes, it’s not “*either/or,*” it’s “*but/and*” or “*if, then*” (i.e., conditional statements determine the application). But we’ll leave that for another time. “The truth is in tension” means that when you read a passage and consider the extremes, you’ll often find the truth in the middle, or in the balance of those extremes. The idea is that truth involves maintaining tension between seemingly opposing concepts, like faith and works or divine sovereignty and human responsibility. “The truth is in the tension” has been used across different domains to highlight the importance of grappling with complex, often conflicting, realities.

For example, Jesus says “do not resist the evil person... let him slap you, let him take your cloak, go the extra mile, give to him if he asks” (Matthew 5:39). What

Jesus actually says is as plain as can be. The difficulty arises when we try to apply it to every day life. Application may wind itself toward two extremes: on the one hand, we may be tempted to explain it away until it means nothing. We build in so many exceptions to the actual words that we effectively neuter the teaching. When one takes this approach, he is hard pressed to come up with any example of circumstances in which the teaching actually applies.

In an attempt to avoid that obvious error, we may take a different approach. We’ll just take the teaching at

face value, literally, without regard to other biblical principles. Therefore, we would never resist one who means to do harm to us. That leads to conclusions that seem to conflict with other biblical principles and examples. For example, are we passive about someone who abuses a child or who wants to embezzle money

from the church? The truth is in the tension.

There is a third possible application: we replace the “eye for an eye” law with another: turn the other cheek. Once we’ve turned the other cheek *then* we can retaliate. Most of us would agree that is just a new kind of Phariseism, and far from Jesus’ command that our righteousness must exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees.

Author F. Scott Fitzgerald once said, “The test of a first-rate intelligence is the ability to hold two opposing ideas in mind at the same time and still retain the ability to function.” I believe his statement is similar to “the truth is in the tension.”

Another word for this is “paradox” — two ideas that seem to oppose each other. There are a lot of paradoxical statements and concepts in the Bible. To mention just a few: the Bible speaks of eternal life as both here and yet to come (“already, but not yet”); Paul said “to die is gain” (Phil. 1:21) yet took measures to preserve his life; Jesus said not to resist an evil person, yet Jesus cleansed the temple, pronounced woes on the Pharisees and rebuked the officer who slapped him (John 18:23).

Perhaps the greatest paradox is Jesus’ command in Mt. 5:48 that we are to be “perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect” (Mt. 5:48), set against a veritable plethora of passages that tell us that we are sinners who cannot begin to approach the glory of God (Romans 3:23).

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DP

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