

October 13 2024

The View

“Sir, 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 six 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: Ecclesiastes

Young Adult Class (room 12) “Acts, Sharing Our Faith”

Room 13/14: “Relationships”

10:30 AM Assembly

Preaching Today : Scott Gardner

Sermon: “Rooted & Grounded in Love”

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

Bible Class: 500 PM @ the Building

Praying the Psalms (Auditorium)

Additional Classes

High School Class, 5 PM - Sunday– TBA

Young people monthly meeting (middle school): contact David Sanderson or Seth Reagan

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 7PM @ 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.

Who is Jesus of Nazareth?

Paul Earnhart

“Who say ye that I am?” is the question with which Jesus confronted the twelve at Caesarea Philippi. Men and women of our day are no less challenged to answer the same question, a question upon which hangs the very meaning of life itself. Who is this whose influence has cast itself powerfully across nineteen centuries?

The only Jesus we may know is the one whose story is written in the New Testament by His close companions and disciples. This is the “historical Jesus.” If we attack their simple, straightforward accounts as unreliable, we have burned the only bridge by which He may be known. We have also assumed the burden of proving what hoped-for reward could have moved these men who spoke so often of truth to enter into a gigantic hoax, and to sacrifice their lives rather than confess it. We must accept or reject the Jesus of the New Testament simply because there is no evidence or testimony for any other.

The Christ of Prophecy

The best way to get an answer to the question, “Who is Jesus?” is to let Jesus speak for Himself. When the Samaritan woman assured Jesus that she knew when the Christ came He would declare all things, He replied, “I that speak unto thee am he” (John 4:25-26). To His disciples just before His ascension, He said, “These are my words which I spoke unto you, while I was with you, that all things must needs be fulfilled which are written in the law of Moses, and the prophets and the psalms concerning me . . . Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer, and rise again the third day” (Luke 24:44,46). Whatever we may think of it, Jesus clearly claimed to be the promised Christ of all the Old Testament prophecies.

Several hundred years before the birth of Jesus, Isaiah declared that the Christ would be descended from Jesse and David (11:1-9; 9:6-7; Jn. 7:42) and be born of a virgin (7:14; Mt. 1:18-23). At the same time Micah spoke of Bethlehem as His birthplace (5:2; Mt. 2:3-6). Yet, in spite of His human birth, Isaiah spoke of Him as “the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father” (9:6-7); and Micah said His goings forth were “from everlasting” (5:2).

More than four hundred years before His conception the prophet Zechariah spoke of His entrance into Jerusalem riding on a donkey (9:9-10). Isaiah chronicled His suffering and death for the sins of the world long before they occurred and spoke beforehand of His burial with a rich man (53:1-9). David revealed the details of the crucifixion fully one thousand years before it transpired (Psalm 22:1-18), and prophesied of the resurrection that would follow (Psalm 16:9-10; Acts 2:25-32). A scheming deceiver might have contrived to seemingly fulfill some of the Messianic prophecies, but, however shrewd, no man has control of the circumstances of his birth and death.

The Son of God

Jesus also made a clear claim to being, in a unique way, the Son of God. To Nicodemus He spoke of Himself as the “only-begotten Son of God” (John 3:16). He made the same clear assertion to a man he healed of life-long blindness (John 9:35-37) and blessed Peter for declaring Him to be “the Christ, the Son of the living God” (Matt. 16:15-17). His other claims reflect His deity indirectly. He claimed to be eternal (John 8:58), sinless (John 8:46), able to forgive sins (Mk. 2:5-10) and give life to the dead (Jn. 5:21,28).

No mere man could make such claims as these unless He were mad

or an arch-deceiver. If we reject Jesus as God's Son we are compelled to place Him in one of these categories. We are left to decide if we are willing to attribute to insanity or wicked deception the finest hour of human history.

Jesus is also declared to be the Son of God by His resurrection from the dead (Rom. 1:4). And the evidence for His resurrection is formidable. Both His friends and enemies agree on three facts: He died, was buried, and the tomb was empty. His enemies, unable to produce the body, bribed the sepulcher guards to tell the puerile story that “while we slept” His disciples came and stole the body away. Is it conceivable that men who ran away in fear while Jesus was alive would afterward risk their lives for possession of His corpse? There is only one explanation of the empty tomb which answers to all the facts and explains the testimony of the disciples and their transformation into a joyous, militant band of preachers. Clearly, as they said, He had risen from the dead and they had seen Him!

The Lord of Lords

From His position as Christ and Son of God, Jesus claimed supreme power over every person and force in the universe (Matt. 28:18; Eph. 1:20-22). Jesus also claimed that He was the very embodiment of truth and life and the only means of access to God (John 14:6; Matt. 11:27). It should be no surprise then that He demanded from all men a supreme and absolute loyalty (Matt. 10:37-38).

We would do well to ponder carefully the question, “Who is Jesus of Nazareth?” It is not the kind of question we can escape, and it sounds very much like our answer will determine our ultimate destiny (Jn 8:24).

Why do bad things happen to good people?

Max Dawson

It is something that has plagued both the wise man and the fool, the educated and the ignorant, paupers and kings: “Why do bad things happen to good people?”

It is probably a question you have had. At one time or another, almost everyone asks about why there is so much injustice in our world.

We live in a world that is filled with all kinds of wickedness and evil. A great deal of that evil comes upon good people – people who haven't done anything to deserve what happens to them. Our minds don't rest well when we think about the injustice and unfairness that we see around us. It's not just that bad things happen to good people; it is also that good things happen to bad people. Justice is turned upside down.

It is something that King Solomon wrote about three thousand years ago. In Ecclesiastes 8:14, the king said: “There is a vanity which occurs on earth, that there are just men to whom it happens according to the work of the wicked; again, there are wicked men to whom it happens according to the work of the righteous. I said that this also is vanity.”

There are good and just men who receive what Solomon thinks ought to happen to the wicked. That is, bad things come upon

them. By contrast, Solomon observes that there are wicked men who receive what ought to go to good men. He recognized that life is often unjust and unfair.

So, the problem of bad things happening to good people is not a new problem. It is as old as the Bible and something that nearly every Bible writer wrestled with at one time or another.

Is it right for us to ask questions about injustice?

Indeed, it is right! Many Bible writers asked the same questions that we may have.

Job couldn't understand why so many bad things befell him (Job 30:26-27).

As the author of Ecclesiastes, King Solomon seemed to be constantly troubled by the injustice that he saw (Ecclesiastes 3:16).

Abraham believed it was an injustice if God destroyed the good along with the bad at Sodom. God did not condemn him for asking this. This text is more than Abraham merely asking questions. The last line of that quotation is an expression of Abraham's confidence in God that He would do right. God is not the author of injustice.

Even the great King David wondered about injustice in our present world. In Psalm 10, David was distraught and disturbed. It appeared to him that God was just letting bad people get away with sin. He even wondered if God was hiding Himself while these evil men went about doing their dastardly deeds! The psalm, however, concludes with David expressing confidence in God, that He will indeed do justice and vindicate the oppressed (Psalm 10:14-18).

The solution to the problem of injustice

We need to trust God and think long-term.

Let us think again about the case of Asaph in Psalm 73. By looking to God's answer, Asaph learned that the injustice was only temporary; it will not prevail long-term. And what about King David? He seemed to blame God for the injustice done to him, or at least thought that God was doing nothing to help him (Psalm 10:1-18). David was wrong in his assessment. God did hear his prayer and David eventually admitted that. The real problem was one of time. David (like us) wanted relief immediately. Think-long term!

Job's case bears out the value of seeing the big picture. Job suffered greatly but look at the end of the matter. In Job 42:12-13, we learn that "the LORD blessed the latter days of Job more than his beginning; for he had fourteen thousand sheep, six thousand camels, one thousand yoke of oxen, and one thousand female donkeys. He also had seven sons and three daughters." In His time, God took care of Job and brought him great blessing. That, of course, was the earthly outcome. But we look for more.

In eternity, all outcomes will be good for the righteous. In Revelation 6:9-10, the righteous had suffered terribly under the hand of wicked oppressors. They are pictured as "under the altar," indicating that their lives had been sacrificed for the cause of Christ. They wondered "how long" it would be until God brought justice to them and to their cause? But Revelation 20:4 portrays those same souls as victorious. Their cause has been vindicated. Truly, the words of Revelation 14:13 have application to all those who suffer for the cause of Jesus, "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on." "Yes," says the Spirit, "that they may rest from their labors, and their works follow them." We look for that time of blessing.

Viewpoint is important. We often don't see a thing in its true nature until we have seen it from all sides. Don't take a short-sighted view of the bad things that happen in life. See all that happens to us in view of eternity.

We can't answer all the questions that can be raised about bad things happening to good people. But we can answer with assurance that it is right to be a person of faith and righteousness. No matter what life brings, God ultimately takes care of His own. He will take care of you if you belong to Him.

A final text: "Trust in the LORD with all your heart, And lean not on your own understanding; In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He shall direct your paths" (Proverbs 3:5-6).

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Read your Bible