

January 5, 2025

# The Folsom 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.

***We do not solicit donations from visitors. Please fill out a visitor’s card and put it in the collection plate when it is passed. See page 4 for more information.***

## Schedule

### The Lord’s Day

#### 9:30 AM Bible Classes

*Auditorium: A Study of Joy*

*Young Adult Class (room 12): “Journeys with Jesus”*

*Room 13/14: “Transformed Relationships” (Romans 12-16)*

#### 10:30 AM: Assembly

*Preaching Today: David Posey*

*“Building Up: Trusting Each Other”*

*Galatians 6:1-10*

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

### Sunday Afternoon and Evening Bible Classes @ the Building

*1:30 PM, Genesis (see Grant Mulligan)*

*5 PM, 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](mailto:david.r.sanderson@intel.com)) or Seth Reagan ([sethreagan@gmail.com](mailto:sethreagan@gmail.com))

**There are several on-going Bible classes in the homes of members.**

**Check with David Posey, Len Baker or one of the elders.**

2<sup>nd</sup> 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

Same classes as Sunday, 9:30 AM

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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.

## Finding Balance in Preaching

Below is an excerpt from an excellent Bible-based newsletter I receive nearly every day from Roger Shouse, a preacher at the Charlestown Road Church of Christ in Indiana:

“...in a time of confusion, questions and doubts, God’s people need to stand with conviction and absolutes. Gender dysphoria. Origins. Authority. Purpose. Function of the church. Salvation. Worship. Everyone has an opinion. What does the Lord say? To do this, we must first understand what the Bible says. It’s not what the church says, but what God says. Then, one must believe that. One can be bold and kind. One can be absolute without being obnoxious. But standing with God comes with consequences. Some walked away from the Lord. Some persecuted the apostles...”

“Jesus tells us that we can know the truth and that truth will make us free (John 8). The idea fills the air today that no two people can see the Bible eye to eye. Everyone has their own take on what God says. If that be true, then that indicts God as a terrible author. We can understand micro biology. We can understand Shakespeare. We can understand the laws of the land. But somehow we cannot understand God’s word? Second, this makes Jesus a liar. The Lord said we can know the truth. If we all walk away from the Bible with different ideas, then Jesus didn’t know what He was talking about. And, if the Lord is wrong about truth, is He right about salvation? How about worship? Can anything in the Bible be trusted?

“...it is those who fear the crowd more than they fear the Lord that present question marks and doubts in their preaching. When preachers are more concerned about paychecks from the church than approval from the Lord, they will tickle ears, bend the truth, and look the other way. Such men do not belong in the pulpit. A man of conviction is what the church needs. A man that knows the word of God and will die defending it, is what the church needs today. Using the pulpit because it appears to be an easy job hurts the church and does more harm than good.”

### Comment

[Disclaimer: obviously, I do not know what every preacher in the world is preaching about and I haven’t read every article. I don’t appreciate preachers or writers who speak and write as if they know what is going on in every church – they don’t and I don’t. My comments below are based on years of experience but naturally limited to what I’ve observed. And for the record, brother Shouse, in his daily newsletter, covers a plethora of topics. I highly recommend it. Subscribe here: [rogshouse@aol.com](mailto:rogshouse@aol.com)]

I agree with every word of what brother Shouse says above. Nothing I say below detracts from his point that we must keep emphasizing that the Bible is sufficient to address *every* religious, moral and social issue that arises, in any time, in any age, in any place. Peter reminds us that when we speak, we should speak “as the very utterance of God” (I Peter 4:11) and, in II Peter 1:3, “his divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness...”

Having said that, in my many years of listening to preaching in churches of Christ and reading articles from my preaching brethren, I have observed that some tend to zero in on certain topics while leaving others alone. I have heard, literally, a hundred or more sermons on various aspects of authority, creation, the organization and function of the church and, of course, the plan of salvation (HBRCB; if you’re a mid-to-long time member of the church you know what those ini-

tials mean). Those are all of vital importance. But I’m struck with Paul said when he met with the Ephesian elders,

“Therefore I testify to you this day that I am innocent of the blood of all, for I did not shrink from declaring to you *the whole counsel of God*. Pay careful attention to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to **care** for the church of God, which he obtained with his own blood” (Acts 20:26-28).

What does the “whole counsel of God” include? I think it may be a taller order than some of us think. Paul says that it includes “care for the church of God.” The word for “care” is translated “shepherd” in other places. That seems to include all the topics above and then some that are more personal like psychological and mental health issues. A young preacher said, “what is the church doing wrong that so many of our members have to seek help with professional counselors?”

I may have missed something but as a young man in the 50’s and 60’s, in conservative churches, when division was rampant, sermons on authority dominated pulpits in non-institutional churches. My father, who was a preacher, commented on the sermons of a well-known, sound gospel preacher. He observed that he never preached a sermon without mentioning “the issues” (referring to institutionalism).

That’s understandable and I’m not criticizing anyone for preaching on the issues that were dividing churches back then. It was necessary and urgent and helpful to many preachers who were not seasoned enough to understand how serious “the issues” were. But it stands to reason that if nearly all our sermons funnel down to one main topic, then other topics will be neglected. There are preachers today who, it seems, rarely preach a sermon in which they do not mention LGBTQ issues, or other sinful social movements. It’s important to address those (although I personally feel it is more effective to discuss in class setting). In any case, all of us who preach need to ask, “Am I preaching the ‘whole counsel of God’?”

What’s included in “the whole counsel of God”? Read Paul’s letters. In Galatians, for example, Paul pointedly addresses the church’s sin of drifting back into Judaism – he held nothing back. But, even with the urgency of that issue, Galatians is also where you read about the Fruit of the Spirit (chapter 5) and “bearing one another’s burdens” (chapter 6).

I’m as sure as I can be that “the whole counsel of God” includes a huge dose of building up the local through sermons and classes on burden-bearing and brotherly love as well as issues on authority, dangerous cultural issues. There is a need to address outside influences but it should be paired with teaching on what should be going on inside the church. I John directly addresses creeping gnosticism but at least a third of that letter is about loving the brethren (I John 3:13-18).

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## CHURCHES OF CHRIST

[Below is an interesting, verbatim entry in *The Handbook of Denominations in the United States 13th Edition*. As the article points out, we reject the notion that we are a “denomination” (which suggests being one church in a network of many). We are not a “branch” of anything, including the Restoration movement even though many churches were established during that era (circa 1800-1870). We would also not capitalize “churches” (other than at the beginning of sentences). Other than that, the entry pretty much hits the nail on the head.] Here's the entry:

The Churches of Christ represent the most conservative branch of the Restorationist movement. They reject the idea of denominationalism and have no central headquarters. This group has no governing bodies. Churches of Christ are anti-creedal and look for Christian unity based on the Bible alone. Stressing a strict adherence to the New Testament pattern of worship and church organization, they refused to join any inter-congregational organization, such as a missionary society. Worship is simple, and they oppose the use of instrumental music on the grounds that the New Testament did not authorize it and that the early church did not use it.

Key doctrines of Churches of Christ include belief in the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit as members of one Godhead; in the incarnation, virgin birth, and bodily resurrection of Christ; and in the universality of sin after the age of accountability. They teach that the only remedy for sin is the vicarious atonement of the Lord Jesus Christ. Strong emphasis is also laid on the church as the body and bride of Christ. A figurative, rather than literal, view is prevalent with reference to the book of Revelation.

Church membership is contingent upon an individual's faith in Jesus Christ as the only begotten Son of God, repentance, confession of faith, and baptism by immersion for the remission of sins. Church attendance is stressed. Churches of Christ maintain that the final judgment of all individuals is reserved to the Lord. This view, however, still allows for a vigorous evangelism that finds unacceptable the “doctrines, practices, names, titles, and creeds that have been added to the original practice of Christianity.”

The most conservative congregations reject instrumental music and use only acapella singing in worship... preachers are not employees but hold their position in the church under mutual agreement with the elders of the churches in which they preach. The actual governance of the church is vested in its elders.

## Classes at the Building, starting Today

*Classes for all ages of children and young people starting with toddlers through high school.*

### For the adults...

**Auditorium**, a study of “Joy” [see Scott Gardner]

**Classroom #13/14** – “Transformed Relationships” from Romans 12-16. [David Posey & Ben Woodside]

**Classroom #5-6** – “Getting to Know the Holy Spirit” [see Ed Sanderson, Sr.]

**Classroom #12** – “Journeys with Jesus: small group discussions on the Master’s teachings.” Garret Smith and Adam Rico will be teaching.

For *additional classes at the building on Sunday afternoon and evening*, see the front page of the View.

If you’re interested in attending a *Sunday afternoon class in a home*, check with Len Baker or David Posey.