

January 19, 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: The Joy of Being In Need”

Matthew 9:11-13

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) or Seth Reagan (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.

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

Same classes 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.

TWO CHURCHES WANT TO GROW, BUT THEIR ATTITUDES TOWARD GROWTH DIFFER GREATLY.

The first church looks upon growth as its primary purpose. Goals are placed before the membership: "We want to double our membership within the next three years," for instance. Success (or failure) is judged almost entirely on the basis of that congregation's numerical growth.

The second church looks upon the saving of souls as its primary purpose and any growth in membership is just a natural result of that primary purpose. Members of the second church are infused with the value of immortal souls rather than with a sense of congregational pride.

Members of the first church become eager to get people to the water. Baptism is the point at which people are added to the membership list; consequently, it's going to take so many baptisms to keep pace with their goal of doubling their membership. They must not only get them to the water, they must get them there within the time period that has been arbitrarily set by their leaders.

Members of the second church are far more eager to get people to repent. Their concern is for additions to the Lord's body rather than additions to a membership list. Their approach is to bring sinners to a consciousness of their sin and the consequences of remaining in sin. If they can do this in one study, great! But if considerable time is required to uproot false concepts and to plant the true seed of the gospel, they patiently accept this. Their only sense of urgency grows out of the uncertainty of life and its duration. But they know that shortcuts are not the answer; that baptism without repentance is worthless; and that once people are brought to true repentance, having been properly taught, baptism for the remission of sins will follow. So they wait with longsuffering until the gospel brings about its desired effect in the hearts of those whom they are teaching.

Members of the first church will be tempted to use questionable tactics in their approach to people. The old methods and approaches don't seem to be effective anymore. New and more positive approaches must be found. So the members of the first church make their appeal to the pride of people. They persuade them of their self-worth; they build their self-image; they tell them how valuable they would be to the congregation. "We need you," they tell their prospects. They might also extol the virtues of the congregation, persuading their prospects of

the value of being a part of such a vibrant, growing group of people. So, people "become members," and they conform to the rules that are placed before them for acceptance within the group, but there may have been little grief over sin; in fact, they might even still believe they were Christians before they "became members."

The members of the second church recognize that the gospel never makes its appeal to the pride of people. They bring people to see their spiritual bankruptcy; that they have "nothing to pay;" that their true worth is not to be found in self, but in Christ; that they must humble themselves and look to Christ for their exaltation; that they are sinners in desperate need of salvation; that their only hope is to be found in Christ. They would bring them to say, in the words of Mrs. C. H. Morris:

"Nearer, still nearer, nothing I bring, Naught as an offering to Jesus my King, Only my sinful, now contrite heart; Grant me the cleansing Thy blood doth impart."

The first church may become compromising in its teaching. Its elders intend to maintain doctrinal soundness, but there is the pressure to produce, to maintain the growth rate set before the congregation. When doctrinal soundness becomes an obstacle to that purpose, the elders may succumb to the pressures and ease up on its teaching. The second church faces no such pressure, for in its concern for the spiritual well-being of people, there is desire for truth on every subject vital to salvation.

The emphasis of the first church is organizational and institutional; the emphasis of the second is spiritual and heavenly.

We commend the second church to our readers. Serious problems can result when churches see growth as their primary purpose. If goals are to be set — and goals can serve a good purpose — let them focus on the number to be taught rather than the number to be baptized. If new approaches are needed, let them be conceived only if they are compatible with God's wisdom. In efforts to reach others, let all determine to know nothing "except Jesus Christ and Him crucified." When churches thus become really serious about saving souls, God will give the increase and growth will take care of itself.

— Bill Hall

Church is Hard

[You may have seen this on Facebook recently . I believe it speaks to a reality that we shouldn't ignore. – dp]

Church is hard for the person walking through the doors, afraid of judgment.

Church is hard for the preacher's family, under the microscope of an entire body.

Church is hard for the prodigal soul returning home, broken and battered by the world.

Church is hard for the girl who looks like she has it all together, but doesn't.

Church is hard for the couple who fought the entire ride to service.

Church is hard for the single mom, surrounded by couples holding hands, and seemingly perfect families.

Church is hard for the widow and widower with no invitation to lunch after service.

Church is hard for the deacon with an estranged child.

Church is hard for the person singing worship songs, overwhelmed by the weight of the lyrics.

Church is hard for the man insecure in his role as a leader.

Church is hard for the wife who longs to be led by a righteous man.

Church is hard for the nursery volunteer who desperately longs for a baby to love.

Church is hard for the single woman and single man, praying God brings them a mate.

Church is hard for the teenage girl, wearing a scarlet letter, ashamed of her mistakes.

Church is hard for the sinners.

Church is hard for me.

It's hard because on the outside it all looks shiny and perfect. Sunday best in behavior and dress.

However, underneath those layers, you find a body of imperfect people, carnal souls, selfish motives.

But, here is the beauty of church—

Church isn't a building, mentality, or expectation.

Church is a body.

Church is a group of sinners, saved by grace, living in fellowship as saints.

Church is a body of believers bound as brothers and sisters by an eternal love.

Church is a holy ground where sinners stand as equals before the Throne of Grace.

Church is a refuge for broken hearts and a training ground for mighty warriors.

Church is a converging of confrontation and invitation. Where sin is confronted and hearts are invited to seek restoration.

Church is a lesson in faith and trust.

Church is a bearer of burdens and a giver of hope.

Church is a family. A family coming together, setting aside differences, forgetting past mistakes, rejoicing in the smallest of victories.

Church, the body, and the circle of sinners-turned-saints, is where He resides, and if we ask, He is faithful to come.

So even on the hard days at church—

The days when I am at odds with a friend, when I've fought with my husband because we're late once again. When I've walked in bearing burdens heavier than my heart can handle, yet masking the pain with a smile on my face. When I've worn a scarlet letter, under the microscope. When I've longed for a baby to hold, or fought tears as the lyrics were sung. When I've walked back in, afraid and broken, after walking away...

...I'll remember, He has never failed to meet me there.

Pat Smith, via Facebook