

view

November 13, 2005

This Week's Agenda

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The Lord's Day

8:30AM & 10:15AM: SINGING, PRAYER, LORD'S SUPPER

Sermon: David Posey. A Message for our Visitors.

5 PM – Singing, Lord's Supper and Sermon

5:30 PM: Classes for all ages from 18 months and up

Adult Classes

- Auditorium: Jeff Herrin - I & II Thessalonians
- Room 11-12: Divorce & Remarriage - David Posey
- Room 7: Rich Mowrer – Gospel of John (Greek study)

News & Prayer Concerns

News

We are delighted to announce that Hamid Nasr was baptized into Christ on Thursday night. He was introduced to the gospel by Wanda Perryman and obeyed after a short study. He is sincere man who was searching for truth and we are so happy to welcome him into the family of God.

Julie Baumgarten is home and doing well, but the biopsy was not conclusive. The doctors are concerned that she may have lymphoma.

Prayers Needed

Continue to pray for Belle Smith; Martha Colvin; the Ken McLelland family; Dawn Woolington; Carly Cain; Nita Sellgren (Sharron Wade's mother); Ben Thorp; Sharon Jones; Duane Lowe; Doris Phillips (Wes Shamblin's grandmother); Becky Woolpert; Kathy & Hank Wilson; Jamie Cole; Monica Fulton (Dave's mother); Brady Rembleski's grandfather; Justin Ivie's father; Tom Royston; Margaret Everett (San Jose); Cheryl Wilson; Laurieann Reagan and Oliver Sasse. Also pray for those who are expecting: Carly Posey, Carrie Sadowy, Angie Cain and Nicole Grinnell.

Out of Town

Denise Westphal is due home from Greece this week, I believe. Randy and Sally are out of town.

Christians Serving in Iraq

Pray for James Woodside (Ben's cousin), Jeremy Allen, Philip Cain, Titus Cain and Tim Martindale. Steve Ries is out of Iraq and should be returning home very soon. We look forward to seeing him.

Wednesday

10 AM - Bible Study - OT History, Divided Kingdom to Birth of Christ, all Invited

7:30 PM - Classes for all ages 18 months and up.

Adult Classes

- Auditorium: Dan Singleton – Daniel
- Room 11-12: Evangelism – David Posey, Sr.

Bible Reading

Sunday – John 10-12; Psalm 137

Monday – Reflection

Tuesday – John 13-15; Psalm 138

Wednesday – John 16-18; Psalm 139

Thursday – John 19-21; Psalm 140

Friday – Daniel 1-3; Psalm 141

Saturday – Daniel 4-6; Psalm 142



Other Involvement Opportunities

The Ladies Workshop will meet again on December 5th at Sharon Bridge's home.

Group Meetings

Group meetings continue. We have just about completed round 3 and will begin round 4 in a couple of weeks.

Calendar

A meeting with the elders and deacons is scheduled for 4:15 on Sunday, Nov. 20th here. We will be discussing our topic for the upcoming group meetings.

A young people's meeting is scheduled for next week after evening services. If you are 13-18, please meet in room 11-12 right after classes on Sunday evening. We also invite any young adults or adults would like to participate in these meetings.

Elders and Deacons

Please let the elders know if you would like to submit names to fill these roles. Please speak to the man first, however, to make sure he is interested.

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The View contains news and articles of interest to the members of the Folsom Point church of Christ. Announcing an activity or event does not necessarily imply that we financially sponsor the event or that the elders specifically endorse every component of that event, since it may not fall under the direct oversight of the elders. The church's work and the elders' oversight is limited by Scripture. We will not announce events that are primarily social in nature. However, we do want to publicize those activities that provide an opportunity for you be a more involved and active member of the body.

Editor

The Secret of Religious Unity

It's a shame that so many "new works" crop up which are not "new works" at all, but products of splits among existing churches. On Judgment Day, many elders, preachers and members will be cast into outer darkness because they couldn't "get along" with their brethren. Division is an abomination to God, by whatever name we choose to call it.

In the first chapter of Philippians, the apostle Paul develops the theme of single-mindedness; that is, the ability to focus on the important matters. For Paul, this meant the preaching of the gospel (1:5, 7, 12, 18) so that Christ is magnified (v. 20). For Paul, to live was Christ (v. 21). The result of preaching the gospel is a unity based upon the gospel. Not a running after men (see I Cor. 1-4, esp. 3:1-4) nor a choosing of "gospels" (cf. Gal. 1:8-9). No, Paul says, "Only let your conduct be worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear of your affairs, that you stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel" (1:27). God desires and expects unity among His people, and has provided the perfect standard upon which it can be based.

Notice, first, that it is the gospel that permeates Paul mind. Any discussion of religious unity is meaningless without an appeal to the gospel of Christ. Paul has already referred to it four times in this letter and two times in this verse. We are to conduct ourselves in a manner which demonstrates that the gospel is truly relevant. The Greek word for "conduct" comes from a root word (politees) which is often translated "citizen." The conduct Paul is thinking about is our body conduct; that is, how our actions reflect on the church and how our actions affect the church. As members of the body, we do not live in isolation. "Worthy" literally means "weighing as much"; so our standard is no less than the ideal of the gospel itself!

The question, then, is whether we reflect an attitude of unity, at all times, based upon the gospel. Or are we more comfortable with Christ in print than in practice? Do we live our daily life in a way which respects the body and reflects the gospel? Are we standing fast, "in one spirit, with one mind, striving together for the faith of the gospel"? This requires agree-

ment (cf. Amos 3:3). Wait a minute! Agreement?! YES!

"Stand fast" means "to hold one's ground in the face of enemy opposition" (see v. 28). How effective is the average local church today, fussing and fighting with themselves, against the real foe - the "adversaries" who strive with all their might against the gospel? According to this verse, there must be agreement in spirit producing a unity of the Spirit (Eph. 4:3).

The disposition which requires truth as a basis will produce the only meaningful unity possible. We are to strive together for the faith of the gospel. We don't strive for unity, we strive for faith. Too many splits have been caused by "personalities"; that means someone was arrogant and unnecessarily unyielding.

Robert Turner once observed that Christians are "one in their efforts to improve" who accept nothing less than the gospel as their standard. There will not only be a righteous tenacity to "get" the truth and apply it, but humility will rule the day.

So the real question is, when it comes to a love of the truth, do our hearts beat as one?

An Examination of the Protestant Movement

The apostle Paul long ago predicted that men would depart from the faith (I Tim. 4:1ff.; 2 Thess. 2:3ff.). Not much later, various abuses of God's plan for leadership in the church led to the establishing of "bishops" who were over cities and groups of churches. Ignatius, writing as early as ca. 117 AD, himself the sole bishop of Antioch, testified to the emergence, in at least one geographical area, of the "monarchical episcopate." There was, therefore, a clear distinction drawn, by that early date, between a "presbyter" and a "bishop" (Evangelical Dictionary of Theology, Walter A. Elwell, ed., pg. 157). Eventually, the papacy of the Roman Catholic church was formed and exerted its influence over an ever-widening geographical area.

After a 1,000 years in the paralyzing grip of Catholicism, some grew weary and began to rebel. Corruption had become commonplace, and men with even a modicum of integrity became alarmed, yet most remained silent. In 1517, however, a man named Martin Luther, a catholic priest, became personally disturbed and set out to “reform” the Catholic church. This culminated in a “protestation” submitted by a minority of Lutheran and Reformed authorities at the German Imperial Diet at Speyer in 1529. The “protestation” was at once an objection, appeal and affirmation, asking urgently, “What is the true and holy Church?” It went on to assert that “there is no sure preaching or doctrine but that which abides by the Word of God.” Lutherans and other advocates of reform thus became known as “Protestants,” standing for gospel truth against Roman corruption (Elwell, pg. 888-889).

The fundamental principles of 16th century Protestantism included the following:

- ***Soli Deo Gloria:*** the idea that only God should receive the glory, as opposed to the pope and the “church.”
- ***Sola Gratia:*** This is “faith only.”
- ***Sola Scriptura:*** Scripture is the sole source of Christian revelation, not “oral tradition” or papal decrees.
- **The Church as the Believing People of God:** Augsburg Confession: “the assembly of all believers among whom the gospel is preached in its purity and the holy sacraments [baptism and Lord’s Supper] are administered according to the gospel.”
- **The Priesthood of All Believers:** The privilege of all the baptized to stand before God in Christ without appeal to human intermediaries. [Elwell comments that “later Protestantism has forgotten this perhaps more than any other foundation principle.” Amen]
- **The Sanctity of All Callings and Vocations:** Luther said, “the works of monk and priest in God’s sight are in no way whatever superior to a farmer laboring in the field, or a woman looking after her home.”

While we should take note of the great courage of men such as Luther and others who stood firmly against the excesses and depravity of Roman Catholicism, we still must regret that they did not see fit to go all the way back to the beginning for their incentive. It

is one thing to try to reform something which is rotten to begin with; quite another to recover the truth and apply it in full. A piece of clay which is full of dirt and rocks cannot be “reformed” into something pure; all you can accomplish is to hide some of the impurities and perhaps pick out some of the rubble. What you really need is a whole new piece of clay. Religiously, God has provided the clay and He has formed it. He’s the Potter, we’re the clay (cf. Isa. 45:9).

Because of a failure to settle for nothing less than the full truth of God, various churches have sprung up over the course of the centuries since Luther. Most adhere, in one degree or another, to what has become known as “Calvinism,” named after John Calvin (1509-1564). Calvinism is a systematic statement of doctrine which includes, among other points, the teaching that Christians are “unconditionally elected” by God for salvation and can never fall from grace. As much damage has been done by this “reformed” principle as that of the most corrupt acts of Catholicism. We will take a deeper look at Calvinism in a future article. The point is, that failure to appeal solely to Scripture has led to vain speculation about what God wants and how He saves. This, in turn, has led to the numerous rifts which one finds in the denominational world.

Are we, as members of the “church of Christ” just one of the “rifts”? I have actually heard some members of the of the body of Christ refer to themselves as “Protestants.” While I do protest the Catholic church and its error, I also protest the “Protestant” error. But my reason for being a Christian is neither. I’m not Protestant, Catholic or Jew — I’m a Christian! One of the great errors on the current religious scene is a failure, or a refusal to use biblical language. The term “protestant” is but one example. We must be careful to speak as the “oracles of God” (I Pet. 4:11).

It is my belief that it would be profitable for us to have a better familiarity with the error of Protestantism and those who have participated in the movement. For the next few weeks, then, we will survey some of the men and their beliefs. Our purpose is not to attack these doctrines but to examine them in light of scripture and draw some conclusions.

David Posey

November 2005

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2 AM & PM Bible Classes	3 **Elders' Annual Meeting	4	5
6	7	8	9 AM & PM Bible Classes	10	11	12
13	14	15	16 AM & PM Bible Classes	17	18	19
4:15 Group Mtg Prep with Deacons 20 Young People's Class (after PM Services)*	21	22	23 PM Bible Classes No AM Class	24	25	26
4 PM Singing 27 4th round of group mtgs begin	28	29	30 AM & PM Bible Classes			

*We will meet right after services in room 11-12 for a short meeting. An announcement will be made there about plans for the rest of the evening.

Communication: The calendar is provided by the elders in an effort to enhance communication about upcoming events. There are other means that we use for this purpose: the news section of the View, the overhead announcements prior to morning services, and verbal announcements on Sunday and Wednesday of matters not covered there. Also, please ask Richard Harvey about getting on his e-mail list - many times, information is shared among the members on that list.

Guided by Parents

My father passed away a little over one year ago. My wife's parents had already made that quiet journey home. There is an emptiness left with their passing that is more than nostalgia: these precious people provided early insight into the "mechanics" of life.

"Hear, my son, your father's instruction, and do not forsake your mother's teaching; indeed, they are a graceful wreath to your head, and ornaments about your neck." Proverbs 1:8-9

What did you learn from your parents? You learned life's basics: brushing your teeth, combing your hair, washing your hands and behind your ears. You learned manners: to say "please" and "thank you," to write thank you notes, to wait your turn. You learned respect: for other people's things and feelings, for older people, maybe even for God and His word.

You also learned "specialty" things: how to string a bow, how to prepare a meal, how to use hand tools, how to hem a dress, how to be patient until the fish bite. Perhaps they helped you with school work and helped you learn how to study. If you were truly fortunate they taught you the ways of God.

God gave us parents for some very important purposes; mainly because we came into this world absolutely helpless and totally naïve! By the time you arrived, your parents—who had been "instructed" by their parents—already had significant experience with life, testing their parent's advice and adding to it from their own observations. To this wealth of practical wisdom can be added the fact that of all the people in this world, nobody loves you better than they do! I submit that this makes their "teaching" a most precious commodity. You should highly value it!

Solomon promised two benefits for those who listen and adhere to their parent's guidance: a graceful wreath and ornaments! The wreath suggests victory. You will be successful with life; you will "win!" The ornaments suggest attractiveness. Your life will be pleasing to you, attractive to others and a blessing to all!

So, wherever you are in your walk of life, treasure your parent's loving lessons. Life long and be well and remember them with gratitude.