

# View

*A Publication of the Folsom Point church of Christ, 900 E. Natoma, Folsom, CA*

January 6, 2008

## Attract Visitors or Make Disciples?

What kind of church should we be? One big news item of 2007 was the admission by Willow Creek Church (one of the largest community churches in America) that their approach to teaching, while bringing in big numbers, did not serve to cultivate true disciples. Here's a statement from their Senior "Pastor," Bill Hybels:

"We made a mistake. What we should have done when people crossed the line of faith and became Christians — we should have started telling people and teaching people that they have to take responsibility to be 'self-feeders.' We should have gotten people, taught people, how to read their Bible between services, how to do the spiritual practices much more aggressively on their own."

Hybels' statement startles me. As a preacher, you would think he would know this almost intuitively. The statement admits that they did not encourage people to read their Bibles and develop themselves spiritually between services, but, instead, to rely totally on the "ministry" at Willow Creek to do it. Hybels admits that the emphasis on programs and meetings did not produce disciples. Forgive me if I utter an audible "Duh" right now. You'd think they could figure this out by doing

what they are telling others they should have done: *read your Bible!*

Willow Creek has dubbed itself a "seeker church," meaning that their work and worship has been produced and directed primarily for people who are "seeking" God — i.e., new people, not regular members. One might ask whether the regular members would tire of the endless quest to attract visitors and the arrangement of worship services with the aim of pleasing

new people. Apparently not, and for good reason. Since the leadership's aim is not to build disciples but to satisfy "seekers," then the regular members are never challenged to do better.

Put another way, the regulars are never made to feel guilty about much of anything because the attention is on the newbies. There are thousands of people in the United States who want to "feel" spiritual and "be" religious, without developing any real convictions or beliefs. As one writer puts it, "we have spruced up worship service, spiked up sermons and become great at organization — all the while failing to produce real disciples" (Ed Stetzer, *Outreach Magazine*, Jan-Feb 2008, p. 126).

The problem with these churches is that they do not trust the Word. This is obvious in their quest to

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be “relevant” — they don’t believe the Bible is relevant, as is. They feel you have to cut and paste the relevance into the Bible, and then preach this relevant, if not particularly *biblical*, message, or all the young people will quit.

That’s just a lack of trust, a lack of faith. Without realizing it, they have bought into the notion that the Bible is just an old book that needs help from those of us “who know better”(?). My faith tells me that God has given me His word and His word is timeless, relevant for all ages. I can certainly make it boring and irrelevant, but it’s not inherently boring and irrelevant at all. It still is, as Paul says, “profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction and for training in righteousness” (II Tim. 3:16). Sounds relevant to me!

## “The time of my departure is at hand...”

In its year-end issue, World Magazine includes a list of many notable people who died in 2007. The sobering list includes the following personalities: Joey Bishop, Ingmar Bergman, Art Buchwald, Liz Claiborne, Yvonne DeCarlo, Jerry Falwell, Ernest Gallo, Robert Goulet, Merv Griffin, Johnny Hart (created the BC comic strip), Don Ho, Lady Bird Johnson, Deborah Kerr, Evel Knievel, Norman Mailer, Marcel Marceau, Tammy Faye Bakker Messner, Luciano Pavarotti, Phil Rizzuto (I put this in for Jack and Greg), Walter Schirra (astronaut), Joel Siegel (critic), Beverly Sills, Tom Snyder, Sean Taylor (24 year old safety for the Washington Redskins), Jack Valenti, Porter Wagoner, Bill Walsh, Jane Wyman and Boris Yeltsin. And the list goes on.

Lists like this ought to cause us to stop and think about the brevity of life on this earth and the need to prepare for the next. Sadly, many of these people devoted to lives to non-spiritual pursuits. Others accomplished great things, from a worldly perspective, but there was no evidence that they served or honored God in their lives.

One thing for sure: we, like them, will all stand before the judgment seat and give an account of our lives (II Cor. 5:10). We should live our lives accordingly.

### Did You Know?

“Freaking,” dancing that is nothing more than simulated sex on the dance floor, is becoming an issue, and not just for “prudish” conservative preachers in churches of Christ. One commentator puts it this way: “A story about freaking led USA Today’s front page last week. Teens defend freaking as just another dance, no worse than the Twist or the Hustle, but adults are shocked; teachers are disturbed and parents, apparently, are clueless.” (Kathleen Parker, Jewish World Review). There have been reports of the outlawing of school dances recently, due to the prevalence of this practice. Let’s see, what did Cole Porter, famous songwriter of the 40’s say about dancing? “What is dancing, but making love to music?”

### The church of Christ

Meeting at 900 E. Natoma  
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#### Elders

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John Daniels: 916/985-3090  
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Eric Fields: 916/817-6495  
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#### Services

Sunday Morning Assembly  
9:30 AM

Sunday Evening: 5:00 PM  
Wednesday Bible Study  
7:30 PM

Classes for all ages.

Private classes arranged  
at your convenience.

For more information,

visit our web site at:

[www.folsomchurch.com](http://www.folsomchurch.com)

Webmaster: Richard Harvey

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# Agenda

## The Lord's Day, January 6, 2008

9:30 AM: Worship: Singing, Lord's Supper, Preaching

Sermon: The Story

☉ Preaching: David Posey

5:00 PM: Lord's Supper, Singing, Preaching

☉ Sermon: David Posey

5:30 PM: Bible Classes for ages 18 mos., & up

Auditorium: What Jesus Wants to Know (David Posey)

Room 11-12: The Parables (David Byrd)

Room 8: Seed-Sowers (Dennis Wade & Cameron Carrozza)

## Wednesday, January 9, 2008

7:30 PM, Bible classes for ages 18 mos. and up,

Auditorium: The Sayings of Jesus (Rich Mowrer)

Room 11-12: Parenting by the Book (David Posey & Dennis Wade)

### Notes

Most sermons are available in MP3 format on our website ([www.folsomchurch.com](http://www.folsomchurch.com)) or on CD (see a deacon).

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# ADULT CLASSES

WE ARE OFFERING SIX ADULT CLASSES ON SUNDAY AND WEDNESDAYS, BEGINNING TODAY. EACH CLASS, EXCEPT THE PARENTING AND SEED-SOWERS CLASSES, WILL FOCUS ON SOME ASPECT OF THE WORDS OF JESUS. HERE ARE YOUR CHOICES.

### **SUNDAY @ 5:30 PM, AUDITORIUM:**

“WHAT JESUS WANTS TO KNOW: QUESTIONS JESUS ASKED”

DAVID POSEY, SR. + VARIOUS TEACHERS (SEE SCHEDULE)

### **SUNDAY @ 5:30 PM, ROOM 11-12:**

THE PARABLES OF JESUS. TEACHER: DAVID BYRD.

### **SUNDAY @ 5:30 PM, ROOM 8: SEED-SOWERS**

TEACHERS: DENNIS WADE AND CAMERON CARROZZA

SYNOPSIS OF CLASS: WE WILL FOCUS ON THE FOLLOWING TOPICS/OBJECTIVES:

EQUIP PARTICIPANTS TO FULFILL 1 PETER 3:15 BY:

DEVELOPING 3 QUALITIES OF SEED SOWERS: KNOWLEDGE, WISDOM, AND CHARACTER

PRACTICING 3 SEED-SOWER TACTICS: COLUMBO, NUTTY PROFESSOR, AND CS LEWIS

RE-KINDLE THE FIRE TO SPREAD THE GOOD NEWS BY EXPLORING PERSONAL REASONS

FOR BECOMING A CHRISTIAN

APPLY LESSONS FROM BRENT HUNTER'S BOOKLET TO VARIOUS EVANGELISTIC SITUATIONS

**OUR PRIMARY GOAL:** LEARN TO SPEAK COMFORTABLY AND GRACIOUSLY IN CONVERSATIONS WITH OTHERS ABOUT CHRISTIAN CONVICTIONS AND VALUES.

### **WEDNESDAY MORNING @ 10 AM, (8 WEEKS, BEGINNING JAN. 16TH).**

“JESUS ON RELATIONSHIPS.” TEACHER: DAVID POSEY, SR.

### **WEDNESDAY @ 7:30, AUDITORIUM:**

THE SAYINGS OF JESUS. TEACHER: RICH MOWRER

### **WEDNESDAY @ 7:30 PM, ROOM 11-12:**

“PARENTING BY THE BOOK.” TEACHERS: DAVID POSEY, SR. & DENNIS WADE