

View

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

April 27, 2008

Live by the Spirit? Keep in Step with the Spirit!

By David Byrd

The children's Bible class theme for this quarter is "The Fruit of the Spirit," a concept presented by the apostle Paul in Galatians 5:22-23. In his letter to the churches in Galatia, Paul admonishes these Christians for "turning to a different gospel" (Gal. 1:6). Some Jewish Christians in Galatia were apparently teaching that Jewish converts to Christianity had to maintain many of the ceremonial practices of the Old Testament. Their attempts to bind things such as circumcision onto the Galatians were perverting the gospel message that Paul had preached and undermining the salvation that was made available to both Jew and Gentile.

Thus Paul could say in Galatians 2:16 "we know that a person is not justified by works of the law but through faith in Jesus Christ, so we also have believed in Christ Jesus, in order to be justified by

faith in Christ and not by works of the law, because by works of the law no one will be justified."

Towards the end of the logical argument that Paul lays out in his letter, he places neatly in front of these Christians the two opposing choices that all men must make in life: Flesh or Spirit... Sin or Salvation...

My will or God's will. "For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh, for these are opposed to each other," (Gal. 5:17). The works of the flesh are just a whole lot of rotted garbage.

Look at the list Paul presents in Galatians 5:19-21 — sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, envy, drunkenness, orgies, and things like these. It isn't pretty. Who really wants to live a life like that?

"SINCE THE DAY WE DECIDED TO CREATE OUR OWN BIBLE CLASS CURRICULUM, 75 CHILDREN HAVE BEEN BORN TO MEMBERS OF THIS CONGREGATION. THEY LOVE BIBLE CLASS AND THEY LOVE LEARNING ABOUT GOD AND THEY REALLY KNOW THEIR STUFF!"

But there is an alternative to the works of the flesh. It's the works of the Spirit: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. In fact, Paul can call this the Fruit of the Spirit because when we choose to be led by the Spirit, the Spirit will produce in us something healthy, something of value, something that can be planted and reproduced over and over again.

LOVE, JOY, PEACE, PATIENCE, KINDNESS, GOODNESS, FAITHFULNESS, GENTLENESS and SELF CONTROL!

Those nine attributes make for a Spiritual life... and a good Bible class.

It's been about twelve years now since the Folsom Point church of Christ decided to take on the task of revising the curriculum for the children's Bible classes. Back then, we were still meeting in a yellow metal building with four and half classrooms (I think one of those rooms was a converted broom closet) and less than 150 members. We weren't even the Folsom Point church of Christ... just the Folsom church of Christ.

But we were dedicated to the truth and to teaching the truth to anyone that would listen. We decided to develop a theme for each quarter and have all of the children's Bible classes study that theme. A family could study together and parents could discuss the same concepts each week with their children. Many of the members indicated that they would like to teach, but found it difficult to put the material together. The solution to this challenge was to provide teachers with some curriculum ahead of time.

The problem to providing curriculum was, "Where would we get that curriculum from?" This was a time that actually predated the internet (remember those days??) so you couldn't just Google "Fruit of the Spirit" and come up with several thousand hits. Moreover, a lot of the material that was available for purchase was questionable in its Biblical teaching. The solution? "Let's create our own curriculum, using the best practices, ideas and experience of the members here."

And something else was in the air. There was a thought that the church might be growing in a variety of ways, not the least of which was through the birth of a few babies. Since the day we decided to create our own Bible class curriculum, 75 children have been born to members of this congregation. They love Bible class and they love learning about God and they really know their stuff! It's not the curriculum that has made this happen. It is people that have made this happen. Their parents have done their job at home. There has always been a willing and dedicated membership that is willing to teach Bible classes.

And... there is the Word of God that is the foundation for all faithfulness. The Spirit has been at work, producing fruit. May it continue to do so for this quarter and for many quarters to come.

The church of Christ

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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

Webmaster: Richard Harvey

Agenda

The Lord's Day, April 27, 2008

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

• Preaching: David Posey, The Story

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

Classes @ 5:30 PM

Auditorium, I John

• Teacher: Dennis Wade

Room 11-12,

Characters of the Bible

• Teacher: Bryan Byrd.

Wednesday, April 30, 2008

10 AM, Here — "The Bible for Everyday"

Teacher: David Posey, Sr.

7:30 PM, Classes

Auditorium, Proverbs

• Teacher: Randy Clark (Jeff Clark, Assisting)

Room 11-12, James

• Teacher: David Posey, Sr. (Zac Brown, Assisting)

Notes

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

Evolution: A Source of the Works of the Flesh!

I heard a fellow preacher say recently that he was getting kind of tired with all the discussion about "Intelligent Design" vs. Evolution. I know what he means. For those of us who have faith, it seems ridiculous to even have to talk about the origin of the universe. After all, it's obvious, isn't it? So why spend so much time on it?

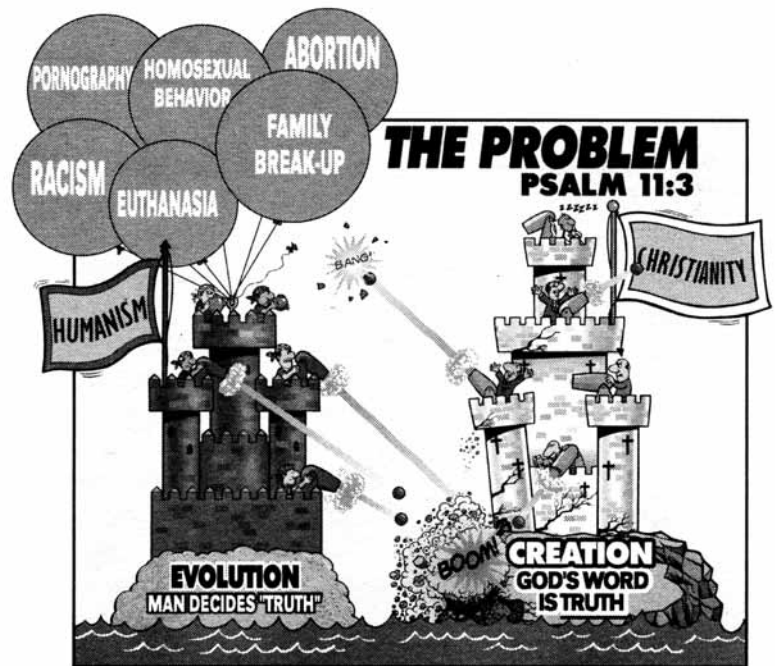
It is not just an academic discussion about "who created what"? If it was, then perhaps we could let it go. But we can't "let it go" because there is more to this teaching than meets the eye.

Look at the chart and think about the impact of the notion that we evolved from some goo that came from some other goo. That teaching has a purpose: to remove any thought of God from the minds of those who hear it. And what happens then? If God is not real, neither is His word real. There is no law, no consequence for breaking the law, no sin. Paul even argued that "without law there can be no transgression" (Rom. 4:15).

Don't you see? If the creation account from Gen. 1 is not true, then God is not real. If God is not real, His laws are not real and I am a law to myself. I get to decide right and wrong and there is no consequence for an incorrect choice.

On the surface, this sounds like a winner. After all, no accountability for sin would free us from a lot of guilt and shame.

But, setting the Bible aside for a moment, there are at least two philosophical and social problems



with this view. First, if we take God and His word out of our worldview, then we also take all hope away. And people who live without hope are pitiable.

Second, as the chart points out, a Godless world is a wicked world, full of the "works of the flesh" that Paul talks about in Gal. 5:19-21. As Dave Byrd says in his article, "not a pretty picture."

We need to be prepared at all times to "give an answer" to this devastating teaching, whenever and wherever it may occur.

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