

April 21, 2024

The View

“Sirs, we wish to see Jesus.” – John 12:21

*“This is the day that the Lord has made;
let us rejoice and be glad in it...”*

Psalm 118:24

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.

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

Schedule

The Lord's Day

9:30 AM Bible Classes

Auditorium: Faith in the Minor Prophets

Young Adult Class (room 12): Walking by Faith

10:30 AM: Assembly

Preaching Today: David Posey

Cloud of Witnesses X: “Faith is a Marathon” Pt. II

Hebrews 12:1-17

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

Bible Class: 5:00 PM @ the Building

Improving Our Singing (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 or one of the other elders if you would like to join one of those classes.

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

Classes: same 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.

“Righteousness and Law”

BY DAVID POSEY

Like most terms, the meaning of “righteousness” must be determined by its context. The word “righteous” and “righteousness” occur about 530 times in the Bible (40x in Romans, far more than in any other New Testament book).

“Righteous” is a term every serious Christian must understand.

Generally, in biblical use, someone is “righteous” if his or her actions agree with divine or moral law. One is “righteous” if he *does* what is “right” as defined by God in his word. In Romans 6:13, the term is used this way when Paul tells us that we are to present our bodies as “instruments of righteousness.” In other words, we are righteous if we are in the habit of seeking out the right thing to do and do it (cf. James 4:17).

The phrase “righteousness of God” often refers to God’s own moral nature; a goodness that flows out of Him, as part of His nature. We see the term applied this way in Romans 3:25.

Usually in Romans, however, “righteousness of God” is the term Paul uses to describe

God’s plan to save man as purposed and executed in Jesus Christ and revealed in the gospel. It is a plan that requires faith on the part of the person who is coming to God and the gospel is revealed with the aim of producing such faith (Romans 1:17).

It all starts with God and His moral law; i.e., his standard of righteousness.

This law is included in the law given to Moses, but is not limited to it. God has graciously revealed his will throughout history in various forms, and it is only through the revelation of law that man has knowledge of God’s will. Indeed, without such knowledge, man could not sin, since sin is the transgression of law (see Romans 4:15; 5:13; 1 John 3:4).

This suggests an inherent problem with law. The more there is of it, the more sin is produced in the individual (5:20). While he may agree that the law is good, he also recognizes that it keeps driving him down, since law itself has no power to overcome sin. Law, then, begins to kill the man and, if he is conscientious and wants to please God, he will begin to cry out and seek a remedy for his guilt. I believe that is the meaning of Romans 7:13-25. Through the use of the first person, Paul dramatically demonstrates the terrible quandary law puts man in. I’ve come to this conclusion because Paul says three times in Romans 7 that “sin dwells in me.” But in chapter 8 he says,

“For to set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace. For the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God, for it does not submit to God’s law; indeed, it cannot. Those who are in the flesh cannot please God.” — Romans 8:6-8

As I see it, if sin is dwelling (living) in a person, they are “in the flesh.” Paul goes on to say, “You, however, are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if in fact the Spirit of God dwells in you.” (Ro-

mans 8:9). Does the spirit of God dwell in us side-by-side with sin “dwelling” in us.

I believe makes the dramatic point that Paul writes about several times in Romans that living under law brings death because no one keeps it perfectly. When man is crushed by the law, more law is not the answer. He has learned that he cannot be “righteous” enough; that is, his actions will never be completely in sync with God’s law. Paul says,

“Nevertheless knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the Law but through faith in Christ Jesus, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, so that we may be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the law; since by the works of the law no flesh will be justified. — Galatians. 2:16

Since he knows that he can never earn salvation by perfectly performing the law, his only hope, literally, is the lovingkindness of the One who gave the law in the first place.

God knew from before the foundation of the world that man would sin, and He provided, in due time a remedy for that sin (see (Ephesians 1:4ff; Galatians 4:4). The cure would be available for a *certain kind of person*, a person whose heart could be touched by the greatest act of love the world would ever see. At the same time, God knew that those who remained stubbornly sinful would view God’s plan as “foolishness” (see I Corinthians 1:18ff.).

So, God sent His Son to be a propitiation for the sins of the world. He would die on a cross and every man and woman would be empowered through the gospel call to be children of God’s (John 1:12). In legal terms, God provided a way for man to be declared “not guilty,” even though he was guilty. The only way this could be accomplished and still preserve the fact of God’s perfect justice was through the sacrifice of Christ. If God decided just to save people without such a perfect sacrifice, we would certainly say he is “merciful.” However, we could not say he is “just.” On the other hand, if he only expressed his justice, no one would be saved (other than those who are not accountable). So God, through Christ, proved to be just even while justifying the sinner. It could happen only through Christ (see Romans 3:21-26). Verse 26 reads,

It was to show his righteousness at the present time, so that he might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.

Unless we are discussing his personal, perfect righteousness, what we call the “plan of salvation” is the “righteousness of God” (at least in Romans). It is his plan to “justify” us. Though the words look nothing alike in English, in the Greek the words “justify” and righteous come from the same root.

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On God’s side, the gift of grace is given in Christ, in his death and resurrection. On man’s side, that grace is appropriated by faith — trusting submission which takes hold of the gift. This faith is a journey upward toward God, not a one-time act never to be repeated. Our faith is first expressed in our willingness to obey the gospel of Christ and be baptized, an act which identifies us with the death, burial and resurrection of Christ. We continue from there to live the life of faith (Romans 1:17). This is a road upon which we will still be traveling, even to the day we die, if we are “faithful.”

We do not void law (God’s way of righteousness) by our faith — far from it. Our faith upholds the law, gives it all of the weight it deserves. We never minimize it or take it for granted (see Romans 3:31). To keep God’s law is our goal, but when we fail, as we often do, we have access to God’s grace. Each day, forgiven of his sins and refreshed, we are empowered by that grace to go on to the new day (cf. I John 1:7-2:1), renewed in the Spirit. He is not conformed to the world, but transformed by the renewing of his mind (Romans 12:1-2). “The righteousness of God” is that “narrow road” to heaven that Jesus speaks about in Matthew 7:13-14.

Quotes & Notes

These are some quotes and notes mostly plucked from various newsletters and social media or something I heard someone say or made up myself, for better or worse. The appearance here does not necessarily suggest that I agree with the statement, but I usually do. – dp

Studies show only 2% of Gen Z* has a biblical worldview, but...

...studies also show that after attending a boot camp—FC camp-like event (e.g., a youth-focused Bible event), 85% of students develop *and keep* a biblical worldview through college and adulthood. The particular event dealt with questions like “can we trust the Bible?” and cultural issues, like “gender identity” issues and the impact of social media and entertainment on their lives. The lesson seems clear enough: take the time to give young people information and challenge their thinking and many will respond positively. By all means, never “despise” their youth (I Timothy 4:12). [* Roughly, Generation Z includes those born in the mid-1990s to the early 2010s]

Think about this: 16 year olds can drive a motor vehicle; 17 year olds are in the work force; 18 year olds are in the military, holding a lethal weapon, guarding our freedom!! Yet some people in churches routinely violate (at least in their thinking) I Timothy 4:12. Some young people leave churches out of boredom, because we keep lowering the bar of expectation for them. Someone said, “stop dumbing down the Bible for young people, and start disciplining them up!” They are not afraid to die young, but they are terrified of boredom.

Lately, it seems that athletes are openly sharing their faith in God, more than usual. For example, quarterbacks C. J. Stroud (Texans) and Brock Purdy (49ers) have often spoken of their faith. Last week, before the Masters Golf Tournament, the number one ranked golfer in the world, Scottie Scheffler, was interviewed and asked what “defines him.” Here is his unapologetic response:

“I’m a faithful guy. I believe in a Creator. I believe in Jesus. I feel like I’ve been given a platform to compete and, you know, show my talent...It’s hard to describe the feeling, but *I think that what defines me the most is my faith in Jesus.* I believe in one Creator, that I’ve been called to come out here, do my best, compete and glorify God, and that’s pretty much it.”

Postscript: Scheffler won the Tournament.

The Importance of Covenant

Something to keep in mind in our study of both Hebrews and the Minor Prophets: If you read the entire Bible cover-to-cover, one theme surfaces repeatedly: that theme is ‘covenant.’ A covenant is a binding relationship between parties that involves blessings and obligations — and judgment by God when his people fail to meet those obligations (see Deuteronomy 28). Throughout scripture we see God, through these covenantal relationships, gathering a people to himself.

No God???

The article this quote came from is way above my head, but the point about “*mathematically perfect orbits*” caught my eye. That just happened by accident??

“This rare exoplanet system has 6 ‘sub-Neptunes’ with mathematically perfect orbits. I could even hear through my headphones the gasp in the room when there were no microphones around. You could see that it was a very nice discovery.”

<https://tinyurl.com/5b2y4a43>