

“Sir, we wish to see Jesus.” — John 12:21

Welcome Visitors!

You are our honored guests and we are pleased that you have chosen to visit us today. Our goal is to do everything according to God's word, including respecting its silence. This is a church of Christ; we are not a denomination, not part of anything larger than this local church and we have no earthly "headquarters." The six elders oversee this work and, ultimately, we answer only to Christ. The comments you hear today are primarily aimed at 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 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. Thank You

Schedule

The Lord's Day

9:30 AM Classes

Auditorium: Fellowship

Room 13/14: Jesus in the Gospel of John

Room 17 – Young Adults Class (18-29)

10:30 AM Assembly

Speaking today: David Posey

Pilate's Question: "What is Truth?"

2 PM Class at the Building

James (Room 13/14)

5 PM (building)

Sermon On The Mount

Weekly Young Adults Class

Class at Posey's: 5 PM

Tuesday 10 AM

The Fruit of the Spirit

Wednesday, 7 PM

Auditorium: Fellowship

Room 13/14: Jesus in the Gospel of John (cont'd)

Room 17 – Young Adults Class (18-29)

Men's Saturday Morning Meeting

7 AM, second Saturday of the month

(see Tyler Wade)

Information

Website & Online Presence

Visit our website at www.folsomchurch.com for updates and material on current and past classes, and recorded sermons and classes. You will also find a directory of churches on page one. If you are a member of the church here at Folsom, see one of the deacons or elders to inquire about access to the password -protected members section. Find us on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/folsomchurch>

Classes & Home Studies

We have classes for children from 18 months and up.

Please see the map in the hallway or ask any of the members which room is appropriate for you and/or your child. There are several Bible studies in progress on Sunday afternoon and evening. Check with David Posey if you have questions.

Restrooms

There are two sets of restrooms: one off the first hallway to the right of the lobby and another at the end of the first hallway to the left. Ask anyone and they'll be happy to point you in the right direction.

For Small Children

There is a special room for nursing mothers and a separate "cry room" at the rear of the auditorium. You enter them from the first hallway to the right, across from the restrooms.

View & Junior View

Be sure to pick up a copy of the View and Junior View; both are sent out weekly to our member list and hard copies are printed on Sundays and available in the foyer.

“Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world—the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and pride of life—is not from the Father but is from the world. And the world is passing away along with its desires, but whoever does the will of God abides forever.”

I John 2:15-17

Sexuality and Gender

In the “Facts Are Stubborn Things” Dept., the Bible is crystal clear when it comes to sexuality. It’s not a matter of hormones, personal preference or culture. The Bible affirms that sex is permitted only within a lawful marriage and a lawful marriage is between a man and woman who qualified to marry. Genesis 2:23-25; Matthew 19:3-9, among other passages, confirm this.

So, what does that say about homosexuality, or any other “variety” of sexual expression? The Bible says that sex outside marriage is “fornication” (Greek, *porneia*) and fornication is a sin. So, homosexuality is a sin. But so is adultery.

Homosexuality is roundly condemned in the scriptures (Romans 1:26-27; I Cor. 6:9-10) — but so is *all* sexual immorality. Adultery — sex with someone other than one’s spouse — is especially egregious because of the breach of trust and the disastrous effect on the spouse.

Christians are not — or should not be — “homophobic” (which, technically, means one is “afraid” of a homosexual person. The term is used, however, to describe one who is prejudiced toward someone who describes him/herself as “gay”).

We learn from the example of Jesus that we are to coexist in society with those who choose to live their lives in a different way than we do. Jesus didn’t offer carte blanche acceptance of people living immoral lifestyles, but he didn’t shun them either. We read that he spent time with “tax collectors and sinners.” The latter are generally believed to be prostitutes. He was not put off by the woman at the well who had had five husbands and was living with a man who was not her husband (in other words, she was committing fornication, see John 4).

The issue in dealing with homosexuality that makes it more difficult than other sexual sins is that it is a sin with two heads. One of those is what I spoke about above: there are *individuals* who choose that lifestyle and go about their business. But there are others who have turned it into a *cause célèbre* and spend their time trying to force acceptance of their lifestyle on others. They want any criticism of the sin to be categorized as “hate speech” and that can lead to the criminalization of “speaking as the Bible speaks.”

As for individuals who choose to live the “gay” lifestyle, we live and let live. But if we have influence with those who make this choice, we will gently attempt to guide them toward Christ and the gospel — just as we would for someone committing fornication (like Jesus did with the woman at the well).

Dealing with a movement is much more difficult, especially if the movement is led by radical leaders, as many individuals in the LGTBQ cause tend to be. Their purpose is not just to normalize that lifestyle but to make themselves a “victim” class with extra rights and benefits equivalent to those extended legitimately to true minorities who have been mistreated due to skin color or nationality (for one example).

Unfortunately, many movements thrive on misinformation and deception and the LGBTQ movement is no exception. Many of the claims they make are simply not true. It was, ironically, homosexual activist and writer Dorothy Allison who once wrote, “Things come apart so easily when they have been held together with lies.”

According to an article in fall 2016 edition of *The New Atlantis* journal, a series of peer-reviewed studies serve to debunk key “progressive” homosexual-activist talking points. The magazine published the results of one study, conducted by world renowned Johns Hopkins University scientists Dr.

Lawrence S. Mayer and Dr. Paul R. McHugh. The Study is a meta-analysis of data from over 200 peer-reviewed studies regarding “sexual orientation” and “gender identity.” It is an objective, exhaustive and comprehensive study on the topic to date (by left-leaning researchers, not “Christians.”) The research established, among other things:

- ❖ “The understanding of sexual orientation as an innate, biologically fixed property of human beings — the idea that people are ‘born that way’ — is not supported by scientific evidence.”
- ❖ “Sexual orientation” in adolescents is “fluid over the life course for some people, with one study estimating that as many as 80 percent of male adolescents who report same-sex attractions no longer do so as adults.”
- ❖ “Compared to heterosexuals, non-heterosexuals are about two to three times as likely to have experienced childhood sexual abuse.”
- ❖ “Gay”-identified people are “at an elevated risk for a variety of adverse health and mental health outcomes.”
- ❖ “Gay”-identified people experience “nearly 2.5 times the risk of suicide.”
- ❖ “The hypothesis that gender identity is an innate, fixed property of human beings that is independent of biological sex — that a person might be ‘a man trapped in a woman’s body’ or ‘a woman trapped in a man’s body’ — is not supported by scientific evidence.”

— Continued on page 3

Continued

- ❖ “Studies comparing the brain structures of transgender and non-transgender individuals ... do not provide any evidence for a neurobiological basis for cross-gender identification.”
- ❖ “[S]ex-reassigned individuals [are] about five times more likely to attempt suicide and about *19 times more likely* to die by suicide” (my emphasis, *dp*)
- ❖ “[T]he rate of lifetime suicide attempts across all ages of transgender individuals is estimated at 41 percent, compared to under 5 percent in the overall U.S. population.”
- ❖ “Only a minority of children who experience cross-gender identification will continue to do so into adolescence or adulthood.”

In addition, the assumption in the media is that so-called “homophobia” leads to high rates of suicide and other devastating consequences of the “LGBT” lifestyle. However, a recent study from “gay”-affirming Sweden dispels this myth. The research, published in the May (2016) issue of the *European Journal of Epidemiology*, found that people entering into a “gay marriage” were, nearly three times as likely to commit suicide than their heterosexual counterparts.

“Even in a country with a comparatively tolerant climate regarding homosexuality such as Sweden,” observed the researchers, “same-sex married individuals evidence a higher risk for suicide than other married individuals.”

There are many other facts, based on solid research, that strongly suggest that the homosexual lifestyle is hardly a harmless alternative. In reality, it has devastating consequences that those in the movement will not talk about. Considering the above non-biased, replicated scientific *facts*, it’s little wonder that an earlier study in the *International Journal of Epidemiology (IJE)* determined the “life expectancy at age 20 years for gay and bisexual men is 8 to 20 years less than for all men.”

I firmly believe that Jesus’ aim in teaching was not to impose some arbitrary rules on us but to teach what is *good* for us. Clearly homosexuality, according to these studies, is not only sinful, but not good for those who engage in it. We are not a “good friend” of an individual who is engaging in this unless we do our best to “speak the truth in love” (Ephesians 4:15) and try to help them find a pathway out.

The author, Matt Barber, who shared the research in this article added this — I agree and appreciate his perspective:

You think me callous. You think I hate. I’m not and I do not. Truth is hate to those who hate truth. I love self-identified “LGBT” individuals with a love beyond my own power to summon. I love them because Christ first loved me. I love them because, like them, I am a sinner in need of a Savior. They are under deception. The enemy of man is the father of lies, and he prowls like a lion seeking to both deceive and devour us all.

I know what it’s like to have someone close to me struggle with same-sex attraction and adopt an aberrant sexual identity. I have a dear family

member wasting away with AIDS at this very moment. While I love him, I also understand that if I were to affirm his lifestyle and offer well-intentioned yet dangerously misguided “compassion,” I would be hurting him, not helping him.

The world recoils at the calling out of sin. Jesus was crucified because he did just that. He did it from a place of love and so should we, but it takes a lot of courage.

dp

New App: Hoop

What it is: The new app Hoop has recently exploded in popularity, thanks to the developers’ ability to gamify sharing the app with friends.

Why it’s popular: The app bills itself as a way to “make new friends on Snapchat,” and it does this by allowing users to swipe through others’ profiles to find someone they like (sound familiar?). If they want to connect, they can request their Snap username to start talking on Snapchat (there’s no actual messaging via Hoop). But a user can only request so many usernames before they run out of the in-app currency (“diamonds”), which can be earned by opening the app every day, getting others to download the app via one’s “Hoop link,” and a few other activities. Thanks to this mass sharing, it’s only a matter of time before teens hear about Hoop.

Infodemic

What it is: As COVID-19 (novel coronavirus) continues to spread, social media has been overwhelmed with information about the epidemic, making young people extremely anxious.

Why we have to talk about it: Because of this massive spread of info—much of which isn’t even true—the WHO dubbed it a social media “infodemic” and partnered with Google, Twitter, Facebook, TikTok, and others to curtail the spread of hoaxes and unreliable data. Even Instagram is trying to reroute users searching for #coronavirus to credible sources. This intense focus on the virus, coupled with the endless memes and jokes about it, has caused young people to feel like it’s a bigger deal than it actually is. Their uncertainty about what it is, how it’s spread, how prevalent it is, and how to prevent infection only adds to the hysteria. Help your teens by bringing it up, asking what they know, searching for credible information together, and praying against anxiety while asking God to protect others and give authorities wisdom.

Cultural Translator, February 14, 2020