

May 2, 2021

# The Sunday View

*"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 at the entrance. Thank You**

## Schedule

### The Lord's Day

#### Assembly

**10:30 AM**

Inside the building

Livestream at 10:30 at <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCLEmwy21YxrL7ZUGtiZTVqA>

Speaking today: Scott Gardner

**"Uncovering the Joy's of Obedience"**

### Young Peoples Classes Today

High School & Up: 5 PM

Contact David Posey for information at  
(530) 558-5057

Middle School 5 PM

Contact Dan Stegall for information  
(818) 209-9810

## Weekly Classes

**Tuesday - 10 AM**

**No Class**

**Wednesday - 7PM**

**The Attributes of God**

Various Speakers

For an online class on the **Sermon on the Mount**, check with Jack Horak @ [jshorak98@gmail.com](mailto:jshorak98@gmail.com)

### Saturday Men's Breakfast

7 AM, second Saturday of the month

Contact Tyler Wade @ [tyler@ppldev.com](mailto:tyler@ppldev.com)

### Additional Classes

There are some smaller classes in progress. If you are interested in participating in any of them, please contact David Posey

## Information

### Website & Online Presence

Visit our website at [www.folsomchurch.com](http://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 on Wednesday night at 7 PM. 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 any 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 (Let us know if you don't get a copy)

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.

### Prayer Requests & News Items

Send to David Posey at [dpaulposey@mac.com](mailto:dpaulposey@mac.com) or text at 530-558-5057

# How Do I Know What My Priorities Are?

The young man who came to the Lord asking what good thing he should do to have eternal life probably would have said that spiritual concerns were his highest priority. But when he was told to sell what he had, give to the poor, and follow Jesus, “he went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions” (Mt. 19:22). What he may have said about his values indicated one thing. His actions indicated another.

If we are not constantly careful, our list of priorities can become disordered. At such times, being honest enough to face the truth about the situation is not easy. When anyone asks what is most important to us, the tempting thing is to answer in terms of what we know should be most important. Because we think we are moving more or less in the direction of putting first things first (“I plan to pray and study my Bible more just as soon as I can get my schedule under control”), we may think that gives us the right to say that spiritual concerns are our top priority right now. But the Lord does not judge what our priorities are by listening to our theories. He looks at our practice. And if we do not somehow gather our courage and look, as He does, at what means the most to us in actual fact — and repent accordingly — then eternity holds no hope for us. Before it’s too late to make any changes, we need to be asking ourselves some blunt questions about what our priorities really are.

**What would others say our priorities are?** Others may not know us as well as we know ourselves, but they are often more objective about what they do know. The neighbor who lives next door could probably sum up in a word or two what we are really about. Perhaps more than anybody, our children are able to cut through our preachments and tell what actually matters most to us in the rough and tumble of daily living.

**What do we think about?** Our true priorities are the things our minds are drawn to when they are “in neutral.” When activities and obligations do not require us to be thinking about anything in particular, our thoughts are attracted, like filings to a magnet, to our real enthusiasms. The person who finds that he meditates on God only when he forces himself to do so is lying if he says the spiritual life is his overriding concern. What do we talk about? The conversations we engage in arise quite naturally out of the things that are on our minds. If we have to admit that we rarely talk about the Lord except in connection with the services of the church, that ought to tell us something. And even if we do sometimes talk about spiritual matters, if our acquaintances would have to say that our conversation gravitates more naturally and enthusiastically toward other things, then there is serious doubt whether our ultimate priorities are really spiritual.

**How do we spend our time?** Hardly anybody has as much “spare” time as he would like. But all of us have some, and the way we spend it displays our priorities. I have known families, for example, who “vacationed” by traveling to gospel meetings or Bible lectureships at congregations in distant states. Judging from their use of time that was theirs to do with as they pleased, one would tend to believe such folks if they said they loved the Lord

more than anything. On the other hand, I have known folks who all their working lives complained that they didn’t have as much time as they wanted to do the Lord’s work — and then spent virtually all of their retirement years in personal leisure, with perhaps less time devoted to the Lord than before! The fact is, the way we spend our time speaks loudly regarding our values.

**How do we spend our money?** Suppose a Bible class teacher recommended a \$50 reference book that would help us in our study of the Scriptures, but we said we couldn’t afford it. Suppose a preacher recommended a \$30 a year periodical that would help us grow spiritually, but we said it cost too much. If it was known that we sometimes spent that much on sporting events and recreational activities, that it wasn’t unusual for us to spend that much in a single evening at a restaurant, that we wouldn’t object to spending that much on decorative home furnishings, etc., could anyone take seriously our claim that the Lord is our uppermost concern?

**What “gives” when we face a conflict of priorities?** Of the many conflicts involving priorities, perhaps none are more annoying than “scheduling” conflicts. Unable to be two places at the same time, we very often have to sacrifice one activity for another. When that happens, if we subordinate the things of the Lord to worldly activities, we give the lie to our professed priorities. In the matter of sports, to take a familiar example, if we can manage it such that our soft ball league and the services of the church hardly ever conflict, that is all well and good, but it says relatively little about our priorities. When the occasional conflict does arise, that is when we make a statement about our priorities. The same is true of work. If, on business trips, we’ve been willing to violate our commitment to assemble with the brethren at our travel destination, we may try to make it look as if we chose between one thing that was “optional” and another that was not. But, in truth, we’ve simply demonstrated which of our various priorities we are willing to make the bigger sacrifice for. Indeed, it’s when priorities collide that we learn the most about ourselves, our values, and whether the Lord reigns within us or not.

How then do I know what my priorities really are? By looking at what I am, in fact, doing with my life. Paul wrote, “To whom you present yourselves slaves to obey, you are that one’s slaves whom you obey, whether of sin to death, or of obedience to righteousness” (Rom. 6:16). At least one thing would seem to be clear: I can’t pour the first and the best of what I am into pursuing what has euphemistically been called the “American Dream” and still turn around and say I love the Lord with all my heart. I can’t go “all out” for one thing and then truthfully claim that something else is more important. Jesus said, “No one can serve two masters . . . You cannot serve God and mammon” (Mt. 6:24). Where my priorities are, there will my energy and enthusiasm be also.

Gary Henry

# The Beginning of Wisdom

Solomon touched on a philosophical principle of basic importance when he said, “The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding” (Prov. 9:10). Living as we do in a “secular” age that refuses to pay homage to God, it is especially important for us to grasp the truth of this principle.

What is the “fear” of the Lord? It must obviously be something other than a craven, servile fear of God, for we are encouraged to “come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need” (Heb. 4:16). The fear we are to have is a “filial” fear which is not inconsistent with love. In fact, love is its primary ingredient. The fear of God is an attitude which acknowledges Him as the Creator, honors Him rightly, loves Him devotedly, and shrinks because of love from giving any offense to Him. Reverence is the basic meaning.

The fear of God is not just an attitude, of course. True reverence always includes active obedience to God, humble submissiveness to the divine will. It is as much a relationship to God as it is a way of thinking about Him. Jesus asked simply, “Why do you call Me ‘Lord, Lord,’ and do not do the things which I say?” (Lk. 6:46). The person who does not take the will of God seriously does not really respect the person of God.

Solomon asserted that the fear of the Lord is the “beginning” of wisdom. What does this mean? It might mean that the reality of God is the most basic fact in the universe. Acknowledgment of that truth comes before even the ABC’s of wisdom in other matters. One commences the journey to true wisdom by taking the first step of learning about God.

But although the knowledge of God is certainly the “first” thing to be learned, more than that seems to be involved in the “beginning” of wisdom. Reverence for God is also “the first and controlling principle, rather than a stage one leaves behind” (Kidner). Without a proper understanding of the “createdness” of the cosmos, one cannot properly assess the facts he may gather. One may heap up information without any recognition of God, but it is the proper orientation of his mind to God that lets man understand what he knows. Dag Hammarskjöld said, “On the day I first really believed in God, for the first time life made sense to me and the world had meaning.” Wisdom is more than the gathering of data. It is the discernment which enables one to judge the significance of what he has learned and to use it to truly good ends.

Man’s ability to properly interpret his factual discoveries, to see the “big picture,” to perceive the relation of one truth to another — and certainly his ability to draw correct conclusions about his conduct — these are all linked to his reverence for the Creator. If man erects a system of thought on any foundation other than reverence and respect for God, the superstructure will inevitably be misaligned and shaky.

There is no more foolish scholar than the thinker who has built his entire life’s work on false premises. However diligent he may have been in research (the gleaning of data and the drawing of inferences), if he started out with untenable presuppositions, then all will have been for naught. For exactly this reason, much of the “wisdom” of our age comes under the indictment of the apostle Paul in Rom. 1:21,22: “Although they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God, nor were thankful, but became futile in their thoughts, and their foolish hearts were darkened. Professing to be wise, they became fools.” The statement in Psa. 127:1 is as applicable to human scholarship as it is to anything else: “Unless the Lord builds the house, they labor in vain who build it; unless the Lord guards the city, the watchman stays awake in vain”

Writing in Pulpit Commentary, W. Clarkson remarks, “No art, no philosophy, no science, no literature, no intellectual attainments or achievements of any kind whatever will compensate for ignorance of God; the soul that knows not him is an ignorant man; the time that knows not him is an ignorant age.” Judged by such a standard, our age is the one that must be classified as the Dark Age. In our time, when the acknowledgment of a personal Creator is often thought to be an impediment to good philosophy, we would do well to go back and reconsider the insight of Solomon, a philosopher whose little finger was thicker than the thigh of any modern thinker: the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.

Gary Henry



Read your Bible daily