

May 16, 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

Livestream at 10:30 at <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCLEmwy2lYxrL7ZUgTizTVqA>

Speaking today: David Posey

Satan's Plan for the Church

Revelation 12

Young People's 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

"Conformed to Christ"

At the Building

Wednesday 7 PM @ Building

The Attributes of God

Various Speakers

Saturday Men's Breakfast

7 AM, second Saturday of the month
Contact Tyler Wade @ 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

Masks Still Required

Even though the CDC has recommended a change on face covering policy, it isn't official until approved by the state of California. Therefore, masks are still required inside the building for everyone, vaccinated or not, until we get clarification from the health department, which we hope will come soon.

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 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 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.

Prayer Requests & News Items

Send to David Posey at dpaulposey@mac.com
or text at 530-558-5057

Do We Have the “Same Mind?”

BY DAVID POSEY

David said, in Psalm 133, “*Behold how good and pleasant it is when brothers dwell in unity!*” I’ve seen the other side of unity and it is ugly. It’s no surprise if I say that I am almost *obsessed* with unity in the church. I say “almost” only because I’m not promoting “unity at any price.” We can establish a *faux* unity simply by compromising on any issue that threatens to divide us. Many churches grow in number through reductionism; that is, reducing the grounds of fellowship to a few, non-controversial propositions.

Last weekend, Saddleback church in southern California, best known for its leader, Rick Warren, who wrote the best seller, *A Purpose Driven Life*,^{*} ordained three women as “pastors.” The church belongs to the Southern Baptist Convention and, according to the president of the SBC, Albert Mohler,

“Saddleback has taken actions that place itself in direct conflict with the stated doctrines of the Southern Baptist Convention.” More to the point, it puts them in conflict with the New Testament (see I

Timothy 2:11-12). This spirit of compromise is not new. Many churches that claim to be “evangelical” (Bible-based) have decided to compromise on several issues besides this one, including LGBTQ issues.

This is troublesome and we need to be vigilant on those and other issues, but let’s talk about unity from a couple of other perspectives: (1) our love for each other and (2) our moral choices.

The worst part of the pandemic, in terms of the effect on the church, has been the lack of regular contact with our members. We were accustomed to seeing a fairly large crowd every Sunday and then, again, on Wednesday nights. When we were forced out of the building, we lost that regular contact and involvement. As you know, there are numerous passages in the New Testament that speak about the importance of our love for one another and the our involvement with each other. See Galatians 6:1-10; I Corinthians 13; II Peter 1:7. I John 3:14 says,

We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love the brothers. Whoever does not love abides in death.

The effect on you of the forced disengagement from our brothers and sisters during the Covid crisis tells you all you need to know about your view of unity. Paul “yearned” (earnestly desired) to be in the presence of his Philippian brethren, “*with all the affection of Christ Jesus.*” That word “affection” is the Greek word *splanknon*, the strongest Greek word for experiencing intense compassion. We are not all going to identify with everyone else in every

particular but our shared love for Christ trumps any personality or idiosyncrasy differences we might have. We love each other because of our special relationship in the spiritual family that is the Folsom church of Christ.

There’s another sense in which we must be unified and that is in our moral choices. I had a conversation with a young college student recently and it went like this: “Paul says in Philippians 2:2 that we are to be of the same mind and of ‘one mind.’ If someone is, say, spreading gossip, how can we possibly be of the same mind?” Good question. If we are not of the same mind on moral issues, we are not unified in the true sense of the word.

There’s a mistaken impression that unity is based exclusively on believing the same propositional truths regarding the plan of salvation, the purpose of the church,

how we worship, etc. But if we are not united on moral issues, then that “unity” is fictional. Paul told the Corinthians to “*be united in the same mind and judgment*” (I Corinthians 1:10) but there could be no unity with the man who was sleeping with his father’s wife — or for

those who tolerated it, for that matter (I Corinthians 5:1-2).

We can’t hide behind the “gray area” mantra, either. I am tired of hearing people say “*the Bible doesn’t say you can’t...*” when discussing moral issues. True, the Bible doesn’t say you can’t abuse your wife, in those exact words. But will anyone dare suggest that the Bible doesn’t cover that? It doesn’t say you can’t snort Cocaine, in so many words — does that mean God is OK with it?

An honest person knows the Bible covers every category of immorality: speech, sex, illicit drugs, recreation, what we watch, read and listen to, and so on. There are some issues that are less clear than others, but let’s be honest: knowing right from wrong in our conduct is not difficult. Peter said “*...but as he who called you is holy you must also be holy in all your conduct*” (I Peter 1:15). And in Philippians, Paul said, “*...approve what is excellent and so be pure and blameless for the day of Christ.*” (1:10). A person who claims that it’s “too hard” to know right from wrong is not trying very hard.

It starts in the mind, with how we think. Paul says, Philippians 4:8, “*Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things.*” When faced with a choice, ask this question “can I characterize what I’m doing or thinking right now by any of the terms I’m reading in Philippians 4:8?”

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* The term “woman” in Revelation can refer to a person or categories of people, even within a few verses. I’ll go into more detail on that next week.

Notes on Revelation 12

BY DAVID POSEY

The events in Revelation are not necessarily written in a chronological sequence. Chapter 12 is a good example. The chapter starts with a rehearsal of the birth of Christ and then describes some things both before and after the time period of the book (AD 90's). It then gives a taste of the future even up to our time, right now. The story which unfolds is a dramatic account of the attempts of Satan to defeat the kingdom of heaven, and his utter failure. The message, of course, is one we've heard before (see 11:15): Christ and his church reigns, even in the midst of persecution. The other important lesson is that while there are still battles between good and evil on earth, God has already won the spiritual war. It's not just "God wins in the end" but God has already won.

The great sign of v 1 follows the sounding of the seventh trumpet where victory is proclaimed followed by "*flashes of lightning, rumblings, peals of thunder, an earthquake and heavy hail*" (see 11:15-19). It is essential to note that the great sign appears in heaven, meaning that the conflict which follows is spiritual in nature although there may be some physical aspects. The great sign is of a woman who is about to give birth to a child. This woman is clothed with the sun, the moon is "under her feet" and there is a "crown of twelve stars" on her head (this crown is *stephanos*, the victory crown). She is with child and cries out to give birth, obviously referring to the birth of the Messiah, the Christ-child. The woman represents the people of God, here the Israelites (or, perhaps, the remnant), from which Christ came. See John 4:22 where Jesus said "*salvation is of the Jews.*"

There is another sign which appeared, revealing the arch enemy of the child. He is depicted as a "great red dragon having seven heads and ten horns, and seven diadems on his heads" (v 2). V. 9 identifies the dragon for us: he is Satan himself, and he is set on destroying this child. Certainly, a dragon whose "tail drew a third of the stars of heaven and threw them to earth" would have no problem defeating a child! And so the devil stands there waiting to "devour the child as soon as it was born." We, of course, think of evil Herod's plot to kill the Messiah by killing all the boy babies 2 years and under. But this child is no ordinary child; this child is to "rule all nations with a rod of iron" (see Psalm 2:9). And so, God protects the child, taking him up to himself and his throne. The devil failed to stop Christ as a child; what chance does he have to stop him as an "adult"?!

Christ will survive to do his work and the devil will never touch Him spiritually (though he will bruise the heel of Jesus; cf. Gen. 3:15). Meanwhile, there is the matter of the woman who represents the people of God. What will become of her? V. 6 tells us that God prepared a place for her in the "wilderness" where she fled. Note that God does not take the woman up to himself and his throne, but he

protects her just the same. She will be nourished there 1260 days (the same as "time, times and half a time" in v. 14). In chapter 11, this was the "time" or extent of the church's persecution by Rome. It is "less than complete" (half of seven), the same figure which describes the "time" in which the Gentiles will trample the holy city (11:2, "forty-two months"). The "woman" in v. 6 now refers to the church, "spiritual Israel" (Galatians 6:16). The church is the object of the persecution and thus will need to "flee."

In what might be considered either a flashback or a summary or an interlude, we read about a war that broke out

in heaven. Michael and his angels fought against the dragon, Satan. Eventually, Satan and his angels were cast out of heaven. John is seeing this during the days of Rome, but when did it actually occur? Verse 10 tells us that "now salvation has come," including

the power of His Christ. This happened at the death and resurrection of Christ. In John 12:31, Jesus said, just before His death, "now is judgment of this world. Now the ruler of this world is cast out." The church has a part in this "casting out" because "*they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives to the death*" (v. 11).

The point is that Satan is a defeated foe, so heaven can rejoice. When the loud voice says "rejoice, O heavens, and you who dwell in them!" he is not just talking about the saints who have already died and gone to heaven because all true Christians sit with Christ in the heavenly places, (Ephesians 2:6; cf. 1:20). This is similar to the 144,000 who were sealed on their foreheads (7:3). So, Christians are safe even if they are killed.

Meanwhile, a woe is pronounced on "the inhabitants of the earth" (12:14, NKJV). The dragon knows he has only a "short time," presumably to round up as many souls as he can to take with him to the bottomless pit (20:3; see Matthew 25:41).

When the dragon was cast to earth, he attempted to persecute the woman who bore the child. This time, we're told that the woman was given "two wings of a great eagle" and was permitted to fly into the "wilderness to her place" (v. 14). There she is nourished for that "time" again, away from the presence of the serpent. But that didn't stop the devil. He "spews water out of his mouth like a river," in an attempt to drown her with his lies and deception. But the church has an unwitting ally since the "earth (i.e., *earth dwellers*) opened its mouth and swallowed up the river" (v. 16). And thus the church was protected, at least for the "time, times and half a time." But the devil continues to make war with the "rest of her offspring" (v. 17) — that's us, believers in Christ, the church in 2021.

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