

January 24, 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**

**We'll be meeting under the tent tomorrow morning and the forecast is for cold temps and maybe some rain. Dress warmly. Please read Revelation 2 & 3 — it'll take about 8-10 minutes. I'll be referring to those chapters in the sermon but, in the interest of time, I won't be reading them in full.**

**Thank you. dp**

## Schedule

### The Lord's Day Assemblies

Three assembly opportunities,  
outside under the tent:

**9:30 AM / 10:30 AM / 11:30 AM**

Livestream at 10:30 at <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCLEmwy2IYxrL7ZUgTiZTVqA>

Speaking today: David Posey  
*Churches Must Be Important*

### Young People's Classes Today

High School & Up: 4 PM (today on Zoom)

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

Middle School: 5 PM

Contact Dan Stegall for information  
(818) 209-9810

### Weekly Online Classes

Tuesday 10 AM (“Conformed to Christ”)

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

Wednesday 7 PM (Faith: Hebrews 11)

Check with Jack Horak: [jshorak98@gmail.com](mailto:jshorak98@gmail.com)

Saturday AM Men's Breakfast

7 AM, second Saturday of the month  
Contact Tyler Wade @ [tyler@ppldev.com](mailto:tyler@ppldev.com)

### Additional Online Classes

There are some other small online classes.  
If you are interested in participating in one 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 (Temporarily Suspended)

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 (Enter through side door; limit 2 at a time)

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 (Temporarily Closed)

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

# Notes on Revelation

## The Seven Churches of Asia

[We will not be spending much time on chapters 2 & 3 in the series of sermons that Scott and I will be presenting from Revelation. We have offered classes and preached series from these chapters in the past and undoubtedly will again. For now, the following information will provide background and a summary.]

The seven churches to which Christ appeared each had its own personality and each was facing its own set of problems. It may be helpful to know what kinds of circumstances and challenges the individuals in these particular churches were facing. Jesus implicitly discusses many characteristics of the various cities in the things he says here. The summary below is intended to help us focus on some of these matters. Note that each church is told that Jesus knows their “works” and each is told about the benefits that “the one(s) who conquer” would enjoy if they follow Jesus’ instructions. The word “repent” appears eight times in these two chapters, although not in the letters to Smyrna or Philadelphia.

### **The Church at Ephesus (Revelation 2:1-7)**

Apparently the church had grown strong in defending doctrine but weak in love of the brethren. They had forgotten the importance of doing everything in love (I Corinthians 13:1-3) and are charged with leaving “their first love.” Stated another way, *they didn’t love like they used to*. Ephesus had a population of about 250,000 and was the most important city in Asia. There were many temples in the city; temples dedicated to Claudius, Hadrian and Severus; to the goddess Diana (Artemis) and others. Paul had spent three years there, establishing the church (Acts 20:31), probably around AD 52, and both Timothy and John had spent time there. But because Ephesus was centrally located and was a popular trade route, the church was susceptible to visitor apparently claiming to be “apostles” (Rev. 2:2). Paul had warned about them in Acts 20 and in his letters to Timothy. Their ardent focus on ridding themselves of those false teachers may have caused the church to slip in their love of the brethren. Focusing so intensely on one area of the body may leave another part of the body unprotected.

### **The Church at Smyrna (Revelation 2:8-11)**

Presently this is Izmir, in Turkey. The city had a population of around 200,000 and had a special relationship with Rome to which she owed strong allegiance. It was famous for its beauty and for its magnificent buildings. A famous thoroughfare there was called “The Street of Gold.” There was a large Jewish population that was hostile to Christians. Gentiles and Jews combined to murder Polycarp there, probably around AD 155. While Ephesus had its “false apostles,” Smyrna had its “false Jews” (Rev. 2:9). The church was probably very poor (v. 9), but spiritually rich. Like Philadelphia, the Lord found no cause to criticize Smyrna. The famous line, “be faithful unto death” is found here (2:10).

### **The Church at Pergamum (Revelation 2:12-17)**

Pergamum was the capitol of Asia, a “citadel,” sitting on a mountain 1,000 feet high with its altar to Zeus visible for miles. It was a center of pagan worship with idols spread all over the town. Besides Zeus, there was Athene, Dionysus and Asclepius (designated *soter*, the Greek word for “savior”). But most importantly, Pergamum was the center for the imperial cult (emperor worship) which had become the criterion for civic loyalty under Domitian. It was the first city to receive permission to build a temple to a living ruler. The term “two-edged sword,” possessed by Christ, had special meaning to the people here because the proconsul had “the power of the sword.” According to legend, a faithful Christian, Antipas, was roasted to death in a brazen bull during Domitian’s reign. Balaam (v. 14; Numbers 22-24) was the prototype of all corrupt teachers who lead people to compromise with worldly ideologies. With regard to the hidden manna, there is a Jewish Tradition that Jeremiah took the pot of manna, which was placed in the ark of the covenant, during the destruction of the temple in 586 BC, and hid it in Mount Nebo (see 2 Macc. 2:4-7). It was to remain there until the Messiah came and then Jeremiah would reappear and return it to the new temple in Jerusalem.

### **The Church at Thyatira (Revelation 2:18-28)**

This is longest letter of the seven. Thyatira was on the present site of Akisar, in what is now Western Turkey. We know that Lydia was from there, or at least owned a house there (Acts 16:14). The city had many trade guilds (“unions”) — for dyeing, pottery, garment making and brass-working (note the description of Christ in v. 18: “fine brass”). These guilds were inseparably connected with pagan religious worship of various kinds, including acts of immorality. You can imagine the pressure placed upon Christians who had formerly been members of these guilds or who tried to find jobs in the city without joining them.

### **The Church at Sardis (Revelation 3:1-6)**

Though this city had a magnificent past, in which its name was at once associated with great wealth, it was, by the time of the Revelation, just a relic. It was famous in the past for its luxury clothing “stores” (like Milan or Paris today). That may account for the reference to “white garments.” The words of Christ to the church seem to correspond with what was true of the city that was living in the past and resting on their laurels. In other words, it was dead or about to die.

### **The Church at Philadelphia (Revelation 3:7-13)**

This city, the newest of those mentioned, was a city of great commercial importance in Asia and was called the “Gateway to the East.” Earthquakes were common and there were many temples and religious festivals there. It was called “Little Athens” and its chief pagan cult was that of Dionysus. The church was probably small (“little strength”) but was presented with opportunity (“open door”). It and Smyrna were the only two of these churches to be commended without criticism by the Lord.

### **The Church at Laodicea (Revelation 3:14-22)**

This was the wealthiest city in Phrygia, famous for its soft, black, glossy wool. In AD 60, it was totally devastated by an earthquake. It also was famous for its medical school, which had developed an eye-salve and an ear ointment (notice the wording in the message to Laodicea which uses these as figures of speech). There were a large number of Jews there. In light of the “lukewarm” statement to the church, it is interesting that water was piped into the city from hot springs a fair distance South of the city and probably arrived lukewarm. For all its wealth, it could provide neither the hot, healing waters of its neighbor, Hierapolis, or the cold, refreshing water to be found at nearby Colossae. It was just lukewarm.

Note that the Lord had something good to say about all of these churches, with the exception of two — Sardis and Laodicea. Note also that in every case, He refers to their *works*. Churches have work to do and the Lord will hold them responsible for it. Of course, the value of studying this section in Revelation is to apply it to our work at Folsom. If Jesus came and I said, “I know your works...” what would he say? And, would he say, “I have this against you...”?



\* This is an argument for the later date of Revelation, since it is unlikely that the city could have been rebuilt to its former splendor in the 6-8 years that a Neronian (c.66-68 AD) date would require.