

May 12, 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

Jesus, Yesterday, Today & Forever

Hebrews 13:5-8

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.

“Behold Your Mother”

BY DAVID POSEY

Thirty years ago I preached my second Sunday morning sermon for the Folsom church of Christ. We were meeting in the building on Reading Street. Like today, it was Mother’s Day. Roy Bridge and I got out of our cars simultaneously and walked toward the building together. Roy said to me, “so, what are preaching on today? Are you preaching about Mary?” and then laughed — let’s say, “heartily.” My heart dropped, my head started spinning. I, in fact, *was indeed* preaching about Mary that day. I interpreted Roy’s comment and laughter as a message something along the lines of “we don’t do that here” (i.e., preach holiday sermons on holidays).

I had come from a smaller church in southern California where there were no elders so I had free rein to preach on whatever topic I wanted. Now, for my second sermon under an eldership, I’m thinking I’m in trouble. For those of you who remember Room IV, I expected to take a trip there after the service and meet with the elders, Roy and Jim Fannin.

My fear was misplaced. Roy and Jim were fine with the sermon. Roy was just “giving me a hard time” for fun, something he was really good at (we should probably keep his wife Sharon on the prayer list every week <grin>).

I preached that “Mother’s Day sermon” using Mary as an example. I’ve decided to resurrect a portion of it for the *View* since I’m not preaching a Mother’s Day sermon today. Mother’s Day sermons can be a two-edged sword. While preachers may mean to honor mothers by preaching on it, I’ve found that it’s difficult to avoid putting moms on the spot. The sermons can easily become lectures to half the audience. A woman author once spoke about how Proverbs 31 sermons made her feel inadequate as a wife and mother because, after all, who can measure up to that lady?! (Personally, I believe Proverbs 31 is a composite picture of various roles a woman might fill, not a standard of perfection to be measured by. If it is the latter, I’m glad there is not a Proverbs 32!).

Here an excerpt from the sermon I preached 30 years ago, on May 8, 1994.

Comedian George Burns said, “happiness is having a large, loving, caring, close-knit family in another city.” I don’t agree with that at any level. Today, I want to talk about family — about mothers, mainly. I assume most of us are thinking about that, so I want to take advantage of it today. I’m going to start at an unusual place, for a Mothers Day sermon. I’m going to start from the *foot of the cross of Christ*. John 19:26-27 reads,

“When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing nearby, he said to his mother, ‘Woman, behold, your son!’ Then he said to the disciple, ‘Behold, your mother!’ And from that hour the disciple took her to his own home.”

Think of Mary’s grief as she watched her son die a horrible death on a cross made of wood, an implement of torture. Do you remember Mary? (Luke 1 & 2). A poor peasant girl from a town

with a lousy reputation is chosen to give birth to the most important Child ever born, the Son of God, the Savior of the world.

- We can talk about her **childlike faith** — how, when she was told she would be with child, she accepted it, even though she was not married and knew she would live under suspicion. Yet, see Luke 1:48, “[God] has looked on the humble estate of his servant. For behold, from now on all generations will call me blessed.”
- We can talk about her **strength**; how, when pregnant, she and Joseph traveled 90 miles on a donkey and found no room at the inn when she got there, spent the night in an old stable, with no female friends to assist in the delivery. But she did it without complaint.

• We can talk about her **inwardness**, her thoughtfulness. Luke 2:19: the baby was born, she wrapped him up, and “pondered these things in her heart...” She demonstrated quiet, but solid, faith.

Mary was the mother of Jesus. She nursed him, diapered him, and rocked him in her arms. He was her precious, sweet, little boy. Fast forward 33 short years. Mary, still fairly young, is standing at the foot of a wooden cross watch-

ing her boy gasp for air, wheezing, his eyes rolling back in his head, with blood everywhere. She surely thought back to those days when Jesus lay peacefully in her arms, his little hands curled up as he slept. She wished, more than anything, that she was at that moment rocking him to sleep, singing a Hebrew lullaby.

It is at that moment, as she stands there dizzy with sorrow, that Jesus says, “Woman, behold your son.” But he doesn’t stop there. He looks toward his good friend, the apostle John, and says, “Behold...your mother!” Our mothers want our love. Jesus loved his mother and saw to it — even in his darkest hour — that His mother was cared for. He was fulfilling the Law: “Honor your father and mother” (Exodus 20:12).

Moms want our respect, our concern, our care, and communication. You may send your mother flowers every Mother’s Day, but if you never call her to see how she’s doing, those flowers are dead on arrival. I’ve seen sons and daughters treat their mothers with little respect, and it’s repulsive. Mothers don’t want or need much; just our care, concern, and contact. Communication is the lifeblood of love. Daughters tend to be better at that; sons, not so much (guys, marry someone who is really good at it!).

Lillian Hellmann, in her book, *An Unfinished Woman*, said, “My mother was dead for five years before I knew I loved her very much.” I identify with that, to some degree. My mom was so easy — she made it so easy — *to take her for granted*; I’m persuaded that she wanted it that way, but still, I wish I had sent her more flowers, called her on the phone more often.

At whatever age you may be, *behold, your mother*.

“Moms want our respect, our concern, our care, and communication. You may send your mother flowers every Mother’s Day, but if you never call her to see how she’s doing, those flowers are dead on arrival.”

Here's why Taylor Swift perfectly represents the cultural moment we find ourselves in.

By Jack Wilkie

Arguably the biggest star on the planet. Taylor Swift, has grabbed the spotlight yet again with her latest album, and it's a perfect encapsulation of our cultural moment.

Swift, the girl who rose to fame for twangy, puppy love pop songs and breakup ballads is no more, having been overtaken by a new, politically vocal, embittered feminist, culture warrior persona.

Though in her early days she uttered the occasional swear word, and has long been unconcerned with modesty, most of her content could be taken as un-noteworthy from a moral standpoint. Just a steady stream of mildly catchy radio hits. *But then, something changed.*

She entered the political fray in 2018 and has become an advocate for LGBT issues and abortion rights. Around the same time, she made the career move of beginning to employ more profanity, sexual innuendos, and social commentary in her music. 2019's "You Need to Calm Down," an anthem shouting down anti-LGBT voices, stands out..

Fast forward to her latest album. Plenty of others have pointed to the blasphemy in the lyrics. Here are a few [printable] examples:

"But daddy I love him / I just learned these people only raise you / To cage you / Sarahs and Hannahs in their Sunday best / Clutchin' their pearls, sighing, "What a mess" / I just learned these people try and save you 'Cause they hate you"

"God save the most judgmental creeps / Who say they want what's best for me / Sanctimoniously performing soliloquies I'll never see / Thinkin' it can change the beat / Of my heart when he touches me / And counteract the chemistry / And undo the destiny / You ain't gotta pray for me / Me and my wild boy and all of this wild joy / If all you want is gray for me / Then it's just white noise, and it's just my choice"

"What if I roll the stone away? / They're gonna crucify me anyway / What if the way you hold me is actually what's holy?"

That's beyond the pale, and she knows exactly what she's doing. But there's something much bigger at play here than a pop star's nose-thumbing toward God.

Why did she have to change? Couldn't she have stayed out of social issues and just kept churning out bland bubblegum pop?

What we're seeing is the result of a culture in a dead sprint to the finish line to determine what our basis of truth and morality is going to be. When a culture already has a foundation for truth, this kind of posturing isn't necessary.

But when a culture is in a tug-of-war between one value set and another, every microphone represents an opportunity to cast a vote. You can't have entertainment options free of political and social commentary because they are all campaign pieces, propaganda telling you that the world's way is best.

For this reason, neutral ground is disappearing. Despite a widely held desire to cling to it, the age of tolerance and religious neutrality was always just a layover in between systems. And the proof is everywhere you look.

Notice how you can't watch a sporting event without a million gambling ads sprinkled in among the lascivious ads for alcohol and previews for lewd tv shows and gory movies. Notice how the family movie and the family sitcom have all but disappeared as options.

Even *Bluey*, what had been the most wholesome, pro-family TV program in decades, couldn't help but introduce gay characters – to a show pointed at 5 year olds, mind you.

No, all of this shouldn't surprise us, but neither should the seeming inevitability of it desensitize us to its ugliness.

What it means

People have already jumped to their metaphorical feet to pose (and mock) the question, "Is it a sin to listen to Taylor Swift?" As I've said, this article isn't about Swift. However, it is about the spirit that drives one to ask such a question.

The Bible is fairly obvious about what is and is not a stone-cold sin, and to be honest, that list isn't as long and exhaustive as we might sometimes want it to be. This tells us that God expects us to use discernment. That's what Christian maturity looks like—knowing the "thou shalt" and "thou shalt not," yes, but also knowing the spirit of the age and the principles that help us know where to stand.

Yet, in the midst of this headlong rush toward the cliff, many Christians insist nothing of the sort is happening and all of this irrelevant. They see it all as harmless and have no qualms about consuming content that wages war on Christian values. "You can't tell me it's a sin, so that settles it!"

Others insist that these things are all a personal choice and we shouldn't really step on anyone's sacred individual liberty by cautioning against such content. And, as always, we should never, *ever* suggest that one choice might be preferable to another.

Discernment is realizing that it's not a fence that they're straddling—it's a fissure, one growing wider by the day.

Lot remained in Sodom, which proved to be a terribly foolish decision, but at least he didn't act as though the city's iniquity was inconsequential (2 Peter 2:7-8). He was oppressed and tormented by the behavior of the wicked. We should be, too.

And yet, pointing out Swift's blasphemies or suggesting that Christians ought to avoid certain shows, movies, or platforms stirs up outrage among many Christians.

Why? If this is a battle between competing religions, why eat at the table of the demons, to paraphrase 1 Corinthians 10? Why remain neutral in a battle to set the culture's bedrock? That, more than anything, is what I'm getting at here. A Christian who has more of a gag reflex at a preacher who calls out Taylor Swift than they do at Taylor Swift's lyrics needs to rethink some things.

It's not about Taylor Swift. It's about who she, we, and our culture at large are accepting as god, or God. The world knows that there are two sides, and they're playing for keeps. When will Christians acknowledge the same reality?