

5 TALENT ELDERS, 1 TALENT RESULTS

Matthew 25:14-30 gives Jesus' parable of the talents. It specifically addresses personal wealth, but can reasonably be applied to any number of situations. In this case we will discuss the leadership of the church in the use of the talents entrusted to the leaders.

5 TALENT ELDERS

Humility aside, no elder thinks he has less than 5 talents. If he did not, he would not have accepted the responsibilities and challenges of being an elder.

Further more, if an elder did not have at least 5 talents, he would not have been asked to be an elder by the congregation.

That being said, an elder holds a position of high authority and therefore high responsibility in a congregation. Literally months of work by a member can be wiped out by a single word of an elder.

Not a single committee can be formed without the approval of the eldership. The elders can cancel a committee at any time.

The elders can simply stand in the pulpit and blame the lack of growth on everyone else.

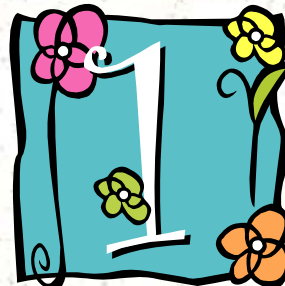
1 TALENT RESULTS

Revelation chapter 2 refers to the Ephesus church as being lukewarm. A group likely with a number of members who had personally witnessed Christ. They are not characterized as a bunch of bad people—they did not tolerate evil men, they toiled, they persevered, they had not grown weary.

They were instructed to repent and return to their first love or their candlestick would be removed. This is figurative, but surely it means they were going to be in trouble on judgment day.

It should be reasonable to say that if the eldership leads a congregation to lukewarmness, it will not bode well for judgment day.

What is the measure of lukewarmness? It is surely a moving target which varies from congregation to congregation. Rather than trying to define the limits of what lukewarmness might be, we would like to state following what has to be a clear case of lukewarmness:



5 TALENT ELDERS

The elders control the budget . There may be some congregational flexibility in the budget, but nothing that displeases the elders is going to happen.

Surely the statement in Luke 12:48 From everyone who has been given much, much will be required; and to whom they entrusted much, of him they will ask all the more." has to apply to elders.

It can be that simple! If you are growing slightly, if the population is not growing, or if you have service area competition it is a harder question and more of a judgment call. If you are not growing when your service area is growing, it can be a simple question. **For better or worse, we have a number of congregations in which the recognition of lukewarmness is only difficult for their own leadership and the fans of the leadership.**

We have a history of members being tactful and saying gracious things so as to not offend anyone. **The church is presently in decline.** It is time to start saying what needs to be said to restart the growth of the church.

If it is true that we have a number of elders mired in a situation which results in lukewarm churches, then the kind thing to do is to figure out some way to communicate this such that they will hear.

If it is true that our 5 talent elders are entrusted with much and are responding by directing congregations toward lukewarmness and are returning little; judgment day will not be good for them.

If we can figure out the words which help them to understand the situation, and how to break out of the situation, we will have done a good thing. That is what this newsletter is about. We have tried and failed many times to figure out how to say this. We may one day figure out what the words are—maybe this article is it.

If this seems reasonable to you, we pray that you will consider the gravity of this challenge. You may be the one who has the words to communicate this message. We will be happy to be the messenger.

If you think this is not a reasonable understanding, we will communicate that also.

The new teacher for the Bible Class quarter announced that he had just recently been asked to teach the class. They said to teach something from the Old Testament, so I chose Isaiah.

When that is the working method of the education committee, would you call it poor operations or poor delegation, or both?

CHURCH GROWTH FOCUS ON ELDERS

In the big picture, members are called sheep—and that was by Jesus so it has to be reasonable. To criticize individual members because the church is not doing things is to not understand what makes an organization run.

In a small congregation, there is a blending of the activities of members and elders (some can be so small as to not even have elders). **When a congregation has enough members to justify having elders, for members to do something against the will of the elders is a sin.**

Deacons are typically nice guys who are delegated some measure of authority from the elders. For deacons to use their measure of authority other than to accomplish the will of the elders is a sin.

Ministers are hired by the elders to implement the will of the elders. Any minister who does not do the will of the elders will quickly find out who is the boss. For a minister to go against the will of the elders is literally a sin.

As an example I once attended a congregation in which an elder frequently stood in to pulpit and commented about our strong and growing congregation. I kept attendance statistics at home and showed him that we were not growing, but were rather declining. His response was to instruct me to never bring statistics back again. At that time the numbers may well have been correct, but it would have been wrong for me to bring them back to church again. An elder had the power to make an act of mine a sin. **That is power.**

Bottom line is that if you cannot reasonably get along with your elders, you need to go someplace else.

Most elders I know would question their having such authority. They frequently feel they can't use their authority to get deacons and members to do anything.

The conclusion to this is that if elders can't lead with the authority granted to them, they need to question whether they should be elders.

Houston Area Churches of Christ Welcome You!

For directory
www.houstonchurchesofChrist.org

Brothers in Christ,

How much do you think it would cost to advertise on 10 highway billboards in the Greater Houston Area? Try \$20,000 - \$40,000 a month. One billboard costs \$3000 - \$8000, depending on the location.

What if we could advertise on 10 billboards for \$1000, \$500, or even as low as \$250 a month?

Impossible! You might say. Not so! The answer is really quite simple, **NUMBERS & UNITY.**

There are over one hundred Churches of Christ in the greater Houston area. If every church contributed to the effort, we could expose our message to over 27 million views (looks) a month for \$250 a month. Wow! Have we ever unified and made a bold statement to the city of Houston that the Lord's church is alive and well? You know the answer, don't you? Everyone else is making statements. We have the truth. Let's make a statement, a **BOLD** statement. We are God's vehicle to save the world.

What can we accomplish with a Billboard Campaign?

- Revive our members
- Give positive exposure to Churches of Christ
- Attract non-members
- Drive traffic to our websites
- Create more opportunities for conversations about Christ and his church
- Bring more unity & fellowship to our brotherhood
- Save Souls

THE CHRISTIAN ARRAY

DEDICATED TO SUSTAINED SCRIPTURAL CHURCH GROWTH IN OUR GENERATION

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Proposal:

Though 100% participation is ideal, 50 % participation would be fabulous.

100 churches - \$250 month for 4 months

50 churches - \$500 month for 4 months

30 churches - \$850 month for 4 months

25 churches - \$1000 month for 4 months

20 churches - \$1250 month for 4 months

- Every church of Christ in the Greater Houston area will be listed on the directory (www.houstonchurchesofChrist.org) with a link to your church website.
- The billboards will be located on major highways (59 north & south, 45 north & south, I-10 east and west, 290, Beltway 8, 610 loop, 225), and would rotate to new high traffic locations every 60 days.
- The pricing requires a four month commitment.

We are aware that the timing of this proposal may not be favorable for some. Please pray that God will bless our efforts. We want to avoid debating the merits of the proposal at this time, and if you choose not to participate, we fully understand. If we do not receive at least a 25% commitment of participation from all of the churches, we will not move forward.

With 25% or more participation, we will include **all** of the Greater Houston Area Churches of Christ in the directory unless exclusion is requested.

Who is the originator of this idea?

Brothers in Christ concerned about the Church of Christ, with no hidden agendas or financial motivation.

Questions may be directed to:

Gary Smith – Fifth Ward Church of Christ , 713-762-2654, garysmithdiscovery@yahoo.com

David Duncan – Memorial Church of Christ, 713-464-0271, dduncan@mcoc.org

John Tillman Jr. - Garden Oaks Church of Christ, 713-694-2349.

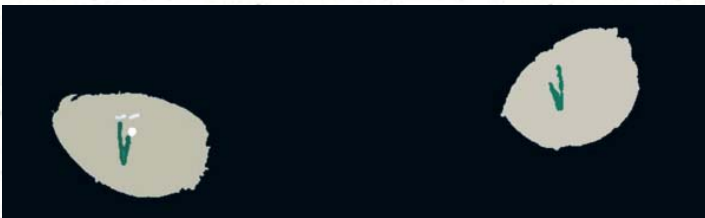
Psalms 133:1 Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!

IMPOSSIBLE FOR EVOLUTION! - HOW ANIMALS SEE

The following article is copied from the Engines of Our Ingenuity Website by John Leinhardt. The theme of the article is that predatory animals typically have eyes forward to locate prey. Prey animals have eyes positioned for almost full circle vision to watch for prey.

It is an amazing display of design to provide benefits to the various animals which the animals could not have figured out for themselves.

Today, we see with two eyes. The University of Houston's College of Engineering presents this series about the machines that make our civilization run, and the people whose ingenuity created them.



We humans are largely binocular beings. Each eye alone gives us roughly a 130-degree field of vision. With two eyes, we can see nearly 180 degrees. Most of that field is what's called a Cyclopean image -- the single mental picture that a Cyclops might see. But that single image, created by two eyes, has both range and depth. Only an occasional person, despite having two eyes, remains monocular. Their eyes fail to form that Cyclopean image.

You and I are predator animals. Like other predators, our eyes face forward. They're designed less to look out for our own protection than to locate prey.



Horses, cattle, and sheep, on the other hand, are the predator's prey. They have to be aware of danger from any direction. The eyes on either side of a horse's head, for example, function in monocular mode. A horse can see all the way around, except for the portion in back that's blocked by its own body. And it has binocular vision over a very small range directly in front. By the way, a horse's vision is roughly 20/30 compared to 20/20 for a human. And it has a limited ability to distinguish colors.



The eyes of the predator cat have even poorer resolution, far less ability to distinguish color, and a very limited field of view. Cats have to turn their heads to see all around them. But, they have much wider binocular vision, excellent night vision, and they quickly accommodate to lighting changes. Cats have another predator advantage: Unlike humans, they don't have to blink to keep their eyes lubricated with water.

The prey/predator difference is dramatic in birds. A birder once told me, "There are really only two kinds of birds: raptors and bird feed." A pigeon's field of vision is even greater than a horse's -- nearly 360 degrees, with a very narrow binocular portion in front. And it processes what it sees faster than we can. Like horses, pigeons are very sensitive to any movement.

IMPOSSIBLE FOR EVOLUTION!

A predatory owl has only a 120 degree field of vision, and most of that's binocular. Like us, any such raptor has to turn its head this way and that, but they can spot prey at great distances. The accuracy of their binocular vision is astonishing by human standards. We use the expression "hawkeye" for good reason.

Unlike humans, few birds can move their eyes. But they're very well-equipped to distinguish color. The eyes of sea birds function like camera filters, cutting through haze and fog. A penguin's eyes are adapted to blue aquatic surroundings. Most birds can see well into the ultraviolet range, which we cannot see at all.

So animals display either the binocular focus of predators like us, or the wide visual spread of prey animals. And that's only the beginning. Once we know the clues, the eyes -- how they're placed and how they act -- have so much more to tell us about who and what any beast really is.

I'm John Lienhardt at the University of Houston, where we're interested in the way inventive minds work.

This article is copied from the following website: <http://www.uh.edu/engines/keywords.htm> and is episode 2581.



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proof of global warming



MONEY PAGE

GUARANTEED CHURCH GROWTH

If your congregation does the following, BCE Publications guarantees that it will grow.

Poll your congregation three times at 6 months intervals with the following results:

- 50% of the members know who their elder is
- 50% of the members will say that a minister is their friend
- 50% of the members will say that they are uplifted by the song services
- 50% of the men will say that their input is considered before physical decisions are made
- 50% of the members will say they are an important part of the work
- 50% of the members will say they are aware of the goals of the congregation
- 50% of the members will say that they know what their part is in achieving the goals

GUARANTEE: For the first congregation which does this and does not grow by at least 10%, we will send \$1000 to the church related children's home of your choice in your name.

I have never met a person who said that if they did this their church would not grow. If your congregation is not growing, what have you got to lose? (Offer made since 2001)

IMPOSSIBLE FOR EVOLUTION?

We will offer \$100 to the first person who can explain how we could have violated the first law of thermodynamics and have come into existence without God.

We will offer \$100 to the first person who can explain how we could have violated the second law of thermodynamics and have existed forever without God. (Offer first posted 8/08)

IMPOSSIBLE FOR EVOLUTION!

This publication continues (since 1991) to make a standing offer of \$100 to the first person who can give any reason (1 or more) as to why atheistic evolution is a better explanation for the universe and/or life than creation by God, The Father of Adam, Abraham, and Jesus; as revealed in the Bible.

We will also give you \$100 if we cannot give you 12 reasons why atheistic evolution is impossible as an explanation for our existence.

We will discuss this any place, any time, and in any forum. (Offer posed since June, 1991)

RUN AT THE SPEED OF LIGHT:

We will offer \$100 to the first person who can refute the logic that a person can in fact run at the speed of light as presented in the September 2009 issue of this newsletter.

THE MONEY PAGE:

This page may seem odd, even irreverent to offer money for something like this. It is 3 simple statements on church growth, that we cannot be here without God, and evolution is not possible. The steadfastness of putting money on the line for this is to try to be of assistance against those who would discourage church growth, believe in atheism, or promote atheistic evolution.

The page is intended to be a continuing reinforcement.

THE CHRISTIAN ARRAY

DEDICATED TO SUSTAINED SCRIPTURAL CHURCH GROWTH IN OUR GENERATION

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AREA WIDE ACTIVITIES

AREA WIDE GOSPEL SINGING:

Hidden Valley on Saturday, April 3, 2010 from 6:00 to 8:00 P.M.

REFRESHMENTS AND ADDITIONAL FELLOWSHIP WILL FOLLOW.

Please print out the attached Announcement sheet for the congregation to read.

David Wardrup, Hidden Valley church of Christ
9521 Sunnywood , Houston, Tx 77038
Office (281)447-5422, Cell: (281)635-3135

YAHOO GROUP

HoustonCofC is a Yahoo group hosted by Steve Sandifer [steve.sandifer@sbcglobal.net] for the purpose of communicating Houston area news among the brethren. It is open to any member of the church at no cost.

The Christian Array Newsletter

This newsletter will be sent to members of the church on a monthly basis as an attempt to promote area wide activities and church growth. If you do not want to receive this newsletter, send an e-mail to info@thearray.org and it will be stopped.

If you know of anyone who would like to receive this newsletter, send their e-mail addresses to info@thearray.org. All past copies of the newsletter can be found on the website "thearray.org".

E-MAIL ADDRESSES

A goal of this newsletter is to develop a mailing list of as many members of the church as possible and to communicate church related information to as many members as possible. In that light, we would appreciate:

1. Your forwarding the church member e-mail addresses which you have.
2. Sending the directory of the congregation you attend or any other directories which you might have.
3. Give us an idea of how to collect church member e-mail addresses.

This information will not be sold or used for any purpose not mentioned herein.

The Christian Array is dedicated to support the sustained scriptural growth of the churches of Christ. It is published by BCE Publications, a 501(c)(3) organization with Benton F. Baugh, Ph.D., P.E. as editor BCE is solely responsible for the content. Any announcements, requests for publication, or comments should be e-mailed to info@thearray.org.