

SHEPHERDING/MANAGING!

OR WHAT IS THE ROLE OF LEADERSHIP?

Shepherding is the primary role of shepherds, and it cannot be delegated. If the shepherds are not shepherding, they are not shepherds. There are kinds of assistance shepherds can receive, but due to the confidential nature of a lot of situations, only shepherds can handle shepherding.

Means of assistance for shepherding can be as simple as a member using a computer to track attendance to note declines in personal attendance so that the shepherd has an early insight into who to shepherd or someone hosting a social event so that the shepherd can remain in contact with his charges.

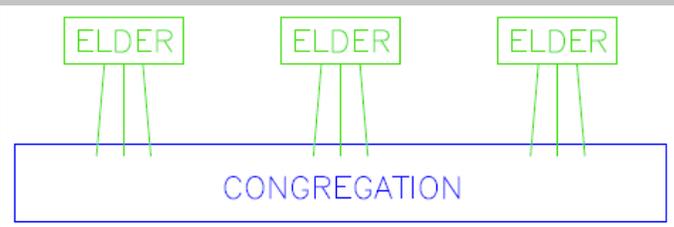
The goal of this article is to examine the contrast in shepherding roles which an elder must do with managing roles the elder is responsible for but which can be delegated.

SHEPHERDING

In a small or start-up congregation, the spiritual leadership not only comes from the congregation, it probably started the congregation.



As the congregation grows, elders are appointed, and at first typically all elders jointly administer the shepherding of the members.



Specific elders may well administer specific members in personal situations, but as all elders know all members a group administration works well.

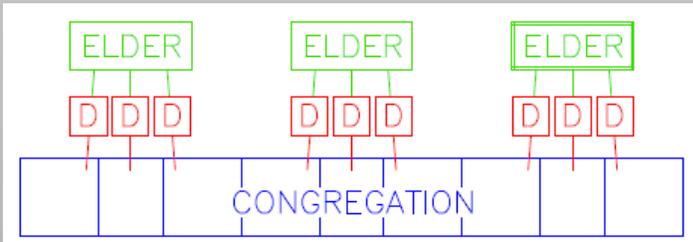
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MANAGING

In a small or start-up congregation, the management leadership not only comes from the congregation, it probably started the congregation.



As the congregation grows, elders and deacons are appointed, and as specific elders are likely to supervise specific deacons who are in turn in charge of physical tasks of the congregation.

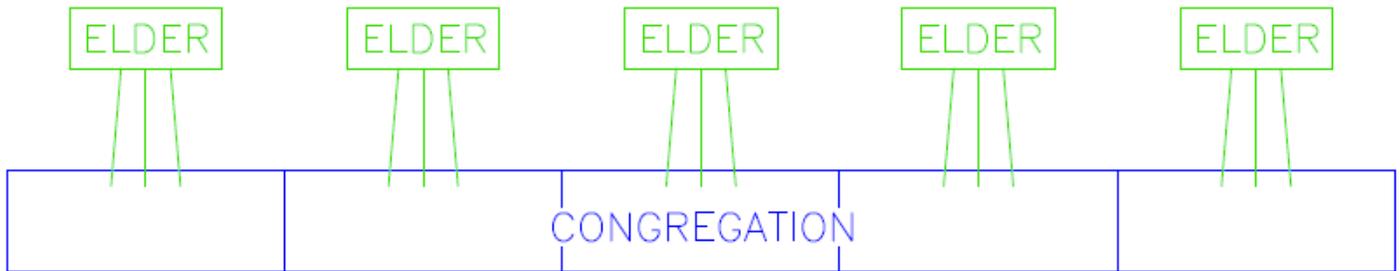


This pattern works well for a congregation within a size range which varies with situations.

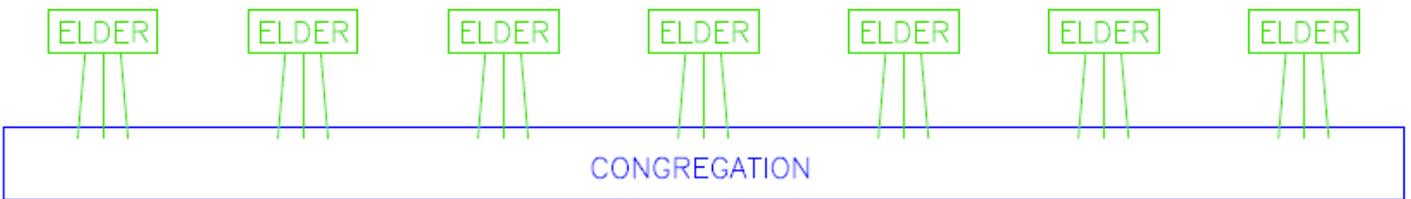
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SHEPHERDING/MANAGING! (OR WHAT IS THE ROLE OF LEADERSHIP) P2 SHEPHERDING CONTINUED

As a congregation grows, frequently the flock is divided into groups and individual elders are responsible for shepherding a specific group as is illustrated by the following:

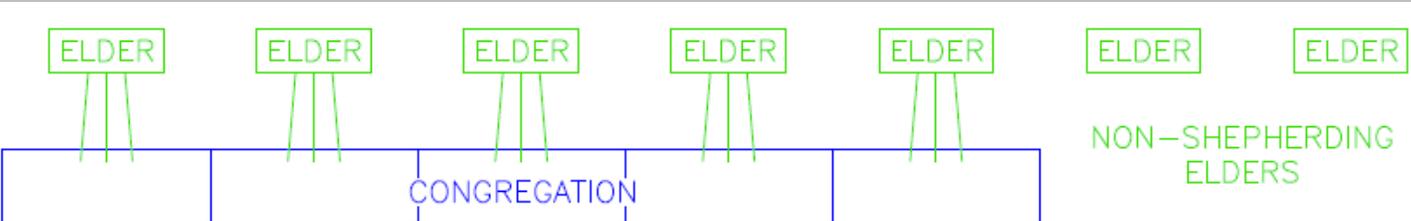


As congregations grow, the mass of shepherding needs and physical needs of the congregation become so overburdening that the net effect is that sometimes all shepherds again become responsible for all members, or elders are no longer specifically responsible for anyone.



All situations are different, but it is reasonable to conclude that when elders are consumed with too many shepherding duties, along with too many physical responsibilities, church growth will stop. Many churches grow rapidly up to a size and simply stop growing. It is so common that churches are referred to as having a life cycle and die similarly to the way humans die. We have all seen the pattern of start-up, rapid growth, hitting a plateau you could not get across, and dying.

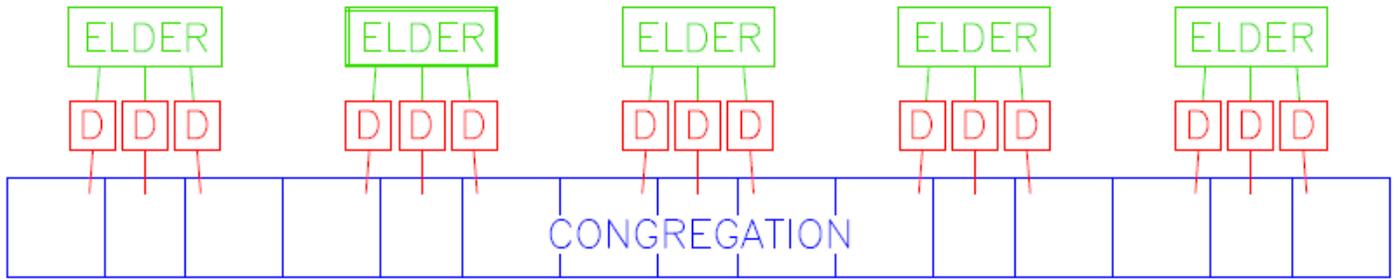
The following graphic is an organization which one congregation is trying to compensate for this situation. A portion of the elders are specifically responsible for non-shepherding activities so that other elders will have time to shepherd.



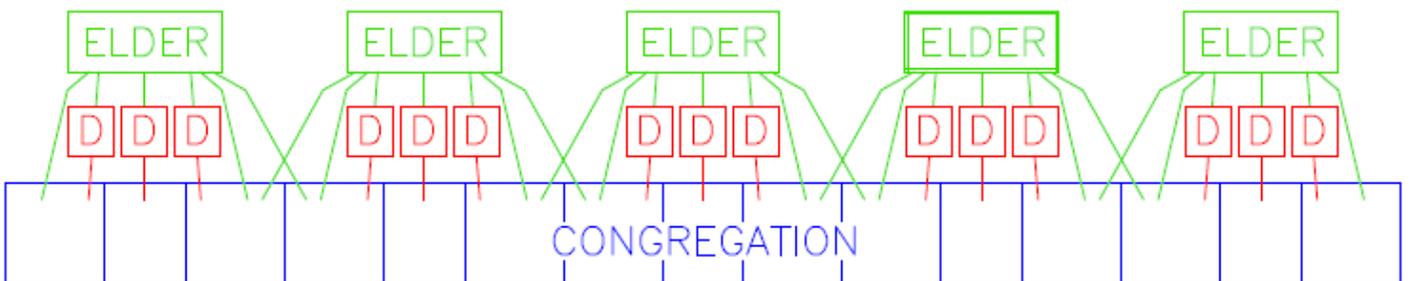
This is with good intention, but a non-shepherding shepherd would be something other than a shepherd. Possibly the benefit can be obtained otherwise. **End of Shepherding, return to Managing.**

SHEPHERDING/MANAGING! (OR WHAT IS THE ROLE OF LEADERSHIP) P3 MANAGING CONTINUED

As the congregation gets bigger, theoretically more deacons simply report to more elders. Something like the following graphic. The box around one of the elders is made bold to imply he is in charge. for a fixed time period This is typically done on a rotational basis.



Whereas that is the theory, what frequently happens is more like the following graphic.



This is attempting to illustrate that elders supervise deacons to an extent and also interact directly with some of the members. In many cases the elders would be happy to simply manage the deacons, but the deacons do not always do what the elders ask them to do. Irrespective of whether the deacons fail in the tasks or the elders failed in the delegation, the work is not being done. As deacons (or other appointees) fail more, elders work harder. This continues until the workload of spiritual leadership and physical leadership simply overwhelm the eldership and church growth stalls.

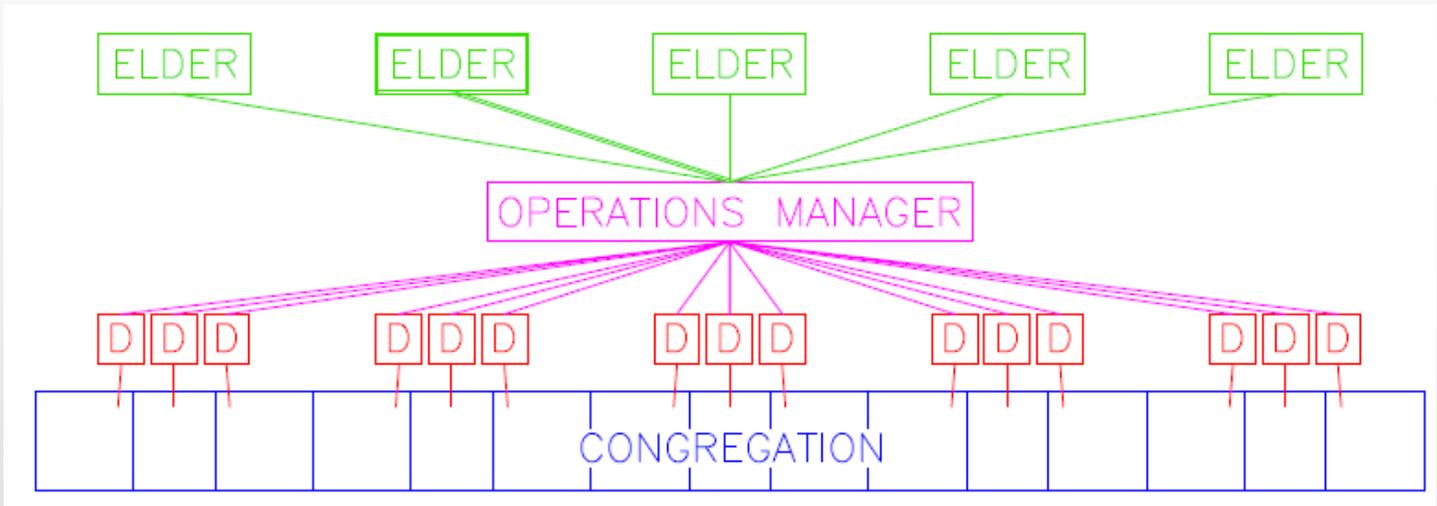
Again, all of us have seen this happen. It is not that everyone is not well intentioned. It is what frequently happens. The typical answer to this is for everyone to work harder. Memory serves everyone to know that it used to work, so if they can revert back to what was working by working harder at it, everything will be all right.

After 20-40 years of the same thing and various episodes of trying harder at the same thing, it would seem prudent to take a fresh look.

The fresh look has to presume that shepherds have to shepherd, but whereas the elders are in charge of physical activities, they don't have to micro-manage them on a daily basis.

SHEPHERDING/MANAGING! (OR WHAT IS THE ROLE OF LEADERSHIP) P4

Consider the following as a graphic of a possible solution to the problem:



This suggestion places an “**Operations Manager**” between the eldership and the work to be done. The person could be an Office Manager, General Manager, CEO, COO or whatever you might like to call him, but would be responsible for the non-shepherding functions of the congregation.

The elders continue with their **rotation of the chair of the elders** function and the operations manager deals with the swing of personalities from one elder to another. Substantial changes can happen from elder to elder on which program is to be pushed or discouraged during that quarter. This can have a discouraging impact on the normal middle managers, which elders can simply write off as ineffective deacons.

Now all the eldership has to do is to **find the right person** to be the Operations Manager. He must be strong enough to command the respect of the middle managers, meek enough to not give the appearance of trying to take over, experienced enough to handle a wide variety of situations, affordable., and willing to work for an eldership. When you thought the hard part was getting the eldership to agree to this, you might find out that getting the person is harder, or he might be an obvious choice in your congregation. He might be free, but he is not likely to be a preacher. The nature of business **administration** and the nature of **preaching (social work)** are extremely different. It is probably reasonable to say that if a preacher would be good at doing this, he should not have been a preacher in the first place.

We have one of our larger congregations departing to instrumental music, presumably trying to stimulate growth. Would it not be better to try scriptural organizational changes rather than starting down the slippery slope to denominationalism?

SHEPHERDING/MANAGING! (OR WHAT IS THE ROLE OF LEADERSHIP) P5

Imagine the **beauty of this situation**:

1. The Operations Manager writes an Operations Manual to **document the policies of the eldership**, the elders approve it, and the congregation operates by it. The same decision is not made time after time, it is made and documented and only visited when some change might need to be made.
2. The elders **do not lose touch** with the congregation because they are separated by an Operations Manager, but rather re-establish touch because they are in shepherding meetings rather than closed elder's meetings.
3. **Regular business meetings** can be held and administered automatically. Elders can do this also, it is just one more thing to do. It is extremely unlikely that a growth profile can be maintained in a congregation without monthly business meetings being held.
4. Regular organizational meeting can be held to keep the middle management informed without being diluted down to the **lowest common denominator**. In typical situations, all elders would take turn as chair and take turns at being in charge of any organizational meeting. The infrastructure for any meeting cannot be any more complex or aggressive than the elder least capable at management. Turns out that there are some great shepherds who are good at shepherding (social work) rather than managing (Type A business work). This is not surprising as having different talents is well taught in the Bible. Does any shepherd want to discourage the work of the congregation to claim their right to run a business meeting?
5. Running a large congregation has many similarities to running a large business, and recruiting appropriate individuals to positions is complex in both. **Removing ineffective individuals** from positions in both is also complex. An appropriate Operations Manager can maintain a continuing rotation whereby an ineffective middle manager can be simply moved graciously. Elderships can do that also, it just takes more of their time.
6. **Computer analysis of member attendance** can be done to detect congregational and individual trends. Wouldn't an eldership like to see a printout on the members who in the last quarter stopped attending Sunday night service, Bible Class, or at all. Just one more thing to be coordinated.

The point to this is that our custom (not the scriptures) is for elderships to micro-manage the operations. This is good at one size congregation and is a growth killer at another size. Have you grown to the point that you need to question the non-scriptural customs in how you operate your congregation?

All that being said, it would be good to have a clear statement of the role of leadership in the church. Consider the following: **The role of the shepherds is to shepherd the flock and to make sure everything else happens under scriptural control.** Conversely, the role of the shepherd is not to do everything or to micro-manage everything.

It is reasonable to say that authority not properly delegated is authority lost.

If you have a congregation which grew rapidly for a period and then went flat line, it may be time to consider some serious (scriptural) organizational changes.

IMPOSSIBLE FOR EVOLUTION—IMPOSSIBLE???

In a discussion with a friend, he tried to get the admission that it was reasonable to consider that either God or spontaneous creation of matter from nothing were possible, even if remotely. Remotely could be 1 chance in a billion. With one chance in a billion, 5 chances a year, and billion years to happen - you have a 99% chance that it will happen.

The most interesting part of the discussion was that he agreed that he believed that it was a possibility that matter could be spontaneously created from nothing.



NOTHING

SOMETHING

SOMETHING ELSE

He was not suggesting that it went from nothing straight to a living breathing animal. He would suggest takes millions of years and thousands of small steps to go from nothing to a living thing. It is however, the same thing. After you believe the nothing to something step as being a natural event, anything is possible.

That is what the basis of atheistic evolution and the Big Bang is. It is usually dressed up in fancy words like parallel universes for time-space continuums, but that is what it ultimately boils down to. He was certain that we could not prove that matter could not be spontaneously generated from nothing. We can't. All we can prove is that it violates the laws of science.

The idea that someone would acknowledge believing that something could spontaneously generate from nothing is mind boggling. It doesn't matter if something generates into our universe and something else generates into a negative universe (whatever that is), it is still a lot of work for free. It is beyond perpetual motion, way beyond. At that point the discussion of "impossible for evolution" is not worth discussing. If matter can spontaneously generate from nothing, anything is possible. Can you say for sure that there is not a one in one billion chance that you can throw a ball and hit the moon or that you cannot put out a fire by putting gasoline on it.

You should recognize that we believe in something from nothing, but it is not a natural event - it is a supernatural event - God. If there ever was a parallel and un-understandable parallel universe, it is where God lives. We will do well to understand God's creation around us, much less actually understanding God. That life exists is a proof of God, but belief in God is faith, as belief in evolution is.

City Wide Meeting Discusses 2012 Campaign for Christ

57 Brethren were present on September 8 at South Union Church of Christ as Fifth Ward Minister **Gary Smith** discussed the 2010 Campaign and proposed a greater effort in 2012. He also introduced the potential idea of an area wide Day of Good Works.

He also reported that 36 congregations cooperated in the recent city-wide **Outdoor Billboard** outreach. (Two **known** baptisms resulted from the Billboards and the Memorial congregation estimated a 10% increase in attendance). This advertising cost \$109,000.

Sugarland Elder **Roy Johnson** reported that the 2010 Campaign resulted in **18 baptisms**. Fifty congregations contributed \$124,815, and \$13,000 remains to help get the 2012 effort started. 4,000 seats were available, with possibly 3/4 filled at some meetings.

Sugarland Elder **Bobby R. Allen** reported that the sale of Campaign T-shirts generated \$6,735 which was applied to distribution of 1,075 Back-to-School Backpacks with school supplies and Campaign invitations.

Congregations represented at the meeting Thursday night were: Memorial, Champions, Fifth Ward, Third Ward, Sealy, Texas (Anderson Street), Hwy. 249, Brookhollow, Sugarland, Highland Heights, Highland Garden, Channelview, Fidelity, Shady Acres, Candlelight, Spring Creek (Tomball), Huffsmith, Mt. Zion, South Union, Southbelt, Riverside, Stafford, Scenic Woods, Kashmere Gardens, Highway Six, Westward Street in Texas City.

Volunteers were requested for a **Nuts and Bolts Committee** to move forward with planning for the 2012 Campaign. Those who volunteered were: Richard Blount, Horace Stroud, Robert Heyen, Roy Johnson, Larry Keele, Kelvin Weathers, Benton Baugh, Gerald Fruzia, Freddy Holland, Wendell Hart and Bobby R. Allen.

Minister **Dale Foster** of the Highway 249 congregation concluded the meeting by recalling that in the 1950's Houston area congregations placed half page ads in the Houston Post. He encouraged a renewal of area-wide evangelism together.

Report by Gerald Fruzia, Minister, Brookhollow Church of Christ.

News of this effort and the 2012 Day of Good Works will be carried in this newsletter. If you would like to participate directly in either of them, respond to this newsletter and your name will be passed along.

Employment Opportunities Campus Minister

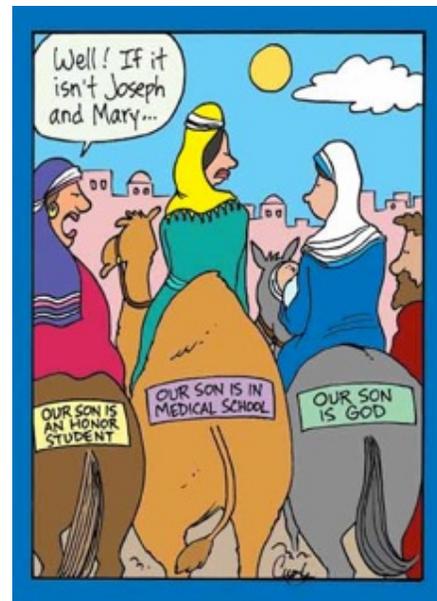
Arms of Hope – Boles Campus is seeking a youth and family minister who has a passion for serving at risk youth and families. At Arms of Hope, we have a unique opportunity to serve youth and single mothers who come from disadvantaged backgrounds and need spiritual leadership to bring them to Christ and guide them to a path of spiritual growth and wellness. We seek to nurture these youth and families educationally, emotionally and spiritually so they can develop and prosper. This key position will encourage and develop relationships with local congregations and coordinate activities with other ministries. This opportunity offers a competitive salary in addition to health insurance, a retirement plan, and vacation/leave time. Learn more about us at ArmsOfHope.org or contact Ms. Allen Williams at lawilliams@armsofhope.org for more information.

The purpose of government is to facilitate citizens in making a living, not providing the living for them.

The purpose of the church is to facilitate members Christianity, not to do it for them.

The best vitamin for Christians: B1

There can be no happiness when the things we do are different than the things we believe.



SPRING BRANCH CHURCH OF CHRIST

5300 Hammerly

It is about 1 block east of Blalock. They have Spanish, English, and Korean services

Bible Class is at 9:00 a.m.
Morning Worship is at 10:00 a.m.
Evening Worship is at 6 p.m.

For more information contact Jim Culpepper at
jim@culpepperlaw.com

THE CHRISTIAN ARRAY

DEDICATED TO SUSTAINED SCRIPTURAL CHURCH GROWTH IN OUR GENERATION

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WHAT THE CHURCH OF CHRIST IS NOT

A local group of Christians who believe that the Bible can be updated by contemporary council decisions.

A church which receives the permission from an earthly headquarters to plant a new congregation.

A church which attempts to duplicate a 19th or 20th century pattern for a church.

A church which believes you can pick and choose what part of the Bible you want to believe and follow only those parts.

A church which believes that we should judge that we are all in a community of believers as long as we say we believe in Jesus, irrespective of what we do and preach. A church which should assure all others that they are saved.

A group who makes decisions based on popularity rather than scriptural basis.

A group which simply skips over Acts 2:38.

A group which finds more convenient ways to simulate baptism.

A group which votes on what it suits them to believe and preach or a group which believes that they are still getting direct revelations from God.

A group who believes we are here to entertain ourselves.

For those bound & determined to change the church of Christ to be the Christian Church, wouldn't it be easier to simply join the Christian Church.? Is the problem that your conscience won't allow you to join the Christian Church, but if you can reduce the church of Christ to being the Christian Church you will not offend your conscience?

WHAT THE CHURCH OF CHRIST IS

The church of Christ is a local group of Christians which try to speak where the Bible speaks and remain silent where the Bible is silent.

The church of Christ tries to reestablish the first century pattern and teaching of the New Testament era at each location.

The church of Christ tries to reestablish the scriptural organization of the church at each location.

The church of Christ has members who believe they are following the scriptural teachings as best they can.

Church of Christ members believe that we should not judge others' eternal reward, but that it is not reasonable to give comfort to others who follow their own preferences rather than teachings of the Bible.

A non-instrumental body as instruments were available in the first century and not used, and not used for several centuries.

A group who teaches Acts 2:38.

A group which teaches baptism by immersion for the remission of sins as that is what is taught in the Bible.

A group which believes all revelation was given in the first century.

A group which believes we are responsible to take the Gospel to the world.

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 your 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

2nd Tues. Preacher's Luncheon at Golden Island Buffet, 901 N. Shepherd,
confirm with Dale Foster at dalefost@gmail.com
December Annual Sacred Harp Singing

Mar, 2012 Area Wide Men's Retreat

May, 2012 Foster's Home for Children Golf Tournament, NW Houston

Texas Mentoring is recruiting for Foster Parents, in interested contact Victoria
@ 713-432-0827

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".

If we are not a Christian nation, what are we?

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:

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.