

THE CYCLE OF LIFE

The Impossible for Evolution article (p. 3) discusses another aspect of a chicken egg, the start of life of a chick. Life can be divided in many ways, but consider the following as basic categories:

BIRTH:

Your birth is traumatic for everyone involved. As a baby you are always cute—perhaps as a defense mechanism so that others will assist you and protect you.

RAPID GROWTH:

You experience an almost exponential growth up to a “mature” size. You don’t even have to try hard to grow, it seems to come naturally.

STEADY STAGE:

You remain of a reasonably stable size, typically only to fatten up some. You may have desired to be bigger or stronger, but it just doesn’t happen.

DECLINE:

You begin to slowly (in most cases) lose some of your size, faculties, and abilities. For the first period of decline, you use your experience and knowledge to compensate for decline in capabilities. At some point your decline overcomes your ability to compensate and you are forced to admit you are getting older.

DEATH:

You pass from the current existence—i.e. gone.

WHO ARE YOU?

In reading the preceding, you may have wondered at what age your decline is going to start or for some of us, when it started.

As applied to you personally, the preceding is not what you decided to do. It is God’s plan. If you plan something else, it is still going to happen. You can impact the getting fat part or advance the death part. Other than that you have little control over the process.

However, in this article, we would like to consider the “you” as your congregation. It appears that a large majority of congregations follow this plan. Think of the congregations you have seen and see if this is not correct.

Most congregations seem to spend a small amount of time in the “BIRTH” and “RAPID GROWTH” periods and spend most of their existence in the “STEADY STATE” and “DECLINE” periods, just as we do as people.

It’s almost like the congregations are following “God’s Plan” for humans. God’s plan for humans is what God intended to happen, so much so that we cannot avoid it. We can shorten it, but we cannot stretch it beyond God’s intention.

Today’s question is whether it is reasonable to follow the same plan for congregations. Surely BIRTH and RAPID GROWTH would have to be pleasing to God (Presuming it is scriptural).

STEADY STATE is reasonably easy to determine. If you have the same attendance you

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had 3 years ago, it is easy to suggest you are in STEADY STATE. A somewhat more conservative assessment would be that you live in a neighborhood which has grown 5% in the last 3 years, your attendance has gone up 5%, then you have not grown. You have simply absorbed the natural influx of members to your community in a STEADY STATE fashion.

By either definition would you as a responsible person in your congregation, like to go to judgment day and say that you helped lead your multi-talented congregation into fields white unto harvest and netted no souls?

If no growth concerns you, DECLINE should scare the bejabbers out of you.

A primary objective of this newsletter is to determine the words to say which will assist congregations in going from a STEADY STATE or DECLINING status back to a growth mode. It doesn't matter if we think up the words, or some contributor suggests them. It is vitally important for someone to assist in this process.

To go from STEADY STATE or DECLINING back to GROWTH is sort of like being reborn. Most leaders think this will happen by tweaking their present operational practices. It is our observation that change sufficient to do this is not a tweaking of current operating practices, but is closer to a rebirth. It does not have to be traumatic, but sufficient change will be considered "traumatic" by a class of current members who are comfortable with the status quo.

Typically, church growth plateaus occur in the range of 200, 700, and 2500 members. The operations structure which got you to that level will not propel you much past it. You must have an organizational rebirth to continue growth. All that is at stake is the future of the church, and more personally, our own eternal future.

One attempt at this is on page 7 of this newsletter (and is repeated in every newsletter). It is called "GUARANTEED CHURCH GROWTH" and provides a simple few steps for getting your congregation to grow. As noted, this plan has been repeated often since 2001 - over ten years. During that time no one has suggested to us that it would not work. As far as we know during that time no one has tried it. It is a bad suggestion, we are poor salesmen, or both. Worse than that, it appears we can't even get someone to try it.

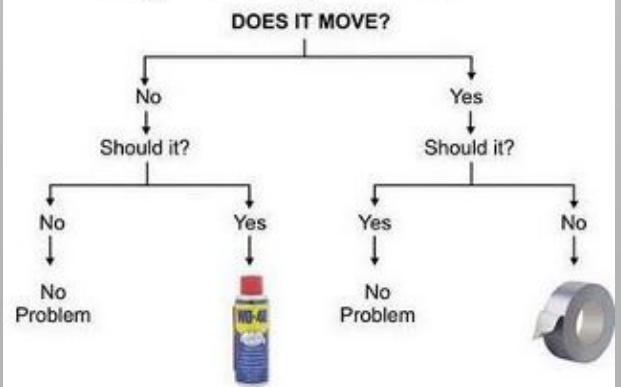
There are readers of this newsletter from all walks of life and all levels of education. If someone has a better way to say this, send it and we will publish it - frequently. Whoever thinks up the words which assist congregations in the process of restarting growth will do a great service.

Possibly the best cartoon of this century



I personally would suggest government. They never go to jail.

Engineering Flowchart



IMPOSSIBLE FOR EVOLUTION

THE INCREDIBLE EDIBLE EGG! - 2

The fertilized chicken egg is a small container containing a yoke and an egg white. Pretty simple mixture in a cool looking shell.

Over a period of about 21 days after the egg is laid, the "filling" of the fertilized egg transforms into a chick.

From the reasonably homogenous yoke and egg white a chick will be formed which will have a heart, a brain, feathers, eyes, a beak, feet, and other essential parts.

All programming information to make this happen was enclosed in the combination of a single male and single female cell.

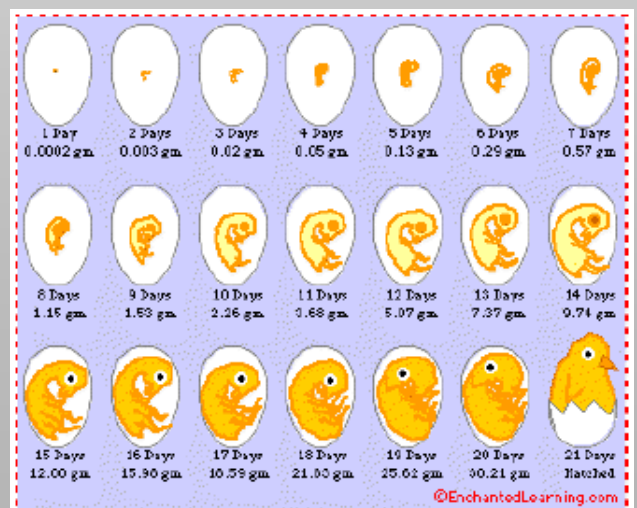
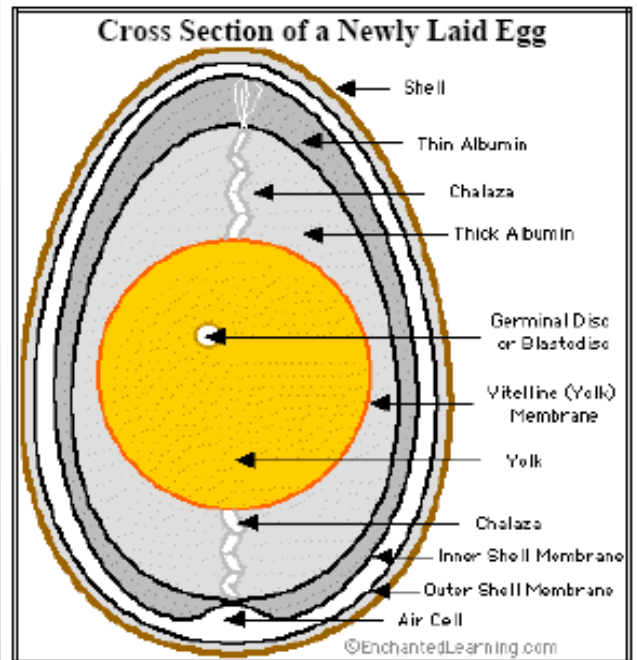
One hundred percent of the raw materials are consumed in the process without the chick eating it. The chick is so well developed that when it is a full chick, it can peck its way out of the shell. After pecking its way out, it simply walks off.

Can you imagine how precisely the chemical mixture within the egg must be. Not enough calcium and there are no bones. Not enough liquid and the chick dies. Too much liquid and the chick drowns. The developing chick is trapped in a porcelain type shell with no chance of getting help from anyone else.

You don't get to experiment to evolve a system such as this. It must be done right the first and every time or the chick simply dies.

To be an atheist, you must believe that a relatively dumb chicken made a shell in her birth canal and filled it with the perfect set of chemicals to make a chick. It takes a lot of faith to be an atheist.

You need a very intelligent designer to do it right the first time. God is that intelligent designer.



THE CHRISTIAN ARRAY

DEDICATED TO SUSTAINED SCRIPTURAL CHURCH GROWTH IN OUR GENERATION

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FILL-IN PREACHERS AND SPECIAL SUBJECTS

We would like to investigate the possibility of having a list of available preachers for fill-in at smaller congregations or for specialized topics.

The topics presented below are presently prepared programs intended to be available at a moment's notice. All expenses are assumed to be taken care of by the speaker unless specifically otherwise agreed in advance. The home congregation is identified for the speakers for your information, but it does not imply in any way that the home congregation is responsible for the content of the lessons.

If you have one or more (max. 5) lessons you would like to present on this basis, send the information to bbaugh@thearray.org and we will post it.

If you are interested in using the services of one of these brothers (or sisters in the appropriate context), contact them directly. If you use one of them, we would appreciate hearing of the results.

The two samples following are a conventional sermon/Bible class situation and a special topic speaker:

Sermons: "Set Forth To be a Propitiation"; "Christ and the Church"; The Theme of God's Eternal Purpose

Classes: God's Eternal Purpose; Personal Evangelism Training; Jude; Romans
KIRK CASTLEMAN, Spring Creek Church of Christ Tomball, Texas, [832-458-4470](tel:832-458-4470), Preaching and Mission Work since 1965.

CHRISTIAN EVIDENCES (IMPOSSIBLE FOR EVOLUTION) Presentation of Biblical, scientific, and logic reasons to believe in Jehovah and Jesus. Presentation for worship service, Bible Class or youth group.

By Benton F. Baugh, Ph.D., P.E., Memorial Church of Christ, bbaugh@radoil.com, 281-599-9914 (Engineer)

December 18, 2011

Dear Brethren:

Please share this with anyone you know who might be qualified and interested.

Public Relations Officer Needed for Cherokee Home for Children

In cooperation with the Director of Development and Executive Director primary responsibilities will include...

1. Design and production of periodic fundraising and public relations mailings. This includes database management, in-house printing and mail processing, off-site purchasing of printing services, and other donor communication processes.
2. Coordinating or assisting as needed with special events on and off campus. This will include the Cherokee Day food drive and barbeque, an annual on-campus auction, regional fundraising and planned giving dinners, development council management, and numerous campus visits and activities with volunteer groups coming to the campus.
3. Travel to and speaking with churches, lectureships, and civic and educational groups representing the home.
4. Planning and implementing public relations goals on the Cherokee Home website, Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, and other social networking and web-based sites as needed and developed. This will include design, updates, and outcomes management of these media outlets.
5. Other tasks to fulfill the mission of the home may be required periodically.

We offer a modest salary with all living expenses provided. This includes housing and utilities; food; fully paid health, life and dental insurance for yourself and dependents; and a retirement program.

Cherokee Home for Children is a 53 year old Church of Christ affiliated residential children's home located in the north edge of the Texas hill country in central Texas. The home takes care of about 32 neglected, abused, and at-risk children at a time. Most of the home's funding comes from Churches of Christ or concerned individuals.

Applicants must be male due to church speaking appointments and must be an active member of the Churches of Christ as verified upon checking references. Both single and married applicants will be considered. All resumes should be sent as a PDF file to Delton McGuire, Executive Director, Cherokee Home for Children at hcdd@centex.net. Our website is www.chc4kids.org.
Delton McGuire, Executive Director
Cherokee Home for Children
P O Box 295, Cherokee, Texas 76832
325-372-7621

Healing the Hearts of Children
In the Heart of Texas



LEARNING CURVE: CHURCH SAFETY

Years ago, in Tulsa, I walked into the church auditorium and discovered a homeless man sleeping on the back pew. That is not an experience I want to repeat. So, I may have a higher level of safety concerns than most. Let's look at some common sense things we can all do for personal safety and to protect others at the church building.

Pay attention to your personal space. That would be the ten feet immediately around you. Look at faces and notice if someone looks intensely angry or very upset. You may need to seek assistance for them or ask someone to intervene. Watch for medical emergencies and be prepared to assist or ask for help. Get to know the people who sit in your area on Sunday morning. We don't want everyone rushing to aid a sleeper but definitely need to assist someone who looks as if they are going to pass out.

Look around at your surroundings. Is there anything unusual or different from the norm? There might be damage to the building or signs of an intruder that others will miss. Pay attention to odd smells and things in disarray. Report your concerns to leadership.

In certain weather emergencies, fire or other situations it may be best for leadership to direct us to another part of the building or to the parking lot without going into detail about the situation. Follow the instructions of trusted leadership calmly and quietly.

We must above all else, protect our children. We are liable for any injury, abuse or abduction of our children on church property. Do not let your child out of your sight without putting them in the care of another responsible adult. Don't leave them in unattended classrooms – they might be subject to bullying, inappropriate touching or abuse. I'm sorry to say that, but these things do happen and we have an absolute responsibility to report any abuse.

Be aware and protective of our preschool children and staff. Do not intrude on the preschool hallway during class hours – it should be a safety zone for the children. Be alert and protective of our office staff too. I always let them know when I enter the building and when I leave. I try to be considerate of their job and limit my visiting to other times.

As it turned out, someone with a key let the homeless man come in and sleep in the building. That brings us to keys. Consider the entire liability for the church building on your shoulders when you use the key! Don't let strangers in and for goodness sake, lock the doors when you leave.

Elizabeth Brown, Texarkana, Texas

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HOUSTON AREA WIDE GOSPEL MEETING
AUGUST 4-8, 2012

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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.

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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

May 22 Foster's Home for Children Golf Tournament, NW Houston

Aug 4-8 Area Wide Campaign for Christ
George R. Brown Convention Center

December Annual Sacred Harp Singing

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.

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.