

DEVELOPING AN EVANGELISTIC CHURCH!

Bro. Tommy Brooks, Evangelist

The following is a reprint of a presentation at the 70th Annual Church of Christ National Lectureship in Atlanta, Georgia last April. The thoughts have a special reason for your consideration - Highland Heights Church of Christ in Houston, where Bro. Brooks is the pulpit minister, has **had 92 baptisms already this year**. If anyone has a hope of becoming evangelistic, they should hear what Bro. Brooks has to say.

DEVELOPING AN EVANGELISTIC CHURCH

INTENT AND PURPOSE

The intent and purpose of this section will be to share methods and insight on congregational and individual evangelism. We will focus on providing strategies that ministers and teachers of the gospel can use to more effectively reach lost souls through the delivery of pulpit sermons, teaching of non-member classes and in developing members to engage in personal evangelism.

PRIMARY GROWTH FACTOR: THE GOSPEL

At the church of Christ in Highland Heights, we use the gospel of Jesus Christ as our primary growth factor. The gospel story is our focus. Jesus said in John 12:32, "If I be lifted up, I'll draw all men unto me." The story of how He died for our sins, was buried and rose again (I Corinthians 15:1-4) is what brings men to Him. It's that love story that contains God's power to save us from man's greatest problem: sin. Romans 1:16 says, "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for [IT] is the power of God unto salvation..."). I Cor 1:17-18 words of wisdom take away the effect the cross. The cross must be preached for it is the power of God.

CAMPAIGN FOR CHRIST—2014

Gary Smith of Fifth Ward and David Duncan of Memorial are the co-chairs of the 2014 Campaign for Christ. The campaign will be held in the Campbell Center on Aldine Bender immediately south of the Intercontinental Airport—in the Aldine area. Flyers are attached in English and Spanish. They are in low resolution for file size. High resolution are available on request.

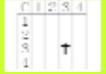


Photo of the June 22nd Rally at Westbury

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At our congregation, the Lord has added an average of 80-100 new babes each year because the gospel is being preached. That “IT” should never be downplayed, overlooked or diminished.

This way of thinking should be believed by ministers and elders together. If there is divisiveness on this, a congregation will suffer, and growth will be stifled. Congregations collectively must also be on one accord with the minister-elder group so that all as individuals can work together to develop an evangelistic church.

PULPIT MINISTERS’ STRATEGIES

GOSPEL SANDWICH

A gospel preacher should keep in mind that many members of his audience may be lost. For this cause, the gospel should be included in each sermon. Presenting the gospel at the beginning of each sermon speaks to the importance of and places a priority on such good news. Somewhere within each sermon ministers should include points that pique interest. We mention the New Testament pattern of worship since most denominations worship using the Old and New; we talk about how to remember our Lord every first day of the week; we emphasize the oneness of the only church found in the bible; and we always let the audience know that the saved are in the church of Christ. Ministers and ministerial students are encouraged to use the “gospel sandwich”—talk about the gospel in the beginning and the end of each sermon—as well as the five-step plan of salvation.

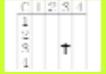
VIP CLASS

After each sermon during worship service, we offer a non-member visitor class. This class is designed to answer any question arising from the sermon or from what they may have been taught anywhere else. The preaching minister will teach the class and will always answer bible questions with bible answers. Each visitor is treated as a V.I.P. (Very Important Person), offered water and snacks and are encouraged to stay as long as necessary to answer all of their questions. We estimate approximately 60-70% of our baptisms have come from this class.

FOLLOW UP WITH VISITORS

Denominational preachers do not typically reach out to their visitors. They are deemed “untouchable” by most. Ministers at our congregation place personal phone calls to our visitors on Mondays following the worship service they attended. Visitors love hearing directly from the preachers and this further makes them feel like a V.I.P. Often they open up and feel more at ease by the end of the conversation. They are more willing to visit again and/or agree to a one-on-one bible study. Some of them even ask questions they didn’t think of during their visit, and bible studies often take place over the phone.





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CONGREGATIONAL STRATEGIES

WORKING EVANGELISM MINISTRY

Ministers and workers in our Evangelism Ministry host a nationwide gospel conference call on Thursday nights in order to share the gospel with family and friends who are not members of the Lord's body. Though most of our listeners are calling from the U.S., some have even called from overseas.

Though we have scheduled classes for non-member visitors several times on Tuesdays and on Wednesday nights, visitors are welcome to call, email, or stop by anytime. We also treat all church events as opportunities to evangelize. First we must promote events with excitement. If the ministers or those who read the announcements are not excited about the upcoming events, the congregation will not be excited and won't be as willing to invite their friends, family or co-workers come to hear the gospel. We also use the church bulletin, website and social media to advertise. We preach or teach the gospel at all events: funerals, weddings, picnics, gospel meetings, community outreach events...anytime we have a lost soul in our midst.

Not only do we reach out to non-members, but we use our Evangelism Ministry to contact those members who we haven't seen or heard from. Restorations are viewed as evangelism. Those members are lost sheep. Jesus places emphasis on rejoicing more over restoring the one who was lost rather than over those who did not stray (Matthew 18:11-13). The Evangelism Ministry makes these phone calls every week. Because of these efforts, many lost sheep have returned to the fold.

INDIVIDUAL STRATEGIES

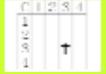
PERSONAL EVANGELISM PROGRAM

What is personal evangelism?

Every day you spend a portion of time talking to friends, family, people in your workplace, or neighbors. Each of these encounters is unique to you, making up part of a day in your life. When you take these encounters and turn conversation to things of God, with the intent of helping others come to know and understand Him, it then becomes personal evangelism. It's not as scary as you might think. In fact, you may be personally evangelizing every day without realizing you're doing so!

Is personal evangelism very important?

To sum up the answer, yes. Jesus commanded His disciples to "Go, and make disciples," meaning that they were to make followers of God. Jesus also told them how they were to do this, by "teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you" (Matthew 28:19, 20). So like Jesus' disciples, each of us are to go and tell others about God, His relationship to man, and what sin, eternity, and salvation are according to the Bible. It is then important to teach the new believers their own responsibility in personal evangelism. To illustrate the importance of personally evangelizing, we talk about a man who will sit in a draped chair before being executed in a prison. What would you tell the man? We feel a sense of urgency because we know that the man will die soon ("dead man walking").



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In fact, we should feel that same sense of urgency for everyone. One personal evangelism student says, to quote a movie, "I see dead people". Everywhere she goes, she views people as the "dead man walking".

Should you be personally evangelizing?

The Bible says that Jesus came to "seek and save those who are lost" (Luke 19:10), and Galatians 2:20 declares that Christ is living in me and I am no longer alive (to myself). If that is the case, then our priority ought to be bringing the lost to Jesus, because our lives are now His and not our own. With Christ living in us, it's important to understand how much He loves people and how much He wants them to come to know Him. "And when he drew near and saw the city, he wept over it" (Luke 19:41). "When he saw the crowds, he had compassion for them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd" (Matthew 9:36).

Joy in heaven.

The Bible also declares that there is joy in heaven when one sinner repents and believes in Jesus Christ (Luke 15:7,10), and that God Himself rejoices over His own (Zephaniah 3:17). With God living in us and working through us, we can't help but have that same joy when we see others understand and believe Him, for they have been "rescued from the domain of darkness, and transferred...into the kingdom of light." (Colossians 1:13).

Multiplying Discipleship

Each one teach one concept is taught to all those interested in personal evangelism. It is

our intent and prayer for all members to be evangelistic. "And the word of God increased; and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly; and a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith" (Acts 6:7).

PERSONAL EVANGELISM CLASSES

We teach members how to teach, not how to win souls, in order to relieve discouragement. We believe one must be prepared to teach the seekers who are seeking to be true worshipers (John 6:23) as was the eunuch in Acts 8. We simply teach people how to plant and water the seed, for God gives the increase (I Corinthians 3:6-8).

Personal Evangelism classes are offered to all members and are taught in the following phases:

PHASE I

Introduction—All students will be introduced to the Personal Evangelism (PE) program.

PHASE II

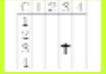
Training—Students will be doing one-on-one in-class teaching of the basic soul saving lesson.

Keyword Memorization—Students are "quizzed" as a group by the class teacher.

Hot Seat Challenge—Students are "quizzed" individually by the group.

PHASE III

Launch—All students who have been through Phases I & II are ready to launch and teach their first one-on-one class with a lost soul.



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PHASE IV

PE Advanced—This phase is for students who have completed phases I-III and are interested in staying with the PE program. Below would be their commitments:

Assist—Help other new students; assist during workshops and with VIP (visitor) classes.

Train—Participate in training new students.

Recruit—Actively recruit new students to the PE program in an effort to get all members through class.

Disciple—Actively disciple new students (from any congregation) and/or new converts from one-on-one classes.

Learn advanced lesson—Students will be taught an advanced lesson which deals more

with doctrinal issues.

Hot Seat Challenge—Advanced students will teach the advanced lesson to the group.

Workshops and Gospel meetings are offered to share techniques of teaching and presenting a non-threatening approach to winning lost souls for the Lord.

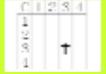
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DO
YOU
BELIEVE
THE
BIBLE?

The Bible teaches we must follow the Bible,
not update it to our preferences.

If your religious group teaches something else,
you might like to visit your local Church of Christ.

The Churches of Christ attempt to speak where
the Bible speaks and remain silent where the
Bible is silent. (Rev. 22:18-19)



WHY IS "NO OTHER GODS" FIRST?

Kirk H. Castleman, Houston, Texas

"No other gods" is the first in The Ten Commandments because every man since the creation has been tempted to be "like God" (Genesis 3:5). This is the fundamental choice everyone has to make: Will God be your God or will something else or someone else be your "god"?

The ungodly in Romans 1 made this fundamental choice that: "For although they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became foolish in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened... and exchanged the truth about God for a lie and worshipped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever!" Amen (Romans 1:21-25)

It was suggested the other day that a young person said, "I do not believe in God...I am an atheist." The tragedy is that everyone has a "god": Either God our Father or a self-created mutilated "god". No doubt this immature, short-sighted youth has made "self" into "god" because our God and Father might radically disturb their life-style. But there are many others who say "I believe in God" but simply disregard Him by creating other "gods" that are inadequate and incapable of providing what humans need (II Kings 17:33).

If there could be conversation with our "atheist", it might be helpful to ask, "Tell us about the God you do not believe in". It would be obvious that the portrait provided is nothing like what the Bible says and what is essentially needed for daily living and dying.

There are "No other gods besides me" (Exodus 20:3) because no other god can say, be, and do what God can say, be, and do for us. Our

God talks to us, listens to us, accepts our feeble worship, carries us in His hands, walks with us, and is The Living God who gives joy and heaven too (Psalm 115 and 135). All the other gods of humans, whether self, pleasures, or material things, are NOT GOD because they cannot provide what humans deep in their hearts cry out for: love, purpose, forgiveness, and even heaven itself after death. O atheist, what does your "god" offer? Nothing. Absolutely nothing!

With all my doubts and yes, even troubling questions, it would be good to ask the youthful atheist, "Can the god you have substituted in your own mind for the True God provide the ultimate answer to the questions of life? Why are you here? Where did you come from? What will happen after you die?" Remember the Philippian Jailer, "And he rejoiced along with his entire household that he had believed in God." (Acts 16:30-34)



CAMPAIGN FOR CHRIST 2014, CONT.

Continued from page 1.

This area was selected as the facility is first class, it is close to many potential recipients of the Day of Good Works, and the church needs to be revitalized in that area.

MISSION ALDINE DAY

Mission Aldine Day on July 19 will be a time that we flood the greater Aldine area with flyers, make contact with as many individuals as possible, and sign up Day of Good Works recipients. It gives every member the opportunity to be a "missionary" for the day. Contact your congregational coordinator to become a member of your congregations's team.

DAY OF GOOD WORKS

Saturday, July 26, will be spent doing good works for others. Your opportunities to participate are indicated on the attached flyers.

CAMPAIGN FOR CHRIST

The actual campaign will begin on Sunday morning, July 27 with Brother Tommy Brooks preaching Sunday morning and Kent Allen of OC and Sheldon Gibbs III preaching Sunday thru Wednesday night. There are numerous other activities occurring, which are listed in the attached flyers.

This will be a great event. We look forward to seeing you there.

LADIES LUNCHEON

The Campaign for Christ Ladies Luncheon will be held on **Tuesday, July 29**, from 11:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m., at the M.O. Campbell Educational Center, 1865 Aldine-Bender Road. The cost is \$10 per church member. Payment will be accepted at the door. Please bring exact change. Non-members/guests may attend at no cost.

Attendees must **pre-register** for the luncheon by emailing **name** and **name of church congregation** to bulletin@fifthwardcoc.org. Also provide the same information for guests you are bringing. Seating is limited, so please register early!



Quotable Quotes

It's easy to diet an any meal except the present one.



IMPOSSIBLE FOR EVOLUTION: ANHIDROSIS! (#59)

Sweating is an interesting design, but is not something which would be possible for evolution to develop. When an animal becomes overheated, it would be logical to find shade and live under it. You could hang your tongue out and get some cooling. The animal which had the tongue characteristic spread all over his body might learn to sweat. You could not say that there is some chance it could accidentally happen. If you don't sweat, you just get hotter, but at least some of you won't die.

A strange thing happens then. When you sweat too much - you die. You lose too much of your bodily fluid to live and you die. When you perceive of the need, you are dead. You don't get to sit in the shade and figure out how to evolve in a non-critical situation. When you become aware that losing too much bodily fluid causes you to die, you are dead.

When you are cooling by sweating enough to cause fluid loss to become critical, another process comes into action. It is anhidrosis. Literally a life and death decision is made on your behalf. If you sweat out further fluids you will die, so your body knows to stop sweating. Staying in the same environmental conditions will cause you to overheat and basically have a sunstroke, or the equivalent which is also not good. At that time your personal survivability is better in the sunstroke like conditions than losing too much of your bodily fluids.

Being a process which is only useful in critical situations which is terminal if something doesn't happen shows the work of an Intelligent Designer. That intelligent designer is Jehovah.

Benton F. Baugh

A READY ANSWER: UNFORGIVEABLE SIN

There are those who decline to be baptized because they feel they have been so bad their sins are unforgiveable. Jesus was forgiving of those who crucified him, so it is unlikely any of us do worse than that.

The New Testament speaks of an unforgiveable sin in Heb. 6:4-6, Matt. 12:31-32, Mark 3:29-30, and Luke 12:10, so such a sin exists, or at least did exist. In each case it is for "blaspheming the Holy Spirit". It is not blaspheming Jehovah or Jesus, just the Holy Spirit. One needs to consider how the Holy Spirit received this special position, while Jehovah and Jesus did not.

As they had no dictionaries in the first century, we need to let the Bible define the word "blaspheme". In this case Hebrews is most clear. Blaspheming the Holy Spirit means being "**once been enlightened and have tasted of the heavenly gift and have been made partakers of the Holy Spirit, and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the age to come, and then have fallen away**".

"Partakers of the Holy Spirit" and "tasted...the powers of the age to come" are a special case. A group of people this would have to include would be **those who actually received a miraculous gift in the first century**. A second group could be **those who personally received the benefit of one of those gifts**. That is the thing which would set the Holy Spirit apart from Jehovah and Jesus. It is easy to understand that if you were given the power to do miracles, and then went back it would be unforgivable.

This was a first century situation which simply does not exist today. You can be forgiven any sin today.

BUILD SOMETHING

“Whatever your lot in life may be, build something on it.”

Building brings to mind the construction of something tangible and useful. It is frequently used figuratively to mean edify and embolden. We build character one level at a time, beginning with a solid foundation. We are either building up or tearing down. Our building tools consist of the patient effort to teach, strengthen, encourage and lift up each other.

Wise women build their homes with attention and love. A positive atmosphere and welcoming spirit doesn't happen by accident – it is cultivated on purpose. It takes more than a house to nurture a family – it takes a home. “The wise woman builds her house, but the foolish one tears hers down.” (Proverbs 14:1)

We are called to build up our neighbors for their own good and not tear them down. Those with weaknesses and failings need to be encouraged. We who are strong need to have pa-

tience. “Therefore, encourage one another, and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing.” (I Thes. 5:11)

God planned, Jesus received the nails and built the church. It is our privilege to build up the church of Jesus Christ. We use our gifts and talents to help each other grow in grace and knowledge. It takes no talent to tear things down. “Try to excel in gifts that build up the church.” (I Cor. 14:12b)

We are responsible for building our own strength, capabilities and faith so that we have something to share in encouraging others. “But, you, dear friends, build yourselves up in our most holy faith and pray in the Holy Spirit. Keep yourselves in God's love as you wait for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ to bring you to eternal life.” (Jude 20, 21) Who are you building up today?

Elizabeth Brown

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A sanctuary.”*

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Employment applications welcome.

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Stephenville, Texas





AREA WIDE ACTIVITIES — HOUSTON

2nd Tues. Preacher's Luncheon, confirm with Dale Foster at dalefoster@gmail.com for address.

GREATER HOUSTON CAMPAIGN FOR CHRIST SCHEDULE

- 7/12/14 Preparation Day - at Memorial Church of Christ
7/19/14 Mission Aldine
7/26/14 Day of Good Works - Campbell Center
7/27-30 Houston Area Wide Campaign for Christ - Campbell Center
- 9/28/14 Eastern European Missions Million Dollar Sunday
www.milliondollarsunday.org

5/20/15 Foster's Home For Children Golf Tournament—Blackhorse

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 E-Magazine

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

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 it if you would:

1. forward the church member e-mail addresses which you have,
2. send the directory of the congregation you attend or any other directories which you might have, and
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.