

## SANTA CLAUS

At a recent meeting, a minister was asked to justify himself for working at a congregation which had activities relating to Santa Claus.

Whereas Santa Claus or Christmas has nothing to do with Christianity and should not have a place in any worship service, it seems to be an age old question which has not been well discussed.

We have members who say that telling children that Santa Claus is coming to town is a flat lie. We have many other members who tell their children that Santa Claus is coming to town. One would think there ought to be an answer to this which all could agree upon.

All would agree that it is not good to lie, however, others who would not lie otherwise continue to do this.

Lets take a side trip first. We are going to presume that all interesting parties watch TV and support the advertisers by watching. A favorite program of the time we will discuss is The Big Bang Theory. You can simply use a show you might like instead. We repeatedly listen to the primary star Jim Parsons say I am Sheldon Cooper, a theoretical physicist and think nothing of it.

Continued on page 2

### IMPACT OF INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC

A major study is being done on the impact of instrumental music on congregations which have taken it up. The objective is to provide objective data on what happens afterwards. Do congregations grow, shrink, remain the same, become a community church or what does happen.

If you have data and knowledge on what has happened to congregations which have taken up instrumental music or are willing to help collect data, contact us at [bbaugh@thearray.org](mailto:bbaugh@thearray.org).

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**MCHUMOR.COM** by T. McCracken



"If you see the congregation start to fall asleep, could you give me a little microphone feedback?"

© T. McCracken mchumor.com

## SANTA CLAUS, P. 2

Jim Parsons is neither Sheldon Cooper nor is he a theoretical physicist. He was a theater major at the University of Houston.

While someone might say he is telling a flat lie, we consider that this is entertainment. He is saying something we accept to not be true. He is not robbing, harming, or doing any bad thing. But he is not telling the truth. If you don't want to watch TV without someone pretending to be someone they are not, you might as well sell your TV. It is entertainment.

Consider that Santa Claus may have some of this entertainment value. When we tell our small children that there is a Santa Claus, we are not trying to harm them. We are actually setting the stage so that we can spend some money on them. We frequently go through an elaborate "stage production" which is not only entertaining to them, but is entertaining to us also.

We never tell ourselves that little Joey is going to grow up to be an adult and believe in Santa Claus. Part of the entertainment value is how long will it take little Joey to figure it out. It is so common that it is part of the "4 stages of life" as illustrated in the box.

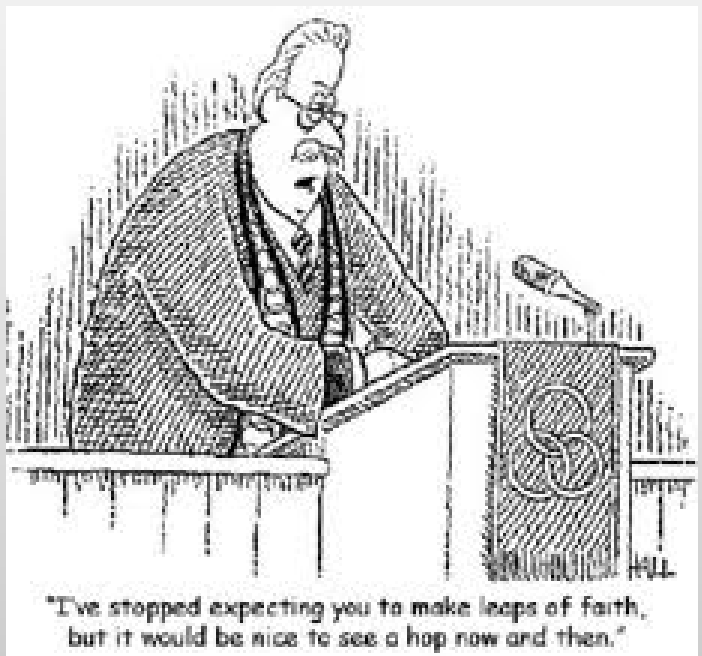
**4 STAGES IN LIFE**  
**YOU BELIEVE IN SANTA CLAUS**  
**YOU DON'T BELIEVE IN SANTA CLAUS**  
**YOU ARE SANTA CLAUS**  
**YOU LOOK LIKE SANTA CLAUS**

If this can be reasonably said, it means that a person can reasonably entertain their small children, grandchildren, and great grandchildren with the story of Santa Claus (but not in "church").

The one place they are at risk is that if we

teach them it is a sin, and it is not, and they do it—they will be sinning by offending their conscience. We will also be participating in the sin if we are binding where the Bible does not bind.

Benton F. Baugh



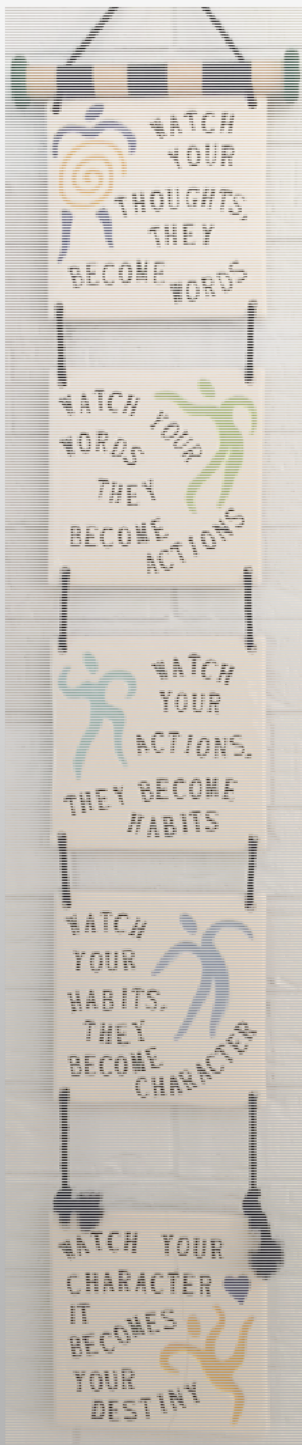
**WHY CONGREGATIONS STOP GROWING**

A major study is being done on why church of Christ congregations stop growing. Congregations very characteristically grow rapidly for a period of time and then the attendance flattens out for an extended period. Most often after an extended flat period, they start to die.

If you have and are willing to share attendance history of your congregation and participate in discussions on the factors which cause the change from growth to non-growth, contact us at [bbaugh@thearray.org](mailto:bbaugh@thearray.org).

## WHAT IS GOD DOING NOW?

Sometimes we treat our study of God like an archeological dig – always looking at history. We need to know all about God through his



Word but we also need to know him in the present. He has called us to be in relationship today. God is always present, indwelling our hearts. His ear is attentive to our needs and he responds to our requests. “In the morning, O Lord, you hear my voice; in the morning I lay my requests before you and wait in expectation.” (Psalm 5:3)

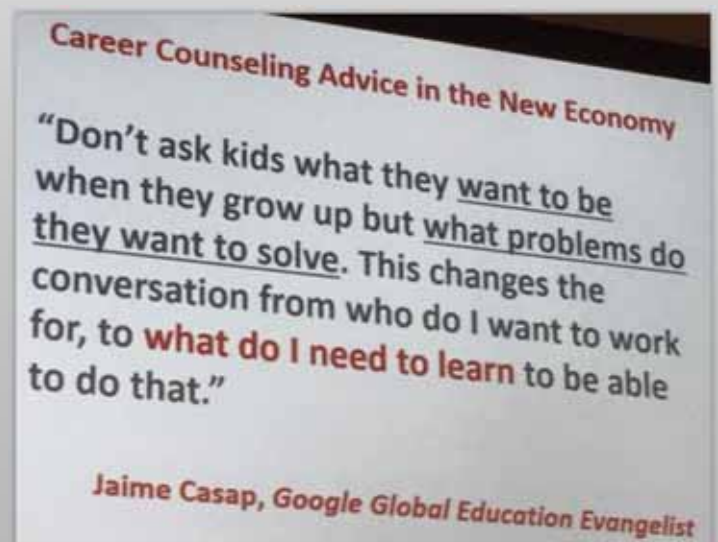
We are blessed and protected by his love. “Spread your protection over them, that those who love your name may rejoice in you.” (Psalm 5:11b) We can trust in God’s love to endure forever. [1 John 3:23-24](#) (in Context) [1 John 3](#) (Whole Chapter) [Other Translations](#) [1 John 4:11-13](#) (in Context) [1 John 4](#) (Whole Chapter) [Other Translations](#) “And so we know and rely on the love God has for us. God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in them.” (1 John 4:16)

There is great power in God’s reconciling love. He patiently holds back the hands of time to give every person an oppor-

tunity to repent. He knows the consequences and is not willing for anyone to be lost. “All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting men’s sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation.” (2 Cor. 5:18-20)

God’s comfort and compassion are at work today. “Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves receive from God.” (2 Cor. 1:3-4) Take time to consider the countless ways that God is at work in your life today.

Elizabeth Brown



## FIRST FOOD AND DRINK ON THE MOON

The Moon (& God) - July 20, 1969. What was the first liquid and food consumed on the moon? I'm betting that most are unaware of this story.

Forty-five years ago, two human beings changed history by walking on the surface of the moon. But, what happened before Buzz Aldrin and Neil Armstrong exited the Lunar Module is perhaps even more amazing, if only because so few people know about it. I'm talking about the fact that Buzz Aldrin took communion on the surface of the moon.

Some months after his return, he wrote about it in Guideposts magazine.

The background to the story is that Aldrin was an elder at his Presbyterian Church in Texas during this period in his life; and, knowing that he would soon be doing something unprecedented in human history, he felt that he should mark the occasion somehow. He asked his minister to help him. And so the minister consecrated a communion wafer and a small vial of communion wine. Buzz Aldrin took them with him out of the Earth's orbit and onto the surface of the moon. He and Armstrong had only been on the lunar surface for a few minutes when Aldrin made the following public statement:

"This is the LM (Lunar Module) pilot. I'd like to take this opportunity to ask every person listening in, whoever and wherever they may be, to pause for a moment and contemplate the events of the past few hours and to give thanks in his or her own way."

He then ended radio communication, and there, on the silent surface of the moon, 250,000 miles from home, he read a verse from the Gospel of John, and he took communion.

Here is his own account of what happened: ". In the radio blackout, I opened the little plastic packages which contained the bread and the wine. I poured the wine into the chalice our church had given me. In the one-sixth gravity of the moon, the wine slowly curled and gracefully came up the side of the cup. Then I read the scripture " 'I am the vine, you are the branches. Whosoever abides in me will bring

forth much fruit . . . Apart from me you can do nothing.'

"I had intended to read my communion passage back to Earth, but at the last minute [they] had requested that I not do this. NASA was already embroiled in a legal battle with Madelyn Murray O'Hare, the celebrated opponent of religion, over the Apollo 8 crew's reading from Genesis while orbiting the moon at Christmas. I agreed reluctantly."

"I ate the tiny Host and swallowed the wine. I gave thanks for the intelligence and spirit that had brought two young pilots to the Sea of Tranquility. It was interesting for me to think that the very first liquid ever poured on the moon and the very first food eaten there were the communion elements."

"And, of course, it's interesting to think that some of the first words spoken on the moon were the words of Jesus Christ, who made the Earth and the moon - and who, in the immortal words of Dante, is Himself the "Love that moves the Sun and other stars."

How many of you knew this? Too bad this type of news doesn't travel as fast as the bad news does.

Share it if you've felt God's love. God Bless America!!!  
[snopes.com: Communion on the Moon](http://snopes.com: Communion on the Moon)



"Wireless communication is nothing new. I've been praying for 75 years!"





## IMPOSSIBLE FOR EVOLUTION #59: GECKO FEET

Geckos are small irritating lizards which love to come into our houses and scare people. However, they are a display of a really interesting invention. They can climb up a wall without stickiness or suction cups on their feet. They have a molecular level attraction system which sticks to walls sort of like atoms in material stick together.



Gecko toes have special adaptations that allow them to adhere to most surfaces without the use of liquids or surface tension. About 60% of gecko species have adhesive toe pads. The spatula-shaped setae (bristle or hair like structure) arranged in lamellae (thin plate like structure) on gecko

footpads enable attractive van der Waals' forces (an attractive force between atoms or molecules) These van der Waals interactions involve no fluids; The setae on the feet of geckos are also self-cleaning and will usually remove any clogging dirt within a few steps. Teflon, which has very low surface energy, is more difficult for geckos to adhere to than many other surfaces.

Gecko toes can hyperextend in the opposite direction from human fingers and toes. This allows them to overcome the van der Waals force by peeling their toes off surfaces from the tips inward. In essence, this peeling action alters the angle of incidence between millions of individual setae and the surface, reducing the van der Waals force.

Use of small van der Waals attraction force requires very large surface areas: every square millimeter of a gecko's footpad contains about 14,000 hair-like setae. Each seta has a diameter of 5  $\mu\text{m}$ . Human

hair varies from 18 to 180  $\mu\text{m}$ , so a human hair could hold between 12 and 1300 setae. Each seta is in turn tipped with between 100 and 1,000 spatulae. Each spatula is 0.2  $\mu\text{m}$  long (one five-millionth of a meter), or just below the wavelength of visible light.

The setae of a typical mature 70 g (2.5 oz) gecko would be capable of supporting a weight of 133 kg (293 lb).

Biomimetic technologies designed to mimic gecko adhesion could produce reusable self-cleaning dry adhesives with many applications. Development effort is being put into these technologies, but manufacturing synthetic setae is not a trivial material design task.

This article after the first paragraph is straight out of Wikipedia, and the last underlined line is their statement. What they are saying is that with all our technology we don't know how to do this, but a zero I.Q. Gecko did it for himself. Clearly this is the work of an intelligent designer.

Benton F. Baugh



## EEM (EASTERN EUROPEAN MISSIONS)

Can you imagine that in some former Soviet Bloc countries, the Bible is now being used as their primary text book.

Many Eastern European administrators, librarians and teachers believe giving the Bible to their children will change the future of their country. That is why they continue to ask EEM to put Bibles and biblical literature in their schools

What can you Do?  
You can supply Bibles and biblical materials:  
For \$1000 for a school!  
For \$150 for a class!  
For \$50 for ten students!  
For \$5 for a child!



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Dirk

# THE CHRISTIAN ARRAY

AN E-MAGAZINE DEDICATED TO SUSTAINED SCRIPTURAL CHURCH GROWTH IN OUR GENERATION



## AREA WIDE ACTIVITIES

**Each Wed. Northeast Houston Preacher's Meeting, Darien Loop CofC, 7014 Darien St. 11:00—1:00, Contact Cecil Herndon, [aj10@ridemetro.com](mailto:aj10@ridemetro.com) for more details**

**2nd Tues. Northwest Houston Preacher's Luncheon, 11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at the Rancho King Buffet, 5900 N. Fwy., confirm with Dale Foster at [dalefost@gmail.com](mailto:dalefost@gmail.com) for info.**

**8/20-21 Houston Area Campaign for Christ, UH Hofheinz Pavillion  
See attachments for details**

## YAHOO GROUP

*HoustonCofC is a Yahoo group hosted by Steve Sandifer [[steve.sandifer@sbcglobal.net](mailto: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](mailto:bbaugh@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

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## 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 [bbaugh@thearray.org](mailto:bbaugh@thearray.org).