

We can act/believe that the Old and New Testament are the literal word of God in the original autograph and is current for us or is not. Those are the two choices. As there are many options to choice number two it seems like there are many choices, but it effectively boils down to two choices.

It has been said that we need to recognize that the New Testament was written in a different society and was written looking forward to the fully established kingdom on earth. We need to look forward to this and **“lean into it”**. That version of choice number two grants that it was the current word of God, but teaches that there is something else we need to lean into. To say the opposite, we need to **lean out** of what the New Testament teaches in at least some way.

First for a statement of what we know.

1. We learn of Jehovah, Jesus, and the plan of salvation solely through the Bible.
2. The Bible proves itself through scientific prophecies included and lack of contemporary myths.
3. We do not have the original manuscripts of the Bible, but rather have copies of copies.
4. God does not prevent the Bible from being mistranslated (See Queen James Version, and it doesn't need to be explained how that was translated).

IN THIS ISSUE:

The Bible or What?	1
Keep Learning - Brown	3
Impossible for Evolution	4
Gulf Coast Christian Counselling	5
Eastern European Missions	6
Area Wide Activities	7

IMPACT OF INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC

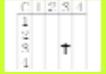
A major study is being done on the impact of instrumental music on congregations which have taken it up. The objective is to provide objective data on what happens afterwards. Do congregations grow, shrink, remain the same, become a community church or what does happen.

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.

5. The last portions of the Bible were written almost 2000 years ago in a different type of society.
6. The kingdom (the church) was fully established in the first century.

Continued on page 2





THE BIBLE OR WHAT?, P. 2

Now for some of what we do not know:

1. Whether all of God's intended writings are actually in the Bible, (see Col. 4:16)
2. Whether some of what is in the Bible is actually inspired writings,
3. Whether some portions are irretrievably mistranslated, e.g. earlier more correct manuscripts are lost,
4. Whether some portions are to be taken literally or figuratively.

To summarize the above, the Bible contains the word of God in **the best and only form** we are going to get it in. **Our choice is to follow it or second guess it.**

It is our recommendation that you get the best and most literal translation you can find and follow it. Your choice is to **"Speak where the Bible speaks and remain silent where the Bible is silent"** (Rev. 22:18-19 paraphrased) or to do **something else**. You don't need a priest or preacher to tell you what it says, you can read it yourself.

In the thousands of ways to do **something else**, there is one common thread through all of them. You have looked at the best form which God has presented His word to you at this time, and decided you know better how to interpret it than the best group of translators.

You need to choose carefully which version you use as some are intentionally mistranslated and others are paraphrased for readability rather than correctness. There are highly credentialed translators who start with presumptions which cause a mistranslation. There are translators who don't believe in miracles, so would tend to minimize any discussion of miracles. There are others who favor homosexual conduct and so intentionally mistranslated the related passages (again, the Queen James Bible). There are some translations so old that words have

changed meanings and make it hard to understand (King James Bible).

For the most part, it is not a question of whether you can find the plan of salvation in a reasonably contemporary group translation, it is a question of whether or not you are willing to follow it.

That would say you are looking back to the New Testament for guidance on religious matters. However we should certainly be looking to the future for the methods to communicate the Gospel.

God is likely to be no more pleased with someone who uses methods to communicate the Gospel which don't work today than someone who simply doesn't follow the word. The choice doesn't have to be modern and unscriptural or old and scriptural. God surely expects modern and scriptural.

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.



KEEP LEARNING

“Instruct the wise and they will be wiser still; teach the righteous and they will add to their learning.” (Prov. 9:9)

Listen: “Let the wise listen and add to their learning, and let the discerning get guidance...” (Prov. 1:5) When we are talking we speak what we already know, when we listen we might learn something new.

Experience: It is important to listen, but then we must put the lesson into practice. “But the man who looks intently into the perfect law that gives freedom, and continues to do this, not forgetting what he has heard, but doing it – he will be blessed in what he does.” (James 1:25)

Ask questions: What do you want to learn? “Ask and it will be given to you, seek and you will find, knock and the door will be opened to you.” (Matt. 7:7)

Read: “Education is not the learning of facts, but the training of the mind to think“ (Albert Einstein) “...give me understanding to learn your commands.” (Psa. 119:73b)

Notice: “I applied my heart to what I observed and learned a lesson from what I saw:” (Prov. 24:32) Be alert and aware of what is going on in the world around you. If you are not willing to learn no one can help you. If you are determined to learn no one can stop you.

Seek with all the intensity of your being to be a learner. Use diligence, enthusiasm and curiosity to acquire spiritual wisdom. Learn with intention how to discern truth and error. At the end of each day be grateful that you have the capacity to learn and thank God for all you have learned.

Elizabeth Brown

ROLLO PRETZELS



At a recent preacher’s meeting, Rollo Pretzels were served, and the “recipe” was requested, so here goes.

Place several small pretzels on a cookie sheet and place a Rollo on the top of each one.

Bake in the oven at 350° for 3 minutes and remove.

Quickly press a pecan on the top of the Rollo.

Put them in the refrigerator for 30-45 minutes to allow them to “set”. No need to refrigerate after that.



IMPOSSIBLE FOR EVOLUTION #60: BIOLUMINESCENCE

The term “glow worm” includes several species of insect, including fireflies. They use a chemistry called bioluminescence to generate light. It is the mixing of 2 or more chemicals which react to produce light.

Fireflies are the commonly seen variety and provide an excellent example of God’s design.

The bioluminescence can be used to catch prey, scare off predators, or communicate. It is used by Fireflies, worms, and 90 of deep-sea life. Squids and crustaceans can release clouds of bioluminescent liquid to confuse predators while they escape.

Some bacteria use bioluminescence to communicate. Whereas the Firefly may be impressive, the bacteria is really interesting. Although all the users of this technology would have zero I.Q., bacteria would be at the bottom of the heap. To communicate means that a bacteria (a one celled living creature) invented a way to mix two chemicals inside their single cell to emit light. If that were not tough enough, a second one celled bacteria at the same time invented a way to see the light and decode the signal.

One has to wonder if the evolutionist who think this is an accident of evolution think they have tiny eyes, or perhaps they invented the solar cell to generate an electric signal their tiny brains could interpret. The decision to generate a light, the implementation of systems to

generate the light, the decision to receive a light signal, and the system for interpreting a light signal is a very complex process. This is not just one incredible task, it is two incredible tasks which must happen at the same time. For one to happen means nothing. They must



happen together.

It is interesting that a person could say it is hard to believe in a God who you cannot see, but would readily believe these complex miracles are an accident of evolution. This makes it easy to believe in God.

Benton F. Baugh



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Gulf Coast Christian Counseling offers supportive and compassionate care for couples, families and individuals. We want to walk with people during times of loss, healing or overcoming personal and interpersonal struggles. Our goal is to provide relational expertise in order to "Restore Hope & Renew Life" as you navigate life's challenges.

Our doors are open to clients from all religious, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds.

Our services include various areas of concern:

Marriage/Pre-marital
Depression/Anxiety
Conflict

Family/Parenting
Loss or Grief
Crisis

Divorce/Separation
Coping skills
Spiritual Renewal

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!



Dirk

Smith 501-2789-1728

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Eastern European Mission 800-486-1818 MillionDollarSunday.org



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 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 for info.

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

8/27 Elder's Workshop, Chickasha, OK, Southern Hills

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.

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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.