

BIBLE SCHOOL - ARE YOU TEACHING?

NUMBER 119

JULY, 2017

On the average Sunday morning we devote 45 minutes to a Bible School. In this class time, someone talks and others listen. The person designated as “teacher” presents a weekly lesson, with the expectation that this process will continue for for the rest of his life.

Classes are most often a “verse by verse” style of going thru books or various themes where a subject is dissected 13 different ways. A problem is that most class members have heard the books “verse by verse” and have heard the subjects dissected 13 different ways before, often several times before.

This means the class members aren’t learning anything, they are being refreshed at the most. What it means that the class isn’t learning anything is that you are not teaching anything. Someone learning something is a necessary component of someone else teaching. You aren’t teaching, it is some kind of performance art

Is there a scriptural requirement that we continue what we are doing, or could we consider something else? As a practical matter, the Sunday school movement began in the 1780s in Britain to help poor children learn to read. That should leave us free to consider ways to make the class time as meaningful as possible.

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Body life in Ephesus

It was twilight after a long hard day. Wearily they hurried along the dusty road, watching for those who would rather see them dead than Christians. Zenas wondered aloud if they were doing the right thing. After all, he told Tychicus, our Fathers and all our ancestors have always been faithful to the Law of Moses.

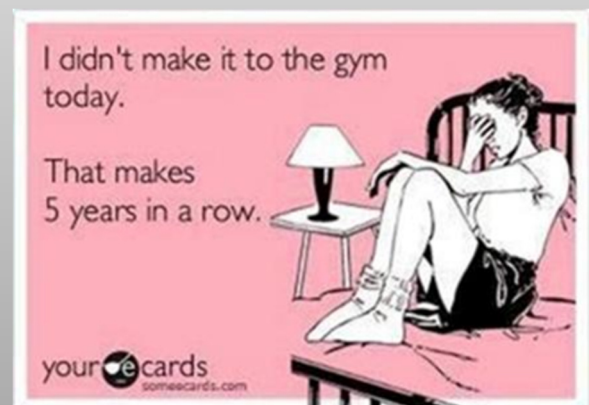
Finally they found the gathering place and huddled around the fire with their new friends. There were greetings and hugs all around before the letter was read. This was something new from our brother Paul. He has suffered greatly for the cause of Christ but he spoke with such passion that it was hard not to believe.

Father Abraham offered sacrifices, they go back to Cain and Abel. How will God forgive us if we don’t continue making our sacrifices? But this new message says that even before Abraham, before creation, God planned for all people to be saved though Jesus Christ. He is the one perfect sacrifice for all time. “In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God’s grace that he lavished on us with all wisdom and understanding.” (Eph. 1:7, 8)

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BIBLE CLASSES - ARE YOU TEACHING?, P. 2

In last month's issue, we suggested taking the first 15 minutes of the class to use the class like a small group to enhance closeness. That leaves us with the last 30 minutes to consider.

The next thing to consider is that it is called a school, but no one expects to graduate. Have we settled into and become used to something which is just a "place holder"?

The teacher has a job, wife, kids, and a yard to mow. How much time can you realistically expect him to invest in a lesson, week after week after week. The easiest thing to do here is verse by verse where the teacher recounts all he can remember about the next section of verses, which most all members have heard at least 3 times before. He is measured by his performance art.

You also need to consider the benefit of using some prepared lessons which would make good Sunday morning sermons. We might leave that to the preacher. Sermons have a different focus and purpose and need to be measured differently.

Consider instead that we make up a list of all the topics which one might encounter in a personal evangelism encounter. That might make up a list of 80-100 topical lessons. If the topical lessons were already made up, the 30 minutes left in the Bible class time (from the last issue) would be used to distribute the topical lessons to the class members (in 3 hole notebook form), and acquainting the class with the information. Not to memorize it, but to know what it is and where to find it in their personal notebook.

After about 2-3 years each member has reviewed the 80-100 topical lessons and knows how to access information on them. The work was easier on the teachers, the class learned more, and the class knows how to recall the information. If it a topic which sparks a lot of interest, have a second week for discussion after they have studied at home.

All we have to do to make this happen is to get 80-100 topical lessons prepared and available in loose-leaf notebook form. It is hard to know how many times 80-100 topical lessons have been made up in the church, but it is likely a bunch of times. There are surely fewer done in loose leaf notebook form but there are likely several of those.

One such set of topical lessons is posted to thearray.org in THE CHRISTIAN ARRAY tab. There are approximately 100 lessons prepared, and more are coming.

Review that set of lessons and judge for yourself whether your members would benefit from reviewing that information and having ready access to it. Imagine how much better prepared your members would be if they knowing and have ready access to that much information. Even better, in addition to ending up with a personal notebook of all the lessons, the will be readily available online at any time.

If you want your congregation to become evangelistic again, this approach will be a good step to take, but it is certainly not the only step you will need to take.

That leaves the rest of your life again, just like before. Do you just start repeating like before or can you presume by this method your members are equipped with this information?

Consider instead that you now have a class equipped to provide answers. Some things the class might do is:

1. Spend more class time in the fellowship discussed in the last issue.
2. Help develop more topical lessons and post them to the website.
3. Become teachers in other classes.
4. Take worship services to your local nursing homes.

Whatever you do, make it an intentional plan to support the Great Commission.

STABILITY IS BAD FOR A CONGREGATION

Taken from the Thom Ranier website:

- 1. A STABLE CONGREGATION IS NOT ON A MISSION.** The nature of the Great Commission means congregations should be in constant change
- 2. STABLE CONGREGATIONS ARE NOT REACHING THEIR COMMUNITIES: Communities are always changing** so a congregation which is reaching their community must be changing with the community.
- 3. COMFORT IS THE ENEMY OF OBEDIENCE:** The New Testament calls for us to get out of our comfort zone to engage and talk to people to spread the Word.
- 4. STABLE CONGREGATIONS HAVE ESTABLISHED FELLOWSHIP GROUPINGS.** For a congregation to accomplish the Great Commission, the social groupings must continuously evolve to engage new members.
- 5. MEMBERS OF STABLE CONGREGATIONS ARE PREFERENCE DRIVEN.** They are more concerned about their music style, room temperature, their programs, their schedules, and their facilities than reaching people with the gospel. Their definition of discipleship is "others taking care of my needs."
- 6. THE BUDGET IS SEVERELY INWARDLY FOCUSED.** Most of the funds are expended to keep the lights on and/or to meet the preferences of the members. There are few dollars for ministry and missions. And any dollars for missions rarely include the involvement of the members in actually sharing the gospel themselves.
- 7. THERE ARE SACRED COW FACILITIES.** It might be a parlor or a pulpit. It could be pews instead of chairs. It might be the entirety of the worship center or the sanctuary. Members insist on holding tightly to those things God wants us to hold loosely.
- 8. ANY TYPE OF CHANGE IS MET WITH FIERCE RESISTANCE.** The members are

confronted with the choice to change or die. And though few would articulate it, their choice by their actions or lack of actions is the choice to die.

There is nothing scriptural about a stable congregation. In fact, the stability is just an illusion. Seeking stability will lead towards decline and death of the congregation.

Body life in Ephesus

This is beyond anything we could ask or even imagine. God chose us with overwhelming love to be his holy, blameless and beloved children. It gave him great pleasure to freely give us this grace. He has abundantly provided every spiritual blessing in Christ, even in the heavenly realms. He lavished on us all wisdom and understanding through his eternal purpose.

Zenas asked, "How in the world will we ever live up to this overwhelming gift of grace and forgiveness? What can we possibly do to show our gratitude?" Tychicus said, "We need to live a life that honors his teachings in every way. Yes, Zenas replied, "Maybe we should tell others about this lavish gift of forgiveness"

Elizabeth Brown

READING THROUGH THE BIBLE ONCE IS ESSENTIAL FOR ALL CHRISTIANS TO MAKE SURE THEY INDIVIDUALLY KNOW WHAT THE BIBLE ACTUALLY SAYS. TO READ THROUGH IT EVERY YEAR IS CLOSER TO PENANCE THAN EDUCATION.

IMPOSSIBLE FOR EVOLUTION - METAMORPHOSIS



It is amazing that a worm hangs itself from a branch, sheds its skin, has an inner skin to harden into a chrysalis (the green thing), in 8-15 days converts itself from a worm to a butterfly, and then flies off. It is incomprehensible that someone would say this is an accidental mutation of DNA. May be incomprehensible, but they do it.

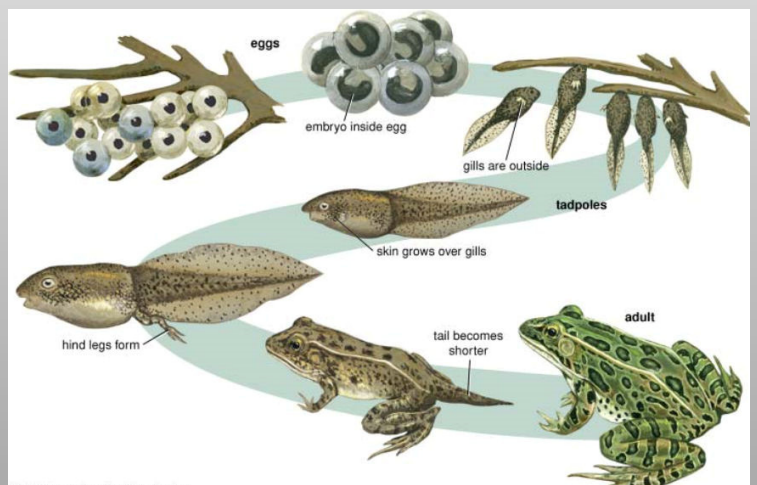
If that doesn't impress you, notice that the wings are floppy and folded in the Chrysalis. You might presume that when they dry they get stiff enough to fly. Turns out God wasn't through yet. As the butterfly begins to flap his wings slowly back and forth in a movement which might assist in drying, he (or she) is also pumping a liquid into the veins in the wings. Once there, the liquid sets up like 5-minute epoxy to stiffen the wings.

Just imagine, if the liquid sets up before it gets into the wings, the butterfly is dead. If it doesn't set up when it gets into the wings, the butterfly is dead.

And to top it off, note the ornate design of the patterns on the wings.

Frogs make a major lifestyle change also.

Benton F. Baugh, Ph.D., P.E.



DNA MUTATIONS - WE HAVE A NAME FOR IT

The picture is an actual drawing by Charles Darwin of the Finches he saw on the Galapagos Islands. They show the beak size of Finches becoming sized (micro-evolution) in accordance with the food supply available on different islands. They do not demonstrate creative or macro-evolution. It is necessary but not sufficient proof.

It was roughly like saying you can throw a baseball, so you can throw a baseball into orbit around the earth. Being able to throw a baseball would be necessary proof that you could throw a baseball into orbit, but it is not sufficient proof.

With 3 billion coded pairs of DNA nucleotides in each of our 37.2 trillion cells, atheistic scientist's theories are that amazing structure were developed by chance mutations. That would be millions of positive or creative mutations in a row. These scientists who claim to be scientific, and say religion is a bunch of myths.

"Science" is usefully defined in the "scientific method. The "scientific method" is systematic observation, measurement, and experiment, and the formulation, testing, and modification of hypotheses.

We have a geological record which generally shows that much of life has been displayed in stages. This does not prove whether it was acts of God or accidents of evolution. The "scientific method" cannot answer this ques-

tion, as it is prehistory. However, we can observe DNA mutations today to see if they are compatible with the theories. Do the observable mutations indicate a positive creative trend to the accidents?

The answer is that all observed mutations to the DNA coding have been damaging. There is not a single observed incidence of accidental DNA mutations providing a positive

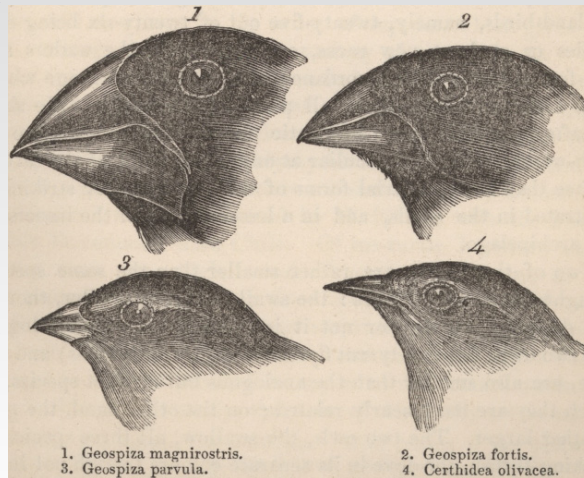
result. If such a thing were to happen, the "scientists" would be more than happy to tell us.

We do have names for the genetic or DNA mutations which we can observe as happening today. Some are:

- CANCER
- DOWN SYNDROME
- SICKLE CELL ANEMIA
- HEMOPHILIA
- COLOR BLINDNESS
- BIRTH DEFECTS
- MUSCULAR DYSTROPHY
- CYSTIC FIBROSIS

See website: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_genetic_disorders for more than 180 diseases associated with genetic mutations.

The point should not be lost here that the atheistic viewpoint of accidental DNA mutations is dependent upon a series of millions of beneficial mutations in a row, but we can only find negative mutations happening. Observable science says it is not true.



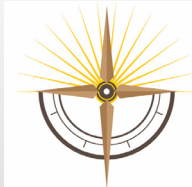
Vacationers

As you travel this summer, you can be of assistance in local congregations in helping them to understand how they are seen by potential visitors and prospects.

On the occgthingtank.org website, Project Papers tab is a paper titled: **MYSTERY GUEST PROGRAM**

This paper and the forms included will help you anonymously communicate with the congregation and improve their "curb appeal".

A project of the OC Church Growth Think Tank
www.occgthinktank.org



NORTH FORT BEND
CHURCH OF CHRIST

Meeting at Tom Wilson Elementary
5200 Falcon Landing Blvd.
Katy Texas, 77494.

Bible class at 9:00 am
Worship at 10:00 am.

Please plan to attend and tell your friends and neighbors. Most importantly, please pray for this mission effort.

www.nfbcoc.org

For more information, contact:
info@nfbcoc.org

PREACHING SPECIALISTS

Congregations sometimes need fill-in preachers and speakers with special subjects which are difficult for the local minister to become proficient in. Following are a list of speakers with topics which may be of interest to you. Each of the speakers are known to us and reliably present the Word.

If any of the topics are interesting to you, contact information is provided. Some speakers may require expenses and/or stipends.

- **CHRISTIAN COLLEGE IMPACT ON CHURCH FAITHFULNESS**
- **CHRISTIAN COLLEGE IMPACT ON MARRIAGE**

Kent Allen, Oklahoma Christian University
405-315-3008

- **CROSSING THE LINE IN ADDICTION**
Philip Bailey, Memorial Church of Christ,
Houston, TX, 713-304-0011
Pbailey@gpbaileyconsulting.com
- **GOD IS SCIENTIFIC**
- **IMPOSSIBLE FOR EVOLUTION**
- **WHAT ATHEIST ARE GOING TO TELL YOUR CHILDREN, WITH ANSWERS**

Benton F. Baugh, Ph.D., P.E.

Memorial church of Christ Houston, TX
713-419-8683

bbaugh@thearray.org

OCCG THINK TANK CHURCH LEADERS WORKSHOPS

Members of the OCCG Think Tank would be pleased to come to your area and present our Church Leaders Workshop with some of the information we have been studying and developing.

Real and practical suggestions will be made on how to better engage your members in accomplishing our part of the Great Commission in our time.

Workshops are formatted as:

Area Wide Workshops meeting at the location of a host congregation,
or Individual congregational workshops.

If you would like to host a workshop for your area or would like one scheduled for your congregation, go to the occgthinktank.org website, contact us tab, and send your information.

The **OCCG Think Tank** is studying how to promote methods which will return the churches of Christ to a growth mode while maintaining a firm scriptural basis. We solicit everyone's ideas on how to do this, but even more than this we need your assistance in making this a reality.

It is clear that having some ideas is different than translating the ideas to a beneficial form and communicating these ideas to the our congregations.

Whereas we would encourage all to dedicate your service time to your local congregation, if you have extra service time and energies, we need your help. There are many ways to help including:

Working on Webpage design
Microsoft Access programming
Phone app for ready access to Bible teachings
Develop Bible teachings into a standardized format
Develop standardized information regarding denominations

If helping in these areas is interesting to you, contact bbaugh@thearray.org

THE CATALYST INITIATIVE

GOAL: Help the kingdom grow by encouraging those without a neighborhood congregation to start one.

PREMISE: The difficulty of doing personal evangelism is proportionate to the distance you are from your congregation.

If you live far enough from your established congregation that it makes it difficult to do personal evangelism and would like to consider starting a new local autonomous scriptural congregation, let us know.

We have experienced volunteers available to assist you in starting your new congregation or to discuss the possibility.

FOR MORE INFORMATION SEE: www.thecatalystinitiative.org

Led By:

Philip Bailey, 713-304-0011, pbailey@thecatalystinitiative.org
Benton F. Baugh, 713-419-8683, bbaugh@thecatalystinitiative.org

THE CATALYST INITIATIVE

Is seeking members who are an employee of or knows someone with a relationship with connections to retirement centers.

If you do or know someone who does, contact:

Philip Bailey, 713-304-0011,
pbailey@thecatalystinitiative.org

or

Benton F. Baugh, 713-419-8683,
bbaugh@thecatalystinitiative.org

Foster's Home for Children

*"More than a home,
A sanctuary."*

Placement applications accepted.

Employment applications welcome.

Applications and donations accepted online

at

www.fostershome.org

Stephenville, Texas

THE CHRISTIAN ARRAY

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

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EEM (EASTERN EUROPEAN MISSIONS)

Many Eastern European administrators, librarians and teachers believe giving the Bible to their children will change the future of their country.

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



Dirk Smith 501-2789-1728 dsmith@eem.org
 Eastern European Mission 800-486-1818
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 Churches of Christ Disaster Relief Effort, Inc.
 P.O. Box 11180, Nashville, TN 37222-1180
 dsastrlf@aol.com www.disasterrelief.org



Jerry Heiderich: Director
 Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist

311A East Calhoun Street, El Campo, TX 77437
 Clinic 979-578-9091, Cell 214-862-8964

jerry@gulfcoastchristiancounseling.com



MENTAL HEALTH SOLUTIONS

Mental and Behavioral Health Crisis Solutions
Jeremy Sprott LPC, Owner

Web: www.mentalhealthresponse.com Phone: (832) 518-7933
 Email: jeremy@mentalhealthresponse.com



Lance Decker

Certified Grief Recovery Specialist

Tomball, TX

+1 (

832) 534-0730

lance@lancedecker.com

www.lancedecker.com

Grief Support/Recovery Groups meet at Spring Creek Church of Christ in Tomball, TX at no cost.

Individual programs available for a fee.

Programs

The Grief Recovery Method: For all Grief Experiences
 When Children Grieve: Helps parents help children grieve

Pet Loss: Program specifically for the loss of a pet

Also available for speaking to groups/ congregations about grief.

THE CHRISTIAN ARRAY

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AREA WIDE ACTIVITIES

- Each Wed. Northeast Houston Preacher's Meeting, Darien Loop CofC, 7014 Darien St., Houston, 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. Frwy., Houston, confirm with Gerald Fruzia fruzia70@sbcglobal.net for info.
- 7/10/17 Houston Area Wide Youth Devotional at Memorial, 900 Echo Lane, 6:00 - 8:00, IMPOSSIBLE FOR EVOLUTION presentation by Benton Baugh (see flyer) followed by pizza and cokes
- 9/2017 Greater Houston Area Church Leader's Workshop—ELDERS AS SHEPHERDS
- 8/2018 Greater Houston Area Campaign for Christ

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.

Permission to reuse information:

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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.