

MAKING BIBLE CLASSES MORE EFFECTIVE

NUMBER 129

JUNE, 2018

Bible classes were started in England in the 1780s as a way to fight children's illiteracy. Children were forced to work long hours rather than going to school. Bible classes are not a scriptural requirement, in fact some object to them because they are not in the Bible. At the very least there are no scriptural requirements on how to conduct them. How we conduct the today is our custom. How they have been conducted for at least the last 75 years has been largely unchanged, in spite of significant changes in technology.

As they represent a lifetime of teaching from which we never graduate, you might consider them to be not very effective. It is an hourly investment each week in our very busy world today, so we might want to make them more effective.

What would be the measure of being more effective:

1. That you achieve a known level of knowledge at a predictable time.
2. That you are putting the Bible class learning to work in the Kingdom (called the Great Commission).
3. That some class members are going on to help others to mature to being an evangelistic member also.
4. Class members are becoming more active in class activities.

Continued on page 2

FREE E-BOOK!!!!

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EQUIPPING FOR SUCCESS

“Their purpose (Proverbs) is to teach people to live disciplined and successful lives, to help them do what is right, just and fair. These proverbs will give insight to the simple and discernment to the young.” (Proverbs 1:3, 4 NLT)

It's graduation time. What does an eighteen year old need to know to become a responsible and productive citizen? As parents we are privileged to train our children in the way they should go. Proverbs is a great guidebook.

SPIRITUAL VALUES – “Trust in the Lord with all your heart; do not depend on your own understanding. Seek his will in all you do, and he will show you which path to take.” (Proverbs 3:5, 6 NLT) Encourage life long learners of the Word of God, it is the path of wisdom and righteousness. “A wise person is hungry for knowledge, while a fool feeds on trash.” (Proverbs 15:14 NLT)

A MORAL CODE – “A wise child accepts a parent's discipline; a mocker refuses to listen to correction.” (Proverbs 13:1 NLT) The job of a parent is to construct boundaries between right and wrong that will last a lifetime. Boundaries strengthened with discipline provide wisdom, judgment and discernment. “Walk with the wise and become wise; associate with fools and get in trouble.” (Proverbs 13:20 NLT)

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MAKING BIBLE CLASSES MORE EFFECTIVE, P. 2

Traditional Bible Classes are verbal presentations which present, represent, and present again topics over a lifetime. The format was set in the 19th century before copy machines and computers were available. Typically a speaker says most everything he knows about a topic for 45 minutes. As it is typically a verbal review of what has been presented before, there is little net benefit for the class member.

It is known that the material will be presented again and again in class after class, so why shouldn't the topic be written down and summarized in 1-3 pages. Additionally, the pages can be put online for ready and future reference.

If the lessons are passed out before class, the class members can see it in writing as it is discussed, take notes on the paper, and store the papers in an organized notebook at home.

If the entire program is planned in advance, a table of contents can be presented so that the classes know what is coming and all the pages can be numbered appropriately.

If there are 100 lessons in your sequence and you spend an average of two weeks on each lesson, it means you will complete the study in about four years.

A key to a lesson sequence like this is you don't just tell members what to believe, that would be a creed.

You can tell them why you believe it, what the scriptures are that support why you believe it, any apparent conflicts in the scriptures which they must be able to explain, what others believe instead, and why they should believe. Until your members are equipped with this type knowledge, their ability to help in the Great Commission will be restricted.

That is a large requirement for each teacher to prepare individually. The first time anyone

prepares a lesson like this, it will be like a draft lesson. When presented and discussed, others can make comments and contributions to be added to the lesson. Presume you have six adult classes and the draft lesson is presented six times. Each time some additional information is added. Your own Wikipedia.

At the end of your first four years when the lessons are represented, it is an upgraded lesson set. The class members can have their first lessons with their notes and the new lesson to reinforce their knowledge.

Imagine at the end of four years, your class members are acquainted with and have in their hands 100 quality lessons on most of the topics they will hear in an evangelistic encounter. They know the what and why of religious topics.

On the day of Pentecost, all you needed to believe was that Jesus was the resurrected Son of God. As the New Testament was written, what we needed to understand became more complex. After 2000 years with groups rationalizing a variety of teachings, we have a more complex need for understanding and believing. We don't just need to explain God and

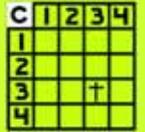
Jesus, we need to explain the simple Gospel truths.

There surely have been hundreds of lesson sets developed by our church members in the past, typically limited to a single congregation.

It may be that some of them are online. If any are online, we have not seen any other than the one we have participated in. That is found at www.thearray.org under the Christian Array tab. It a series of topical lessons which attempt to follow the Restoration principle of "Speak where the Bible speaks and remain silent where the Bible is silent". The topical lesson on page 10 is an example of this.

UNTIL YOUR MEMBERS ARE EQUIPPED WITH THIS TYPE KNOWLEDGE, THEIR ABILITY TO HELP IN THE GREAT COMMISSION WILL BE RESTRICTED.

Continued on page 3



MAKING BIBLE CLASSES MORE EFFECTIVE, P. 3

We have seen several lists of sermons on line. However, sermons tend by nature to be more words than facts, which make them hard to review to learn topical information.

If you know of another online set of topics, let us know and we will advertise it.

Now to really push the limits for some congregations, consider visual graphics to improve the quality of your lessons.

We use projectors and sometimes video screens for sermons and song services in most congregations these days. They see some service in Bible Classes also.

Many topical lessons can be enhanced by seeing key points on a display. There are also sets of low resolution Bible related maps which can be downloaded for free, and there higher resolutions maps you can purchase. If you search "bible maps" you will see numerous options.

A good PowerPoint slide to make a point can take as little as a couple of minutes or can take a couple of hours to prepare. The talent to prepare good graphics and to present lessons well do not necessarily reside in the same person. This is an excellent time to involve more of your members in the teaching program.

It is simply not practical to involve a member in spending time making quality graphics for a single class. However, when your plan is to present a lesson in 4 adult classes this year and to repeat it every 4 years, it makes a graphical investment more logical.

The next step beyond that is an online storage source for supporting graphics for the topics. The Christian Array website is looking at this, but it needs assistance (time and talent, not money) to accomplish this.

The #1 point to this is that we need to decide that at some date reasonably in the future a majority of our class members will be prepared to assist in the Great Commission, as indicated by some measure. Our suggestion for a measure is in 4 years, having been exposed to 100 topical lessons to equip them, and know the 100 lessons are available online for their ready reference at any time and place.

We will continue to support our ready reference online resource which you are welcome to use. As we make or receive supporting graphics, we will make those available also. However, graphics will be a slow process.

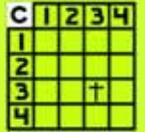
Next Month: Bible Classes, the next step.

Church Sickness #5: Activity Acclimation

Activity Acclimation happens when church members see busyness as the same as commitment and/or godliness.

Some highlights from today's Rainer Report:

- Being busy is not important; being productive is.
- God wants us to use our time and energy to make a Kingdom difference.
- Look and someones checkbook and calendar and you see what their priorities are.
- A busy church is not always an effective church.



BILLY GRAHAM'S DAUGHTER

Billy Graham's daughter, Anne Graham, was interviewed on TV shortly after the 9/11 attacks in New York City. She was asked, "How could God let something like this happen?"

She gave an extremely profound and insightful response saying "I believe God is deeply saddened by this, just as we are, but for years we've been telling God to get out of our schools, to get out of our government and to get out of our lives. And being the gentleman He is, I believe He has calmly backed out. How can we expect God to give us His blessing and His protection if we demand He leave us alone?"

In light of recent events...terrorists attack, school shootings, etc. I think it started when Madeleine Murray O'Hare complained that she didn't want prayer in our schools, and we said OK.

Then someone said "You better not read the Bible in school ... the Bible says thou shalt not kill, thou shalt not steal, and love your neighbor as yourself." And we said OK.

Then Dr. Benjamin Spock said that we shouldn't spank our children when they misbehave because their little personalities would be warped and we might damage their self-esteem. We said an expert should know what he's talking about. And we said OK.

Now we're asking ourselves why our children have no conscience, why they don't know right from wrong, and why it doesn't bother them to kill strangers, their classmates, & themselves. Probably, if we think about it long and hard enough, we can figure it out. I think it has a great deal to do with "WE REAP WHAT WE SOW."

Funny how simple it is for people to trash God and then wonder why the world is going away from Him. Funny how we believe what the newspapers say, but question what the Bible says. Funny how you can send 'jokes' through e-mail and they spread like wildfire

but when you start sending messages regarding the Lord, people think twice about sharing. Funny how lewd, crude, vulgar and obscene articles pass freely through cyberspace, but public discussion of God is suppressed in the school and the workplace.

Are you laughing? Funny how when you forward this message, you will not send it to many on your address list because you're not sure what they believe, or what they will think of you for sending it. Funny how we can be more worried about what other people think of us than what God thinks of us.

Pass this on if you think it has merit. If not, just discard it... no one will know you did. But, if you discard this thought process, don't sit back and complain about what bad shape the world is in.

God bless you as you share it with friends. No Nation or people can ever survive or succeed without Jesus Christ.

EQUIPPING FOR SUCCESS

Continued from page 1

WORK ETHIC – *“Good planning and hard work lead to prosperity, but hasty shortcuts lead to poverty.”* (Proverbs 21:5 NLT) Young people must be taught the value of working hard. *“Never be lazy, but work hard and serve the Lord enthusiastically.”* (Rom. 12:11 NLT)

Proverbs conveniently has 31 chapters, one for every day of the month. Have the whole family read the chapter that corresponds with the date. Once is never enough for Proverbs. Keep reading it for a lifetime!

Elizabeth Brown



THOMAS COOK VACATIONERS

THESE ARE ACTUAL COMPLAINTS RECEIVED AT "THOMAS COOK VACATIONS" FROM DISSATISFIED CUSTOMERS

1. "On my holiday to Goa in India, I was disgusted to find that almost every restaurant served curry. I don't like spicy food."
2. "They should not allow topless sunbathing on the beach. It was very distracting for my husband who just wanted to relax."
3. "We went on holiday to Spain and had a problem with the taxi drivers as they were all Spanish."
4. "We booked an excursion to a water park but no-one told us we had to bring our own swimsuits and towels. We assumed it would be included in the price."
5. "The beach was too sandy. We had to clean everything when we returned to our room."
6. "We found the sand was not like the sand in the brochure. Your brochure shows the sand as white but it was more yellow."
7. "It's lazy of the local shopkeepers in Puerto Vallarta to close in the afternoons. I often needed to buy things during 'siesta' time -- this should be banned."
8. "No-one told us there would be fish in the water. The children were scared."
9. "Although the brochure said that there was a fully equipped kitchen, there was no egg-slicer in the drawers."
10. "I think it should be explained in the brochure that the local convenience store does not sell proper biscuits like custard creams or ginger nuts."
11. "The roads were uneven and bumpy, so we could not read the local guide book during the bus ride to the resort. Because of this, we were unaware of many things that would have made our holiday more fun."
12. "It took us nine hours to fly home from Jamaica to England. It took the Americans only three hours to get home. This seems unfair."
13. "I compared the size of our one-bedroom suite to our friends' three-bedroom and ours was significantly smaller."
14. "The brochure stated: 'No hairdressers at the resort.' We're trainee hairdressers and we think they knew and made us wait longer for service."
15. "When we were in Spain, there were too many Spanish people there. The receptionist spoke Spanish, the food was Spanish. No one told us that there would be so many foreigners."
16. "We had to line up outside to catch the boat and there was no air-conditioning."
17. "It is your duty as a tour operator to advise us of noisy or unruly guests before we travel."
18. "I was bitten by a mosquito. The brochure did not mention mosquitoes."
19. "My fiancée and I requested twin-beds when we booked, but instead we were placed in a room with a king bed. We now hold you responsible and want to be re-reimbursed for the fact that I became pregnant. This would not have happened if you had put us in the room that we booked."

BE AWARE ...THEY WALK AMONG US, THEY VOTE AND THEY BREED as evidenced by #19!!!!

Forwarded from Ray Scott

IMPOSSIBLE FOR EVOLUTION – FIRST BREATH

The first nine months of a baby's life are spent in a nice warm environment with all his or her needs met. It is fed and given oxygen thru an umbilical cord, and it's waste products are removed along the same cord. Quite a convenient setup.

In nine months it grows from being an incredibly complex single cell to becoming an incredibly complex baby. The first cell is referred to as a "stem" cell. Stem cells are undifferentiated biological cells that can differentiate into specialized cells and can divide (through mitosis) to produce more stem cells. It ultimately differentiates or changes into more than 200 kinds of cells to make the baby's body work.

In those nine months, the baby does a lot of complex tasks from having a heart beat to moving arms and legs.

After the birth, an amazing process in itself, the baby has some time to learn new things. It needs to learn to feed, but has a few days to accomplish this before it is critical. It needs to learn to see, but that will take a few days. It needs to learn to crawl and walk, but those will take a few months.

There is one event that the baby must do, and do within 4 or 5 minutes or it dies. That is to breathe. The baby has spent months in a totally liquid environment, and now must suddenly be able to breathe air.

From our perspective (20-20 hindsight), we can see the obvious benefit of this capability. But imagine the capability did not exist and evolution needed to evolve

it. What is the unevolved condition of this capability that it evolved from? What are the intermediate steps?

Chicks are an interesting option. When they peck their way out of an egg shell, they are breathing immediately. However, they never "lived" in a liquid environment. The chick was a liquid environment inside the shell which matured into a chick. As the chick went from a blob to a chick, it was actually breathing within the shell. The egg shell is porous and oxygen and carbon dioxide seep through the shell. An initial membrane kept the liquid in the egg from leaking out. The membrane became part of the chick, exposing the porous shell. See issues 58-60 for more information) It is its own impossible, but not this one.

This is clearly the work of an intelligent designer, and that designer is God.

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



Photo source unknown

THE CHRISTIAN ARRAY

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

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IMPOSSIBLE FOR EVOLUTION is a 97 page 8 1/2" x 11" full color book by Benton Baugh which includes many of the "impossible" articles in this newsletter plus discussions on what impossible means, definition of terms, what evolutionists are going to teach your kids, and answers for evolutionists. Price: \$30.

To order this book go to:

<http://www.thebookpatch.com/Bookstore/Genre.aspx>,
click on Religion, then click on Religion and Science

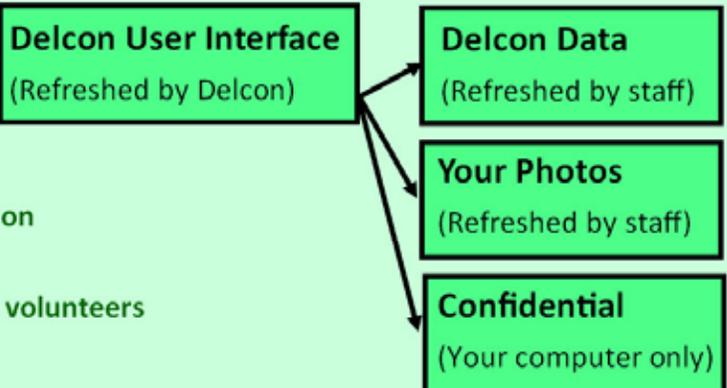
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Vacationers

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



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

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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**

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TOPICAL STUDIES

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WHY DID THE GALATIANS FALL FROM GRACE?

CONCLUSIONS:

1. Galatians 5:4 gives a definitive example of falling from grace.
2. Having fallen from grace means that if you died in that state, you would go to hell.
3. Specific reasons were given for their falling from grace.
4. The reasons were simply trying to bring God's old law into the new covenant.
5. If a person departs from God's new covenant to an extent greater than the Galatians departure when they should reasonably know better, that person has fallen from grace; if they were ever in the grace.
6. Whereas we cannot judge that a person is going to hell or not, we have no business giving comfort to a person who teaches and/or practices departures from God's new covenant.

It is clear that even in the first century there were Christians who fell from the grace of God as is shown by the following verses:

"I am amazed that you are so quickly deserting Him who called you by the grace of Christ, for a different Gospel; which is not really another; only there are some who are disturbing you, and want to distort the gospel of Christ." (Gal. 1:6-7)

"You have been severed from Christ, you who are seeking to be justified by law; you have fallen from grace." (Gal. 5:4)

The second verse tells us that the Galatians were falling from grace by adding the requirements of law to the teachings of Christ. It is interesting to read to the Galatians to see what things these people were doing to cause the falling from grace:

Gal. 3:3 "Are you foolishly now trying to be perfected by the works of the law?"

Gal. 4:9 "You desire to be in bondage to the Law."

Gal. 4:10 "You observe days and months and seasons and years."

Gal. 5:2-4 "You are seeking to be justified by the Law." (Specifically condemns circumcision for religious reasons.)

It is interesting to note that while these Christians were not willing to submit to the will of God, they were not adding new or strange "improvements" to the church. They were only bringing forward a part of God's old Law. Certainly, it is reasonable to conclude that there is a general principle involved here: if you do not submit to the will of God as it is given to us, you will fall from grace. (Rev. 22:18-19, II Tim. 3:16-17, Gal. 1:8-9)

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WHY DID THE GALATIANS FALL FROM GRACE?

A second way of looking at the Galatians is to consider what the author Paul did not say about them. He did not say that they were not: good moral people, sincere in what they were doing, hard working, prominent in the church, generous, knowledgeable, people you would like to associate with, or more energetic than you or I are.

The fact that Paul said that Christians who could have had all of the good characteristics mentioned in the previous paragraph could still fall from grace is distinctly different from typical contemporary religious teachings.

This means that being a "good" person is not enough. You must submit to God's will.

With more than 300 different churches around, this makes it important for each of us to study the word and make sure we are submitting to God's will and not other sincere beliefs, practices, or teachings.

If you look at the pattern of the church set up in the New Testament and the church you attend departs from this pattern more than the departure of the Galatians, you should be concerned that you are not in the grace of God.

The New Testament pattern includes such things as: baptism by immersion after confession of sins and for the remission of sins (Acts 2:36-41 & Acts 8:35-39); all Christians called saints (Phil. 1:1); no man called father (Matt. 23:8-12); celebrating communion on the first day of each week (Acts 20:7); singing from the heart rather than with instrumental music (Eph. 5:19); and local autonomy of churches under the control of elders (Titus 1:5-9 & I Tim. 3:1-13).

If your church has developed practices other than these or other New Testament teachings, we urge you to study your Bible and submit to the pure word of God.

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AREA WIDE ACTIVITIES

- 7/22-27 Texas Normal Singing School, 72nd year at ACU, www.singingschool.org
- 8/18 Missions Conference, Chattanooga, Tennessee, eastbrainerdchurch.org/missionsconference
- 8-31-9/3 National Singles Retreat, Sugarland, Tx, nationalchristiansingles.com, 832-687-0366
- 9/13-14 New Day Conference, Murfreesboro, TN, northboulevard.com/newdayconference 615-893-1520
- 9/30-10-3 Harding University Bible Lectureship, Searcy, Ark., 501-279-4449 www.harding.edu/events/lectureship
- 10/1 Ministry Equipping Day, Oklahoma Christian, Edmond, OK, 405-425-5141 or Gradyking@oc.edu
- 11/5-11 53rd Pan American Lectureship, Havana, Cuba, www.lectureship.org 800-533-7660
- 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.

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