

DISCIPLES OF CHRIST TO LOSE 50% IN 10 YEARS

NUMBER 141

AUGUST/SEPTEMBER, 2019

To be more precise, the August 25 article in the Christian Post Reporter had the title “Disciples of Christ on track to lose half of its membership in 10 years.” A good title, but too long to fit our format. The Disciples of Christ or Christian Church are of course a group which also claims a heritage to the Restoration movement, and had a split with Churches of Christ in 1906. You would equate them with the liberal instrumental group and Churches as the more conservative acapella group.

That would related to a 6.7% average annual decline rate. Churches of Christ were declining about 0.5% 4 years ago and the decline has accelerated to 1.71% last year.

If our decline rate remains at 1.71% rather than accelerating more, we will only decline by 16% rather than 50%. Good news of a sort.

The Disciples of Christ were way ahead of us in going to instrumental music and other more liberal operating methods, but some of our congregations are trying to catch up with them.

The article was sent to us with the wording

“Interesting article about the Disciples of Christ ‘aging out.’ We aren’t the only ones with issues. It appears all who worship in traditional worship settings are hurting...”

Continued on page 2



JOSHUA

What sort of person was Joshua?

We read in the Old Testament book of Joshua that upon the death of Moses the Lord God spoke to Joshua. The Israelites were encamped near the Jordan River. The Lord told Joshua to lead the nation across it. They were preparing to receive the land the Lord had promised them.

Joshua had been Moses’ aide. Moses perhaps mentored Joshua. Now the question was whether or not the Lord would support Joshua just as He had supported Moses.

Continued on page 3.

IN THIS ISSUE:

Joshua - Black	1
Pleasing God—Brown	3
Revive Us Again	3
OC Church Growth Institute	4
Impossible for Evolution	6
Area Wide Activities	11

DISCIPLES OF CHRIST TO LOSE 50% IN 10 YEARS, P. 2

Whereas we would agree with the implication that we are aging out, we have some heartburn with the statement of “traditional worship settings” as if that were a cause. There is a high degree of correlation between the two, but we would suggest they are not cause and effect.

As most of our readers will not have had an opportunity to see a non-traditional worship service, we are including some pictures of one we visited. On the first page was the **laser light show** which preceded the Sunday morning worship service. It was in a high school auditorium, and being older, we were invited to go to a separate class room setting which would not be so loud. Being there to get the whole experience, we went in the auditorium.

The **pictures on this page** are the singing service with a sizeable band and several singers, the entertainment during the communion service, and a sermon (which was good). It was an experience. Non-traditional worship services can come in a variety of styles. All are likely to start off more modestly than this, and it is not a guarantee that they will become this extreme.

Back more to the point, we would suggest that the cause of our decline is more along the lines of our traditional, optional operating style which both maintains a traditional worship style and discourages evangelism. That being said, our traditional worship style, especially acapella music, is one of our strongest points. We need to be focusing on making our acapella music better. Discouraging evangelism is a whole other subject. No one intentionally discourages evangelism, but we effectively do.

It ought to be reasonable to say that if we don't effectively evangelize our own kids we will lose them. If we don't effectively evangelize our neighbors we will not gain them. Those two factors equate to congregations aging out and dying, irrespective of worship styles.

Why would we suggest that our operating

style discourages evangelism. This topic is discussed in more detail in the topical paper OCCG-009 CHANGING ELDERS INTO



SHEPHERDS which is located at the website occg.institute under the project papers tab, and is also attached to the current email.

C	1	2	3	4
1				
2				
3			+	
4				

JOSHUA , P. 3

PLEASING GOD

Then the Lord said to Joshua: "As I was with Moses, so will I be with you; I will not fail you, nor forsake you. Be strong and of good courage; for you shall cause this people to inherit the land which I swore to their fathers to give them." (Joshua 1:5-6)

The Lord also instructed Joshua to meditate day and night on the book of the Law. He was to obey the Law in all he did. It had not been long since Moses had given the Law at Mount Sinai. But the Lord emphasized that if Joshua kept the Law, he would attain prosperity and good success. No doubt Joshua listened closely.

Perhaps Joshua's most important attribute was the meticulous way he responded to the Lord's commands. For example, when the Israelites battled the Hivites, Jebusites, Hittites, Canaanites and other resident tribes, the Lord usually directed Joshua to put all the inhabitants to death and to take no plunder. Joshua carried out these orders completely.

Near the end of his career, at a meeting at Shechem, Joshua challenged the Israelites always to follow the Lord.

"But if serving the LORD seems undesirable to you, then choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your ancestors served beyond the Euphrates, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you are living. But as for me and my household, we will serve the LORD." (Joshua 24:15)

John Black, Houston

"...and find out what pleases the Lord." (Eph. 5:10)

It's an interesting thought that we can give pleasure to God. Our children give us pleasure when they do the right thing with the right attitude. Some of that joy comes from the affirmation that they listen. And think of the warm glow of pleasure when they speak the tiniest words of gratitude. A little praise raises it to another level. It is not so hard to figure out what gives God pleasure.

Our Father wants us to listen to his words and do the things he planned for our good. God is pleased when our character begins to emulate his character. This means we need to pay attention to who God is and what he does.

"The Lord is compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, abounding in love...He does not treat us as our sins deserve or repay us according to our iniquities." (Psalm 103:8-10)

In any love relationship we always seek to please our beloved. We need to get acquainted with everything that pleases God, what he likes and what he doesn't like. It's our lifelong quest to know God.

"And we pray this in order that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and may please him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God." (Col. 1:10)

Have you seen the photographs of the galaxies photographed by the Hubble Telescope? Considering that God is bigger than all that exists isn't it amazing that he knows, hears and responds to you and me? What will you do to please him today?

Elizabeth Brown, Texarkana

**WE HAVE THE TRUTH, LOGIC
AND SCIENCE ON OUR SIDE. WE
WILL NOT LOSE IF WE USE IT.**

THE CHRISTIAN ARRAY

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

C	1	2	3	4
1				
2				
3			+	
4				

OC CHURCH GROWTH INSTITUTE

As illustrated on the graphic below, the OC Church Growth Think Tank is now merged with the Christian Array to become the OC Church Growth Institute.

Both the OC Church Growth Think Tank and The Christian Array had websites which are now merged into the www.occg.institute website. The old links will still work. All of the

pattern. That goal will move forward into the Institute in trying to help implement the ideas.

The present plans for implementation are:

CHURCH GROWTH CONSULTATIONS. Not that our ideas are necessarily better than someone else's, but they come with a more objective 3rd party view of your situation which is



content of the old websites is now on the new website.

Array also published this e-magazine which will continue as a constituent part of the Institute.

The OCCG Think Tank will continue as a constituent part of the Institute, and will continue to work at thinking up ways to help Churches of Christ grow.

The primary role of the Institute beyond continuing the work of the Think Tank and the Christian Array will be to focus on implementing the ideas identified by the Think Tank. The Think Tank goal is to try to figure out how to return the Churches of Christ to a 5% annual growth

hard for an inhouse person to do.

CHURCH GROWTH WORKSHOPS: Area wide events

STUDIES AND PAPERS: Promote and/or sponsor Topical papers on church growth topics. One presently being planned will address how to improve acapella singing in churches.

SHEPHERDING CERTIFICATE: Considering organizing a course program to assist Shepherds in addressing what must be done to help their congregations grow in the 21st century.

Continued on the next page.

OC CHURCH GROWTH INSTITUTE, P. 2

DELCON DATABASE: Providing a congregational operating system database created in the scriptural operating style of Churches of Christ. Its goal is to promote more congregational organization to free Shepherd's time to allow them to do shepherding while gaining more control over the actual operations.

FULL, FREE RESOURCE: Post a permanent free online resource for anything you would need to support personal evangelism. The website already has a lot of content but much more is needed.

ACAPELLA MUSIC: Considering offering grants to study how to improve acapella singing in our congregations and to study the objective, measurable impact on congregations 5 years

after adopting instrumental music. If you are interested in leading or participating in either of these studies, let us know.

All of these and future activities are intended to benefit the church at large and represents primarily voluntary work. Each member should devote their primary efforts to the support of their local congregation, but if you have extra time and energies to help the church at large, this project might be of interest to you. Let us know at:

Contact us at: info@occg.institute.

A FULL FREE ONLINE RESOURCE FOR 21ST CENTURY EVANGELISM

www.occgainstitute.org



OC CHURCH GROWTH INSTITUTE

Working to address the current 1.71% annual decline of Churches of Christ in the USA by providing:

- Short answers for Personal Evangelism
- Topical Lessons (100+ topics),
- Papers (Church growth and evangelism topics)
- Church of Christ Locator
- Christian Array E-Magazine (130+ issues)
- Services (Church growth consultation and workshops)
- and other information

We need your help to accomplish this goal!

Visit the bottom of our website to find out how to get the iPhone shortcut!

For more information, contact:
info@occgainstitute.org

IMPOSSIBLE FOR EVOLUTION – LOBSTER FINS

At a local upscale restaurant, you can see some lobsters moving about as if they had no idea of what was about to happen to them. When there are several in the tank, they seem to pile up in the corners. They are relatively heavy creatures with their exoskeleton and do not seem to have legs well adapted for climbing, such as on the pile of other lobsters.

They have heavy front claws which are not good for climbing and are a load to be dealt with. Notice in the photo that between the rear legs and the folded down legs, it has fins. They are literally swimming fins. When the lobster attempts to climb on a pile (or likely anything else) he or she use the swim fins to help push him or her up. It is quite interesting to watch, especially when you had no idea it was going to happen.

Now imagine you are a Lobster walking along the ocean floor and decide to climb on top of something which you cannot do. Do you say to yourself that you have some open space on the bottom side of your tail? You know it is there, even though you can't see it, as you see it on other lobsters.

Then all you have to do is to dream up the DNA programming to make a fin, the DNA programming to make new muscles to power the fins, the DNA programming for nerves to control the muscles, and DNA programming in your brain to do the controlling and know when to do the controlling.

That shouldn't be much of a challenge for a zero I.Q. Lobster; after all, he or she has a million years to do this creative design work. Wait, it only lives a short time! Our atheistic evolutionists would suggest that any one of the Lobsters needs to make some progress towards this goal. Maybe generation 1 starts working on the nerve programming to control the fins, not having any idea what a fin is. Maybe generation 37 starts to work on the design of the muscles to control the fins.



That may seem like we are making fun of atheistic evolutionists, but their basic answer is it just happens. They do not offer a plan as to how all this happens, it just happened. Photo by Baugh

For one more time, we want to suggest that simply the fins on a Lobster are a complex system of programming for the fins, muscles, blood supply, nerves, brain power and other components. They are not a lucky series of accidental mutations, they are a clear indication of an Intelligent Designer. That Intelligent Designer is God.

“8 REASONS CHRISTIANITY IS FALSE”

To be better aware of what you believe, it is sometimes good to hear what the other side has to say. Being a subscriber of the Atheist Alliance Newsletter, we keep a regular tab on them. The following is an article directly copied from their newsletter.

By [Bill Flavell](#) on July 23, 2018 Comments Closed / 67399 views

Atheist Alliance International Newsletter 7/16/19

There is very little that we can prove in this world. We can look for evidence to support claims people make and when there is robust supporting evidence, and no contrary evidence, we can conclude a claim is probably, but not definitely, true.

However, it is easier to prove something is false—all you need is one piece of contradictory evidence. So, what about Christianity? Is there evidence that contradicts, or casts grave doubt on Christianity? I think there is rather a lot.

To keep this article brief, I will describe the falsifying evidence without giving all the sources and details but, actually, most of it is so well-known, that even Christians should be aware that this evidence exists.

1. There is clear evidence that prayer does not work despite the Bible promising prayers will be answered.
2. There is clear evidence that humans invent gods. Humans have invented so many gods that the default assumption should be that a god is a supernatural entity invented by humans. Christianity would need solid evidence that the Jewish god is an exception to this rule but there is no such evidence.
3. There is clear evidence that religions and gods are propagated through culture by infecting children, and no evidence that they are propagated by gods.
4. There is clear evidence that Christianity has evolved as human understanding of the world has changed whilst a real, God-given religion, should never need to change.

5. There is clear evidence that humans on this planet have unequal access to Christianity so, if Christianity were true, billions would be condemned to hell for no fault of their own. This contradicts the Christian notion that God is omnibenevolent.
6. There is clear evidence that the Bible, supposedly inspired by God, is liberally sprinkled with the type of errors we would expect from its Iron Age authors but would not expect from the creator of the universe.
7. Christian theology is incoherent to the point of absurdity. God killing his son so he can forgive our future sin is like me breaking my son's legs so I can forgive my neighbor in case she ever parks her car on my drive. It is quite ridiculous.
8. There is clear evidence that the arguments presented for the existence of the Jewish God are logically flawed—all of them have been shown to be unreliable. If this were not the case, all honest and intelligent people would accept that God exists, just as all honest and intelligent people accept that black holes exist.

All that is left for Christians is faith and their feelings. We know that faith and feelings can be used to believe in any god at all—including non-existent gods. So faith and feelings cannot help us determine if Christianity is true.

But that is all Christians have.

There you have it. It is full of misrepresentations, opinions, and misinterpretation, with only one fact stated. That “all honest and intelligent people accept that black holes exist.” “Black holes” are a contemporary theory for how to explain some phenomenon and is certainly amenable to opposing theories by honest intelligent people.

The #6 claim to errors is much of what this publication is about. The #4 claim to Christianity is what the Apostasy was all about., The Bible remains the same.



Foster's Home for Children

In an effort to meet a growing demand for children needing out of home placement, Foster's Home for Children is expanding by three additional group homes in the summer of 2019. We will be interviewing and hiring caregivers for these three homes. If you are interested in being considered, it is not too early to submit your application. Consider serving with us as we provide sanctuary and healing to children of trauma. Applications can be found on our website at www.fostershome.org, and submitted to glenn@fostershome.org.

For more information, contact Glenn Newberry, President, at 214-536-6172.



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:

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 www.occg.institute 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

THE CHRISTIAN ARRAY

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

C	1	2	3	4
1				
2				
3			+	
4				

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
MillionDollarsunday.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

ADVERTISING POLICY:

**Any scriptural event relating to more
than one congregation at no cost**



**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



Lance Decker

Certified Grief Recovery Specialist

Tomball, TX
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.



**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



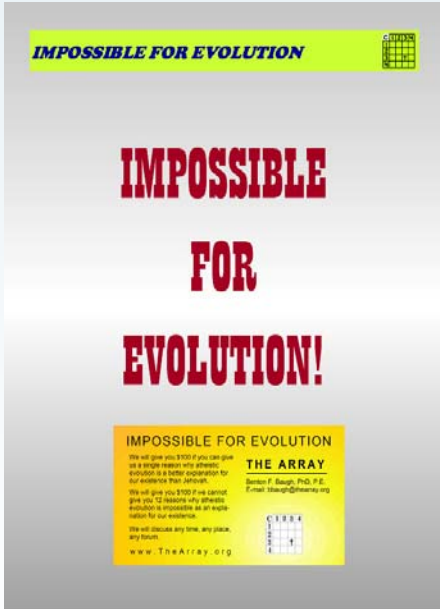
HELPING VICTIMS NATIONWIDE

Info or assistance call 615-833-0888 or 1-800-541-2848
Churches of Christ Disaster Relief Effort, Inc.
P.O. Box 111180, Nashville, TN 37222-1180

THE CHRISTIAN ARRAY

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

C	1	2	3	4
1				
2				
3		+		
4				



FREE E-BOOK: IMPOSSIBLE FOR EVOLUTION

Go www.thearray.org, MAILING LIST tab and sign up again (or the first time) to receive this E-Magazine and you will receive a digital copy of the Impossible for Evolution Book.

IMPOSSIBLE FOR EVOLUTION is a 97 page 8 1/2" x 11" full color book by Benton F. 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:

[Www.thearray.org](http://www.thearray.org), BOOK tab

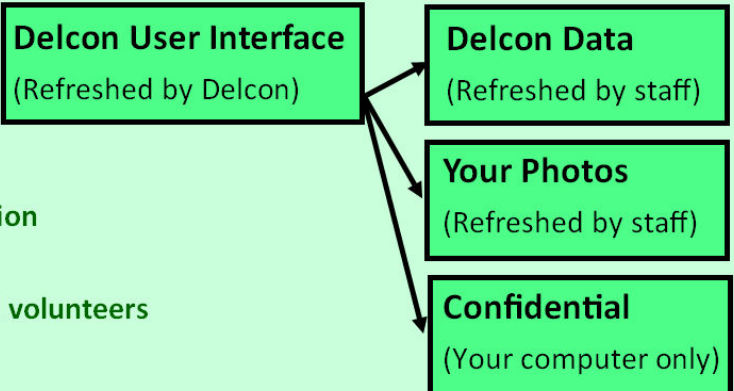
(All net proceeds go to Oklahoma Christian University)

New software specifically designed for the locally autonomous operating style of churches of Christ.

- Helps organize your missions and goals
- Organizes congregational information
- Prints Class rolls
- Tracks worship and Bible class attendance
- Collects and organizes membership information
- Tracks involvement, willingness and actual
- Provides complete job descriptions, staff and volunteers
- Provides picture and non-picture directories
- Provides regular reports to leadership
- Reports can be customized to your specific needs
- Assistance provided in setting up your congregation

DelCon

A CHURCH OF CHRIST DATABASE



Contact us at info@thearray.org

Price: \$335.00 per congregation
Installable on as many computers as needed
Annual License fee including support by email: \$100.00

THE CHRISTIAN ARRAY

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

C	1	2	3	4
1				
2				
3			+	
4				

AREA WIDE ACTIVITIES

Each Wed. NE Houston Preacher's Meeting, Location varies

11:00—1:00, Contact cell (713) 201-2417, marcusbarnum@gmail.com

2nd Tues. NW Houston Preacher's Luncheon, 11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., Rancho King

Buffet, 5900 N. Frwy., Hou, confirm with Gerald Fruzia fruzia70@sbcglobal.net

All past 140 copies of this newsletter can be found on the website "occginstitute.org" under the E-MAGAZINE tab. The free phone app discussed below will give you ready access to the information at any time.

GET A FREE PHONE APP FOR THE OC CHURCH GROWTH INSTITUTE

For iPhone:

1. Visit the website on your mobile device, www.occg.institute.
2. Along the bottom row of buttons, press on the middle button
3. The row of options just above the "Cancel" button, scroll to the right to the 6th button "Add to Home Screen", and press it
4. Press "Add", and you can move it around as you would a normal app



For Android

1. Visit our website on your mobile browser
 2. Click on the "Add Bookmark" button at the top right of the screen
 3. Press on the "Add To" drop down menu and select "Home Screen"
- The shortcut should appear on your home screen

Permission to reuse information:

As our sole objective is to get good information out to church members, anyone is welcome to use any part or all of what is in the publication at any time. No permission or credit is required.

RENEW YOUR FREE "SUBSCRIPTION"!!!!

Your free subscription can be renewed at www.thearray.org on the mailing list tab. When you "opt-in" to this email list you will receive the e-book IMPOSSIBLE FOR EVOLUTION.

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.

Circulation: 4587 congregations and individual members

Advertisements: Send to info@thearray.org