

DEER PARK PRAYER TENT

NUMBER 142

OCTOBER, 2019

In June 2019 Elder of Deer Park Pat Flanagan and Minister Richard Blount sat down with Benton Baugh to discuss and examine church growth options. One of the ideas that spawned from this meeting together was that of a Prayer Tent. This idea had been seen taking place out in Pearland.

EQUIPPING CHILDREN FOR SUCCESS

Mothers are anxiously awaiting the day. Kids are not that enthusiastic for summer to be over. The school supply lists are displayed prominently in local stores. This is a good time to review what our kids really need for school and

for life. It's an alternate list of the three R's: Respect, Responsibility and Right.

BE RESPECTFUL: We live our lives in community with other people and it pays great dividends to be respectful.

Children need to respect authority, all authority. This begins by teaching them to obey their parents. Without this fundamental training they are crippled for life and will have to learn the hard way that they are not in charge of the world.

BE RESPONSIBLE: This begins by providing each child with tasks that require accountability. This is not a place to cut corners or think it takes less time for mom to do it. It is essential that children learn to be responsible for their bodies, their things and their work. The earlier this is learned the better. It requires allowing the natural consequences of their actions to be a part of the training.

Go to page 4



Richard Blount purchased the items from Amazon and Vista Print as to not add another expense to the churches budget or be a burden to the existing budget. He purchased a Canopy, Banners, Table Runners, and Pop Up Banners to showcase the prayer tent well in the community. Pat Flanagan went to Kroger, Chick-fil-A, Wal-Mart, HEB, and CVS to inquire about setting the prayer tent up on those company grounds on Saturdays. Continued on page 2

IN THIS ISSUE:

| | |
|---|-----------|
| Equipping Children for Success—Brown | 1 |
| Abraham and Issac - Black | 5 |
| 10 Leadership Ideas - Barber | 6 |
| OC Church Growth Institute | 4 |
| Impossible for Evolution | 7 |
| Area Wide Activities | 11 |

DEER PARK PRAYER TENT, P. 2

Pat was unsuccessful at each company due to corporate approval being denied. The last location was CVS as he was visiting to make a purchase and Pat decided to speak with the Manager, Mr. Kelly. The manager's response was this community needs more things like this to lift some spirits. The manager, Mr. Kelley, personally approved the prayer tent.

Deer Park Church of Christ created their Prayer Tent Evangelism Team. Members Youth

Minister Todd Trusty, Brian Holifield and Rebecca Holifield, Pat Flanagan, Richard Blount and Gwendolyn Blount, David Camp and Patsy Camp, Mike Flanagan and Gracie Flanagan, Adrian Burke, and Andrew Green all set out on July 27 to try the tent idea out.



The first Saturday the team had 10 visitors on 6 encounters. These encounters consisted of prayer for illness, family domestic situations, and also domestic relationship challenges. The team would take down the contact information and then proceed to say collective hand held prayer with each persons that ask for prayer.

Continued on page 3

DEER PARK PRAYER TENT, P. 3

The Deer Park Church of Christ Prayer Team would also invite the persons that asked for prayer to the church for Sunday worship. So far about they have had 5 visitors come out for worship on Sunday, 2 couples and 1 man by himself thus far. They have also had 1 man, Chris Vega, come back for Bible study on that Wednesday as well. The prayer team mails out a card of encouragement to each person that comes to the prayer tent and also does a follow up visit to the homes of those individuals during the first or 2nd week of the visit to the tent.

The visits so far has only had 1 successful interaction and commitment to attend the church worship. Overall in 3-4 months of setup with the Prayer tent there has been 17 visits or more and 5 visitors to the church. This calculates to almost a 1/3 encounter further opportunity scenario. The church members also created signs that say Honk if you need prayer and other signs that say stop if you need prayer. Members stand on the corner and hold up the signs and have found that the several passerby's honk in support of prayer is needed. The Youth Minister Todd Trusty stated that he believes the honking cars are in agreement with the team and God, and he believes that means that a good seed is planted with each person that honks their horn for that day. Todd Trusty believes the seed that was planted by the honk may help that person be more encouraged that day or week and also be more encouraging that day and or week.



The team has grown significantly over the 3 months and Mary Miller a recent widow of 70 years plus of age is helping hold signs and also

Diana Mahew has join the team to assist. The team also has had participation from youth Izaabella Guerrero, Cameran Blount, and Reyna Holifield. The overall experience has bonded the Deer Park Church of Christ members and grown their faith, by the those that stop for prayer demonstration of faith. Many encounters are in tears with social pain, health chal-



lenges, employment issues, family members in hospice, addictions, and divorces.

We hope to continue this community outreach for years to establish a presence in the community on a consistent bases to drive more awareness to the church and bring Glory to God. We credit much of this idea and inspired movement to Benton Baugh, a member of OC Church Growth Institute, who shared the challenges today with church attendance and how his organization is willing to invest, inspire, and support any churches trying to re-engage and evangelize to grow their congregations attendance.

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EQUIPPING CHILDREN FOR SUCCESS, CONT. EFFECT OF INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC

DO RIGHT: The world is a great big complex place, how can we teach our children to do the right thing every time? They learn by watching us, but don't depend entirely on the osmosis process. We have to teach our children to do the right thing no matter what. Everyday in everyway bring up issues that need the right decision and provide plenty of practice.

Reinforce the golden rule, "Love your neighbor as yourself." It is considered the summary of all the laws because, "Love does no harm to its neighbor." (Rom. 13:10) Send them out the door with the admonition, "DO NO HARM," to anyone or anything. Have your kids create a poster to illustrate each value. Never forget, Moms civilize the world, one child at a time!

Elizabeth Brown, Texarkana

The OC Church Growth Institute is processing a study leading to a published paper on the topic of the impact of instrumental music on congregations. We are collecting objective data and would appreciate your help in identifying congregations which have taken up instrumental music, and the results.

If you can be of assistance in this process, go to the occg.institute website and on the bottom of the front page there is a link. This link will take you to a draft paper with a form to collect standard information. If you can help even with partial information, it will be of great assistance.

This is a major situation in our congregations and needs to be clarified with objective facts.



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ABRAHAM AND ISAAC

Abram (later Abraham) and Sarai (later Sarah) were living near Bethel when a severe famine struck. They moved to Egypt, as described in Genesis 12: 10-20. Approaching the border of Egypt, Abram told Sarai she must say to the Egyptian rulers that she was Abram's sister. Otherwise, since Sarai was a most attractive woman, they might kill him, but spare her. It was a half-truth. Sarai was Abram's half-sister.

Sarai was such a beauty she was soon invited to live in Pharaoh's palace. While Abram increased his wealth bargaining with traders for cattle, camels and servants, Pharaoh considered taking Sarai for his wife.

The Lord afflicted Pharaoh and his household with terrible diseases. Pharaoh perceived their lives were in danger because of Sarai. He sent for Abram and chastised him for not telling the whole truth about his wife. Then he ordered Sarai to be restored to Abram and that Abram leave immediately, taking with him all his possessions and his true wife.

This episode is the first of three similar events found in Genesis 12, 20 and 26. They all describe incidents where the husband arranges for the wife to be considered his sister. We might call these episodes "Sister-Wife Narrations" in Genesis.

Genesis Chapter 20 says Abraham and Sarah were in the Philistine Gerar region. Abraham let spread the word that Sarah was his sister. Abimelek, the king of Gerar, sent word for Sarah and she came to him.

But the Lord appeared to Abimelek in a dream, and warned him to leave the woman alone. If he did not he would die. Abimelek hadn't approached Sarah. He asked if the Lord would kill the innocent. He had not known anything was wrong. The Lord cautioned Abimelek to give back the woman or he would die.

The next morning Abimelek summoned his officials and Abraham. Abimelek demanded Abraham explain why he told a half-truth about his wife. Abra-

ham said he thought there was no fear or respect for his God in the land. He could have been killed so someone could take Sarah. Besides, Sarah really was his sister, the daughter of his father but not of his mother.

Abimelek gave gifts of slaves, livestock, and silver to Abraham. Then he prayed to God, and God made well Abimelek, his wife and the female slaves who had become barren on account of Sarah.

The third Sister-Wife Narration is found in Genesis Chapter 26. The focus in this chapter is on Abraham's son Isaac and Isaac's sister Rebekah.

There was another famine, and Isaac visited Abimelek, the king of Gerar, who was probably the same Abimelek Abraham had dealt with. The Lord appeared to Isaac and instructed him not to go to Egypt, but to spend some time in this land.

When asked about Rebekah, Isaac's wife, Isaac said she was his sister. Isaac and Rebekah stayed in the region a long while. One day Abimelek looked out a window and saw below him Isaac and Rebekah cuddling. Abimelek sent for Isaac. He asked why Isaac had told people his sister was his wife. As his father had said to Abimelek before, Isaac's fear was that someone would kill him in order to take possession of Rebekah.

Abimelek charged all the people, saying, "He who touches this man or his wife will surely be put to death." (Genesis 26:11, WEB)

Isaac and Rebekah continued their stay in Gerar for a time, and the Lord blessed Isaac. His crops, herds and flocks increased. Isaac became a man of wealth.

What do we learn from the Sister-Wife Narrations?

These similar episodes emphasize that the Lord cares for and looks after his children. That remains true in the present day. It will always be true.

John Black, Houston

10 LEADERSHIP IDEAS



Recently, I participated in a leadership workshop at Spring Meadows church in Spring Hill, Tennessee. Dale Jenkins asked me to present ten leadership ideas in ten minutes. Here's the list.

1. We have in our congregation the leaders we want, the leaders we deserve, the leaders we've taught and trained, the leaders we've prayed for. If we want better leaders, the best time to start is two generations ago. If we didn't, the best time to start is now.
2. Perhaps the best way to train leaders is not to train leaders. Develop disciples of Jesus. Select from those devoted disciples men who can and will lead. I find very little in the Bible about training leaders. I see much about making disciples by baptizing them and teaching them to obey ALL that Jesus commanded. I see much about the group of believers selecting outstanding men to lead when needed.
3. Family (leadership, business, softball) rules are usually unconscious, unspoken, understood, and contradictory. It can improve our following of Jesus and leading others when we think about and discuss our rules (the habitual way we do things) and commit to reducing contradictions. It would improve our leadership and reduce our stress.
4. The identified patient is rarely the cause of the problem but where the symptoms of the group surface. Rarely will firing the preacher or the death or resignation of an elder produce a great improvement. The ones we had were there because the group produced, chose, and sustained them. Unless the group changes, we'll get another one like the last one. In fact, they are prepared and waiting in the wings to take their place. The same is true of preachers. If you're changing congregations because a few people irritate you, they're already at the next church where you'll preach. You can learn to deal with them here, or move and deal with them there, or be miserable all your life.
5. Leadership training needs to involve pain — uncomfortable situations we'll face in leadership. We need to train so intensively that real situations will seem easy compared to our training. You don't win Friday night football games by reclining in an easy chair playing video games Monday through Thursday.
6. Great leadership teams (elders, deacons, preachers) are composed of growing individuals. If I want a better eldership, preacher, deacons, I need to have a plan to grow myself. When done and shared with humility, some of it will rub off on those close to me.
7. If I want the congregation where I worship to have great vision and great goals, I need to have great vision and great goals for my life. It's inconsistent to talk about mission and vision for the church if I've not thought, planned, and am continually preparing for where I think the Lord wants me to be ten or twenty years from today.
8. One of the biggest mistakes of GOOD leaders is over-functioning. The reason people continue to talk to elders about deacons' work is that they get something from the conversation. When there's a revision to the Bible, I suggest an amendment to the qualifications of elders: "A shepherd must be one who doesn't know where the thermostat is and if he found it, he doesn't know how to work it." People will quit talking to elders about the temperature in the auditorium when they get a consistent answer: "John Doe is the deacon who does an excellent job of caring for our building. He will assist you with your concerns." In Acts 6:3, the apostles said of the seven, "We will turn this responsibility over to them."
9. Toxic conflict in a group is generated and maintained by gossip (Proverbs 26:20). That is solved by the leadership being committed to Biblical teaching (Matthew 18:15-17; Titus 2:10, 11). If leaders state and remind the congregation they believe and will practice what the Holy Spirit teaches, it will eliminate toxic conflict. If you announce your unified intent to practice Biblical conflict resolution, one of the wives in the group and one of your brothers-in-law will violate the principle within six weeks just to see if you are serious. If you'll deal with it firmly in love, things get better after the initial sabotage.
10. Much of our training and philosophy of leadership has been affected by our family of origin. By learning more about our family — why they did what they did, what influenced and challenged them — we can be free to change, modify, and accept some of "the way we always did it." Humans, even the best, do some things well and some things not as well. Consider the heroes of faith in Hebrews 11.

Jerrie Barber

IMPOSSIBLE FOR EVOLUTION – PURKINJE TREE

On a recent visit to an eye doctor, the model he had of an eye showed the veins in the eye in front of the retina. They are shown as Retinal blood vessels in the figure to the right. As we are interpreting the image on the retina as what we see, a portion of that image is blocked by the blood vessels, so we should constantly see the blood vessel pattern in our vision.

Turns out our eyes have the ability to block out images which are stationary within our field of vision. Our eye blood vessels are stationary with respect to our eyes, so our eyes blank them out and give us a picture of the world without veins crossing the image. The pattern of the veins is called the Purkinje Tree after Johann Evangelist Purkinje who first described it in 1823.

This process of masking out stationary images (for which we cannot determine a scientific name) is clearly beneficial to all of us. To constantly see the Purkinje Tree image of blood vessels in our vision would be a nuisance, but would not be life threatening.

This capability is not a physical attribute which might possibly be a subject of evolution. It is rather some sort of mental programming for which we would have no idea how could happen, or how it could be passed on to subsequent generations. It could not have been learned by a person, because if it had it would not be in the his and/or her DNA to pass on to offspring. It is clearly a proof of God.

A way to visualize this process is to blow up the image of the Cheshire cat and start at the X on it's nose. After a bit the rest of the image will functionally disappear from your view.

Benton F. Baugh

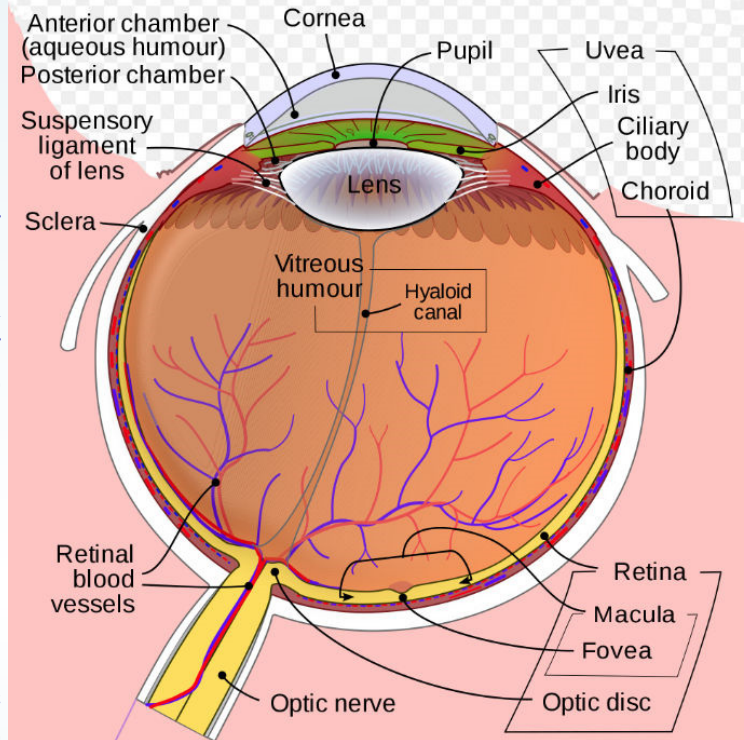


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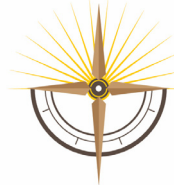
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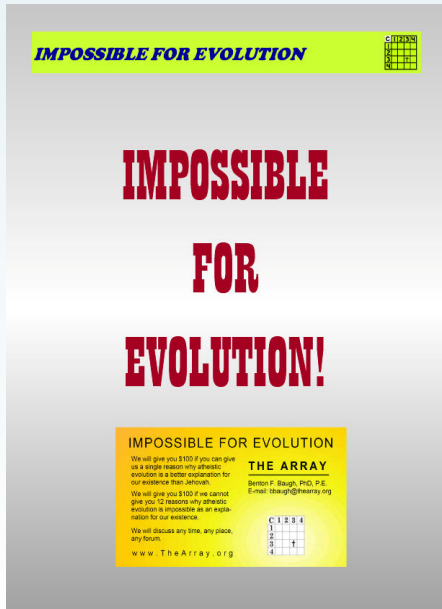
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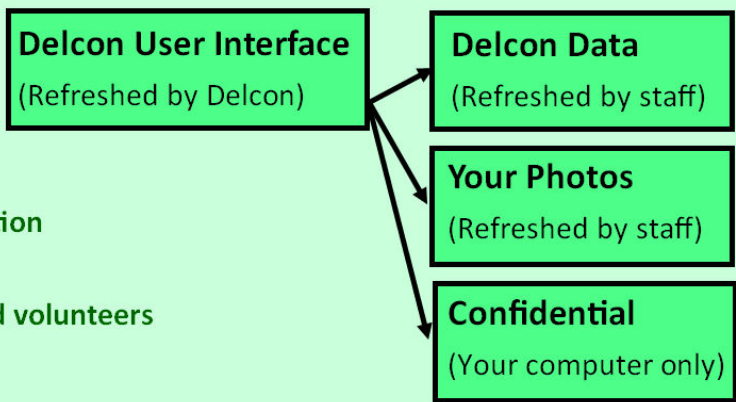
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2nd Tues. NW Houston Preacher's Luncheon, 11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. , Rancho King Buffet, 5900 N. Frwy., Hou, confirm with Gerald Fruzia fruzia70@sbcglobal.net

11/1/19 Student input on church growth, Oklahoma Christian University, Brew Conference room, 8:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m.

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