

# IS CHURCH MEMBERSHIP AN HONORARY ROLE?

NUMBER 155

NOVEMBER 2020

This lesson is generally directed towards your membership in the church. Today it appears that many members think that their attendance at a worship service is their role in the church, hence the title "Is Membership An Honorary Role?" Is simply attending adequate for a Christian to do, or is more expected?

After four books on Jesus' life leading up to the church, 23 books of the New Testament were directed towards the establishment of the church, conduct in the church, and Christian life.

Even more today with the availability of online services, is the watching of an online service sufficient as your role as a Christian. You don't even have to get out of your pajamas. We are not talking about a bedridden member or someone confined to a nursing home situation, we are considering the vast majority of us who are fully capable of attending your local congregation.

Continued on page 5

## CHECKING ON THE SAINTS

On Thursday December 17 there will be a Zoom call where various congregations in the Greater Houston area spend one minute each reporting on how their congregation is fairing during this Covid pandemic.

Houston and Surrounding Area Churches of Christ  
CAMPAIGN FOR CHRIST

**"CHECKING ON THE SAINTS"**

**ZOOM CALL**

Thursday, December 17, 2020  
7:00 p.m.

We're asking a representative from each Church of Christ congregation to take one minute to tell everyone how your congregation is doing.

Email your congregation and representative to Gary Smith, David Duncan, Benton Baugh  
campaignforchrist@array.church

Zoom Meeting Link  
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88010913172?pwd=WTFpNHdQMWlulzBuN2NMcOrNEhUd:09>  
Meeting ID: 880 1091 3172  
Passcode: 773002

\*Multiple leaders are welcomed on the call

This event by the Greater Houston Campaign for Christ is shown on the small graphic in the middle of this page, as a full size flyer on the following page of this e-magazine, and as a separate attachment in this mailing.

All members are invited to participate in the Zoom call, with the contact information being shown on the bottom of the flyer. If you are a congregational representative

and can make a report for your congregation, contact us at

campaignforchrist@array.church.

We pray that you will participate with us in this effort and that similar efforts of mutual encouragement might happen in other areas.

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## WHILE GOD WAITS

“Look, I am coming soon! My reward is with me, and I will give to each person according to what they have done.” (Rev. 22:12)

The curtain of time hangs poised to close. Any time now – why does he pause? God’s patience is legend. Among his children, there are some who have not yet come to repentance, they linger in sin. But be assured that the day of the Lord will come suddenly and all will be changed. All things considered, what should we be doing?

Jesus told a parable about a ruler who went away and when he returned he found some of his servants faithful and some lazy. It is not so much a matter of quantity, who can ever do enough, it’s about stewardship and quality of life. What have we done with the gifts that God provided?

Everything we do depends on character. Our attitude and behaviors come directly from the values we learn and put into practice. What we do is what we mean. We are to keep on maturing in character: growing in knowledge, self-control, perseverance, godliness, kindness and love. God is going to look at the end result, the expression of character that comes through what we do.

When God is looking at the books to see the pattern of our lives, what we have done, what will he see? “The dead were judged according to what they had done as recorded in the books.” (Rev. 20:12) Life is about living everyday in a trustworthy, accountable and responsible way. “...let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven.” Will you let your light shine so others can find the way?

Elizabeth Brown, Texarkana, TX

## BREADCRUMBS

“It is written, ‘Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God’.” Matthew 4:4 (Deuteronomy 8:3)

After feeding five thousand men, besides women and children, with five barley loaves and two fish, Jesus instructed his disciples to “Gather up the leftover fragments so that nothing will be lost. So they gathered them up and filled twelve baskets with fragments from the five barley loaves which were left over by those who had eaten.” John 6: 12-13

Later, Jesus explained the source of miraculous manna that sustained ancestors of the Israelites: “For the bread of God is that which comes down out of heaven, and give life to the world.” Then they said to Him, “Lord, always give us this bread.” Jesus said to them “I am the bread of life; he who comes to me will not hunger and he who believes in me will never thirst.” John 6:33-35

When I was a child, I would help feed a flock of chickens in the farmyard of my grandmother. I was intrigued by the way they would follow every trail of corn or breadcrumbs that she spread out in the morning, eagerly searching until every morsel was consumed. I was amused and impressed by the old rooster that would crow to welcome the dawn of every day, calling for his flock to follow the trail of food and crowing often as if to give thanks and praise

As a scientist and explorationist, I have often compared the pathways of researching, discovery and development of new ideas which benefit mankind to following a “trail of breadcrumbs” that attract our attention to bits of information which lead to revelation and comprehension of concepts vital to the survival of mankind.

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## BREADCRUMBS, P. 2

Although I cannot comprehend the source or manner of provision that yields such great benefits, I learned to eagerly and systematically follow the “trail of bread crumbs” that arouse my curiosity, fill me with knowledge, give me purpose, energize my labor, enthuse me and inspire me to share and compare insights with anyone and everyone willing to listen.

Now, as I reflect on the tapestry of travels, friendships, work and wonders I have witnessed, I am filled with gratitude and awe, humbled before all those who came alongside to collaborate for success of so many ventures that enriched all.

My sense of duty to those who came before me, attended me, and will come after me is best expressed by the anonymous author of Psalm 71: 17-18:

“Since my youth, O God, you have taught me

And to this day I declare your marvelous deeds.

Even when I am old and gray,

Do not forsake me, O God,

Till I declare your power to the next generation,

Your might to all who are to come.”

I feel obligated to my conscience. Therefore; I offer my collection of “breadcrumbs”, consisting of essays, letters, poems, songs, seminars, and other documents which convey personal thoughts, bits of information, lessons learned, examples of success and failure, words of encouragement, words of warning, cautionary stories – all of which represent the truth of my experiences in as respectful manner as possible and with due recognition of alternative perspectives that may warrant consideration of new opportunities for exploration.

The Lord provides; we must all be open and alert for new “breadcrumbs” along our path of life. Of this I am confident- Almighty God, our Father and Creator of the universe, will never withhold the Bread of Life to anyone who seeks Him, believing in His Son, Jesus Christ.

Jesus did not withhold favor from the Canaanite woman seeking mercy for her demon-possessed daughter when she desperately appealed “even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their master’s table”, acknowledging her low status as a “dog” – the prejudicial slur for pagan ancient enemies of Israel. With great compassion he answered “Woman, you have great faith! Your request is granted.’ And her daughter was healed from that very hour”. Matthew 15: 27-28

Larry S. Grubbs, Harrison, Ohio



## IS CHURCH MEMBERSHIP AN HONORARY ROLE?, p. 2

The conclusions of this study are:

1. Church membership is intended: Acts 2:41 and Acts 2:47 teach that when you are baptized you are added and that the Lord was doing the adding. These do not specifically say to the church, and the “church” word is not used until Acts 5:11.
2. Church attendance is intended: Hebrews 10:25 specifically states not to forsake the assembling together.
3. Is church attendance sufficient: We have only located 11 verses which describe your conduct in the “church service”. Of the 7957 verses in the New Testament 3779 are in the Gospels leaving 4178 describing activities in the “church age”. That leaves 4167 verses not discussing what you are doing in church services or 99.7%.
4. James 2:17 and James 2:22-25 clearly teach that a passive having faith without actual works to go with it is a dead faith. Faithful attendance at worship services would not be considered a “work”.
5. Rev. 3:15-17 probably best describes a congregation where a majority of the members have acted as if the role of member was an honorary role and had become satisfied with themselves. It didn’t look like a good outcome.
6. No listing is found of what a Christian should do to be acceptable. This would make sense as the New Testament was written in a first century situation, but needed to apply to all times including today. Any first century list on church methods would not fit in a computer

age. The religion stays the same, but not the methods. However, the Great Commission gives a good indication:

Matthew 28:19-20 gives two roles to all members:

1. “Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit” and
2. “Teaching them to observe all that I commanded you”

This would assign roles both directly to personal evangelism and to support roles which would mature those evangelized into becoming evangelistic also. Methods today need to fit those religious goals

What this means is that as it says in Philippians 2:12 “So then, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your salvation with fear and trembling;”

Clearly more is expected of us than simply attendance, but no formulas are given for what each person must do in this or any other time. It can best be summarized as do your part of the Great Commission. We must all do our part.

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## IS CHURCH MEMBERSHIP AN HONORARY ROLE?, p. 3

### COLLECTED VERSES:

#### START OF THE CHURCH

Acts 2:37-41 "Now when they heard this, they were pierced to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Brethren, what shall we do?" Peter said to them, "Repent, and each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off, as many as the Lord our God will call to Himself. And with many other words he solemnly testified and kept on exhorting them, saying, Be saved from this perverse generation! So then, those who had received his word were baptized; and that day there were added about three thousand souls."

#### VERY EARLY CHURCH

Acts 2:42-47: "They were continually devoting themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. Everyone kept feeling a sense of awe; and many wonders and signs were taking place through the apostles. And all those who had believed were together and had all things in common; and they began selling their property and possessions and were sharing them with all, as anyone might have need. Day by day continuing with one mind in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they were taking their meals together with gladness and sincerity of heart, praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord was adding to their number day by day those who were being saved."

#### WORSHIP SERVICES OF THE CHURCH

Acts 2:46 "Day by day continuing with one mind in the temple, and breaking bread from

house to house, they were taking their meals together with gladness and sincerity of heart,"

1 Corinthians 14:34 "The women are to keep silent in the churches; for they are not permitted to speak, but are to subject themselves, just as the Law also says."

1 Corinthians 16:2 "On the first day of every week each one of you is to put aside and save, as he may prosper, so that no collections be made when I come."

1 Corinthians 11:18-22 "For, in the first place, when you come together as a church, I hear that divisions exist among you; and in part I believe it. For there must also be factions among you, so that those who are approved may become evident among you. Therefore, when you meet together, it is not to eat the Lord's Supper, for in your eating each one takes his own supper first; and one is hungry and another is drunk. What! Do you not have houses in which to eat and drink? Or do you despise the church of God and shame those who have nothing? What shall I say to you? Shall I praise you? In this I will not praise you."

2 Corinthians 8:24 "Therefore openly before the churches, show them the proof of your love and of our reason for boasting about you."

2 Corinthians 9:7 "Each one must do just as he has purposed in his heart, not grudgingly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver."

Ephesians 5:19 "speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord;"

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## IS CHURCH MEMBERSHIP AN HONORARY ROLE?, p. 4

Colossians 4:15-16 "Greet the brethren who are in Laodicea and also Nympha and the church that is in her house. When this letter is read among you, have it also read in the church of the Laodiceans; and you, for your part read my letter that is coming from Laodicea."

1 Timothy 2:12 "But I do not allow a woman to teach or exercise authority over a man, but to remain quiet."

1 Timothy 3:15 "but in case I am delayed, I write so that you will know how one ought to conduct himself in the household of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and support of the truth."

1 Timothy 4:13 "Until I come, give attention to the public reading of Scripture, to exhortation and teaching."

Hebrews 10:25 "not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another; and all the more as you see the day drawing near."

### FELLOWSHIP TOGETHER

Romans 15:1 "Now we who are strong ought to bear the weaknesses of those without strength and not just please ourselves."

### OBEY LEADERS

Hebrews 13:17 "Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they keep watch over your souls as those who will give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with grief, for this would be unprofitable for you."

### REQUIREMENT FOR MORE THAN SIMPLE ATTENDANCE

James 2:17 "Even so faith, if it has no works, is dead, being by itself."

James 2:22-25 "But prove yourselves doers

of the word, and not merely hearers who delude themselves. For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks at his natural face in a mirror; for once he has looked at himself and gone away, he has immediately forgotten what kind of person he was. But one who looks intently at the perfect law, the law of liberty, and abides by it, not having become a forgetful hearer but an effectual doer, this man will be blessed in what he does."

### GENERAL

Galatians 6:6 "The one who is taught the word is to share all good things with the one who teaches him."

1 Thessalonians 5:26 "Greet all the brethren with a holy kiss"

1 Thessalonians 5:12 "But we request of you, brethren, that you appreciate those who diligently labor among you, and have charge over you in the Lord and give you instruction,"

Hebrews 12:23 "to the general assembly and church of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, and to God, the Judge of all, and to the spirits of the righteous made perfect,"

### BAD CONDUCT

1 Corinthians 5:11 "But actually, I wrote to you not to associate with any so-called brother if he is an immoral person, or covetous, or an idolater, or a reviler, or a drunkard, or a swindler—not even to eat with such a one."

Galatians 6:1 "Brethren, even if anyone is caught in any trespass, you who are spiritual, restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness; each one looking to yourself, so that you too will not be tempted."

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## IS CHURCH MEMBERSHIP AN HONORARY ROLE?, p. 5

2 Thessalonians 3:6 “Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you keep away from every brother who leads an unruly life and not according to the tradition which you received from us”

2 Thessalonians 3:14 “If anyone does not obey our instruction in this letter, take special note of that person and do not associate with him, so that he will be put to shame.”

3 John 1:9-10 “I wrote something to the church; but Diotrephes, who loves to be first among them, does not accept what we say. For this reason, if I come, I will call attention to his deeds which he does, unjustly accusing us with wicked words; and not satisfied with this, he himself does not receive the brethren, either, and he forbids those who desire to do so and puts them out of the church.”

### APOSTACIZING

Galatians 1:6 “I am amazed that you are so quickly deserting Him who called you by the grace of Christ, for a different gospel;”

Rev. 2:2-4: “I know your deeds and your toil and perseverance, and that you cannot tolerate evil men, and you put to the test those who call themselves apostles, and they are not, and you found them to be false; and you have perseverance and have endured for My name’s sake, and have not grown weary. But I have this against you, that you have left your first love.”

Rev. 2:20 “But I have this against you, that you tolerate the woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess, and she teaches and leads My bond-servants astray so that they commit acts of immorality and eat things sacrificed to idols.”

Rev. 3:1-3: “I know your deeds, that you have

a name that you are alive, but you are dead. Wake up, and strengthen the things that remain, which were about to die; for I have not found your deeds completed in the sight of My God. So remember what you have received and heard; and keep it, and repent. Therefore, if you do not wake up, I will come like a thief, and you will not know at what hour I will come to you.”

Rev. 3:15-17: “I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot; I wish that you were cold or hot. So because you are lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, I will spit you out of My mouth. Because you say, “I am rich, and have become wealthy, and have need of nothing,” and you do not know that you are wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked.”

### OTHER INTERESTING VERSES BEFORE THE CHURCH WAS STARTED

Matt. 28:19-20 “Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”

Matt 6:3 “But when you give to the poor, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing,”

Matt. 6:9-13 “Pray, then, in this way: Our Father who is in heaven, Hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come. Your will be done, On earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.”

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## IS CHURCH MEMBERSHIP AN HONORARY ROLE?, p. 5

Matt 16:16-18 “Simon Peter answered, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.” And Jesus said to him, ‘Blessed are you, Simon Barjona, because flesh and blood did not reveal this to you, but My Father who is in heaven. “I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build My church; and the gates of Hades will not overpower it.”

Matt 18:15-17 “If your brother sins, go and show him his fault in private; if he listens to you, you have won your brother. “But if he does not listen to you, take one or two more with you, so that by the mouth of two or three witnesses every fact may be confirmed. If he

refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector.”

These verses are an those which readily come to mind in considering this topic. Surely you can add some more as you “work out your own salvation with fear and trembling”.

All verses are copied from the New American Standard Version.

## GUARANTEED CHURCH GROWTH!

If we provide a **REFOCUS WEEKEND** we will guarantee that if your congregation does not grow 5% in 2 years, we will donate \$5000 to the Church of Christ related children’s home of your choice in your name.

### A REFOCUS WEEKEND IS:

- (1) Friday night: Area wide youth rally at your facility, we provide the pizza & cokes
- (2) Saturday 8:00 - 2:00: Church growth consultation
- (3) Saturday or Sunday Afternoon: Congregational Dream Session
- (4) Sunday Bible Class: A church growth lesson
- (5) Sunday morning worship: A church growth sermon

See <https://occg.institute/refresh/> for more specific information.

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See website for cell phone shortcut!

## IMPOSSIBLE FOR EVOLUTION #111 – SIGHT IN ABSOLUTE DARKNESS

The light we see is light energy directly from a source (the Sun or a light bulb) or is similar light reflected off a surface. These are electromagnetic waves in the range of 400 - 700 nanometers long (0.0000157” - 0.0000275”). A sheet of notebook paper is about 0.003” thick, so it would take about 150 waves of visible light to travel the distance of the thickness of a sheet of notebook paper.

As seen in the figure, UV (ultraviolet), X-rays, and Gamma rays are progressively shorter. IR (infrared) are radio waves are longer.

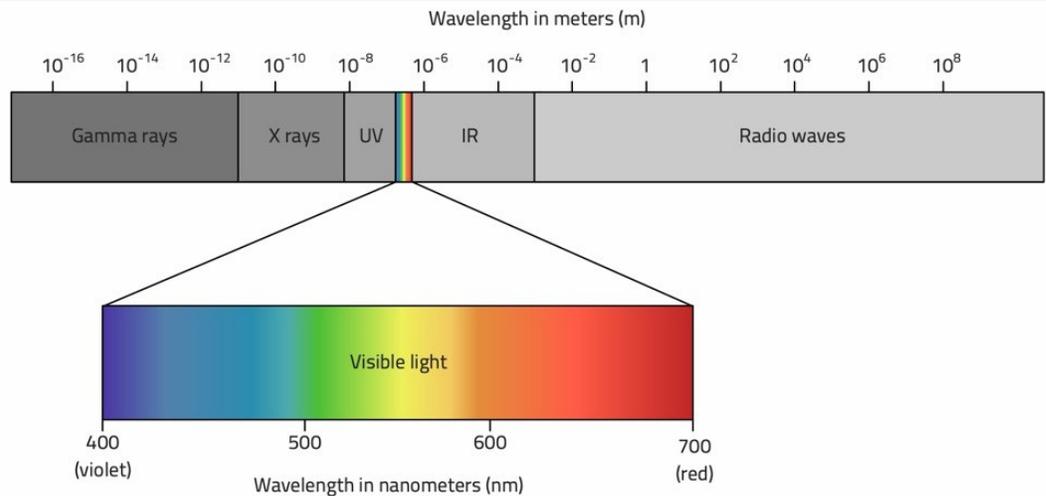
A human body has an average internal temperature of 98.6° and an external skin temperature of about 93°. At 93° your skin's body temperature emits an infrared electromagnetic wave, as everything else around you does. You cannot see it, as you can only see light in the visible light range.

Many “motion sensing” security lights do not sense motion at all, but rather sense a change in infrared light. If the light is seeing the wavelength of light associated with 72° and a 93° person walks into view, it recognizes the change. If it is 93° outside and a 93° person walks by, it sees no change, or in other words does not infer that motion happened.

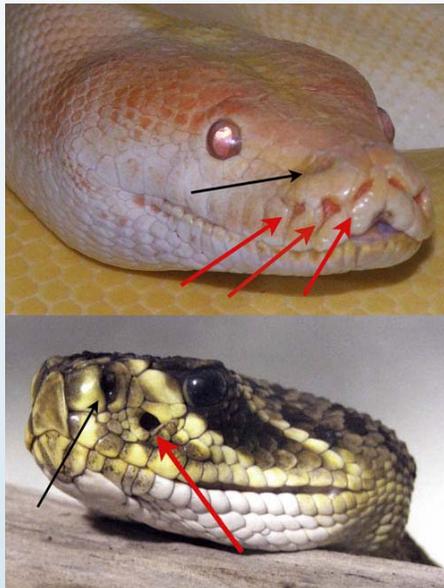
These use pyroelectric materials which generate electricity when they are

heated by a source such as infrared light, and are tuned to the human temperature range.

Certain species of pit vipers, boa constrictors and pythons can capture prey with uncanny accuracy in total darkness. In addition to conventional eyes, they have pit organs as identi-



fied by the red arrows in the photographs which sense infrared radiation, so they can see the body heat of their prey. These organs are pyroelectric so they capture energy from the infrared radiation and send the resultant signal to its brain to identify where their prey is.



We are left to believe that this zero I.Q. reptile invented the concept to use infrared radiation, did the complex DNA programming to facilitate it, and then learn how to interpret the data, it all happened by accident, or it is the proof of an intelligent designer. The intelligent conclusion is that there is an intelligent designer and that designer is God.

Benton F. Baugh



## WINGS OF EAGLES VIDEO SERIES

Fifty years ago we could take it for granted that most people we met believed in God, were of the Christian religion, and that society in general supported church work. Today atheistic evolution is openly taught in schools and we are getting progressively less support for religious practices. After you have established a relationship with a prospect, this series will provide concise Christian apologetics.

This 3 lesson Wings of Eagles DVD personal evangelism series are addressed to our contemporary situation. They can be easily shown in a personal evangelism encounter or a Bible class lesson.

### THE LESSON TOPICS ARE:

#### IF GOD?

A comparison of atheistic evolution with the reality of a god existing, leading to the conclusion that a god exists.

#### WHICH GOD?

A comparison of the various offerings to be the god, leading to the conclusion that Jehovah and Jesus are God.

#### WHATS NEXT?

A brief history of the world and of Christianity leading to a discussion of how to find Christ's church.

These lessons are available as a free download at [occg.institute](http://occg.institute) under the SERVICES tab. Additional supporting resources are on this website.

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## 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](http://www.fostershome.org), and submitted to [glenn@fostershome.org](mailto:glenn@fostershome.org).

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



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## Visitors

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

On the [occgrowth.org](http://occgrowth.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 Institute

## 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.

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[www.lancedecker.com](http://www.lancedecker.com)

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P.O. Box 111180, Nashville, TN 37222-1180

Hello, this is Maxine -- I have questions!



How do those dead bugs get into the enclosed light fixtures?

Why is it that whenever you attempt to catch something that's falling off the table you always manage to knock something else over?

Why, in winter, do we try to keep the house as warm as it was in summer when we complained about the heat?

All past copies of this newsletter can be found on the website "occg.institute" under the E-MAGAZINE tab.

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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"
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