

OWN IT!

NUMBER 168

JANUARY 2022

The University of Houston was actually started in 1927 as a Junior College by the Houston Independent School District, with cougars as a mascot. In 1932 it became a full independent college. One of the consequences of this is that some of the older more established colleges referred to the University of Houston as Cougar High.

Some have campaigned for UH to engage the term Cougar High as a winning feeling of a great university. Among other things in the Tier 1 university, their football team is currently rated 17th in the nation and their basketball team is ranked #10 in the nation. Instead of being embarrassed by the name Cougar High, they should **OWN IT** as a motto and be proud of it. They are on a Cougar High!

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WHAT DOES JESUS ASK OF A DISCIPLE?

"To love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind", "Love your neighbor as yourself". Matthew 22:37-38

"If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me". Matthew 16:24

What is man that you are mindful of him,
the son of man that you care for him?

Continued on page 2

WEARING JESUS

"Having a life jacket is not the same as wearing it." (a sign near DeGray Lake)

Knowing all about Jesus is not the same thing as wearing and living the character of Jesus. "Rather, clothes yourselves with the Lord Jesus Christ, and do not think about how to gratify the

desires of your sinful nature." (Rom. 13:14 NIV)

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OPEN HEARTS BIBLE MINUTE

Maybe you will find exactly the nugget you are looking for in this selection of wise sayings from Proverbs. *"Only simpletons believe everything they're told!"*

The prudent carefully consider their steps." (14:15) *"A wise woman builds her home, but a foolish*

woman tears it down with her own hands." (14:1) *"Work brings profit, but mere talk leads to poverty!"* (14:23) *"A wise person is hungry for knowledge, while the fool feeds on trash."* (15:14) *"Fear of the Lord teaches wisdom; humility precedes honor."* (15:33) *"When people's lives please the Lord, even their enemies are at peace with them."* (16:7)

Elizabeth Brown

DO SOMETHING GOOD THIS WEEK, AND DON'T GET CAUGHT DOING IT!

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WHAT DOES JESUS ASK OF A DISCIPLE?, P2

WEARING JESUS, P2

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You made him a little lower than the heavenly beings

and crowned him with glory and honor.

You made him ruler over the works of your hands;

you put everything under his feet

All flocks and herds

and the beasts of the field,

The birds of the air,

and the fish of the sea,

all that swim the paths of the sea. Psalm 8: 4-8

"We see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, now crowned with glory and honor because he suffered death, so that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone. In bringing many sons to glory, it was fitting that God, for whom and through whom everything exists, should make the Author of their salvation perfect through suffering. Both the one who makes men holy and those who are made holy are of the same family. So Jesus is not ashamed to call them brothers." Hebrews 2: 9-11

Disciples are ambassadors of Jesus, believers who have passion for life and desire to be kind and do good for others, making His joy complete by living according to God's plan and drawing the lost away from the evil of this world. Disciples are driven to become part of something beyond the limits of their personal capacity that is worthy of celebration and praise to God. As people of this world join Jesus' team of disciples and become trained and equipped to make new disciples, they can swarm onto the field of harvest as workers for the Kingdom of God, no longer content to be only spectators marveling at the action of salvation.

Larry S. Grubbs, Harrison, Ohio

Continued from page 1

Remember the weakest link between God's saving grace and Satan's subtle and destructive influence is human choice. God cannot and will not make the choice for us. We need to be trained in godliness. Too many are spiritually dull, still living on milk. "But solid food is for those who are mature, who through training have the skill to recognize the difference between right and wrong." (Heb. 5:14 NLT)

Where do we go for training? "All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our lives. It corrects us when we are wrong and teaches us to do what is right. God uses it to prepare and equip his people to do every good work." (2 Tim. 3:16-17 NLT)

The world won't teach us the difference between right and wrong. It know nothing of godliness and righteousness. Take care that you can discern right from wrong. "Do not waste time arguing over godless ideas and old wives' tales. Instead, train yourself to be godly." (1 Tim. 4:7 NLT)

Are you ready to commit your mind to God's training? Will you carry Jesus around in the book or wear his attitude, manner, passion and godliness for all to see? How will you strengthen every fiber of your spiritual being today?

Elizabeth Brown, Texarkana, TX

IT IS SAID BY ELITIST THAT RELIGION IS THE OPIATE OF THE MASSES. IT IS MORE LIKELY THAT EVOLUTION IS THE OPIATE OF THE ELITIST!

OWN IT, P. 2

The Churches of Christ have a similar situation. They are often chided as being a legalistic judgmental group. The Churches of Christ should not be legalistic or judgmental, and UH was never a high school.

We were considered legalistic because we used to be in the word and tried to follow it. If you are trying to follow the word and try to convince others to follow the word, you are functionally being judgmental regarding their religious lifestyle if they are not. If you say Acts 2:38 says you should repent and be baptized for the remission of sins, and especially if you follow that up with "baptism" means "immersion", you are functionally criticizing most of the Christian religious landscape. That would be interpreted as being legalistic.



A first question is what does "legalistic" actually mean? The dictionary definition of legalistic is:

1. adhering excessively to law or formula, e.g. "our conciliation process avoids an overly legalistic approach"
2. THEOLOGY: concerning adherence to moral law rather than to personal religious faith, e.g. "legalistic notions such as duty and obligation"

These definitions leave something to desire. "Adhering excessively" only means something when it is done to the extreme. As a practical matter in many cases, one person's excess is another person's normal. Who is to decide when normal ends and excess begins?

In the #2 theology definition it can be taken that following any command would be legalistic. When Jesus said, "If you love Me, you will keep My commandments." (John 14:15) and "If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love; just as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love." (John 15:10), He

was definitely promoting legalism by that definition. If definition says Jesus was a legalistic, by that definition you want to be a legalist also.

For the purpose of this article, we are going to presume that following Jesus' commands and following Jesus' commands through the Apostles is simply being scriptural. If Jesus said it and you do it, it should be good.

SCRIPTURAL: Doing what the New Testament says.

Now to discuss being legalistic and liberal in more of a contemporary context. Everyone has a point of view which they consider to be right, or they would have another one. Someone may preach something they do not consider to be right for wrong motives, but down deep almost everyone thinks they are right.

From their point of view, anyone who follows more scriptures or more made-up rules that they do is legalistic. From their point of view anyone who does not follow the scriptures and made-up rules they follow is liberal. That means that everyone to the right of you is a legalistic person and everyone to the left of you is a liberal person. The net effect of this is that you are personally a liberal in some people's point of view and are a legalistic person in someone else's point of view. I have been personally called a liberal heretic by some and a legalistic person by others. It's just me.

We will take that thought and define what that means.

LEGALISTIC: Adding restrictions to what the New Testament actually teaches.

LIBERAL: Not following what the New Testament actually teaches.

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OWN IT!, P. 3

There would be some flexibility on this for social customs, but not for religious teachings. As an example of a social custom, Romans 16:16 specifically instructs "Greet one another with a holy kiss." which was a social custom of the day. Today the social custom for men and women is a warm and friendly handshake.

Now just imagine the Churches of Christ focus on the New Testament and justify all religious acts by what the New Testament says. We would not be being LEGALISTIC; we would simply be being SCRIPTURAL.

Be scriptural and own it. If someone suggests that you are legalistic, tell them you are not being legalistic, you are doing what Jesus' New Testament says. That is not legalistic, it is scriptural.

No one is likely to accuse you of being legalistic unless they know something about you and have some relationship with you. If you are doing your job, you will know something about them as well.

That being said, Acts 2:38 is good for almost everyone as an example. It is how you get into God's grace and is almost universally ignored. You can say as an example that we follow Acts 2:38 rather than believing you are saved before baptism, baptism is actually immersion rather than sprinkling or pouring, and/or it is of a consenting adult rather than infants. You are going to own that you follow the scriptures rather than being embarrassed by it.

At that time, you can graciously add in the conversation the particular teaching of their group instead of what Acts 2:38 says, because you know. To whatever extent you don't know about a particular group's teaching, you can find it at www.occg.institute/, topical lessons, 05 Which Group?, starting with lesson 5.50. Information is collected here and is freely available on a dozen major religious groups for your

ready access. If there is another group you are dealing with, let us know and we will search for it, or you can help us. Lesson 5.51 is a blank form specifically for collecting information about groups. You can help in this work.

The Churches of Christ have long had the motto "speak where the Bible speaks and remain silent where the Bible is silent" and has a new suggested motto of NT:OA (New Testament, only and all of it). We should be the people who know what the Bible says, follow it and own that we do it.

As for being judgmental, great care should be taken. We are responsible to try to let others know that Jesus said "If you love Me, you will keep My commandments" instead of today's do it yourself religions and that his commandments are in the New Testament. A good deal of care, time, practice, and skill are involved in saying that to those who have not chosen to follow the scriptures. You are not going to do your part of the Great Commission if you are being judgmental, because that will offend people.

As a general rule, before you say anything to a prospect, say it to another person instead to see how it affects them. Personal evangelism is a skill and should be developed.

OWN that you scripturally follow the New Testament and do your part of the Great Commission.

Benton F. Baugh

**IF YOU ARE HEADED IN THE
WRONG DIRECTION, REMEMBER
THE PATH TO HEAVEN ALLOWS
U-TURNS.**

ENTIRE CLASS FAILS!

The following was seen on social media in 2020, but we do not know where. It included the following editor's note: "I found this in my news feed on one of the social media sites and thought how practical a lesson this would be. Even I would have learned from it as dense as I am."

For your reference, socialism is a political and economic theory of social organization which advocates that the means of production, distribution, and exchange should be owned or regulated by the community as a whole.

TEACHER FAILS AN ENTIRE CLASS: An economics professor at a local college made a statement that she had never failed a single student before, but had recently failed an entire class. The class has insisted that socialism worked and that no one would be poor and no one would be rich, a great equalizer.

The professor then said, "OK, we will have an experiment in this class on this plan". All grades will be averaged and everyone will receive the same grade so no one will fail and no one will receive an A... (Substituting grades for dollars – something closer to home and more readily understood by all.)

After the first test, the grades were averaged, and everyone got a B. The students who studied hard were upset and the students who studied little were happy. As the second test rolled around, the students who studied little had studied even less and the ones who studied hard decided they wanted a free ride too, so they studied little.

The second test average was a D! No one was happy. When the 3rd test rolled around, the average was an F.

As the tests proceeded, the scores never increased as bickering, blame and name-calling all resulted in hard feelings, and no one would study for the benefit of anyone else.

To their great surprise, ALL FAILED and the professor told them that socialism would also ultimately fail because when the reward is great, the effort to succeed is great, but when the government takes all the reward away, no one will try or want to succeed.

These are possibly the 5 best sentences you'll ever read and all applicable to this experiment:

1. You cannot legislate the poor into prosperity by legislating the wealthy out of prosperity.
2. What one person receives without working for, another person must work for without receiving.
3. The government cannot give to anybody anything that the government does not first take from someone else.
4. You cannot multiply wealth by dividing it!
5. When half of the people get the idea that they do not have to work because the other half is going to take care of them, and when the other half gets the idea that it does no good to work because somebody else is going to get what they work for, that is the beginning of the end of any nation.

.....

We are going to add an additional note here to the article above. The only one who continued to receive what he/she expected was the teacher or leader. The leader excluded himself from the socialist experiment so he/she could continue their lifestyle.

Incidentally, if anyone can explain why the preceding is not reasonable, let us know and we will print it.

IMPOSSIBLE FOR EVOLUTION #124 - COTTON

If someone invented cotton today, it would be a "miracle fabric". It can be produced cheaply in bulk, is strong, flexible, long lasting, highly absorbent, can be dyed any color, and can easily be woven into comfortable fabrics.

The oldest cotton fabric has been found in Huaca Prieta in Peru, estimated to about 6000 BC. Some of the oldest cotton bolls were discovered in a cave in Tehuacán Valley, Mexico, and were dated to approximately 5500 BC. Seeds and cotton rope dating to about 2500 BC have been found in Peru. By 3000 BC cotton was being grown and processed in Mexico, and Arizona.



Cotton may have been domesticated around 5000 BC in eastern Sudan near the Middle Nile Basin region, where cotton cloth was being produced.

The latest archaeological discovery in India puts the dating of early cotton cultivation and the use of cotton to 5000 BC. The Indus Valley civilization started cultivating cotton by 3000 BCE. Cotton was mentioned in Hindu hymns in 1500 BCE. When Alexander the Great invaded India in 327 BC, his troops started wearing cotton clothes that were more comfortable than their previous woolen ones.

Christopher Columbus, in his explorations of the Bahamas and Cuba, found natives wearing cotton mantles and sleeveless shirts embroidered and painted in different designs and colors, a fact that may have contributed to his incorrect belief that he had landed on the coast of India.

Cotton is useful in many ways but has never been thought of as an edible source of protein, because of toxic chemical gossypol, which protects cotton from insects. It is so toxic that if

consumed can lower blood potassium and result in weakness, respiratory issues and even paralysis. Cotton plants do produce seeds, but those seeds are poisonous, at least to humans. They can be fed to cattle after being separated from the fibers, as seen in the photo.

So, we have a plant that grows long hair which is poisonous to us and insects. It produces seeds which are also poisonous to us but edible by cattle, if they could get to them. The seeds are good food for Boll Weevils, who can get through the fibers, but destroy the seeds rather than carry them off for propagation. They are not like fruit seeds which something eats the fruit and deposits the seeds someplace else to grow. When they die, they fall on the ground and are protected by a cotton ball which makes them difficult to find the ground and grow naturally.

This is not the atheistic evolutionist's dream of survival of the fittest. Atheistic evolution would have favored fiber varieties which were edible. Atheistic evolution would have favored varieties in which the seeds were accessible. This is a plant with two strikes against it to start. Its trick is that it provides a wonderful fiber for human beings, just like some intelligent designer was planning to take care of them. Cotton is a clear message to you that God is real and He is taking care of you.



Benton F. Baugh

Photo and information collected from Wikipedia



Wings of Eagles

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WE WANT TO BUY YOUR CHURCH!

If you are planning to close down your Church of Christ in the greater Houston area, we are interested in matching you with a good funding source.

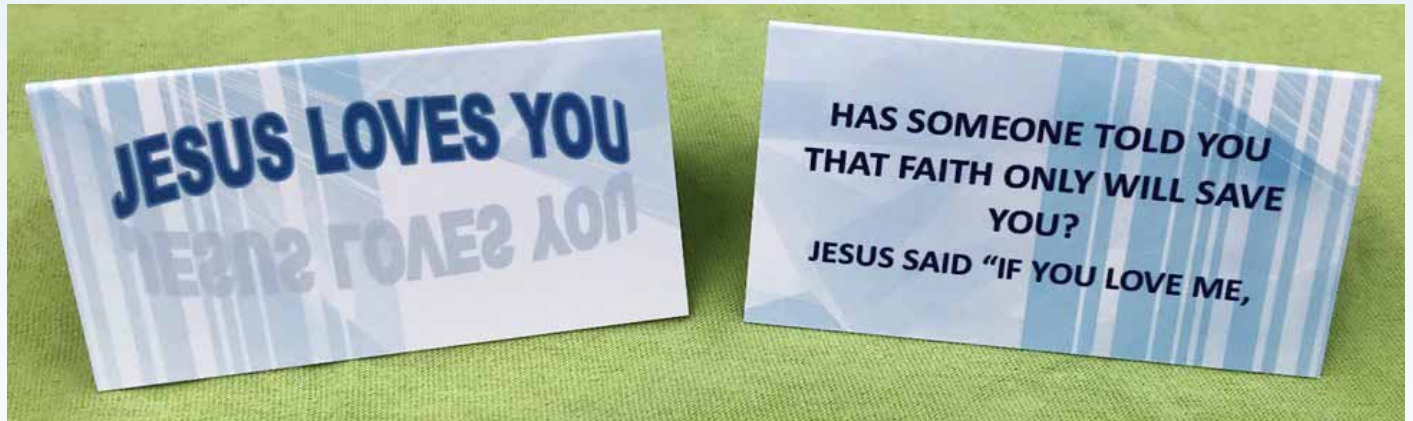
If you know of someone else who is thinking about closing and selling their church, we would appreciate your telling us.

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PERSONAL EVANGELISM TENT CARDS



Tent cards are business card size and are folded into a small tent. You can hand them to someone or when you go to lunch, you can simply leave it on the table. The purpose is to try to start a discussion, or at least to give an invitation.

They can provide a message like these samples or can say anything you like.

Imagine you equip your members with 1000 of these and consider the impact it can have on your congregation.

You can get products like these at your local printer or online by searching for tent cards.

If you like contact us at info@occg.institute and we will assist you.



OUTSIDE OF CARD



INSIDE OF CARD

PERSONAL EVANGELISM TRI-FOLDS

Personalized personal evangelism tri-folds are a tool which has proven to be an effective way to begin conversations similarly to the Tent Cards discussed last month.

These cards not only tell the basics about Churches of Christ, but also can give location details and service times about your specific congregation. They can be edited to give whatever information you think to be beneficial for you're area and circumstance.

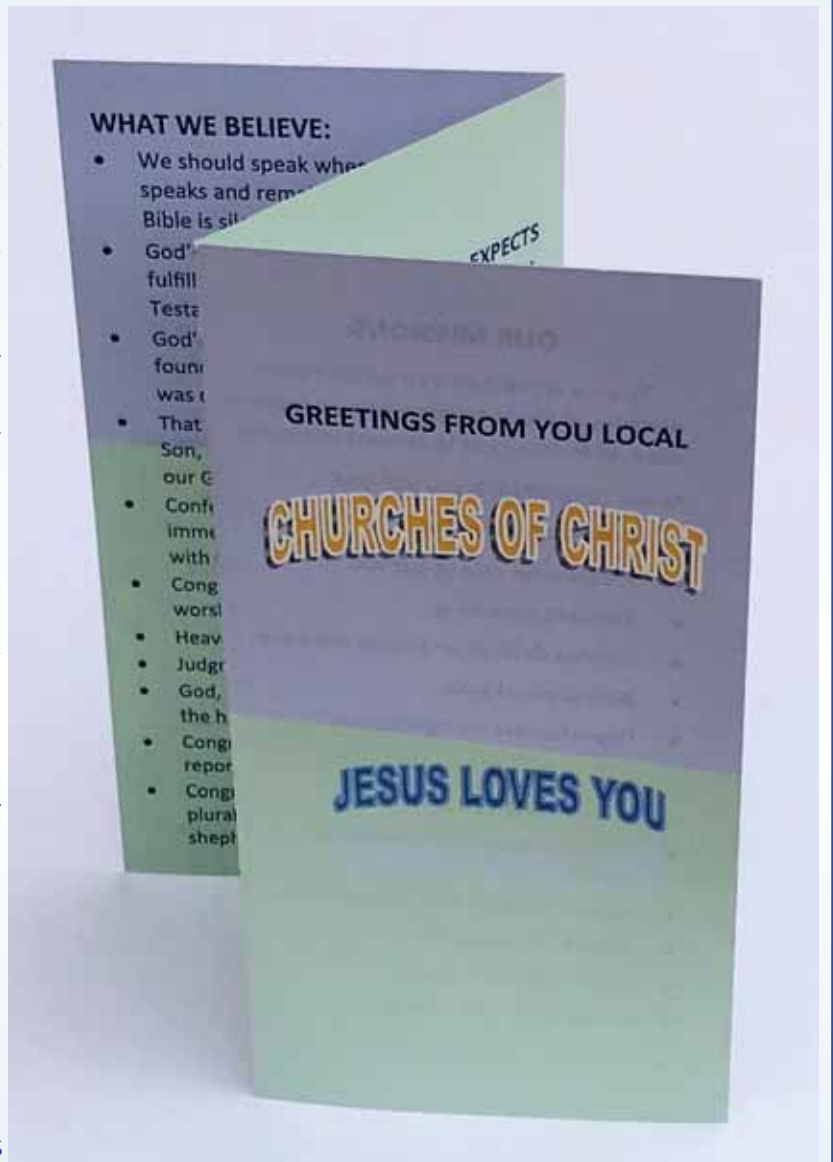
Cards similar to this can be obtained from a number of printers, with Uprint.com being the one we have used. In the example shown we used a 5.5" x 8.5" Z-Fold printed on the outside and inside in full color. It is found under brochures.

The following will give the base costs for the tri-folds, with shipping being extra.

100	\$37.19	\$0.38 ea.
250	\$106.31	\$0.43 ea.
1000	\$238.49	\$0.24 ea.
10000	\$1,074.46	\$0.11 ea.

You can go online and design any style tri-fold or other brochure you prefer. As an alternative, if you like the wording and style on the example shown, we will have them printed for you.

The following page shows the wording which was used for Memorial in Houston. If you want us to coordinate them for you, print the next page, mark it up as you like, and email it to bbaugh@occg.institute. Our part of the process will be a free service. You will pay only for Uprint's printing costs.



If you deal with them directly, they will send a free sample of your printing. As we have dealt with them before, they will not send us a free sample for you. We will send you a free sample which looks like the following page before anything is printed.

Hopefully this will be a method which will be of assistance to some congregations. If you have another idea we can publish in a future issue,

PERSONAL EVANGELISM TRI-FOLDS

WHAT WE BELIEVE:

- We should speak where the Bible speaks and remain silent where the Bible is silent
- God's word in the Old Testament was fulfilled; and we now live by New Testament teachings
- God's complete plan for us today is found in the New Testament, which was completed in the first century
- That Jehovah the Father, Christ the Son, and the Holy Spirit together are our God
- Confession of sins and baptism by immersion brings us into relationship with God as His adopted children
- Congregational singing is part of the worship of God
- Heaven and hell are real
- Judgment day will come for everyone
- God, the Intelligent Designer, created the heavens and the earth
- Congregations are autonomous, reporting only to Jesus
- Congregations are overseen by a plurality of scripturally qualified shepherds

WHAT WE DO NOT BELIEVE:

- Salvation by faith only
- The inability to fall from grace
- Substitution for the scriptural baptism by immersion (sprinkling, pouring, infant baptism)
- Purification in purgatory
- Divorce and remarriage of Christians other than for adultery
- Approval of extra-marital or homosexual conduct
- Judgment on the eternal destiny of others
- Updating the New Testament to match contemporary teachings

GREETINGS FROM YOUR LOCAL

CHURCHES OF CHRIST

JESUS LOVES YOU

OUR MISSIONS:

To be a servant church which makes disciples of Christ by connecting people to God, to friends, and to servant ministries.

At our congregation you will find:

- People who love Jesus
- People who care about you
- Relevant preaching
- Exciting children and youth ministries
- Biblical world view
- Opportunities for significance

YOU WILL FIND:

- A spiritual home for you and your family
- Fellow members who care about you
- Support for yourself
- Support for your family
- An opportunity to belong

WE BELIEVE THAT GOD EXPECTS US TO LIVE A GOOD CHRISTIAN LIFESTYLE, ON SUNDAYS AND EVERYDAY:

We honor Christ's sacrifice by:

- Attending weekly worship services regularly.
- Learning His word and making friends in Bible classes
- Spending time daily with God, reading His word and praying
- Finding ministries where we can serve Him by serving our fellow man
- Sharing our faith.
- Financially supporting the work of the church.
- Growing in faith and love for God and each other

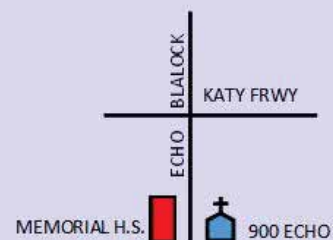
How can we help you?

Can we pray for you?
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elders@mcoc.org

A Church of Christ congregation near you:

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Houston, Texas 77024
www.mcoc.org, 713-464-0271

Worship: 8:20, 10:30, and 6:00 p.m.
Bible Classes: 9:30



THE BIBLE

HYPERBOLES IN THE BIBLE



SUMMARY: There are some statements in the Bible that reflect a phenomenon or broad generalization which must be interpreted with the whole of the scriptures in view. These are hyperboles and are commonly used, e.g., the revolutionary war expression “the shot heard around the world” was not ever understood to be a literal statement. It was true in a figurative sense.

A hyperbole is an exaggerate statements or claim not meant to be taken literally. It is a standard figure of speech in language.

There are some statements in the Bible that reflect a phenomenon or broad generalization which must be interpreted with the whole of the scriptures in view. These are hyperboles and are commonly used, e.g, the revolutionary war expression “the shot heard around the world” was not ever understood to be a literal statement. This is simply the way some parts of language are used.

The following verses are listed as being extraordinary in scope. Some may well be intended to be understood literally and some may be hyperboles.

Psalms 50:1 The Mighty One, God, the Lord, has spoken and summoned the earth from the rising of the sun to its setting. Matt 5:45 “He causes the sun to rise on the evil and the good...” The sun does not rise, it only appears to rise from our point of view. It is a phenomenal statement.

Matt 13:31-32 “a mustard seed...and this is smaller than all the other seeds sown in the garden” (NAS) – smallest seed in the restricted context of the middle East gardens – an orchid seed is actually smaller but the audience had never heard of an orchid, and the orchid seed is not sown and would not be in a garden. It may sound like a hyperbole, but it is a true scientific statement.

Col 1:23 “gospel...which was proclaimed in all creations” NAS, “was preached to every creature” KJV. A hyperbole (exaggeration) to explain that the gospel had reached the extents of the world as they understood it, not that every single person (or creature) had heard the gospel.

Genesis 1 The six creation “days.” A metaphor or a scientific statement?

Genesis 7:19 Regarding the Flood “and all the high mountains everywhere were covered”. Universal or restricted statement?

Matt 21:21-22 And Jesus answered and said to them (disciples), “Truly I say to you, if you have faith, and do not doubt, you shall not only do what was done to the fig tree, but even if you say to this mountain, ‘Be taken up and cast into the sea,’ it shall happen. 22 “And all things you ask in prayer, believing, you shall receive.” (NAS) (No records of any mountains being cast).

THE BIBLE

HYPERBOLES IN THE BIBLE



Mark 11:24 “Therefore I say to you, all things for which you pray and ask, believe that you have received them, and they shall be {granted} you. (NAS) Speaking to the Apostles only or to everyone?”

John 5:24 “Truly, truly, I say to you, he who hears My word, and believes Him who sent Me, has eternal life, and does not come into judgment, but has passed out of death into life. (NAS)”

John 16:23 “And, in that day you will ask Me no question. Truly, truly, I say to you, if you shall ask the Father for anything, He will give it to you in My name. (NAS) (not yes, no, or maybe)”

Acts: 13:48 And when the Gentiles heard this, they {began} rejoicing and glorifying the word of the Lord; and as many as had been appointed to eternal life believed. (NAS) (Predestination?)

Acts 16:31 And they said, “Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you shall be saved, you and your household.” (NAS) (Saving others or natural assumption?)

Rom 11:29 for the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable. (NAS) (Can’t fall from grace or the offer won’t be retracted?).

1 Cor 7:14 For the unbelieving husband is sanctified through his wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified through her believing husband; for otherwise your children are unclean, but now they are holy. (NAS) (Saving others or just increases the chance?).

1 Cor 7:16 For how do you know, O wife, whether you will save your husband? Or how do you know, O husband, whether you will save your wife? (NAS) (Saving others or just increasing the chance?).

John 16:25 “These things I have spoken to you in figurative language; an hour is coming when I will speak no more to you in figurative language, but will tell you plainly of the Father.” (NAS)

Luke 2:1 “Now it came about in those days that a decree went out from Caesar Augustus, that a census be taken of all the inhabited earth.” All the Roman empire? (NAS)

HEALING AMERICA

A timely new book by Richard Blount IV exploring the problems, causes, solutions, and benefits of being an American.



He provides an intentional approach for the country's healing process and aims at healthy relationships and spiritual maturity as the ultimate goal.

This book can be purchased for \$19.95 at: Amazon, Barnes & Nobles, and Westbow Publishing

- 25 - A conclusion is the place where you got tired of thinking.
- 26 - Experience is something you don't get until just after you need it.
- 27 - The hardness of the butter is proportional to the softness of the bread.

Steven Wright

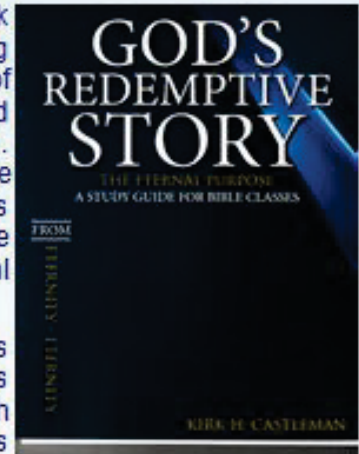
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Dave Blanchard

daveblanchard@fuller.edu

734-516-6008

A 13 lesson book written by a long time Church of Christ minister and servant of Jesus. Intended for Bible Class studies, this book can also be used for personal evangelism.



Most Bible class study books on this subject begin with Genesis 3. This study however, lays

the foundation by beginning with a basic study-outline of Biblical History, which is sorely lacking among many Christians today. Then after laying this foundation, it seeks to present a "Synthesis of Scripture" by asserting that the theme of all the Bible is Jesus, His Death, Burial, and Resurrection! The Eternal Purpose of God for Redemption is then presented with an in-depth study of Ephesians 1, and other New Testament passages which describe God's redemptive plan.

It is not until the fourth lesson that God's Eternal Purpose in Genesis 3 is presented. Then other Promises, Pictures, Prophecy, and Prep-

**"AN EXCITING STUDY OF GOD'S
POWER AND REVELATION IN
HUMAN HISTORY"**

aration, are fully described. This study includes a description of the Davidic Covenant, as well as a helpful approach to Old Testament Prophecy.

This guide is helpful for all Christians, but especially new Christians who need an understanding of God's eternal desire for all the world!

This book can be bought on Amazon for \$10.



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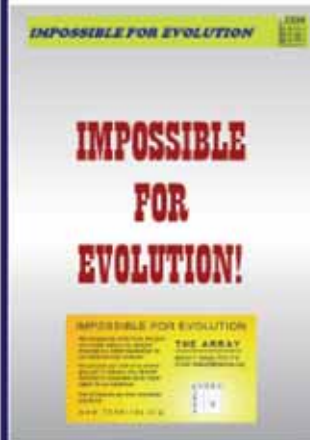
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Barry & Ace

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