

FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT – LOVE

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The term fruit of the Spirit occurs one time in the Bible, in Gal. 5:22-23. "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law" (NASV, used throughout this article).

The fruit of the spirit are more or less contrasted with 15 deeds of the flesh in Galatians 5:19-21. "Now the deeds of the flesh are evident, which are: immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions, envying, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these, of which I forewarn you, just as I have forewarned you, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God."



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Be THANKFUL in ALL CIRCUMSTANCES

"Be thankful in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you who belong to Christ Jesus." (I Thess. 5:18 NLT)

In Paul's concluding remarks to the Thessalonian Christians, he left a serious TO-DO list. We can benefit from taking them to heart. It all begins with gratitude.

HONOR YOUR LEADERS: "Dear brothers and sisters, honor those who are your leaders in the Lord's work. They work hard among you and give you spiritual guidance. ¹³Show them great respect and wholehearted love because of their work. And live peacefully with each other.

ENCOURAGE EVERYONE: ¹⁴Brothers and sisters, we urge you to warn those who are lazy. Encourage those who are timid. Take ten-

der care of those who are weak. Be patient with everyone.

DO GOOD: ¹⁵ See that no one pays back evil for evil, but always try to do good to each other and to all people.

PRAY WITH GRATITUDE & JOY: ¹⁶ Always be joyful. ¹⁷ Never stop praying. ¹⁸ Be thankful in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you who belong to Christ Jesus.

TEST EVERYTHING: ¹⁹ Do not stifle the Holy Spirit. ²⁰ Do not scoff at prophecies, ²¹ but test everything that is said. Hold on to what is good." (I Thessalonians 5:12-21 NLT)

Elizabeth Brown, Texarkana, TX

A Personal Perspective on Laws Given and the Law of Love

All law leads to Jesus Christ, Immanuel, who accomplished the impossible of compromised man, held prisoner by death, the instrument of Satan to separate man from God.

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FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT - LOVE P. 2

I say “more or less contrasted” because there 9 fruits of the spirit and 15 deeds of the flesh. It is not a clean one to one comparison. They are also not exact opposites. If the fruit of the spirit is self-control, Satan’s temptations would not offer lack of self control to tempt you. This lesson is to look at what Satan’s temptations offer instead of self-control, to tempt you to not have self-control. To look at the opposing temptation can be instructive in understanding the fruit of the spirit.

In each of the nine cases of fruit of the spirit, we will discuss the fruit of the spirit and what temptation might keep you from producing that fruit. This will be an ongoing discussion in this current and in future issues; this month we will discuss LOVE.

FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT: LOVE

1 Corinthians 13:4-7 “Love is patient, love is kind and is not jealous; love does not brag and is not arrogant, does not act unbecomingly; it does not seek its own, is not provoked, does not take into account a wrong suffered, does not rejoice in unrighteousness, but rejoices with the truth; bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.”

The eight different types of love, from to the ancient Greek language, are: Eros (sexual passion), Philia (intimate, authentic friendship), Ludus (playful, flirtatious love), Agape (unconditional love of the type between God and man), Pragma (committed, companionate love), Philautia (love of the self), Storge (family love), and Mania (obsessive love).

With eight kinds of love possible, which type or types of love would be characterized as a “fruit of the spirit?” It is likely that the agape type is what is being referred to here and in Matthew 5:43-44 "You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.

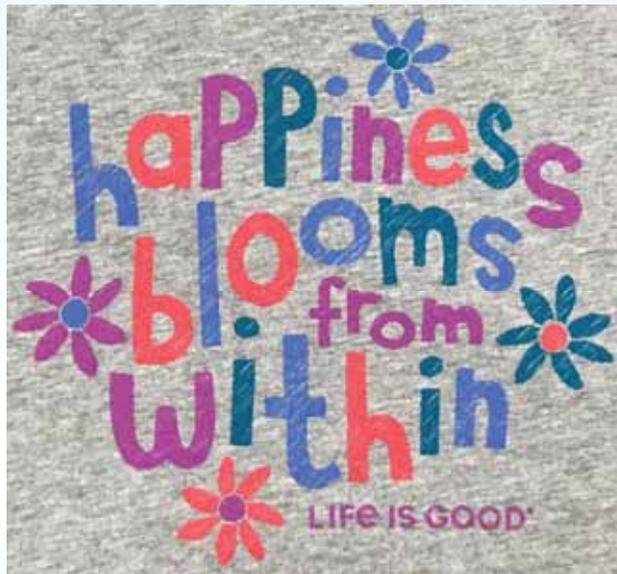
But I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you,”

Similarly, in Matthew 22:36-40, the writer is referring to agape-type love. “Master, which is the great commandment in the law? Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On

these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets”.

Agape love is the highest form of love, unconditional love for both God and neighbor. It is selfless, focused on the other person, given freely and gladly. It is without condition or the expectation of repayment. It is expressed in service, and willingness to suffer on another’s behalf. This type of love is not what you feel for your spouse, but rather the kind which wishes the best for everyone. It does not say that you must like everyone, but rather that you want the best for everyone. Certainly for Christians, “the best” for every man and woman is to believe in God, and to and change their life such that they will spend eternity with God in Heaven.

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FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT - LOVE P. 3

DEEDS OF THE FLESH: FOCUS ON SELF (RECOGNITION, ATTENTION, PRESTIGE, FAME, ACCLAIM, NOTICE IMPORTANCE)

If a fruit of the spirit is the kind of love which makes you love your enemy and love your neighbor as yourself, Satan's temptations would not be simply to make you hate your neighbor. To simply hate would not be a temptation for many people although it appears to be a temptation for some. Instead of loving and respecting others, it would be the temptation to have undo attention focused on yourself, to put self first, to sit yourself in the seat of honor. None of these are bad per se. As a practical matter sometimes attention from others is a natural consequence of living your life well. However, a focus and striving for this attention on yourself negatively affects your concern for other people. Having attention shown to you can be addictive, with progressively greater acts required to maintain the attention. One measure you can use is whether the recognition you are receiving helps you do your part of the Great Commission, or hinders it.

That difference would make deeds of the flesh closer to the Greek philautia (love of the self) than agape (unconditional love of others).

Benton F. Baugh

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A Personal Perspective on Laws Given and the Law of Love, P. 2

When God chose Moses to lead the rescue of His people from slavery in Egypt, He led them into the desert, teaching and training them for 40 years, giving them first Ten Commandments, followed by others that were intended to be for their own good. However; the first generation frequently rebelled against the law of Moses. When they appealed to Joshua, successor to Moses for arbitration and reconciliation of offenders, God raised up first Judges, then Kings who were “monitored” by Prophets, who also served as agents of reconciliation during times when God punished rebellion by defeat and imprisonment and occupation by their enemies, which continued into the period of conquest and occupation by Rome.

Finally, God chose to send His Son, Jesus into the world to seek and save **all** the lost, revealing His unending love for all his children who would come to believe in the gospel of Jesus, place their faith trust and hope in Him and live by the Word of God written on their hearts, and nourished by the power of the Holy Spirit, sent to indwell them at their baptism. By the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit followers of Jesus are empowered to fight the temptations of Satan and repel the attacks of Satan’s co-conspirators who choose evil over good. The righteous are encouraged to witness the power of God’s love and his amazing grace that is extended to every repentant sinner. The redeemed righteous are built up together all over the world to be ambassadors of Christ reaching out in the Name of Jesus to rescue every child of God and become heirs with Jesus to the promises of eternal life in the presence of God in the world to be made

NEW according to the Revelation described by the Apostle John.

We must always be mindful of the admonitions of Jesus to those who deliberately reject Jesus. He taught us, died for us and was resurrected from the grave to demonstrate the Truth of God’s promise. The stubborn, proud, evil deceivers who delight in self-deception, and the fruit of lies that bring misery and death to millions of the innocent already stand condemned by their own words and actions. Evidence of the truth is already being revealed and made clear. The worldly wise will be made simple, and the simple will become wise in the ways of the LORD as they come out of the darkness into the light.

Those who choose to learn how to live in the knowledge of Love for the Lord will be free indeed and shall not be intimidated, tempted or deceived anymore. We are all called to learn about love at the foot of the Cross during our personal sweet hour of prayer.

Larry S. Grubbs, .Harrison, Ohio

OPEN HEARTS BIBLE MINUTE “So then, let us aim for harmony in the church and try to build each other up.” (Rom. 14:19 NLT) “May God, who gives this patience and encouragement, help you live in complete harmony with each other, as is fitting for followers of Christ Jesus.” (Rom. 15:5 NLT) “Live in harmony with each other. Don’t be too proud to enjoy the company of ordinary people. And don’t think you know it all!” (Rom. 12:16 NLT)) Harmony is not sameness it is using our gifts to make a melody.

Elizabeth Brown



FLATLINE DAMAGE



growth. Worship services tended to serve as a pep rally to send members off to do personal evangelism. In order to do personal evangelism, it was (is) critical to know what

The OCCG graphic illustrates the understanding that during the early growth of typical congregations, a transition happens. It is generally where the line changes from red to green. An inflection point happens in the curve indicating a shift from hot to a lukewarm condition. The congregation is still growing at that point, and most would intuitively understand it to still be hot. The transition typically happens as an event in the life of the congregation changes the nature of the operation of that church group. We have discussed the reasons for this before, but at this time we want to look at the flat portion of the curve or when the congregation “flatlined.” This is not flatline like in medical conditions where the patient is dead, but rather in this case it means that the congregation attendance is neither growing nor declining.

During the red or HOT portion of the congregation’s life, certain things were happening that created evangelistic outreach and conversion of others to the church. For whatever reason, those things stopped happening. The underlying causes for this would be a beneficial study, but that is not the subject of this article.

The normal presumption is that while the congregation is holding steady at a constant attendance or flatline condition, things are pretty good. The title of this article “FLATLINE DAMAGE” is suggesting that things are not “pretty good”.

Before the change at the point of inflection, children and new members in a congregation were doing the things which promoted church

the Bible said and to understand why the Churches of Christ believe what they believe.

After the point of inflection leading to the green flatline era in the congregation, congregants were no longer doing whatever it takes to promote church growth. Attending worship services became their service to Jesus. Actual Biblical knowledge became more the domain of the church clergy (paid staff)

EFFECT OF GENERATIONS IN SECULAR LIFE

The first generation of the Church of Christ was for the most part born poor, attending (if at all) college in night school, and then going on to start a business.

The children of the first generation (the second generation) grew up understanding that the family finances were limited, understood budgeting, and saw the family become more financially substantial.

By the time the second generation were of college age, the family was for the most part able to send them to the schools of their choice.

When the second generation graduated from college, their kids (the third generation) never knew shortages. Their parents were financially stable such that the third generation rarely saw a time which limited finances required forced budgeting. They functionally grew up wealthy.

Continued on page 6

FLATLINE DAMAGE, P. 3

The kids' world view was formed from a poor circumstance moving toward improving financial circumstances. The grandkids' world view was formed in affluent circumstances, as likely happened in subsequent generations. This change will affect the children to different extents and in different ways.

This generational shift affects countries, societies, families, businesses, churches and many other things. A clear example is the struggles of the post WW2 generation in Japan. The next generation was highly committed to excellence. Then the next generation became more of a consumer society. It takes concerted effort to keep this change from happening .

EFFECT OF GENERATIONS ON CONGREGATIONS

Looking again at the graphic above, the red generation(s) were highly committed to the church and did the things which caused the church to grow.

The green generation(s) inherit a church which has grown, is not in an intensive care situation of survival, and has passed the transition point. A major indicator of passing the transition point is that members tend to become disenfranchised from the management of the church, with decision-making typically taken into closed meetings of a limited number of leaders. In addition to this, the busy-ness of activities and committees have multiplied, with the natural organizational complexity associated with such structure.

Our discussion is not about red and green generations, but rather about the generations within the green area. Presume the first green generation is well versed in the Bible, what the Church of Christ understandings of the Bible are, and are generally committed to it. They believed and knew why they believed.

The second green generation has been taught

Church of Christ understandings of the Bible, but rather than debating it for themselves they have believed their authority figures and focused on making the committee system and social groupings work. What is important is that they understand the Church of Christ understandings of the Bible, in sort of a fuzzy secondhand way. A percentage of the second generation drops out, but it does not make a noticeable change.

The third generation perceives their parents participating in the church as a social grouping activity. It is boring and repetitive to them. They tend to have little interest in statements like "speak where the Bible speaks and remain silent where the Bible is silent". It is old fashioned.

A percentage of the third generation will remain faithful. A percentage of the third generation will advocate unscriptural change to improve the social grouping. A percentage of the third generation will simply leave.

With the resulting decline of commitment, at some point the blue portion of the line (congregational numerical decline) will happen. The decline will be inexplicable and a surprise to most. Typically, the roots of the decline began a long time before the decline started, when everyone thought things were going well.

The point to this is that when a congregation changes their emphasis from Great Commission growth and planting to internal maintenance and stability, they are laying the groundwork for the future decline of the congregation. This is the damage which happens in a flatline congregation.

Benton F. Baugh



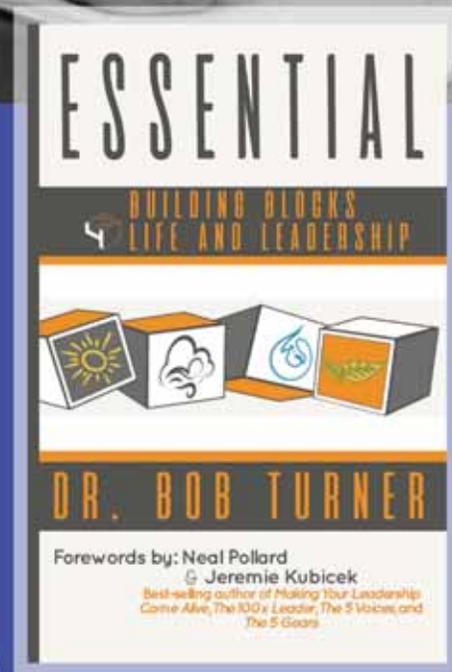
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Dr. Bob Turner is the current director of SALT (Sunset Academy for Leadership Training). He holds multiple Bible degrees and a Doctorate of Intercultural Studies, emphasizing Adult Leadership Development.



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IMPOSSIBLE FOR EVOLUTION #126 – CATERPILLAR WHEEL

Patania ruralis, the **mother of pearl moth**, is a species of moth of the family Crambidae. It is shown in the photo to the right.

Its wingspan is 26–40 millimeters (1.0–1.6 in). The forewings are pale whitish-ochreous, yellowish-tinged; a grey subcostal suffusion and connected orbicular dot; lines rather dark grey, first straight, second serrate, curved, strongly broken inwards beneath middle; a dark grey discal mark, nearly followed by a grey blotch; a grey terminal band, edge parallel to second line. Hindwings with color, discal mark, and posterior markings as in forewings. The larva is whitish green, sides greener; dorsal line darker; head green.

This European moth flies from June to September depending on the location.

The caterpillar larva of the Mother of Pearl moth move slowly forward in a slow peristaltic motion of wavelike muscle contractions. This makes for good movement for eating leaves, but very slow movement escaping any danger.

When the larva encounters a danger, it can transform itself into a wheel as seen in photographs A and B. In this mode, it can launch itself off at about 15" per second or about 1 mph. This is 40 times its normal travelling speed.

It can go from straight and stationary to rolling in just 60 milliseconds (six hundreds of a second). In this motion it propels itself for some distance to safety. The distance travelled will be variable depending upon the terrain on which it is rolling.

Just imagine a caterpillar who can think up of the idea of becoming a wheel in a micro second, and while doing it will have its head on the ground to give it a push to start the motion. That is two complex motions in a microseconds for a bug which normally just inches along.

Surely this is impossible for an accident of evolution and is a proof of God.

Benton F. Baugh



Photo from Wikipedia

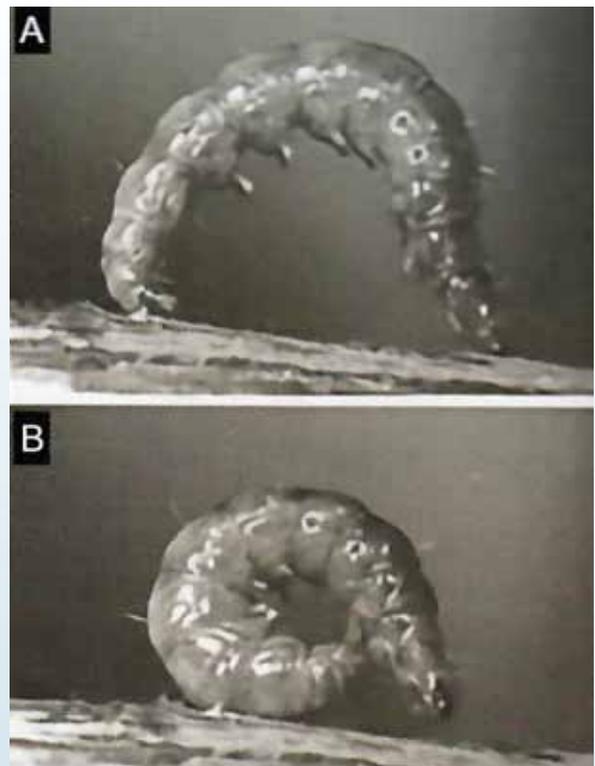
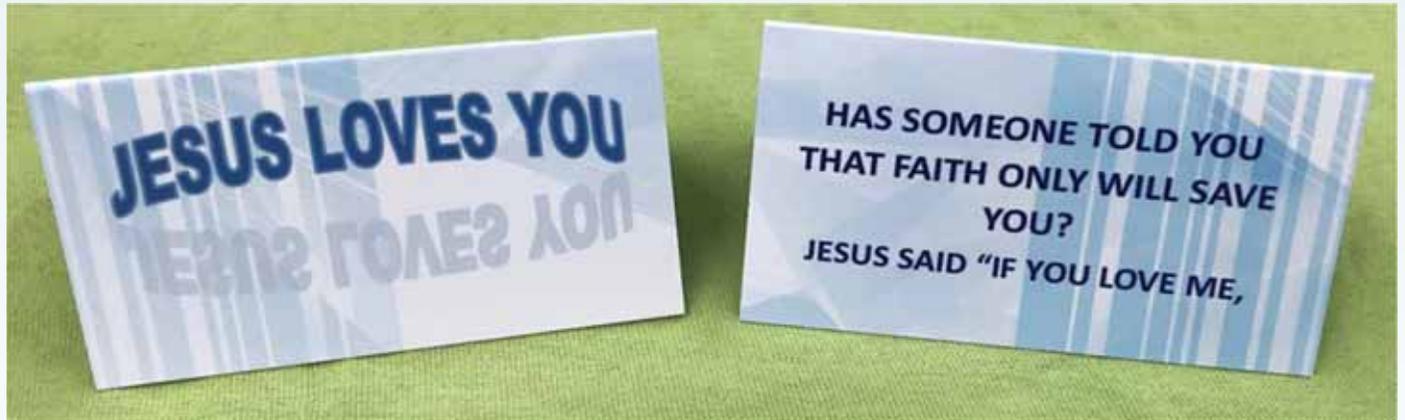


Photo and information collected from Creation Magazine

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.

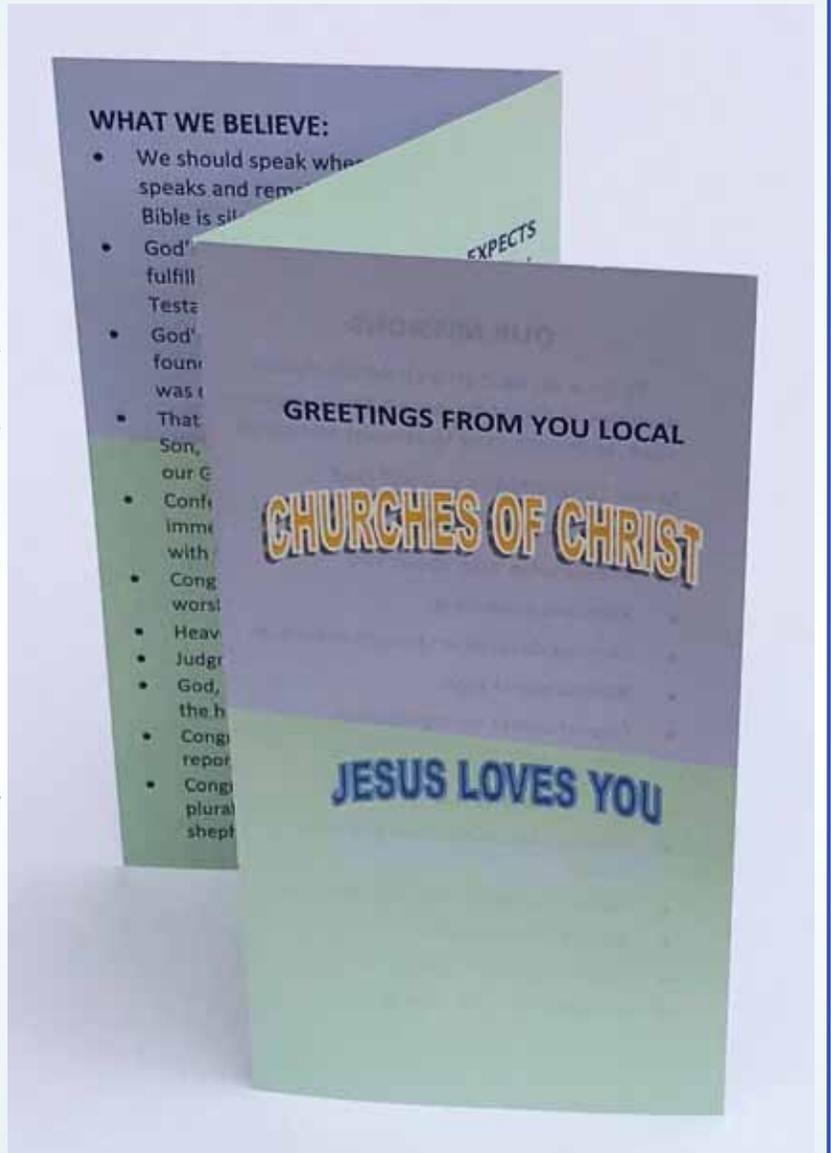
Cards similar to this can be obtained from a number of printers, with Uprint.com being the one we have used. In the example shown we used a 5.5" x 8.5" Z-Fold printed on the outside and inside in full color. It is found under brochures.

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

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

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- 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

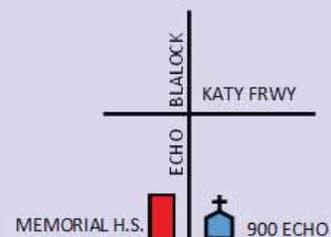
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THE CATALYST INITIATIVE

PROMOTING THE GREAT COMMISSION BY ENCOURAGING STRONG MEMBERS TO START LOCAL CONGREGATIONS

bbaugh@thearray.org

SUMMARY: We must all appear before the judgment seat as it is appointed for men to die once and after this comes judgment. You could characterize that your Father is going to be doing the judging, not your Grandfather.

GENERAL CONTEMPORARY ATTITUDE:

There is a general view today that God is not particularly serious about the instructions in the Bible. We don't actually need to be constrained by what was said to another culture 2000 years ago. We are free to upgrade the Gospel to what is relevant today. Our God is a loving God, not a harsh rule applying God. God will not be cruel enough to condemn anyone to an eternal punishment in Hell. All will be rewarded with a home in Heaven, although some may be a little better off than others. The topics of Hell, judgment, and punishment are not even socially acceptable to talk about today. Various groups can adopt more contemporary teachings as long as you believe in Jesus. Maybe you don't actually need to even believe in Jesus, as long as you do good things.

STARTING POSITION:

This study is predicated upon the starting position that (1) there is a God, (2) that God is Jehovah, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit, and (3) all instructions we have from God today are in the New Testament. If you disagree with that, you need to start a different place before this study.

Given this STARTING POSITION, is the GENERAL CONTEMPORARY ATTITUDE supported in the New Testament? This study first lists the major descriptive verses regarding judgment day.

MAJOR DESCRIPTIVE VERSES REGARDING JUDGMENT DAY

Matthew 7:13-14 NASB: "Enter through the narrow gate; for the gate is wide and the way is broad that leads to destruction, and there are many who enter through it. For the gate is small and the way is narrow that leads to life, and there are few who find it."

Matthew 25:31-46 NASB: "But when the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the angels with Him, then He will sit on His glorious throne. All the nations will be gathered before Him; and He will separate them from one another, as the shepherd separates the sheep from the goats; and He will put the sheep on His right, and the goats on the left. Then the King will say to those on His right, 'Come, you who are blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was hungry, and you gave Me something to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave Me something to drink; I was a stranger, and you invited Me in; naked, and you clothed Me; I was sick, and you visited Me; I was in prison, and you came to Me. Then the righteous will answer Him, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry, and feed You, or thirsty, and give

You something to drink? And when did we see You a stranger, and invite You in, or naked, and clothe You? When did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You?' The King will answer and say to them, 'Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did it to one of these brothers of Mine, even the least of them, you did it to Me. Then He will also say to those on His left, 'Depart from Me, accursed ones, into the eternal fire which has been prepared for the devil and his angels; for I was hungry, and you gave Me nothing to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave Me nothing to drink; I was a stranger, and you did not invite Me in; naked, and you did not clothe Me; sick, and in prison, and you did not visit Me. Then they themselves also will answer, Lord, when did we see You hungry, or thirsty, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not take care of You? Then He will answer them, Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to Me. These will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life."

Revelation 20:11-15 NASB: "Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat upon it, from whose presence earth and heaven fled away, and no place was found for them. And I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne, and books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life; and the dead were judged from the things which were written in the books, according to their deeds. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead which were in them; and they were judged, every one of them according to their deeds. Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire. And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire."

VERSES REGARDING THE STRICTNESS OF JUDGMENT

Sodom and Gomorrah: rained fire and brimstone, Gen. 19:24

Lot's wife: instructed to not look back at Sodom and Gomorrah, Gen. 19:17, turned to a pillar of salt because she looked back, Gen. 19:29

Jericho: Joshua 6:17 only Rahab the harlot shall live, Joshua 6:21 destroyed man & women, young and old, ox, sheep, and donkeys

Uzzah: steadied ark when oxen stumbled, died, 2 Samuel 6:1-7 and 1 Chronicles 13:9-12

Rich Man and Lazarus: Teaches of a clear understanding of the outcome in the Hadean world even before judgment day, Luke 16:19-31,

Ananias and Sapphira, Acts 5:1-11 Each lied to God and fell over dead

Heb 10:27 "but a certain terrifying expectation of judgment, and the fury of a fire which will consume the adversaries." (NAS)

THE END

JUDGMENT



James 2:13 “For judgment {will be} merciless to one who has shown no mercy; mercy triumphs over judgment.” (NAS)

James 3:1 “Let not many {of you} become teachers, my brethren, knowing that as such we shall incur a stricter judgment.” (NAS)

2 Thes. 1:9 “These will pay the penalty of eternal destruction, away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power” (NASB)

2 Pet 2:4 “For if God did not spare angels when they sinned, but cast them into hell and committed them to pits of darkness, reserved for judgment;” (NAS)

2 Pet 2:9 “{then} the Lord knows how to rescue the godly from temptation, and to keep the unrighteous under punishment for the day of judgment,” (NAS) (Rich man and Lazarus)

2 Pet 3:7 “But the present heavens and earth by His word are being reserved for fire, kept for the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men.” (NAS)

Jude 1:6 “And angels who did not keep their own domain, but abandoned their proper abode, He has kept in eternal bonds under darkness for the judgment of the great day.”

VERSES REGARDING THE LAXITY OF JUDGMENT

None we can find to support the more contemporary views.

Romans 2:14-16 “14 For when Gentiles who do not have the Law do instinctively the things of the Law, these, not having the Law, are a law to themselves, 15 in that they show the work of the Law written in their hearts, their conscience bearing witness and their thoughts alternately accusing or else defending them, 16 on the day when, according to my gospel, God will judge the secrets of men through Christ Jesus.” (NAS) This is a contemporary statement by the Apostle Paul in current tense which suggests that on judgment day they will be judged by a law written on their hearts. This can be interpreted that if they had never heard of Jesus or baptism, they might be judged by God’s natural moral laws. It would not have applied to Paul’s readers as by definition they had heard of Jesus, so would not be suggesting any laxity to the hearers of the Gospel.

As you can lie, cheat and steal today without any immediate punishment would tend to give comfort to the idea of an easy judgment. It is certainly taken that way.

The word “love” is found in the Bible 348 times, whereas the word “judgment” is only found 158 times.

John 3:16 NASB “For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life.” Sounds like a serious

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THE END

JUDGMENT



loving statement, but also embodies the determined will of God to send His son to the earth to be crucified.

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”

WHEN IS JUDGMENT DAY

The term “day of judgment” is listed in the New Testament (NASV) 9 times (Matt. 10:15, 11:22, 11:24, 27:19; Mark 6:11; Acts 25:6; Romans 2:5; 2 Peter 2:9, 3:7; 1 John 4:17, and Jude 6). We would naturally tend to think of this in 24-hour terms.

Consider there are more than 6 billion people on the planet today and each gets one second for judgment. That would be 6,000,000,000 people / 60 min. / 60 sec. / 24 hours / 365.25 days = 190.1 years. Then there are all the people who have already died. If everyone is judged in a single day in sequence, it is going to be a long day.

Consider further what 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17 (NASB) says: “For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we shall always be with the Lord.”

That would make it sound like all the “dead in Christ” will arise at once to meet Christ in the air. It sounds like shortly afterwards those “alive in Christ” will be caught up to the clouds also. Functionally to determine who is “in Christ”, everyone has to be judged.

The would imply that judgment will not be 24 hours or 190.1 years, but instantaneous for everyone. We would not all be judged in sequence, but in parallel or at the same time.

That would say judgment day is likely whenever Christ returns, and all probably happens at that time very quickly.

THINGS TO CONSIDER:

JUDGMENT WILL BE STRICT

ALL HUMANS WILL BE JUDGED EXCEPT JESUS, ENOCH, AND ELIJAH

THE NT TEACHES ETERNAL REWARD

THE NT TEACHES ETERNAL PUNISHMENT

WILL KEEP UNRIGHTEOUS UNDER PUNISHMENT - RICH MAN AND LAZARUS

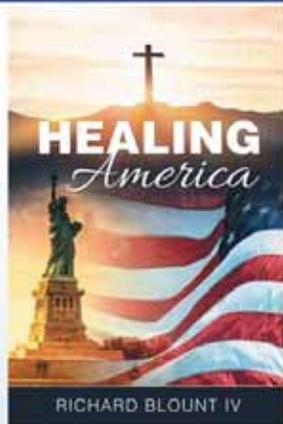
6 BILLION+ WILL BE JUDGED

WHEN CHRIST RETURNS, SAVED WILL MEET HIM IN THE AIR

In the online version of this lesson, all verses with the word “judgment” are listed.

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1. *Life isn't fair, but it's still good..*
2. *When in doubt, just take the next small step.*
3. *Life is too short to waste time hating anyone.* *Source unknown.*

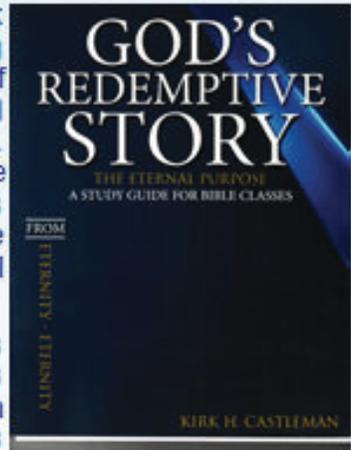
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