

FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT – JOY

NUMBER 171

MAY, 2022

People sometimes equate joy with happiness. Happiness may be an outward sign of joy, but true joy goes deeper than that. Joy is a matter of the heart. If your joy fruit is based on life's circumstances, what happens when things aren't going your way? Your joy vanishes so you are left fruitless with nothing to share with others. James 1:2 says, "Count it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance." We will live out Romans 8:28, "And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose."



FLASH OF THE OBVIOUS THE POWER OF GOD

The objective of this essay is to explain that it is within the reach of everyone to experience a "break-through" comprehension - a "blinding flash of the obvious", to **realize** that one **IS** truly **secure forever** "in the hands of Jesus", when we develop a personal working, loving relationship with the Holy Spirit- sent by God **as Jesus promised** – to **live within humans, together with our spirit**, teaching us and guiding us to live in obedience to the gospel of Jesus Christ – Immanuel – God with us – Son of man, whose sacrifice for all the sins of humanity [past, present, future] opened the door to salvation for everyone and anyone who chooses to believe in Him and follow His commands!

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STRENGTHEN FAMILY FIRST

"Love never gives up, never loses faith, is always hopeful, and endures through every circumstance." (I Cor. 13:7 NLT)

We were created for family. The husband is to provide and protect, his wife to nurture and connect. It is a beautiful, protective and enriching arrangement. Family is the building block for home, church, community and civilization as a whole. It is far greater than the sum of its parts. Treasure and protect it.

"Love never gives up, never loses faith, is always hopeful, and endures through every circumstance." (I Cor. 13:7 NLT)

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Joy is an interior contentment that comes from being close to God and in right relationship with others. Joy also comes with speaking and upholding the truth, maintaining honesty and integrity in relationships, enduring hardships, and conducting oneself with decency and honor throughout a lifetime.

Joy is the product of a peaceful, believing heart. It's an internal emotion that never changes, regardless of your situation. When times get tough, I still have joy because I am a child of God and my eternal life is secure. He will never leave me or forsake me. I have the joy of the Lord.

In contrast to happiness, which can come and go due to our circumstances, joy can abide internally because we have the love of Christ. And it does not change when times get tough. As we can see from the following scriptures, joy comes from the Lord.

The joy referred to here is deeper than mere happiness; it is rooted in and comes from God. Since it comes from Him, it offers serenity and stability, contrasted with the fluctuations of life that create the roller coaster ride of worldly happiness.

DEEDS OF THE FLESH: EUPHORIA, TEMPORARY HAPPINESS, ESCAPE

If a fruit of the spirit is the kind of joy which you receive from enduring a test of your faith and increasing your endurance in Jesus, Satan's temptations would include personal pleasures that create fleeting happiness. It would be something like taking a drug or smoking a cigarette; while it brings temporary happiness, it causes an ever-increasing need for this artificial stimulus, more often and in greater quantities, in order to recapture the happiness. Such of Satan's temp-

tations, while offering temporary escape from the boredom, pain, or drudgery of life, typically lead to an addictive situation which leaves you worse off than before.

Another example of Satan-driven happiness is the euphoria of an extra-marital affair, leading to divorce and other life-destroying and soul-destroying consequences. Compare this with joy of a lifetime of commitment to a spouse, which generates children and grandchildren. These temptations of Satan are like dropping a dish to watch it break; the excitement of watching it shatter into a thousand pieces, never same again, is fleeting. But God-given joy is more like the heirloom dish which endures and passes lovingly from generation to generation.



STRENGTHEN FAMILY FIRST, P. 2

We were created for family. The husband is to provide and protect, his wife to nurture and connect. It is a beautiful, protective and enriching arrangement. Family is the building block for home, church, community and civilization as a whole. It is far greater than the sum of its parts. Treasure and protect it.

Strengthen your family with words of patience and kindness. It takes practice and resolve to build up each family member with positive words instead of tearing down with criticism. Get some rest so you can do your best.

Strengthen your family with courtesy. Extend every little courtesy to those closest to you. Family is no place for jealousy, boastfulness or being rude. Love never harms others.

Strengthen your family with unselfishness. Love does not demand its own way. Conflicts will arise but be sure to resolve them in favor of family unity. Put family first, not selfish desires. Try compromise.

Strengthen your family with forgiveness. Don't be a grievance collector. Love isn't irritable and it keeps no record of wrongs. Love forgives again and again. Forgiveness doesn't put us down, it lifts others up. Always pay back good for evil.

Strengthen your family with truth and justice. Tell the truth. Be a trustworthy, reliable and responsible partner. Rejoice when truth wins out. Don't risk the sacred bond of family with deception and lies.

Family is forever. Treat these relationships with the care they deserve. Will you practice loving more authentically everyday? Show more kindness in every way? What will you do and say to strengthen your family today?

Elizabeth Brown , Texarkana

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WINGS OF EAGLES



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Short cell phone answers to Biblical questions!

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FLASH OF THE OBVIOUS - THE POWER OF GOD, P. 2

The objective of this essay is to explain that it is within the reach of everyone to experience a “break-through” comprehension - a “blinding flash of the obvious”, to **realize** that one **IS** truly **secure forever** “in the hands of Jesus”, when we develop a personal working, loving relationship with the Holy Spirit- sent by God **as Jesus promised** – to **live within humans, together with our spirit**, teaching us and guiding us to live in obedience to the gospel of Jesus Christ – Immanuel – God with us – Son of man, whose sacrifice for all the sins of humanity [past, present, future] opened the door to salvation for everyone and anyone who chooses to believe in Him and follow His commands!

The overwhelming joy of comprehending this knowledge and the inconceivable wonder of participating in the work of the Creator of the universe – humbles the soul with complete clarity of perspective- **and** permeates our being to build up faith and sustain each believer in any and all circumstances. Humans now have the wonderful “option” to inherit life without end – a life that cannot be destroyed by ANY EVIL FORCE. Therefore; let us pray that every believer may gladly reach out and up to “take on” the challenges to witness and teach to make disciples with whom we can share the knowledge and power of God.

King David of the Israelites danced and sang in the streets of Jerusalem because he BELIEVED, while many doubted. Even he stumbled and fell to temptation but was restored by God. Today, many are intimidated by doubt because we know that all humans “have sinned and fall short of the glory of God” – many far short. However; the GOSPEL proclaims that all are FORGIVEN, and told to “go and sin no more”.

Think: The Holy Spirit of God is living within “ME” and every baptized believer! He is not sitting on a bench in the back of our minds – but ALIVE and ACTIVE, ready at a prayer moment’s invitation to shield us against Satan’s temptations! With the power of the Holy Spirit each believer can become a “gentle giant” -a spiritual powerhouse of

faith who will drive Satan to flee! Satan knows the presence of Christ signals his doom. Such are the disciples of determination required to restore the present church to the glory of the church during the first century, when disciples served as human torches along the Roman roads – the LIGHT of the Gospel that illuminated a center of darkness which became the epicenter of the original holy Catholic church whose believers spread the gospel throughout the known world!

All peoples today are under attack by evil forces who have deceived and lured many far away from God and are working to obscure knowledge of the gospel truth about God’s love for all His creation and the sacrifice He has given to redeem them. His Believers must be bold and courageous, remembering Jesus words “I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.” Let us join Him in overcoming our troubles wrapped in His Love.

Larry S. Grubbs, Harrison, Ohio

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Stephenville, Texas

AIRTAG NECKLACE

My wife having aphasia dementia gives the rest of us some concerns about her getting lost. She has never been lost yet, but we worry.

We have put the Find My Friends app on our cell phones and so we can know where her cell phone is at any time. Unfortunately she forgets to take her cell phone regularly.

We bought an Apple Air Tag as is seen below and put it in her billfold in her purse. The Apple Air Tag is \$29.00 and easily links to the Find My Friends on our cell phones. Then she left her purse on the bus at the OKC airport. We might not have been able to find her, but we could find her purse.

Then I looked on Amazon for Air Tag holders and found the protective case shown on the lower right picture. She is shown wearing it on the upper right photo and has received several comments on how attractive it is. As long as she is wearing it, it does not matter if she loses her purse or cell phone, we will know where she is.

This air tag holder comes in 4 colors each for \$12.99. The open like a compact and easily receive the Air Tag. The front and back of the holder give a different look, with the back being a simple ring. The back of the Airtag is white to give the clean look as seen in the photo.

As a practical matter, we can now easily know where she is, her cell phone is, and her billfold is. If she has her neck-

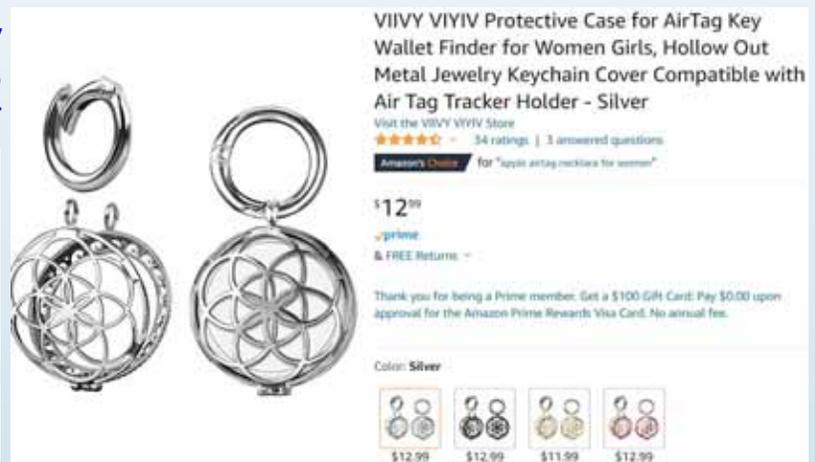


lace, cell phone, or billfold with her, we will know where she is. The cost was minimal and gives us a feeling of security which is beyond value.

If you are in a similar situation, we would encourage you to consider doing something like this.

If you have other ideas, send them to info@occg.institute and we will publish them also.

Barry





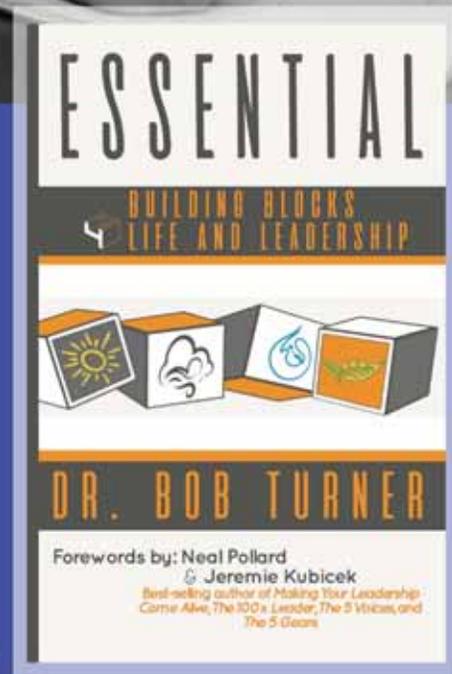
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Dr. Bob Turner is the current director of SALT (Sunset Academy for Leadership Training). He holds multiple Bible degrees and a Doctorate of Intercultural Studies, emphasizing Adult Leadership Development.



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IMPOSSIBLE FOR EVOLUTION #127 – ACL

On April 4, 2022 University of Houston star running back Alton McCaskill suffered a torn ACL during a non-contact drill in practice, putting his availability for the 2022 college football season in doubt.

The anterior cruciate ligament (ACL) is one of the key ligaments that help stabilize your knee joint. The ACL connects your thighbone (femur) to your shinbone (tibia). It's most commonly torn during sports that involve sudden stops and changes in direction — such as football, basketball, soccer, tennis and volleyball.

One might consider this to be a bad design, or a spectacular design

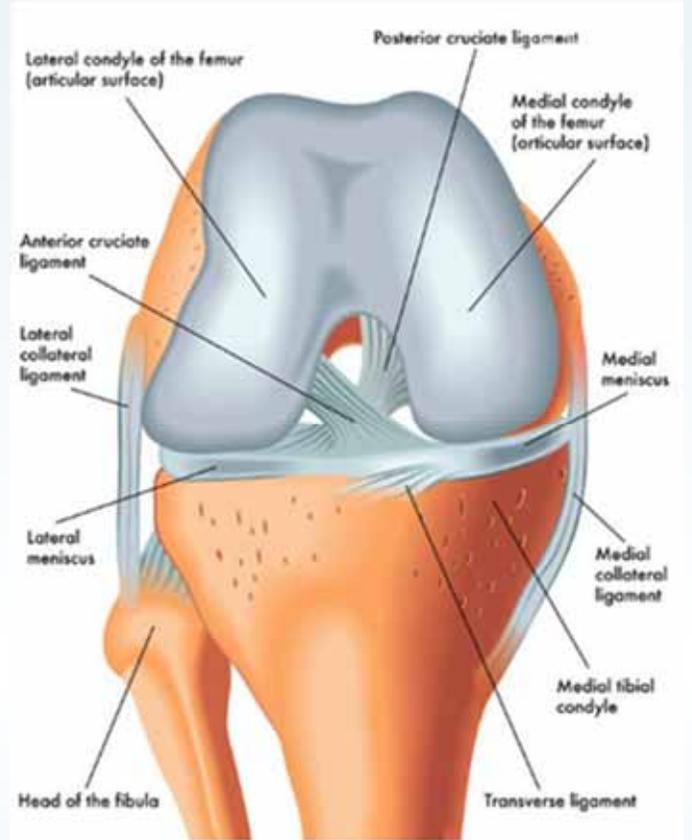
The knee is a swivel joint. That means when the foot is planted on the ground and the body rotates, rotational strain is exerted on the knee. This has the potential for major knee damage. The anterior cruciate ligament (ACL) and posterior cruciate ligament (PCL) are connected in the knee to resist this rotation and damage. When you hear that someone has torn and ACL, it is characteristically in sports where extreme stress is placed on the ACL.

We are suggesting that the ACL is a design impossible for evolution to do. It carries the usual impossibility of requiring accidental computer programming of the DNA to make a new structure, but it goes further.

The need for an ACL does not show up until a man is at, near, or beyond reproduction ages. For atheistic evolution to do anything, it would have to impact the person's DNA in a way which would be passed on to their offspring.

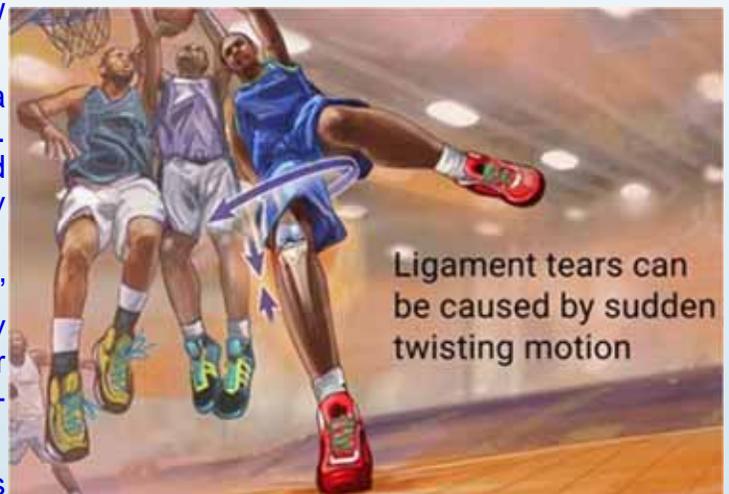
The reason the last paragraph specified "man" is that women are born with all the eggs they will ever have. That makes it impossible for any recognized need to be input into the woman's eggs.

That this complex design to protect the knees exists is a spectacular proof that a really intelli-



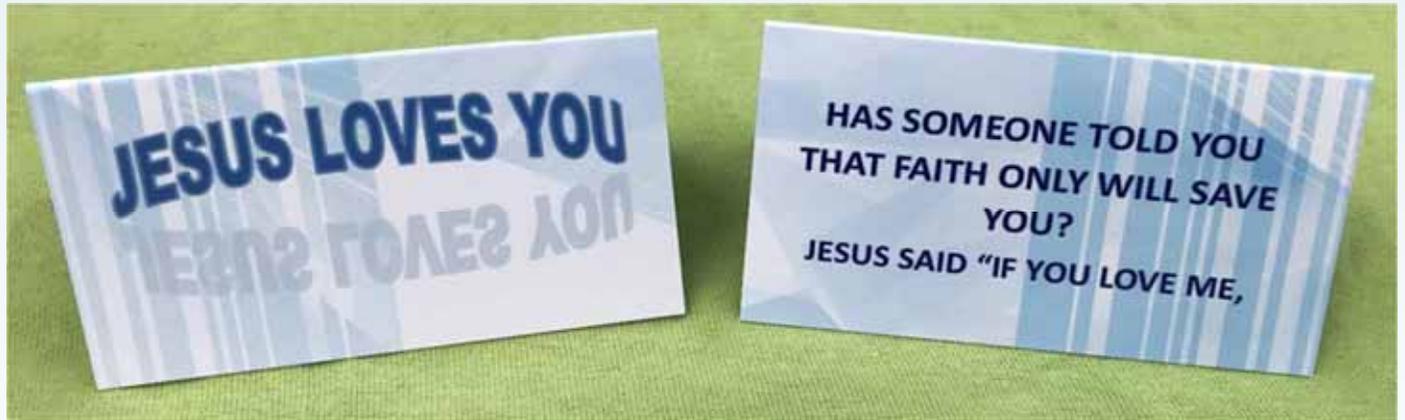
gent designer knew of the stresses which joints like knees would sustain, and that He implemented designs to protect them.

Benton F. Baugh



Photos and information from Wikipedia

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.

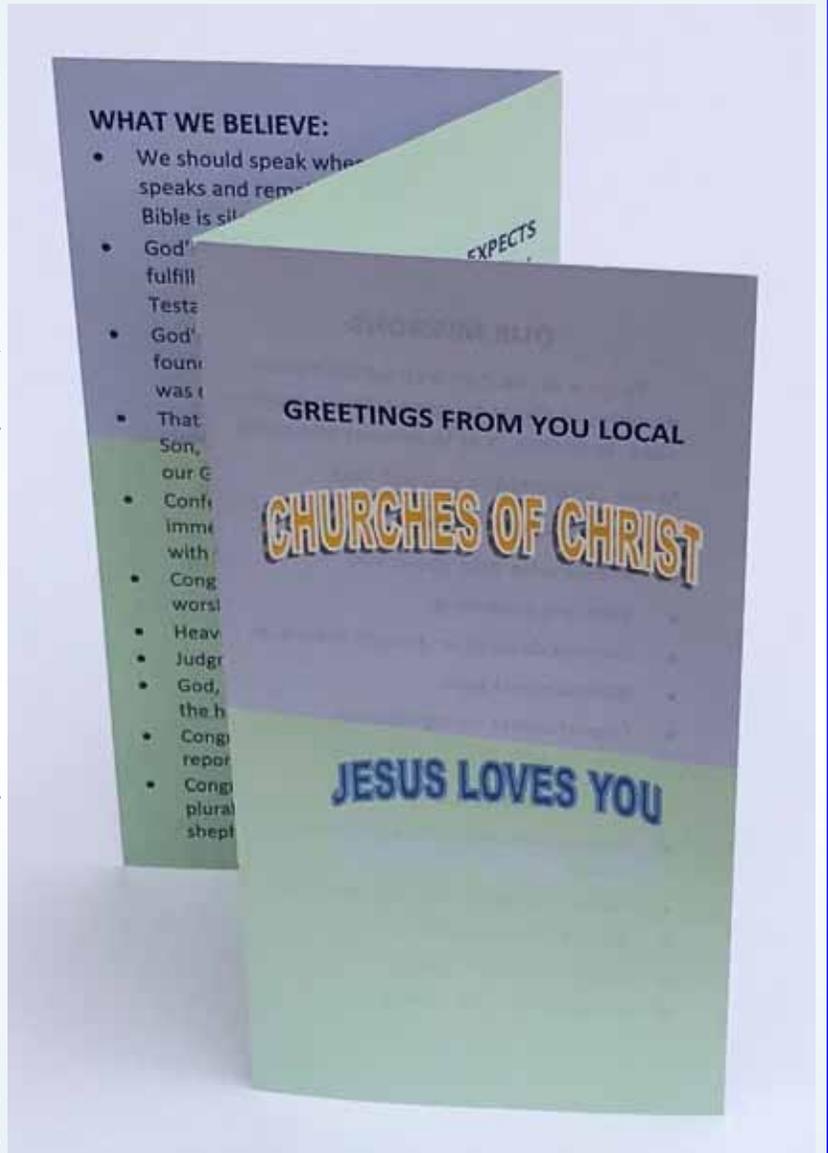
Cards similar to this can be obtained from a number of printers, with Uprint.com being the one we have used. In the example shown we used a 5.5" x 8.5" Z-Fold printed on the outside and inside in full color. It is found under brochures.

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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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

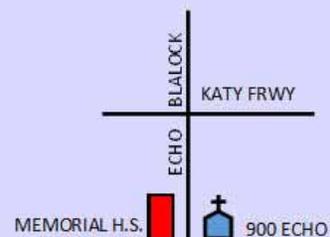
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SUMMARY: Both love and works are 100% essential.

1. I Cor. 13:3 Deeds without love profits nothing.
2. James 2:17 Faith without works is dead.

Love as it relates to people of the world as indicated in the Bible can be characterized as genuine wishing well of other people, with some actions to match.

CAN YOU HAVE LOVE OF GOD WITHOUT WORKS? No!

John 14:15 "If you love me, you will keep my commandments."

(Therefore, if you are not keeping his commandments including deeds, you must not love Him.)

CAN YOU HAVE WORKS WITHOUT LOVE? Yes!

I Cor. 13:3 Deeds without love profits nothing.

(Therefore, deeds are an indication of, but not proof of love.)

REFERENCE DATA:

Love (Webster's Collegiate Dictionary) 1 a (1): strong affection for another arising out of kinship or personal ties <maternal ~ for a child>, (2): attraction based on sexual desire: affection and tenderness felt by lovers (3): affection based on admiration, benevolence, or common interest <~ for his old schoolmates> b: an assurance of love <give her my ~> 2: warm attachment, enthusiasm, or devotion <~ of the sea> 3 a: the object of attachment, devotion or admiration <baseball was his first ~> b: a beloved person : darling – often used as a term of endearment 4 a: unselfish loyal and benevolent concern for the good of another: (1): the fatherly concern of God for man (2): brotherly concern for others b: a person's adoration of God 5: a god or personification of love 6: an amorous episode: LOVE AFFAIR 7: the sexual embrace : COPULATION 8: a score of zero (as in tennis) 9 cap, Christian Science : GOD- at love; holding one's opposition scoreless in tennis <won three games at love> - in love: inspired by affection.

SALVATION CAN COME THRU LOVE*

1. Luke 7:47 Sins forgiven because she loved much.
2. II Tim. 4:8 Crown of righteousness for those who love his coming
3. James 2:5 Kingdom promised to those who love him.
4. I John 3:11-14 From death to life because we love the brethren.

SALVATION CAN COME THRU WORKS**

1. Matthew 25:34-39 Saved for feeding the poor.
2. Mark 9:41 Saved for giving water.
3. The 8 examples of conversion in the Christian dispensation all include works (baptism), none specify love.
4. The Great Commission in Matthew 28:19 and Mark 16:15-16 specifies works (baptism) for salvation, but does not specify love.

* If you love you will work or you didn't love. John 14:15.

** If you work without love, it does not profit. I Cor. 13:3.

* & ** Conjunctive strict construction: Therefore, both love and deeds are required for salvation, neither is sufficient alone.

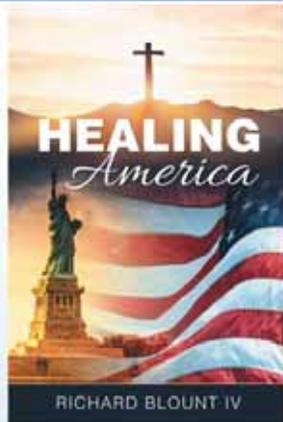
The word "love" is used 150 times in the Old Testament and 297 times in the New Testament. There are 613 commands in the Old Testament and 269 in the New Testament.

QUESTIONS:

1. Are we doing the deeds which Christ commanded with the love that we should have?
2. Are you doing the deeds which Christ commanded with the love that you should have?
3. Can you define love the "love" that the Bible is talking about?
4. Why would God use a term in the Bible such as "love" 447 times which is critical to our salvation, yet is so difficult to understand?

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4. *Your job won't take care of you when you are sick. Your friends and parents will. Stay in touch.*

5. *You don't have to win every argument. Agree to disagree. Source unknown.*

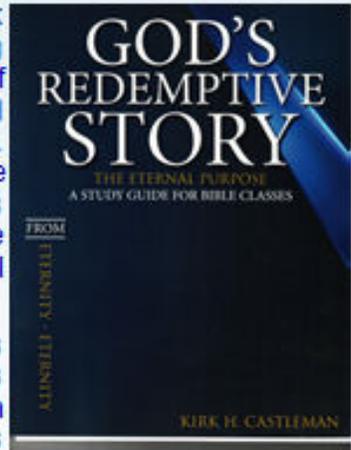
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Dave Blanchard

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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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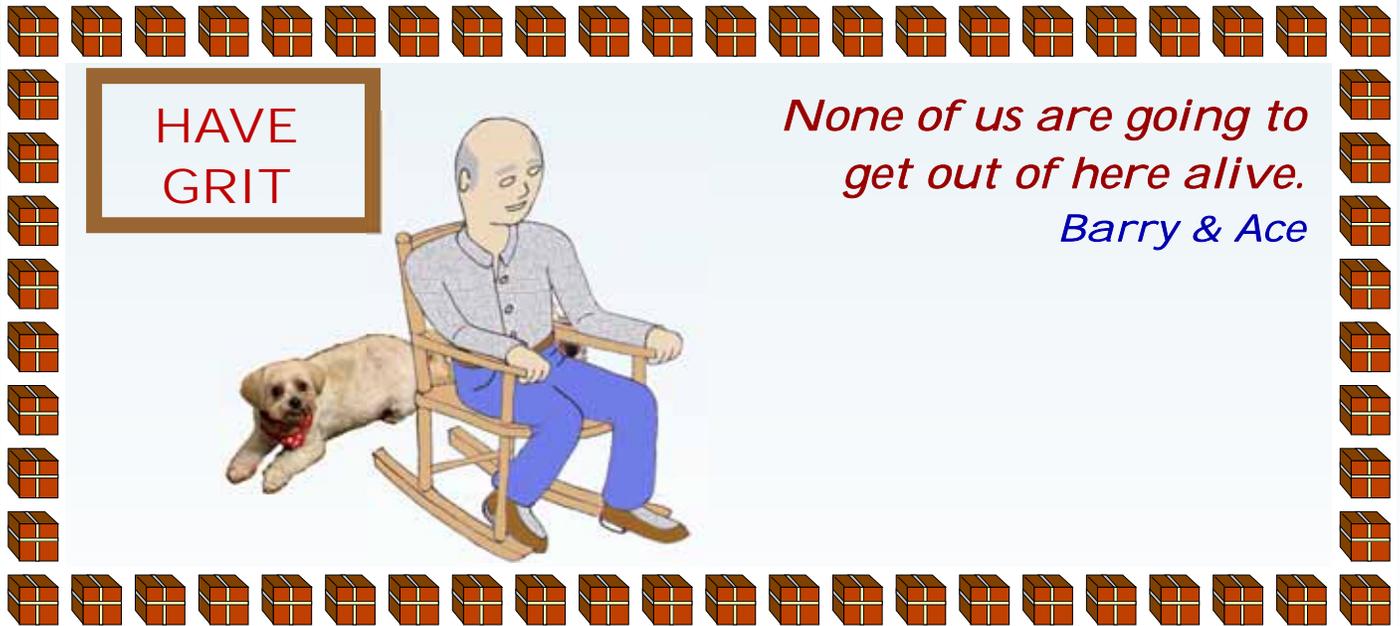
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- (3) Saturday or Sunday afternoon: Dream Session
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- (5) Sunday morning worship: A church growth sermon

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For more information, contact:
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HOUSTON PREACHERS AND LEADERS LUNCHEON Every second Tuesday except December, For information contact David Wardrup - cell: (281)635-3135; davidcwardrup@gmail.com or Cruz Hernandez - cell: (713)560-9080; cruzalbertohdz2017@gmail.com

To post your event: info@occg1.institute (Note email address has changed)

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