

BIBLICAL DOCTRINES PROGRAM

NUMBER 181

JUNE 2023

Are there actual Biblical doctrinal truths, or is everything subject to your interpretation? Is one interpretation as good as another, as long as you are sincere? That is the conventional understanding.

Many of our members turn to the internet to investigate doctrinal truths. They frequently get denominational truths instead of what the scriptures teach. What will happen to the church when more and more denominational interpretations creep into our belief? Enough different teachings have come into the church today that we have numerous divisions in the Church of Christ.

Continued on page 2

BE A LIFELONG LEARNER

"...let the wise listen and add to their learning, and let the discerning get guidance—" (Proverbs 1:5 NIV)



I know so little about so much, it is a wonder that I can get through the day. As the saying goes, "A lot happened before I came along." I am not the least bit intimidated by the scope of my ignorance. I function fairly well on the

knowledge of others. But my passion is to keep learning.

Continued on page 3

LET IT BE KNOWN: THE STORY OF GLORY

By His Own Will God placed a spirit of Love in the soul of every created man and woman which He nourishes in our hearts and minds, preparing us as children of God to acknowledge Him and be capable of producing fruit of the Spirit- Love, Joy, Peace, Patience, Kindness, Faithfulness, Gentleness and Self-control. What is invisible is made visible by behavior which attracts and bonds us together-with such force that our collective gratitude spontaneously evokes praise and worship to acknowledge God.

Continued on page 4

IN THIS ISSUE:

| | |
|---|-----------|
| Biblical Doctrines Program - Baugh | 1 |
| Be a Lifelong Learner - Brown | 1 |
| Let it be known - Grubbs | 1 |
| Impossible for Evolution | 9 |
| Advertisements | 10 |
| Calendar of Events | 15 |

BIBLICAL DOCUMENTS PROGRAM, P2

Continue from page 1

Have we strayed so far that if we take a renewed stand on “speak where the Bible speaks and remain silent where the Bible is silent”, we will destroy the church? If we have strayed so far from basic Biblical truths that proclaiming them would destroy our church, are we really the church?

Might a recommitment cause an awakening of the church instead? It is our understanding that a recommitment to the truth will displease some who don't like the truth. It is also our understand that failing to recommit to the Biblical truths will displease God.

It is also our understanding that a recommitment to Biblical truths may cost us some members in the short run, but it is the path to real church growth.

The Catholic Church has formally existed for about 1500 years. In that time they have concluded that they can add to and take away from what the scriptures say. From time to time they have declared opposites to be true. Over the years they have accumulated a number of teachings which are not in the scriptures.

Protestant denominations are distinguished by the Catholic doctrines which they protested. They went partially back to the scriptures, but not all the way back.

The goal of Churches of Christ from the beginning of the 19th century has been to “speak where the Bible speaks, and remain silent where the Bible is silent.” Even in Churches of Christ with this lofty goal there is a difference in teachings on a number of subjects.

Many of our brothers and sisters have done serious study and lesson development, and the work has died with them. Many times the same work is duplicated as it is not made readily available.

We are comfortable that the 140 topical lessons we have posted at <https://occg.institute/bible-class-topical-lessons/> are primarily duplicates and/or copies of what others have done. Rather than having our lessons die with us, we are starting a Biblical Doctrines Program on an endowed website to make them permanently accessible.

The Biblical Doctrines Program is an effort to:

1. Capture some of this work which has been done (including our own),
2. Generate more lessons to provide a complete set of lessons,
3. Vet or proof all lessons for scriptural truth (according to known criteria), and
4. Make the lessons easily available on a permanent basis.

Though we have been working toward this goal for several years, we are going to take it to the next level:

1. The website and content will be placed in a new website at Oklahoma Christian University.
2. All the existing lessons will be vetted by a team of Church of Christ scholars (according to known criteria).
3. All new lessons will be vetted by a team of Church of Christ scholars (according to known criteria).

Continued on page 3

BIBLICAL DOCTRINES PROGRAM, P3

Continue from page 2

Would you like to participate in discussions on how to determine what is scriptural? Is it important? Is a common understanding even possible?

WHERE DO WE GET OUR TRUTH?

It is our understanding that the instructions from God to us today are recorded both in the New Testament and in some natural moral laws (e.g. I Cor. 11:14). Some natural laws are stated (e.g. I Cor. 11:14) and so we can have clarity as to what they are. Unstated natural moral laws would be hard to recognize and/or interpret, so will not be addressed in this program.

The Old Law was true and gives good information and history, but we are no longer subject to its rules (Gal. 3:24-25, Gal. 5:4).

Thinking that God speaks to you personally, the vote of your church council, your elders, or your personal feelings do not make new truths. We strictly get our truth from the New Testament which God gave us, with background from the Old Testament.

“ACCORDING TO KNOWN CRITERIA”

The next step of this program is to address “according to known criteria”. What are your rules of interpretation? We all have some, even if we don’t recognize it. Some things in scripture are literal, some are figurative. How does one decide which? As you can see in the graphic on the first page, different points of view can sometimes cause seekers to reach different conclusions.

This lesson is not about what truths actually are, rather focusing on how we can decide what is true. The lesson “BIBLICAL PRINCIPLES

YOU CANNOT HAVE A GUIDELINE FOR EVERYTHING, BUT GUIDELINES ESTABLISHED IN ADVANCE OF PROBLEMS ARE BENEFICIAL!

FOR UNDERSTANDING THE BIBLE,” which is found at <https://occg.institute/bible-class-topical-lessons/> as lesson 7.3, is our current attempt at discussing guidelines for deciding what is true when following the Bible. This lesson is also attached to today’s newsletter. We say “current” to describe the guidelines that we have written, expressing our best efforts, but they are posted in hopes that you will review them and comment, helping us to make them the best they can be. We will prayerfully update them, always with the goal of making them both Biblical and helpful to all of us seeking to do the will of our Savior.

In future lessons, we will be discussing Biblical doctrines. We will be referring back to this lesson for validating understandings of what we are reading.

If you can help us on this lesson and/or future lessons, let us know at bbaugh@occg.institute.

Benton F. Baugh, Houston, TX

BE A LIFELONG LEARNER

Continued from page 1

“Instruct the wise and they will be wiser still; teach the righteous and they will add to their learning.” (Proverbs 9:9 NIV) Sometimes folks skip Bible Class because they know less than others in the class – of course they do! People who attend Bible classes are lifelong learners and it shows. Those are the people you want to sit next to in class!

It’s not that you have to know the entire Bible, but that is the place to grow in the knowledge of God. It is God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit that we want to know. “*The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge, but fools despise wisdom and instruction.*” (Proverbs 1:7 NIV)

Elizabeth Brown, Texarkana, TX

Continued from page 1

LET IT BE KNOWN: THE STORY OF GLORY

By His Own Will God placed a spirit of Love in the soul of every created man and woman which He nourishes in our hearts and minds, preparing us as children of God to acknowledge Him and be capable of producing fruit of the Spirit- Love, Joy, Peace, Patience, Kindness, Faithfulness, Gentleness and Self-control. What is invisible is made visible by behavior which attracts and bonds us together-with such force that our collective gratitude spontaneously evokes praise and worship to acknowledge God.

So it would always be between God and mankind as ordained, if not for the seed of evil by which Satan corrupted mankind's relationship with God. Satan's goal is **sowing doubt** which divides the mind and heart – paralyzing the instinctual function of love and distracting our attention away from God. He steers us toward focus on ourselves: self-dependence, self-satisfaction, self-love, self-pride and self-confidence, and self-determination. Such selfish abuse of natural processes creates situations which determine climatic changes affecting our habitat and self-manipulation of the biologic identities established by God. Man's obsession with self-power and self-dominion has, throughout history, given rise to tyrannical, diabolical, autocratic agents of destruction, genocide, and ever-more schemes to thwart the workings of God and eliminate even knowledge and recognition of God. Rather than glorifying God, man has turned to abominations in darkness, preying upon one-another, corrupting the very notion of God, reducing man to base levels as a forager of sickened animals and poisonous plants - inducing pestilence, plagues, and worldwide un-

controllable epidemics that are so destructive that they are being clinically manipulated, adapted and stored to deploy for war between nations!

What of God's will for man at this moment of history? His love is so strong that he sent His Son to overcome the evil separating mankind from God (by means of doubt and death) before many could come to know God and experience His love. Jesus Christ took upon Himself the maximum full punishment required to redeem man from the wrath due as penalty for all the sins committed by mankind. Sins past, present and future, defeated and offering the gift of eternal presence with God. By God's power, Jesus was resurrected to life. He appointed Apostles to preach His message to all mankind, declaring Himself the gateway to eternal life in the presence of God for everyone who acknowledges Him, believes in Him and follows Him according to the Commandments He gave from the Father. Because of His victory, man can be free of doubt, free to become like Jesus: cleansed of sins through baptism. And the cleansed man or woman receives the gift of the indwelling Holy Spirit – personal counselor and guide to a moment-by-moment life of righteousness. That Spirit makes Christians aware of, and helps us follow through with, all the good works God has prepared in advance for us to do.

The salvation of mankind is a gift; it has no season, but rather is the reason that, every day of our lives, we celebrate the Truth and Holy Righteousness of the Universe that pervades and persuades all human souls to reach out to Jesus, to become Holy as He is Holy.

Hallelujah, Amen.

Larry S. Grubbs, Harrison, Ohio

IMPOSSIBLE FOR EVOLUTION #136 - AUTOMATIC PERCHING

Many birds have the ability to land on a small branch and go to sleep without falling off when they are sound asleep. That would be a helpful talent for most of us who simply fall over when we doze off.

When these birds land on a limb and settle down, their feet automatically lock around the branch. The length of the tendons, muscles, and bones in their legs is such that bending their legs in the downward movement operates their feet like small clamps. This is "automatic perching," illustrated in the graphic below.

The birds cannot open their feet again until their body is lifted by straightening their legs.

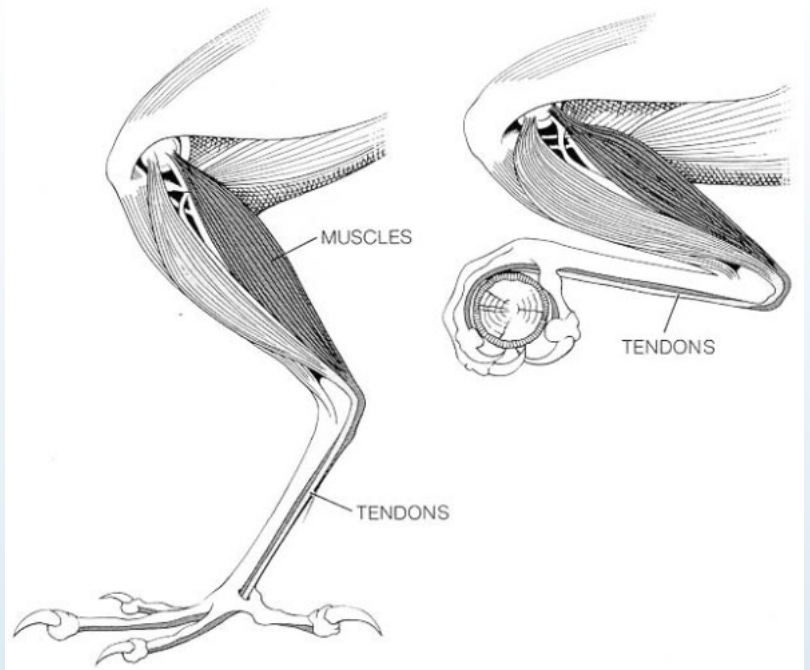
This means that their leg bones, muscles, and tendons are designed in perfect harmony for this to work. If the bones were too short or the muscles and tendons were too long, the bird would simply fall off.

The design of a pulley and lever system like this is an ingenious design which must be programmed into the DNA of a bird for it to work.

It is not a survival of the fittest question. Many birds such as Ostriches and Road-runners never even get into a tree to lock onto a limb. They survive just fine.


This unique talent of some birds is just one more message to you that God exists.

Benton F. Baugh




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"The challenges ahead of you can only be measured by the ability inside of you."

Zone Leader: 7 Tactics for Leading in the Zones is a field-guide designed to help you navigate change. Resistance and conflict occur anytime change is introduced, and leaders must have the tools and resources necessary to avoid the pitfalls that hinder real success. No matter where you find yourself in the four zones, the tactics discussed in Zone Leader will enhance your ability to lead through each zone. "The challenges ahead of you can only be measured by the ability inside of you. The more you put into developing your leadership, the greater your ability to deal with the challenges you face."

"To get where you're going, you need more than just a destination: you need to know where you are now, and you need a map. To assist you on your journey, this thought-provoking book provides you with all three."

Sheila Heen, Harvard Law Professor and co-author of *Difficult Conversations: How to Discuss What Matters Most*.

"I wish this book could have been available when I was in both undergraduate and graduate studies. I was struck with how readability and depth worked in concert to clearly address leadership. The zones resonated with my thought processes and lay a logical format for understanding."

Gery Taylor, Executive Vice President, Prosperity Bank



Bob directs the Sunset Academy of Leadership Training. He is a coach, consultant, and full-time speaker, conducting workshops in leadership development. He is dedicated to helping leaders implement positive, transformational change and creating a vision to prepare the next generation of leaders. He lives in Virginia Beach, VA and holds a Doctorate in Intercultural Studies with an emphasis in adult leadership development from the Fuller Theological Seminary in Pasadena, CA.



ZONE LEADER
7 Tactics for Leading in the Zones

ZONE LEADER: 7 Tactics for Leading in the Zones

TURNER



ZONE LEADER

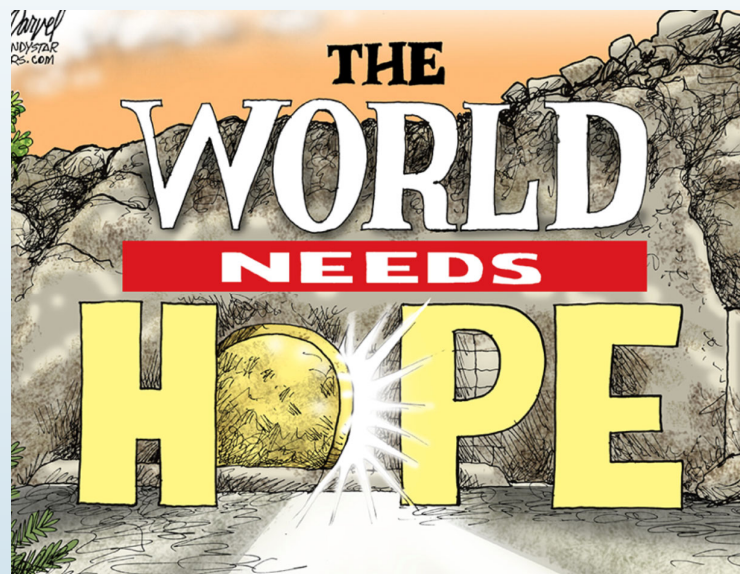
7 Tactics for Leading in the Zones

Dr. Bob Turner

Author of *Essential: Building Blocks 4 Life and Leadership*

Foreword by best-selling author, Jeremie Kubicek, co-founder of GIANT Worldwide

An excellent book to read. Available on Amazon.





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35. *Don't audit life. Show up and make the most of it now.*

36. *Growing old beats the alternative -- dying young.*

37. *Your children get only one childhood.*

Source unknown.

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.

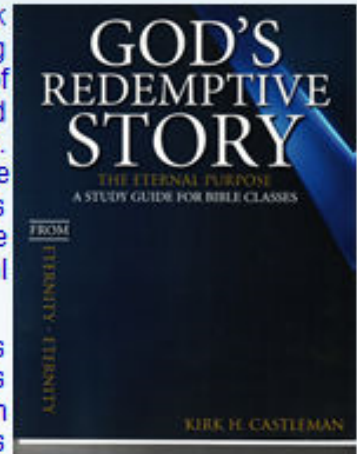
It is not until the fourth lesson that God's Eternal Purpose in Genesis 3 is presented. Then other Promises, Pictures, Prophecy, and Prep-

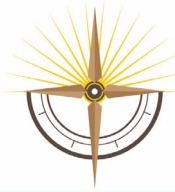
"AN EXCITING STUDY OF GOD'S POWER AND REVELATION IN HUMAN HISTORY"

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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- (5) Sunday morning worship: A church growth sermon

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

For more information,
contact:
info@occg.institute



THERE IS NO EXCUSE FOR NOT TRYING



A candle loses nothing in lighting another candle.

Barry & Ace

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

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@occg.institute

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