

ELECTION SERMON 2024!

NUMBER 192

October 2024

I have voted in 14 presidential elections and am about to vote in the 15th. I have always thought the current election was the most consequential, until I realized that I always thought that. It must not always be true.

That being said, I once again think the current one is the most consequential ever. And it may well be.

We have always made it a point to stay out of politics. Our primary goal has been to help smaller declining congregations return to a growth pattern. We wanted to appeal to all church members, and to not offend half of them. With the “separation of church and State” doctrine it just made common sense.

A friend sent a video link titled “Church, Unite for the Soul of America!” or “Election Sermon 2024” and it made me rethink what I have done. **Have I been intimidated against doing what I should be doing?** The preacher is Gary Hamrick of Cornerstone Chapel in Virginia, a progressive

**HAVE WE BEEN INTIMIDATED
AGAINST DOING WHAT WE
SHOULD BE DOING?**

church of some sort.

Separation of Church and State is not in this nation’s founding documents. The first amendment was set up to limit government interference in churches and not church participation in government.

The 1954 Johnson Amendment is a provision in the U.S. tax code that prohibits all 501(c)(3) non-profit organizations from endorsing or opposing political candidates. It is presently under court

challenge for limiting free speech. It does not say you cannot discuss policies in churches.

Gary Hamrick does not endorse or oppose either of the presidential candidates, but rather speaks more to the policies which are being presented.

The Election Sermon 2024 can be found by Googling “Church, unite for the soul of America.” It is almost an hour long and is well worth your time to watch and listen to it. It is excellent.

We would strongly recommend you watch the Election Sermon 2024 now and encourage your friends and neighbors to watch it also.

Benton F. Baugh

Continued online!!!

THE COC WILL LOSE ON FRIENDSHIP EVANGELISM

In the article on personal evangelism styles (article 1.4 on [www.occg.institute/topical lessons](http://www.occg.institute/topical-lessons)), several styles of evangelism were discussed, including friendship evangelism. The article is also attached at the end of this newsletter.

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SHARED JOY

We have a number of joys in life such as when you win a competition or graduate from high school or college. Some of these are available to everyone, some to just a few. However, nothing compares to the following which can be available to all of us if we live long enough:

- The joy of seeing the birth of your child.
- The shared joy with your child of seeing your grandchild born.
- The mutual joy with your child and grandchild of seeing your great-grandchild born.
- The joy of seeing the baptism of your child.
- The shared joy with your child of seeing your grandchild baptized.

The mutual joy with your child and grandchild of seeing your great-grandchild baptized.

We similarly live vicariously through our offspring with joys like hearing their first words, their first steps, and seeing numerous events in their lives.

We need to always keep in mind that life is what happens when we are busy trying to make a living. Don't be too busy with everyday problems to miss the really important things in life.

Also remember while you are watching them, they are watching you.

Few people in their old age wished that they had worked a little more. Many wish they had spent more time with their family. One of my greatest regrets was not spending more time with my mother.

Benton F. Baugh

THE COC WILL LOSE ON FRIENDSHIP EVANGELISM, P. 2

Continued from page 1

Friendship evangelism is a method of sharing the gospel by building friendships with people and eventually sharing the good news with them. It can be an effective way to reach people who might not accept a tract or be offended by a direct approach. It is the least stressful way to share the Gospel and reflects a lifestyle rather than a specific act. It is probably reasonable to say that most of the other styles begin with friendship evangelism, at least to some extent. Other methods of evangelism do not work unless you have a friendly relationship with the prospect. There is no such thing as antagonism evangelism.

That being said, if you are able to convert a prospect simply because you are friendly with them, you have dunked a friend. You likely have an uncommitted Christian. Someone who has been initiated by baptism into your social club.

If you have not had discussions about actually following the scriptures, we will likely lose them to the next friendlier group which comes along. Other groups tend to be "friendlier" as they have fewer rules to follow. The challenge is to change not only "name," i.e. to Christian, but to change behavior in accordance with Jesus' teachings.

Abortion, instrumental music, divorce, homosexual conduct, women being more active in worship, scriptural church organization and attendance expectations are just a few of the topics which add a negativity to Churches of Christ when they follow the scriptures.

When you do not follow up a baptism with a determination to teach the new convert what the Bible teaches on subjects such as these and

ground them, you can expect a high percentage of them to leave before long.

If a person does not realize that the New Testament gives some rules for us to follow and that the Churches of Christ are unique among named groups in following these teachings, they have no reason to not move on to a friendlier church, one closer to home, one with a better building, or one with a better kids' program.

Continued on page 4

YOUTH MINISTER OR INTERN NEEDED IN SOUTHERN ILLINOIS

**CONGREGATION WITH AGING MEMBERSHIP
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Primary role will be to provide a welcoming and educational environment for young families and coordinate youth activities, classrooms, and VBS.

Some preaching may be required but the COC WORSHIP SERVICES PROGRAM will be used for the bulk of the preaching.

A degree from a brotherhood university would be good, but is not required.

CONTACT: Send resume to and/or contact info@occg.institute for more information.



THE COC WILL LOSE ON FRIENDSHIP EVANGELISM, P. 3

Continued from page 3

While we are teaching new converts, we need to make sure we are teaching our kids also. We have had a generation of many of our youth ministers focusing on relationships rather than doctrines, and the church will pay the price for that.

I knew one brother who seemed to baptize someone every other week. The odd thing was that after being baptized, you characteristically never saw them again. I visited another congregation of about 400 members which baptized about 400 people a year for several years, and still had 400 members. These are real things that are happening today; you don't have to make this up for effect.

We must focus on maturing young Christians so that "As a result, we are no longer [to be] children, tossed here and there by waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, by craftiness in deceitful scheming; (Ephesians 4:14) Those words are directly from the New Testament.

In summary, if you are trying to grow your Church of Christ congregation with friendship evangelism only, it is likely a short-term benefit, and deadly in the long term. When your members choose to move to a denomination or to skip church all together, it likely indicates a failure in grounding them.

Possibly a worst case is after a time when you end up with a majority of untaught members in your congregation, and you can become outvoted by them. Literally outvoted.

We must win because we are standing for the truth, and we must always stand for the truth.

Benton F. Baugh

Finding
PEACE

"Now may the Lord of peace himself give you peace at all times and in every way. The Lord be with all of you." (2 Thes. 3:16 NIV)

There are times when we find ourselves in emotional and spiritual turmoil. Things happen that are beyond our control. To be honest, we are not in control of much anyway. Our lives are shattered, to one degree or another. So how do we find our equilibrium again? We need a way to find peace and balance within ourselves before we can share it with others.

NARROW YOUR FOCUS: Stay in the present moment. There is nothing here and now that is threatening. We can find peace in the present moment. It is yesterday and tomorrow that hold the power to rob us of peace. Make the present moment home base and discipline your mind to return often. Say to yourself, "Stay in the present moment."

POUR IT OUT: God is big enough to hear every bit of your anger, concern, disappointment, fear and doubt. He can handle it. He is waiting to help. Just tell him all about it. Ask God for what you need now. *"May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit"*. (Rom. 15:13 NIV)

WE CAN LISTEN: If you need more help, please seek out a trusted friend or counselor. Your brothers and sisters are here to help. We don't have all the answers, but we love you! *"Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful."* (Col. 5:15 NIV)

"And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus." (Phil. 4:7 NIV)

Elizabeth Brown, Texarkana, TX

Look, Listen, Learn, Love, A Meditation

Americans staked claim to the unalienable rights to Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness.

While we have been told “Everything is permissible” – but not everything is beneficial.” [1 Corinthians 10:23], the world around us offers untold forms of happiness which many people claim to “love so much that they pursue until they drop”.

However; we still find ourselves “Looking for Love” and “Singing the Blues”. A reliable source tells us “Finally brothers, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable - if anything is excellent or praiseworthy – think about such things.” Philippians 4:8

We are also cautioned to consider “To the pure, all things are pure, but to those who are corrupted and do not believe, nothing is pure. In fact, both their minds and consciences are corrupted. They claim to know God, but by their actions they deny Him. They are detestable, disobedient and unfit for doing anything good”. Titus 1:15 Therefore the Apostle Paul warned; “See to it that no one takes you captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy which depends on human tradition and basis principles of the world rather than Christ.” Colossians 2:8

The most undesirable tradition and deceptive philosophy which captivates people today is “We do it this way because that is the way it has always been done”. Such philosophy and doctrine often found in churches “slams the door” to those who do not know God, as well as those curious and concerned seekers of the Lord, regardless of the “church” they may visit.

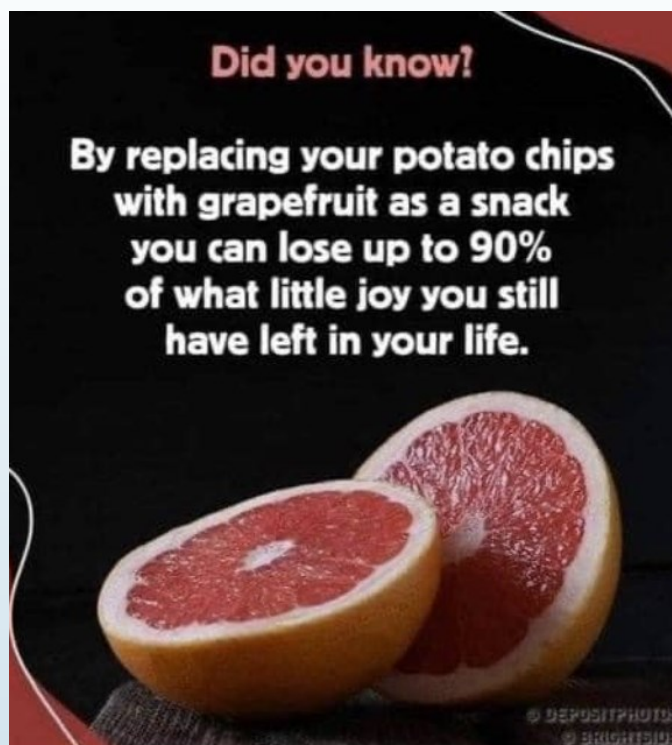
Every soul must have freedom, be strong and courageous and willing to change when he/she

seeks the Lord; because each one is a unique creation by God – “God’s workmanship, created in Christ to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do”. Ephesians 2:10

People have been trapped by tradition for so long that Biblical TRUTH of a joy-filled, abundant life is obscured. This is why people have become vulnerable to the lies of Satan’s helpers, who are now and have for many years been teaching our children new, different and “progressive” THEORIES to lure them to perdition.

Everyone should choose their teachers wisely, being careful to follow Jesus first. Actions speak louder than words. The Holy Bible is the most Authoritative “Manufacturers Owner Manual” and textbook containing “**Basic Instructions Before Leaving Earth** that is available to help a person to “Look, Listen, Learn, and Love.

Larry S. Grubbs, Harrison Ohio



IMPOSSIBLE FOR EVOLUTION #148: FOAL SLIPPERS

Foals are typically born in the anterior or cranial presentation. This means they are born head and front feet first. This means that the hoofs would tend to lacerate the birth canal walls during delivery. Humans are born headfirst 97% of the time, but do not have sharp hooves to complicate the delivery.

When the foal is born, the DNA of the mother and the foal are already determined, so evolution as a solution to this problem is not possible simply based on timing. At birth, a filly already possesses (within the ovarian cortex) all the egg cells that she will have in her lifetime. She cannot pass on DNA from something she has learned to her children as the DNA she will pass on is already set at birth.

It would take a third-party designer, an Intelligent Designer) to solve this problem.

The solution is foal slippers, also called golden slippers, fairy fingers, and horse feathers. They are shown in the upper picture. The foal slippers are a soft keratin hoof covering which protects the birth canal from the sharp hooves, and protects the womb during pregnancy.

Keratin is the key structural material making up scales, hair, nails, feathers, horns, claws, hooves, and the outer layer of skin among vertebrates (animals without spines).

The foal slippers are a soft rubbery form of keratin which start to dry out moments after birth.

Another thing an Intelligent Designer would do would be to reuse this module of programming information on other animals. It is in fact reused on donkeys, zebras, cows, deer, and rhinos.



© Pfluegler | Dreamstime.com

In equines, they are shed soon after a foal begins to stand. The shedding process can vary from dropping-off whole to the gradual wearing down.

Of the seven characteristics identified as impossible on page 8 of the IMPOSSIBLE FOR EVOLUTION book*:

1 something from nothing, 2 lasts forever, 3 blind complexation, 4 irreducible complexity, 5 compromising evolution, 6 new DNA programming, and 7 non-physical developments, foal slippers would be identified as impossible only because they require new DNA

programming. However, one impossible makes it impossible.

This is one more spectacular proof that our Intelligent Designer, God, is taking care of us.

Benton F. Baugh, Ph.D., P.E.

Information from creation.com and Wikipedia.



You can get a copy of the IMPOSSIBLE FOR EVOLUTION book for \$30 at www.occg.institute, BOOKS tab or for a free PDF copy by signing up this newsletter at www.occg.institute MAILING LIST tab. If you are already on the mailing list, just sign up again.

"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."

Gerry 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

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
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Matthew 18:20

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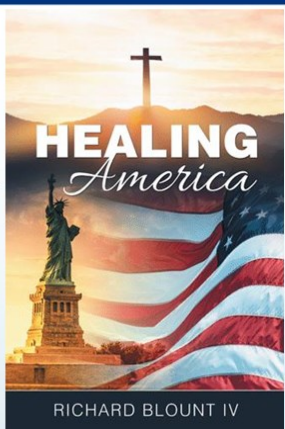


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The SOAR program at Foster's Home for Children aims to provide young adults ages 18-22, who have aged out of foster care, a longer runway to successful independence. Our goal is to provide a base of support beneath them as they transition to life on their own.

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

BULLETIN BLOOPERS! 😊

3. Please place your donation in the envelope along with the deceased person you want remembered.
4. The church is glad to have with us today as our guest minister the Rev. Ralph Green, who has Mrs. Green with him. After the service we request that all remain in the sanctuary for the Hanging of the Greens.

From Ray Scott

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

For more information,
contact:
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If we don't vote our conscience, we will live by someone else's!

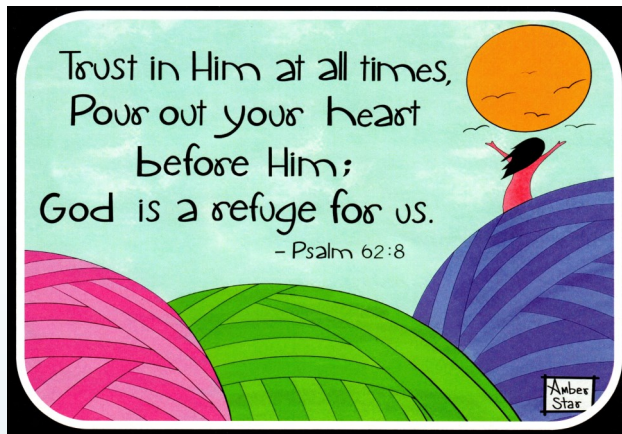


*It is your privilege and obligation to vote!
Go vote and take someone with you!
Barry & Ace*

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Online Virtual Worship Services for smaller congregations are ready for you to use. For more information contact baugh@occg.institute.

To post your event: info@occg.institute



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Your free subscription can be renewed at www.occg.institute on the mailing list tab. When you "opt-in" to this email list you will receive the e-book **IMPOSSIBLE FOR EVOLUTION**.

The Christian Array is dedicated to support the sustained scriptural growth of the churches of Christ. It is published by the OCCG Institute with Benton F. Baugh, Ph.D., P.E. as editor and is solely responsible for the content. Any announcements, requests for publication, or comments should be e-mailed to info@occg.institute.

Circulation: 4000 congregations and individual members, Advertisements (no charge): Send to info@occg.institute

WINGS OF EAGLES VIDEO

PERSONAL EVANGELISM STYLES



SUMMARY: There are several basic styles of personal evangelism which describe how most of us operate. They are Friendship, Direct, Intellectual, Testimonial, Relational, Invitational, Service, and Closing. Most of our activities will have a predominant style supported by other styles.

Styles of evangelism are: Direct, Intellectual, Testimonial, Relational, Invitational, Service, and Closing. Every single person has God-given gifts and abilities that fall predominantly into one of these approaches. Usually, individuals will also have secondary characteristics rather than being all of one type. The style you use in a personal evangelism encounter will frequently be determined by the situation you are in and with whom you are talking.

Friendship evangelism

One method is sharing the gospel by building friendships with people and eventually sharing the good news with them. It can be an effective way to reach people who might not accept a tract or be offended by a direct approach. It is the least stressful way to share the Gospel and reflects a lifestyle rather than a specific act. It is probably reasonable to say that most of the other styles include friendship evangelism.

The Direct Approach: Peter in Acts 2

Peter addresses the crowd on Pentecost and boldly proclaimed the Gospel to those who are present. It is very direct. Those who have this gift get straight to the point. They preach Christ and they seek a response. The issue isn't forced but the person using this approach directs the conversation to a discussion on faith.

The Intellectual Approach: Paul in Acts 17

Paul reasoned with philosophers and deep thinkers in Athens. Today this is practiced by apologists and other logical thinkers. The intellectual evangelist is challenged to have an excellent knowledge and understanding of the Gospel. This approach is becoming more important in today's world.

The Testimonial Approach: John 9

Storytelling. Storytelling has been an effective method of teaching since the beginning of humanity. This approach uses a very natural, conversational way to evangelize; it is basically sharing our story. Sharing personal stories of one's own walk with Christ often carries unique weight, telling of experiences that facts alone cannot provide. One of the best Biblical examples is the story of the blind man in John 9 healed by Jesus. When he was asked who healed him, he replied, "Whether he is a sinner or not I do not know. One thing I do know is that I was blind, but now I see."

WINGS OF EAGLES VIDEO

PERSONAL EVANGELISM STYLES



The Relational Approach: Luke 5:27-29

Building a relationship before you become evangelistic can be a critical force in reaching others. Some people's evangelistic abilities come from the natural ability to relate to people. The story of the calling of Matthew in Luke 5:27-29 is a great biblical example of this approach. Jesus sees Levi in his tax collecting booth and calls him saying, "Follow me." Levi (Matthew) follows him and invites several guests to his house for dinner that night with Jesus. This approach places a high value on building relationships. This requires, it must be noted, a commitment of time, because relationships take time and energy to build trust.

The Invitational Approach: The Disciple Andrew in the Gospels) Woman at the Well in John 4.

This approach is similar to the Relational approach. However, it is characterized predominantly by inviting people to church events such as services, retreats, Bible studies, and other faith-based activities. It is definitely one of the most natural and easiest ways new believers can reach out to others. It is particularly helpful to those who feel they don't have the right words. These evangelists are assisted when the congregation has special events to invite visitors to attend. Those hosting and participating in the events are doing personal evangelism also if someone is taking advantage of the event to invite someone to come.

The Service Approach: Tabitha (Dorcas) in Acts 9.

A person who prefers this approach enjoys sharing the love of Christ through deed over word. They find this approach to be easy because it is the way God made them. Service evangelism is at the heart of the Christian faith. It provides opportunities to begin discussions and gives others a reason to accept that you are sincere. Individuals hosting, helping with, and participating in service projects are doing personal evangelism, if someone else is using the project to do personal evangelism.

Closers: Peter in Acts 2

Some members have a lot of talent at starting the evangelism process but can never quite close the commitment. Some people are good closers. This is a special talent and should be utilized.

Team Effort

A personal evangelism program at a congregation will likely have members fitting into all these categories. Some individuals may do well in one of the categories such as the service approach. When they engage someone with a greater interest than they can satisfy, the evangelism process can hand the prospects off to another member with a different skill set. It can be team cooperation to bring someone to Christ, and a team effort to mature that person after baptism.