



Laborers Together Newsletter

Memphis School of Preaching Alumni Association

“For we are laborers together with God. . .” (1 Cor. 3:9)

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THE WORK OF THE ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

Keith Dixon, President

It was good to have the lectureship this year. It was amazing what this meant to me personally, and I for one missed not having the lectureship last year. Next year's lectureship is set for the same time that it has always been. Let us re-mark our calendar for that last full week in March 2022 and let us strive to all be there.

I know we stress the Alumni dues. It must be emphasized that these are voluntary dues. Not all can afford to give and help the school out, but if you can see fit to do so, please do. We have a set amount, but if you cannot afford to give that much but still want to help, please do so. If you want to give more, that will help out as well. Thank you for whatever amount you can give.

Let me share with you what happens to your dues. There is a death benefit that goes to the family of those who have graduated from the school. This goes also to the honorary graduates as well. It is not much, but it helps in a time of need. We had 22 graduates who died last year. So, \$5,500 in benefits was given to the families of the graduates.

Secondly, there are things that need to be done to and around the school with which alumni can help. Brother Clarke mentioned that a gate was needed at the entrance to where the students live. This will help with security. A fence will be needed as the funds arise. The alumni association has helped with other projects over the years as well. One of the

apartments needed to be set up for handicap use, and the alumni association helped with funds to accomplish that. We have helped with funds to provide assistance with the families of the teachers who have passed on.

Also, the Alumni Association has been and still continues to be a recruiting benefit to the school. We need alumni to

tell others to go to MSOP. We have invited them to go and visit the school. The school still needs this to be done. Keep those men in mind and build up those that are preaching the Gospel of Jesus.

The 2022 lectureship will be on “Timeless Truths”. It sounds like a much needed topic. We hope to see you there, Lord willing.

FOUNDATIONS 2021



The Young Ladies Of Foundations 2021



The Young Men Of Foundations 2021

On June 26 - July 2, 2021, the Memphis School of Preaching conducted their annual training camp for teenage boys and girls called Foundations. This was a week of specialized training for young men and young ladies ages 13-19 who wanted to learn more about becoming better servants for God.

We had 136 teens on campus, both male and female, with separate curriculums for each group. Our theme was “Do You See What God Sees?” The thrust of our theme was to influence young

people to see what God has revealed about how He sees right and wrong, and to think the same way. The daily classes included faith-building teaching on Christian Evidences, holiness, worship, and moral purity, as well as practical instruction on how to be an effective servant.

It was a great week, and we were able to come through it safe and sound. Thanks to everyone who helped facilitate this wonderful event!



Statistics Stand For Souls

B. J. Clarke, Director

World population is fast approaching 8 billion people. Every one of these 8 billion human beings has an immortal soul. How can we get the word out to these billions of souls about heaven and hell? Who will tell them what Jesus did to pave the way to heaven for them?

Nearly 350,000 babies will be born today across the world. Every precious newborn has an eternal soul within his/her tiny body. They are young now, but they are on a collision course with eternity. As they grow older, who will teach them about how life began, why it began, and how earthly life is going to end?

Approximately 150,000 people in the world will die today. Each spirit will return to God who gave it (Ecc. 12:7), and He will assign it to its proper location (Lk. 16:19-31). Each soul will leave this world and enter eternity, either to experience everlasting life or everlasting punishment (Mt. 25:46).

The foregoing statistics indicate a population growth of almost 200,000 people per day. Jesus wants the gospel to be preached to every one of these creatures (Mk. 16:15)! Indeed, “faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the word of God” (Rom. 10:17), but “how shall they hear without a preacher?” (Rom. 10:14).

The world needs preaching every bit as much today as it did in Paul’s day. Souls by the billions are marching toward eternity, and time is of the essence. There is no shortage of sin in the world, but there is a shortage of preachers! More than ever, we need to redouble our efforts to get the whole gospel to the whole world!

We have been blessed to have a healthy enrollment throughout the years at MSOP. However, we can take our efforts to the next level, so that we can recruit, train, and send forth even more gospel preachers.

We are determined to go the extra mile in our efforts to motivate men to become gospel preachers. Thank you so much for the support you give us, which empowers us to recruit more men to come to MSOP to train to “Preach the Word” (2 Tim. 4:2).

ALUMNI NEWS

In Sympathy

We extend our sympathy to **Tom Wacaster** in the passing of his sister-in-law, Linda Wacaster on Thursday, November 4, from a heart attack. The funeral was at the Cedar Hill church of Christ in Cedar Hill, TX on November 10.

In Sympathy

We extend our sympathy to the family of **Nick Deiger (1971)**. He passed away on November 6 at the age of 80. He was a resident of Monongah, WV. He was a minister for the Sandyville Church of Christ for 7 years, retiring from the Pumpkin Center Church of Christ after 28 years. He was most recently the minister of the Moorsville Church of Christ. He was active in the West Virginia Christian Youth Camp for 55 years, and for over 30 years, he was President of the Board for the West Virginia Christian Youth Camp. He loved working with the kids. Nicholas was a veteran of the United States Army during the Vietnam Era and was also a missionary in Murmansk, Russia. The family will receive friends at Domico Funeral Home, 414 Gaston Avenue, Fairmont, WV, on Friday, November 12, 2021 from 2:00 p.m. until 8:00 p.m. and on Saturday, November 13, 2021 at the Oakhurst Church of Christ from 10:00 a.m. until 11:00 a.m. The funeral will be on Saturday, November 13, 2021 at 11:00 a.m. at the Oakhurst Church of Christ with Peter Ray Cole, Steve Snyder, and Dick Bartrug officiating. In lieu of flowers, the

family requests that memorial donations be made to West Virginia Christian Youth Camp c/o Don Riffle, 12 Columbine Drive, Lost Creek, WV 26385. Online condolences may be sent to the family at www.domicofh.com.

Prayer Request

Thurman Golemon (2012) called the school office recently while I was on campus to ask for prayers for his family. His father, Steve Golemon, had passed away. Please remember them in your prayers.

Prayer Request

We have been asked to solicit your prayers on behalf of **Drew Suttles (2018)** and his family. Drew preaches at Quitman, Georgia. His father died recently, and his mother has been sick for months with Guillain-Barre' Syndrome and is now in rehab. Their family is going through a very difficult time. If you would remember in your prayers Drew, his wife Brittany, and their four children (Jaxton, Henley, and the twins McKenna and Palmer) along with Drew's mother, it would be greatly appreciated.

Prayer Request

Lee Davis (1985) writes, "Dear brethren, I take a step forward and two backward. I need your prayers. This dialysis is saving my life but at the same time it's killing me. My illness has degraded. My hope for a kidney is not on the horizon. I miss you all so much. I miss the school so much. My dialysis prevents

me from going. I love you all, and it will be wonderful to be in Paradise.” For those wishing to contact him, his address is: 176 Charleston Lane, Apartment 105, Box 113, Crossville, TN. 38555.

New Work In Canada

Tony Brewer (2015) writes, “I have been a gospel preacher for about eight years serving in congregations in Northeast Arkansas after my graduation from Memphis School of Preaching in 2015. Before that, I filled in and taught Bible classes in congregations in Northwest Tennessee. I have been married for twenty two years to LaBeth Brewer and have two children, Anthony and Abigail. Anthony is eighteen, and Abigail is seventeen. I have a passion for preaching and teaching the gospel especially on a personal one on one level. It is this passion and drive, I feel, that will make this next endeavor in my ministry a success with God’s help. My family and I have moved from the USA and have gone into full time mission work. We are in the Maritimes. This is a geographical area located on the Atlantic coast in Canada in the province of New Brunswick. There are approximately 755,000 people in this area with only one sound congregation of the Lord’s people. We have had our heart on this work since 2015. I first met Stephane Maillet in 2015 and found in him a close friend. Since then, we have put our heads together and decided to host an old-fashioned tent meeting, the first of its kind in decades in this area of the world. The tent meeting was held in 2016. My family and I, with three other gospel preachers traveled to work this mission. This was our

first time meeting the congregation in person, and I fell in love with the people here and with the area. It was clear to me that the Lord’s church was sparsely represented all over Canada and New Brunswick was not an exception. From that time, mission work in Canada, and especially in the Maritimes, became a priority for me. I thank my God often for this opportunity.

The congregation here is located in Riverview, New Brunswick. This is one third of a tri-city area consisting of Riverview, Moncton, and Dieppe. My family and I will be working closely with the Maillet family, who have already been laboring in this area. The Maillets, have been working in the area since 2012. In 2018, they moved to the USA for two years so Stephane could be educated at the Southeast Institute of Biblical Studies in Knoxville. After his graduation in 2020, Stephane moved back to New Brunswick to continue working here in this mission field.

After the Maillet family moved here, the church began to grow spiritually and numerically. For the first time ever, it is evident that a new building is needed and much more effort needs to be given to this province. The people are hungry but with so few laborers.

That being said, we are in a great need for your help as we have so many plans to continue growing and strengthening the church in an area where it has been so weak and in danger of nonexistence before now. Our family budget for four is approximately 6,000 USD per month. I know that sounds high,

but the cost of living is extremely expensive here. For instance, gasoline is almost ten dollars a gallon. We are also having to work for more permanent residency so that our growing children can attend school/obtain careers here. Right now, we cannot even obtain secular employment if we wanted to, however we are faithful and believe that the Lord is with us in our efforts. It is my prayer that you can support this good and difficult work. We covet your prayers. Please consider supporting this work monetarily. If you are able, you may send it here: Riverview church of Christ, c/o Tony mission fund, 365 Pine Glen Road, Riverview N.B. Canada, E1B 4J8.

Resigned As Director

Randy Collum (2010) writes, "Randy Collum has resigned from the Executive Director position at the Pine Vale Children's Home in Corinth MS. He is staying in Corinth and preaching for the Snowdown Church of Christ in Prentiss County, MS. Jon O'Keefe (1998) has assumed the position at Pine Vale. I would encourage everyone within two hours of Corinth, MS to familiarize themselves with the work at Pine Vale. It has taken a direction that allows it to help struggling families that need to place a child outside the home. This is especially designed to help those who are taking care of extended family members. There is no charge for the families to place a child with Pine Vale. It is fully funded by the churches of Christ."

New Work In Mississippi

Jon O'Keefe (1998) writes, "Hello Mike, I hope that you are doing well. I am a 1998 graduate. I am leaving the work at

Shults-Lewis Child and Family Services and moving to Pine Vale Children's Home in Corinth, Mississippi to become their next Executive Director."

Academic Achievement

Ben Wright (1997) writes, "I have completed a Master's in Christian Ministry from Amridge University. Thanks for all you do for us!" Congratulations, Ben!

Prayer Requests

Doug Hoff (1992) writes, "Several weeks ago a 20 year old man came to worship services at the Warren (PA) congregation (~25 souls) where I preach. Avery came with a college friend named Alex. Avery seemed very interested but Alex not so much. When asked, Avery said he would definitely come back. Two weeks went by but no Avery. He showed up this past Lord's Day (Nov. 7) and said he had been ill with Covid. After worship was over, I talked to him and found out he comes from a VERY nominal Catholic background. He admitted he knows almost nothing about the Bible but was eager to learn. He specifically asked how to overcome the pull of the world! He asked several other good questions like what is communion all about and how much "should" he give (he did know about 10%!). I urged him to start reading Matthew-John even though some of it wouldn't make a lot of sense to him -- yet! I gave him my cell number and e-mail address and told him to call, text or e-mail me with any questions. He greatly appreciated that since I do not live in the general Warren area. My wife and I drive 62 miles one way (~90 minutes) to worship with the saints there. I teach the

Bible class and preach the morning and afternoon sermons. Please pray for Avery Vazquez. I think he has an honest and good heart (Luke 8:15) and may soon know enough to obey the gospel. I also would like to express my gratitude to the brethren who helped with our medical bills after Linda had her open heart surgery August 11. The bills totaled more than \$100K but with Medicare Part A (no Part B), generous benevolent gifts from loving brethren, and the 2 hospitals and most of the providers "writing off" most of the charges, we finally got everything paid. Linda recovered nicely and is doing very well now. Our prayers were definitely answered. I did not enjoy the thought of paying for the rest of my life . . . ! Please also pray for my employment situation... I am pursuing a few opportunities and would greatly appreciate prayers."

Two New Books Published

Rod Rutherford (1974;1991*) wrote, "I appreciate the good work you do in collecting news and keeping alumni of MSOP informed. Here is some news from Brenda and me. We wrote two books during the "Pandemic." One is on the home and is suitable for class use. It is entitled "Unless the Lord Builds the House..." The other is a book of biographies of pioneer missionaries of the churches of Christ. It is entitled "Of Whom the World Was Not Worthy." It is suitable for class work and especially for use in preacher training schools [*I utilized this excellent book in my course MI541 History Of Christian Missionary Efforts II last year. I highly recommend it! MRMJ*]. Both books are published by Amazon and

available from them in both the printed version and in the kindle eBook. Brenda and I also keep a few of the printed version on hand for those who would prefer to order from us. I have been sick for the past two months and have had to cancel my preaching appointments. However, I am feeling better now and beginning slowly to get my strength back. I have not had Covid, but a series of health problems that came one after another. I would appreciate prayers for my continued improvement. My address is: Rod Rutherford, 6477 Hugh Willis Road, Powell, TN 37849.

Prayers For Mission Trip

Tim Burroughs (2004) writes, "I will be traveling with Jonathan Burns to Singapore on November 17th-30th to attend the Four Seas College of Bible and Missions' graduation and preach for the Lim Ah Pin congregation. Jonathan will also be conducting this year's webinar that will be taking the place of the Annual Four Seas College Lectureships. The webinar can be seen on Four Seas College Facebook Page. The webinar will take place November 25th-27th. Please keep Jonathan and me in your prayers for safe travel and success in taking the Gospel into this part of Southeast Asia."

Work In A Mission Area

Eddy Gilpin (1985) writes, "I'm not sure if I ever updated things with you via this format. After over 22 years with the West Side congregation in Salem, Virginia, Jeanny and I decided to work with a congregation in a mission area. Beginning the first Sunday of 2020, we began work with the Pulaski Church of

Christ (Pulaski, Virginia). It is the only congregation in Pulaski County and had a membership of around 30 when we began. We will continue to live in our home in Roanoke County and commute the 45 miles to Pulaski. Church address: Pulaski Church of Christ, 3712 Newbern Rd., Pulaski, VA 24301. Home address: 8627 Newport Rd., Catawba, VA 24070.”

New Electronic Gospel Periodical

Mitch Sparks (2021) is editing a new gospel periodical called *The Christian Light*. I have already written for it. In coming weeks, he will have articles from Billy Bland, Allen Webster, Todd Clippard, & Brock Kendall. You can receive it for free by subscribing by email at thechristianlight1@gmail.com. Brother Sparks is preaching in Bay, Arkansas. I commend him on this good work.

MSOP Welcomes Michael Clarke

We are happy to announce that **Michael Clarke (2017)** has been hired to work in Admissions in a new full-time position devoted to Recruiting and Digital Promotions. He will be recruiting, traveling, and promoting the school. He will be working under the direct oversight of our Administrative Dean, brother Bobby Liddell. If you would like for brother Michael Clarke to come and give a report on the work at MSOP and preach on a particular Sunday, please feel free to contact him. Also, if you know of a good prospect for MSOP, please let him know.

Indonesia Mission Report

John Grubb (HA-2013) writes, “I continue to have part in Bible classes and worship services in Taiwan, China, and Malaysia. I also tune in to services in New

Zealand, Australia, Singapore, and the United States. During the month of October, I finished up the testing for the Chinese class in First Corinthians. I will teach again on February 17th. I will be teaching on the subject of “Church History.” I continue to have part in the Wednesday night English class at the Subang Jaya congregation in Malaysia. Sometimes I teach the class, and sometimes I serve as the conveyer of the questions and answer sessions. I also help with questions and answers at the Tuesday night Chinese class at Subang Jaya. I had the privilege to preach in English to the Section 17 congregation on the last Sunday in October. Every month, I speak in Chinese on the first Sunday at the Taichung church in Taiwan. On the second Sunday, I preach in Chinese to the Section 17 congregation in Malaysia. Every Monday morning, we have chapel services at the Chinese Dept. of Four Seas College in Singapore. I am scheduled to speak to the English group at Subang Jaya on Wed., Nov. 10th. I am thankful for the opportunities available online. We are scheduled to return to Indonesia on November 24th. All contributions can be sent to: Grubb Mission Fund, P.O. Box 7450, Chestnut Mountain, GA 30502.

Australia Mission Report

Brett Rutherford (1996) writes from Devonport, Australia, “I am about to begin another regular Bible study with a lady named Renee who was contacted through the congregation’s letterboxing efforts. She has completed four of our Bible correspondence courses. For the last two weeks in October, Renee has been

attending our Sunday night service. Last Sunday night I was speaking to Renee about the possibility of starting a personal Bible study with us. She readily agreed to the one-on-one study. I hope to set up a time to study with her when she has completed the correspondence course. Throughout the month of October, we have been making preparations for our gospel meeting with Glen Tattersall. Glen is the evangelist for the Northern Midlands church of Christ. I conducted a gospel meeting in September at the Northern Midlands congregation. Glen is now returning the favor by presenting a series of lessons at Mersey Bluff. The topics that Glen will covering during the course of this meeting will be Racism, Environmentalism, Feminism and Baptism. We have advertised this meeting by erecting signs at all the major entry points to the city. We have also distributed flyers to approximately ten thousand homes in Devonport and the surrounding areas (through letterboxing and Australia Post delivery). We have also advertised this gospel meeting in the local paper and on our website. Each year, during the month of October, I begin teaching a course on World Evangelism at the Southeast Institute of Biblical Studies. Southeast is located on the opposite side of the globe in Knoxville, Tennessee. I have to get up at 3:30 A.M., three days a week, in order to teach this class. I can't say I enjoy the hours, but I do enjoy having a part in preparing these men to preach the gospel. I have six students in my class. Two of the students are Australians. One of the Aussies is my son Mitchell. The

other Australian is Andrew Young. Sadly, one of my students contracted Covid 19 before the term began and was placed in ICU on a ventilator. His name is Cornell Coats. Please keep him in your prayers.”

Panama Mission Work

Marlin Retana (2017) writes, “May God bless you all. We keep working hard on preparing materials for the Online Spanish Bible School. I was recently in Texas recording 27 lessons on the book of Luke which are already available on the school website to anyone who speaks Spanish and wants to learn what the Bible says. There is also an 18 lesson course on the book of Genesis. More topical videos are available at www.buscandolaverdad.org (the latest one is on the Thief on the Cross, and currently working on the Truth about Christmas, and The Ten Commandments). If you are looking for a mission work to support, we will certainly appreciate your help. I will be more than glad to provide more details about this work of the Lord (my private e-mail address is mr@marlonretana.com). You can also visit www.spanishbibleschool.org and read all of our previous newsletters (this link takes you to the English section of the school website). If you know people who can benefit from these efforts, please refer them to www.escuelabiblicaenlinea.org.

Nigeria Mission Report

Chuck Cordon (2019) writes, “It seems remarkable that a year ago we were just heading back from our first stateside campaign in Mission Valley, Idaho. Arriving back in Savannah, TN on October 24th, we were busy and excited getting

ready to leave for our 2nd campaign in Jos, Nigeria. On January 6, we headed out to Nigeria and returned in May. It was a flurry of activity here and there, catching up and visiting, Covid in August, and our youngest daughter's (Rachel) wedding in September to a fine young man in Richmond, VA. A year has come and gone, and we are very encouraged to report that we are a week out from departing Savannah once again for our second stateside service. While desiring to go West...the Lord provided an unexpected opportunity to work with a wonderful church in Concord, NH. Yes, you got that right...Concord, NH in the winter! This is going back to our northeastern roots (Marci and I both grew up in upstate NY). We have set an initial timeframe of the winter (March 31, 2022), which right now is nothing but a date on the calendar. I will be serving as the full-time minister. So, we are in a blaze of closing up the house and packing and all that. Our work with the School of Biblical Studies in Jos, Nigeria remains our core work. Our intentions are to return to work there for the Fall '22 semester (Aug-Dec 22). The oversight of our work continues with the Savannah church of Christ. As before, all support funds received are on account with Savannah and are used solely for our Africa missions work. No funds are used in any capacity for stateside expenses. With every thanksgiving we are encouraged by your continued love, support, and partnership. Concord Church of Christ, 141 Fisherville Rd., Concord, NH 03303. Our contact, email, and phone remain the same.

New Lectureship

The first annual Bulwark Lectureship is scheduled for February 25-27, 2022 at the Valdosta church of Christ, 1119 Old Lee Highway in Tuscumbia, AL. The theme is "Ezra-Nehemiah-Esther." A book is being produced which will be both exegetical and homiletical. A good number of MSOP faculty and alumni are participating. I would like to encourage those in the area to lift up their hands in this edifying endeavor.

Africa Mission Report

Ron Gilbert (1973) of International Bible Teaching Ministries writes in his recent newsletter, "Our BCC program continues to grow. We are thankful for the good work being done by Karen Knight who is coordinating our BCC program and our over 150 volunteers who grade these BCC lessons. We have recently had one BCC student in Kenya that was baptized into Christ and another who is requesting baptism. We have received good news from Malaysia recently with 3 baptisms. Our Gospel meetings in Africa continue to go great. During the month of September, we had over 100 baptisms from Gospel meetings in Africa and the first 15 days of October we have over 50 reported. There are several more meetings scheduled in October and November. So far during 2021, we have had over 400 baptisms from these Gospel meetings and over 800 since we started the program. I was talking with a preacher friend the other day and he was telling me that their meeting was canceled for fear of COVID, and he said he was going to talk with the elders and see if they would send those meeting funds to our

Africa Gospel meeting efforts! I hope others will consider doing the same. Some may choose not to have a gospel meeting at a local congregation, but we can sponsor one or more in Africa...We are getting good reports from the 3 congregations that we helped build church buildings. The church in Kalomo, Zambia recently had 58 present for Sunday worship. The congregation near the preacher school in Malawi recently had 92 present. The congregation in Malawi, that just moved into their new church building a few weeks ago, had 86 present last week. All three of these congregations are growing, and the attendance continues to climb. We are also getting Bibles for these new congregations and some of them need song books. We have sent funds to 4 different locations in Africa recently for them to purchase Bibles in local languages. We also have 5,000 Bibles and New Testaments almost ready to ship to Africa. We have finished printing and putting together around 1,700 of the 3,000 booklets we are preparing for Africa. We are getting reports each month from the preacher schools that we have started in Africa. One recent report from Malawi informed us that the brethren there are sponsoring a radio program and were having difficulties making tapes at the radio station. They have built a small radio studio at the preacher school so they can make tapes for preaching the Gospel on the radio. This will be a good training tool for the preacher students as well so they will be able to do some radio preaching.”

Tanzania Mission Report

Howell Ferguson (1984) writes, “Helping Christians remain faithful to the

Lord is an ongoing challenge in any country. Satan never stops working to distract and weaken God’s people. While there are three basic “avenues” of temptation (lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes, pride of life; 1 John 2:16), Tanzanians face a slightly different twist. Frank Mwashikumbulu reports on the following “Friendship Seminar”: ‘Hello brethren, greetings to you all in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. Here in Tanzania, we are going good. We are so thankful to God who helped us to do the Seminar safely. We met with three congregations as follows: Church of Christ Mapangala, Church of Christ Matebete, and Church of Christ Kapunga. Lessons which we taught in the Seminar are three as follows: (1) Why We Are Needed To Worship God: Teacher Frank Mwashikumbulu. (2) Standing In The Truth: Teacher Boaz Kasiba. (3) Answering The Questions From The Christians: All teachers. Most questions asked by the women whose husbands are not Christians were: What are they to do while their husbands [try to stop] them from going to Church? We tried our best to answer the questions according to what the Bible says and gave them advice on how they can talk with their husbands. Attendance of the seminar: Adults 26, Children 22. All Christians enjoyed the seminar, and they asked us to have a friendship seminar twice a year.’ The Chimala School of Preaching graduated its first full 2-year class (11 students) upon returning to a self-running school in January 2020. This is a significant milestone in the history of the Chimala

Mission. Nathan Ferguson and his family were able to remain in Tanzania long enough to attend and be the guest speaker for the Oct. 15th graduation...We are very proud of these graduates and pray for their success in the Lord's kingdom. We are equally excited anticipating the future of new students and the beginning of the new 2022 CSOP school year!"

India Mission Report

Ronnie Gootam (2018) writes, "The Gootam family has been serving the Lord for close to 6 decades. However, He has not ceased to bless us, and He continues to do so each day. As the Scripture says that children are a gift from God, we are joyful to announce the birth of our newest addition Adelyn Eva Gootam on July 22, 2021. Both mother and daughter are doing fine. The Satyavani School of Evangelism was started on March 2020 with a focus on reaching out to souls that want to study what the Bible teaches and about 10 biblical topics: 1) God the Father, 2) God the Son, 3) God the Holy Spirit, 4) The Bible, 5) Premillennialism, 6) Gospel Plan of Salvation, 7) One Church, 8) Denominational doctrines 9) Memory Verses, 10) Preaching. We have enrolled and taught over 1,000 students both online and in-house classrooms. We started studying the books of the New Testament in June 2021. We will finish the New Testament in November 2021. The current student body is about 100. They attend live classes on Zoom and YouTube each day. We also baptized 25 students that are from various religious backgrounds such as Pentecostal, Lutheran, Jehovah's

Witnesses, Catholic etc. We are very happy to announce that the Independence Church of Christ, Coldwater, MS is going to oversee the Bible Correspondence Course Ministry from now on. Brother Dan Cates was in Kakinada a few years ago and has seen our work firsthand. We run the world's largest Bible Correspondence courses work in two regional languages from Kakinada. This course originally was written by brother Ira Rice while he was a missionary to Singapore and Malaysia. From 1964 to 2021, we have helped literally millions to know the way of truth by using the Basic Bible course. About 1200 complete the course per month. We have been gifting a copy of the Bible in Telugu or Oriya language to anyone that completes the 26 lesson BBC with us. Hence, the Bibles are in great need for us. Since India is an idolatrous country, most people do not know where to get a Bible. However, we door deliver it freely to those interested in learning the truth. We highly appreciate participation and fellowship of Forest Hill Church of Christ as well as Independence Church of Christ and MSOP in this great work."

Reminder of Dues

MSOP Alumni Association voluntary dues are \$40 a year and may be sent to MSOP in care of our treasurer, Keith Mosher, at 3950 Forest Hill-Irene Rd., Memphis, TN 38125. Make checks payable to MSOP Alumni Association. If it is more expedient, just go to the alumni page of the website at www.msop.org and pay using your PayPal account. Funds are used to pay a \$250 death benefit to

families when an alumnus passes away. They are also used to help fund special projects for the alumni association like the Roy J. Hearn flash drive, and to support MSOP in special purchases like technology for the classrooms or the security gate which has been planned for the street to the apartments. We would encourage our alumni to go to the alumni page of the school website at www.msop.org to read the constitution and bylaws of the alumni association for further information. It would also be helpful to update your personal information there if anything has changed.

How To Benefit MSOP Through AmazonSmile

When purchasing online at Amazon.com, there is a way that your purchases can benefit the Memphis School of Preaching. If you shop online at AmazonSmile using this link: smile.amazon.com/ch/62-0722864, Amazon will donate .5% of your purchases to the Memphis School of Preaching. It is the same Amazon, same products, same prices and same service, but now your purchases are helping to support the Memphis School of Preaching. Please remember this link when making all of your Amazon purchases.

Alumnus Of The Year Nominations

Mark Reynolds (1999) writes, “It is time to nominate candidates for the 2022 MSOP Alumnus of the Year to be awarded during the lectureship in March. Please send your nominations, along with a short paragraph about why they are deserving, to **Mark Reynolds** at mreyn8391@comcast.net.

The Alumnus Of The Year Should Be One Who...

...is exemplary in Christian living (Rom. 12:1-2; 1 Thess. 2:10).

...faithfully proclaims the whole counsel of God (Acts 20:27; 2 Tim. 4:1-4).

...has demonstrated primary devotion to preaching for a period of at least ten years (Acts 4:20; Jer. 10:9).

...is a fitting example of humble service (Eph. 4:1-3; II Cor. 10:18).

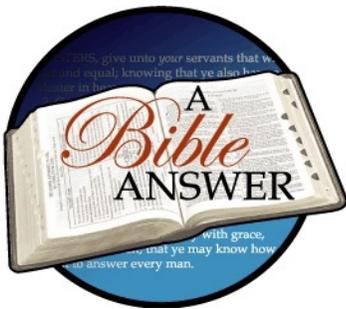
...has manifested fruitful labors whereby men may glorify God (Matt. 5:16).

...has demonstrated his willingness to make personal sacrifices for the cause of Christ [health, finances, etc.] (Phil. 3:4-11; 2 Cor. 11:23-28).

...if he is married, he has been supported in his work by a wife “faithful in all things” (1 Tim. 3:11).

...if he is married and has children, those children must respect their parents and revere God (Titus 1:6).

...has lent his moral support to MSOP (attended lectureships, etc.).



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ONE STEP AT A TIME

Tom Wacaster

It has been observed that “the journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step” (Lao Tzu).

I thought about those words many years ago as I began a long drive home from Bristol, Virginia to Fort Worth, Texas - total distance, 982 miles. I don't recall having ever driven that distance by myself in a single day. Come to think of it, I can't recall having driven that far even with someone else in the car. I had intended to break the trip up into two legs, and spend the night somewhere around Brinkley, Arkansas, but once I arrived at Brinkley it was early afternoon and I thought, “I can get further than this.” Sure enough, I could, and the further I drove, the closer home appeared in my mental window. With each mile behind me, there remained less ahead of me, and the shortened distance to my destination motivated me to press on. I managed to miss the heavy traffic in Knoxville, Cookeville, and Memphis, but not so with Nashville. If you ever find yourself on a freeway in Tennessee it might be wise to follow the advice of a native Tennessean in order to calculate the proper speed limit on one of their freeways: “Subtract your age from 100. Double this number if your car has dual exhaust. Conversely, add your age to 100 if you are driving on I-40 or suffering from a midlife crisis.” The same person suggested that when driving through Knoxville, never use your turn signal, unless, of course, you are on the

freeway with no intention of merging. I digress, however, so let me return to the subject at hand.

Abraham is said to have “looked for the city which hath the foundations, whose builder and maker is God” (Heb. 11:10). Like Abraham, those men and women of faith listed in Hebrews chapter eleven “all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them and greeted them from afar, and having confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth” (Heb. 11:13). Their faith motivated them to endure great odds in order to reach a destination that cannot be found on a GPS or located in some Rand McNally Road Map. It is, however, as much a journey as was my trip from Bristol, Virginia to Fort Worth, Texas. This journey is not measured in miles, but it does demand maturity on the part of those who would successfully complete the trip. You and I are traveling the same road as our ancient predecessors. Here are some things to keep in mind.

First, don't get distracted. It is unfortunate that the devil has successfully “blinded the eyes of the unbelieving” (2 Cor. 4:4), so much so that the masses are not even aware of the existence of the inevitable destination to which they are traveling. My journey from Virginia took me past the exit for highway 66 that would take the traveler to Pigeon Forge, Gatlinburg, and the Smoky mountains. I could have visited Rock City, Lookout

Mountain, or Ruby Falls, but those side trips, and hundreds and thousands like them, would have hindered me on my journey, perhaps even keeping me from my destination. I sometimes wonder how many precious souls are kept from reaching their spiritual destination for no other reason than the fact that they took a “side road” to enjoy some pleasure for the moment, allowing the devil to deter them from the truly important. The “lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the vainglory of life” (1 John 2:16) distracted them along the way, and they ended up pursuing things temporal rather than things eternal.

Second, don’t get discouraged. The sheer distance, when carefully calculated and considered, would discourage any sane person from attempting to complete the journey in one day. Then there were the inevitable obstacles along the way: road construction, heavy traffic, potholes, work zones with their “fees doubled when workers present.” This does not even take into account those rude and obnoxious drivers that one might encounter along the way. Quite often when I begin a journey someone says, “Drive carefully!” I appreciate that thoughtfulness, but is there some reason that I would not drive carefully? So, I often respond, “I will; but so must everyone else with whom I come in close proximity along the way.” There are also obstacles along the road to our heavenly home that, if permitted, could discourage us in the journey. There are unforeseen circumstances that come along that would defeat us. We must struggle with ourselves; that may very well be the

greatest obstacle we encounter along the way. Then there are people who discourage us. I’m not suggesting they do it intentionally. An unkind word, a failure to uphold our hands in the work we are doing; these are things that often discourage us. When we do not see the fruits of our labors immediately, we tend to get discouraged in the work, often giving up in despair. If you find yourself discouraged along the journey, take your Bible and read again those words from the Holy Spirit penned by the hand of Paul: “Wherefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord” (1 Cor. 15:58). “And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not” (Gal. 6:9).

Third, let us be determined. Thomas Jefferson is credited with having said, “When we see ourselves in a situation which must be endured and gone through, it is best to make up our minds to it, meet it with firmness, and accommodate everything to it in the best way practicable. This lessens the evil, while fretting and fuming only serves to increase your own torments.” Some years ago, I came across this interesting true life example of determination:

The year was 1983. In Australia, the long-distance foot race from Sydney to Melbourne was about to begin, covering 875 kilometers - more than 500 miles! About 150 world-class athletes had entered, for what was planned as a six-day event. So, race officials were startled when a 61-year-old man approached and handed

them his entry form. His name was Cliff Young, and his “racing attire” included overalls and galoshes over his work boots. At first, they refused to let him enter. So, he explained that he’d grown up on a 2,000-acre farm, with thousands of sheep. His family could afford neither horses nor tractors so, when the storms came, his job was to round up the sheep. Sometimes, he said, it would take two or three days of running. Finally, they let Cliff enter, and the race began. The others quickly left him way behind, shuffling along in his galoshes. But he didn’t know the plan included stopping each night to rest, so he kept going. By the fifth day, he had caught them all, won the race, and became a national hero. He continued to compete in long-distance races until well up in his seventies. He was an inspiration to millions and a great encourager of younger runners. In his honor and memory, in 2004, the year after his death at age 81, the organizers of the race where he first gained fame permanently changed its name to the Cliff Young Australian Six Day Race. What was the key to Cliff Young’s success? It goes by various names: determination, perseverance, persistence, tenacity. It means keeping one’s eye fixed steadfastly on a goal, and not stopping, no matter the difficulties or the obstacles, until that goal is achieved.

Here, then, are three important keys to beginning, enduring, and completing our journey to heaven: Don’t get discouraged, don’t be distracted, and be determined. Take the journey one step at a time, and never lose your love for heaven. The history of mankind is marked by a

long list of nameless men and women who began the journey, who faced calamity and hardship, only to give up. In the words of the Psalmist, “They turned back” (Psa. 78:9). Let me remind you that the benefits of determination and the reward for successfully completing the journey far outweigh the alternative. Like I said when I began this article, and with but slight alternation in the words, let me remind all of us: “With each passing day behind me there remains one less day ahead of me, and the shortened distance to my destination motivates me to press on.”

When someone dies, the County Coroner will list the cause and time of death on the death certificate. None of us know beforehand when that time will be.

Ecclesiastes 3:1-2 states, "To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven: A time to be born, and a time to die." The Bible teaches that God knows when we shall die. No person knows the specific hour or minute of his death. Only the all-knowing God knows. The fact that God foreknows it in no way implies that at our birth He set the time and fixed it so that there is nothing we can do to lengthen or shorten our lives. Neither does it mean that God has arbitrarily set the time of our death. I know there are those who say that everyone has a "time to die" and that if it is not your time, you will not die, or if it is your time, you cannot keep from it. The Bible does not teach this.

Jesus made it clear that one can die at any moment. In John 7:6-8, "Then Jesus said unto them, *My time is not yet come: but your time is always ready.* The world

cannot hate you; but me it hateth, because I testify of it, that the works thereof are evil. Go ye up unto this feast: I go not up yet unto this feast: for my time is not yet full come." On that occasion, Jesus could not go up to the feast with His disciples because His appointed time to die had not come. His death was to be at one appointed time. However, it did not matter when the disciples went. He said, "My time is not yet come: but your time is always ready." Here is clear evidence that individuals do not have a pre-determined time for their death as Jesus did.

The Bible clearly teaches that we can shorten or lengthen our life-span by the way that we live. Proverbs 10:27 says, "The fear of the Lord prolongeth days: but the years of the wicked shall be shortened." A person can hasten the time of his death. This is done daily by thousands who conduct themselves foolishly while driving a vehicle, participating in some violent sports, or by destroying their bodies by drugs and alcohol. A person may hasten his death by taking his own life such as King Saul and Judas did. A person may hasten his death by committing crimes punishable by the death penalty. Men have the power to bring about their own death.

A person may also prolong his life. Psalm 90:10 states, "The days of our years are threescore years and ten; and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years...." King Hezekiah is a Biblical example of a man given extended "years. In answer to his prayer, God added fifteen years to his life (Isa. 38:1-5). Paul points out also, that God may extend mercy in

time of sickness (Phil. 2:27). He also reminded the Ephesians, "Honour thy father and mother; which is the first commandment with promise; That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth" (Eph. 6:2).

Since we do not know when we shall die, we must be prepared at all times. If we knew when we were going to die, we might wait until the time was almost on us before obeying the gospel. Instead, we should say as did Isaac, "I know not the day of my death" (Gen. 27:2). Satan desires for us to wait, but as Paul says, "... behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation" (2 Cor. 6:2).

Brethren, let us be among the blessed dead who die in the Lord (Rev. 14:13).

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