

YOKEFELLOW

August 2009

Vol. 36, No. 8

“HONOR TO WHOM HONOR” - A TRIBUTE TO JAMES A. BOBBITT

Curtis A. Cates

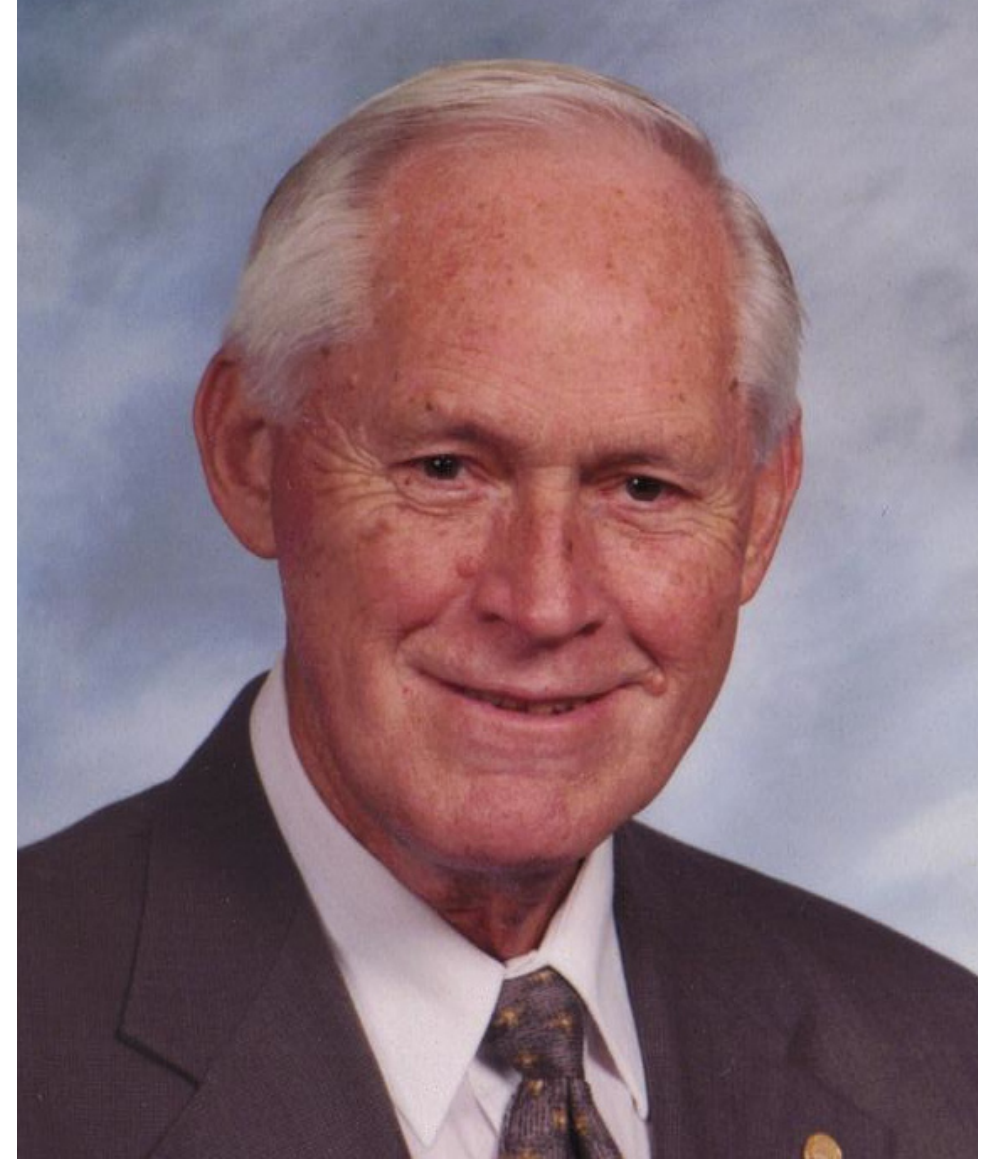
Having distinguished himself in the area of finances and administration, brother Bobbitt was elevated to the position of Vice President of the State Savings Bank Branch [in downtown Memphis] of the National Bank of Commerce. From the time of the establishing of the Knight Arnold congregation, he served as the treasurer.

In my being highly blessed to serve as director of the Memphis School of Preaching under the capable oversight

James A. Bobbitt, great and good man and Christian gentleman, went to be with the Lord on July 15, 2009, at age eighty-four. His was a noble life of service and of invaluable contributions to the Knight Arnold/Forest Hill Church of Christ and to its many works, since its establishment in 1959. He served the congregation with distinction as an elder for thirty-nine and one-half years [1962-2002].

Having been born on March 2, 1925, and reared in Gibson County, Tennessee, and having been graduated as valedictorian of the Class of 1942 from Lexington High School, brother Bobbitt matriculated in Harding College, where he was graduated summa cum laude in 1949. The same year, he and his wife, Gladys, were married; sister Bobbitt is a gracious, exemplary Christian lady who wonderfully complemented her husband as they together meant very much to the Cause of Christ.

Brother Bobbitt was a man of great faith in God and of unswerving loyalty to His Sacred Revelation. He was a diligent Bible student, and it was a blessing to sit in classes he taught [for example, to benefit from his deep insights into the book of Ecclesiastes]. Being grounded in the Word and possessing real depth of integrity and courage of his convictions, he was not “a reed shaken in the wind” (Mat. 11:7) and “carried about with every wind of doctrine” (Eph. 4:14). As Solomon by inspiration wrote in Proverbs 4:26-27, brother Bobbitt was “established” in all his ways and would “Turn not to the right hand nor to the left.” He also had what brother Rex A. Turner, Sr., would describe as a “balance wheel.”



INFORMATION ABOUT

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of brother James A. Bobbitt and the other elders of Knight Arnold/Forest Hill during the last half of his tenure as an elder [1983-2002], I was deeply impressed by the following attributes of brother Bobbitt:

1. He understood and could appreciate the role of the elders [who oversee and “formulate policy” for the School, as it were] and of the director of the School [who is responsible for carrying out those policies—to administer, which means “to get something done”].

2. He placed trust in the employees of the church, including the director of the MSOP.

3. He requested and valued input from the School's director relative to equipment and structural needs, salaries, visions for the future, personnel, discipline, and other matters.

4. He was optimistic and had faith that if something was reasonably needed to expand and improve fulfilling the purpose and outreach of the School, the Lord would provide a way.

5. He was an example of and promoted humble service to the Lord, love, peace, and harmony in the church based upon the principles of eternal Truth.

6. He was a man of generosity.

7. He was an encourager and would regularly express appreciation to the personnel for efforts expended to the glory of the Lord.

8. He believed in the purpose of the Memphis School of Preaching, the educating of faithful Gospel preachers (2 Tim. 2:2), and enthusiastically showed much personal interest in and expended much personal time and sacrifice on its behalf in its function as a part of the educational program of the Forest Hill Church of Christ.

James and Gladys Bobbitt were blessed with three daughters: Meredith, Martha, and Marie. The family now includes three sons-in-law, eight grandchildren, and three great-grandchildren. They had just recently celebrated brother and sister Bobbitt's sixtieth wedding anniversary.

The memorial service for brother Bobbitt was conducted at the Forest Hill Church of Christ on Friday, July 17, 2009. Brethren Barry Grider, Terry Joe Kee [son-in-law to brother and sister Bobbitt], and James Rogers conducted the service. Interment took place at Crittendon Memorial Cemetery, Marion, Arkansas.

The influence of brother Bobbitt's life has been immeasurable, permeating not only Forest Hill and the Memphis School of Preaching, but extending throughout the world through the preachers who were educated in the School. I highly esteemed brother Bobbitt and deeply treasured his friendship and encouragement. “...he being dead yet speaketh” (Heb. 11:4). May the Lord's richest blessings be with sister Gladys and their family.

THE NEED FOR READINESS

Bobby Liddell

And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent: Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead (Acts 17:30-31).

There will be a day in which all men will be judged. There is no question that there will be such a day, nor is there any doubt that we all will be there, but, the question is, “Are we ready for the judgment day?” Life is short, and death is coming (Jam. 4:14). As surely as we have an appointment with death, we have an appointment with judgment (Heb. 9:27). Let us seek to understand the need for readiness for that great judgment day, to the intent that better understanding will spur us on to being ever watchful.

Jesus promised He will come back (John 14:1-4), but we do not know when (Mat. 24:36). He will return, in His second coming (Heb. 9:28), as the apostles saw Him ascend (Acts 1:11). When Christ comes, He will not set foot on earth, but all (both good and bad) in the graves will be resurrected (John 5:28-29; 1 Cor. 15:50-58), and the saved will “meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord” (1 The. 4:17).

On that day, “the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up” (2 Pet. 3:9), so there will be no earth upon which man could continue to live, nor on which Christ could reign (as premillennialists falsely assert; cf. Dan. 7:13-14; Zec. 6:13; Heb. 8:1-4; 1 Cor. 15:23-24). That day will be the last day, and eternity will begin (John 12:48).

All nations will be present on that great day (Mat. 25:32). We ALL will be there. “For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad” (2 Cor. 5:10). Christ will judge the whole world on that day (Acts 17:31), and all those who are ready will be there (Rev. 2:10), but all those who are not ready will also be present, and will be judged (2 The. 1:7-9).

Jesus Christ the Lord will judge (Acts 17:31; John 5:22; 2 Tim. 4:1, 8), and He will separate the good from the wicked (Mat. 25:32). The righteous will be told, “Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world” (Mat. 25:34), but the wicked will hear: “Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels” (Mat. 25:41). Jesus

said, “And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal” (Mat. 25:46).

There will be no “second chance” on (or after) the day of judgment. Christ is not coming back to preach the Gospel, for He has already done that (Mark 1:14-15). He is not coming back to invite men to come to Him (Mat. 11:28-30), for He has already done that. All men will settle up with God on that day, the last day (John 12:48), and there will be no more opportunity to hear the Gospel (Rom. 10:17), to believe in Christ (John 8:24), to repent of sins (Acts 2:38), to confess faith in Him (Acts 8:37; Rom. 10:9-10), to be baptized into Christ for the remission of sins (Gal. 3:26-27; Acts 2:38), nor to live faithfully as a child of God (1 John 1:7-10; 1 Cor. 15:58).

If one never found a convenient season before, it will be too late then (Acts 24:25). If one were almost, but not altogether, persuaded, it will be too late on that day (Acts 26:28). If one knew better, but did not do better, it will be too late. If one had “good intentions” of obeying God, but never did, it will be too late. For church members who warmed a pew, were lukewarm, apathetic, and indifferent, it will be too late. Those who failed to watch will wish forever that they had (Mark 13:34ff).

On that last day, the standard of judgment will not be any of the following: man's opinions, ideas, wishful thinking, or the doctrines of men (Mat. 15:9). Likewise, these will not be taken into account: what the majority believes, likes, or wants; what loved ones believed or practiced; what the world approved; what appealed to the worldly, ungodly, carnal, or hypocritical; what synods, conventions, and forums of men decided; or what felt good, seemed right, or promoted union (not real unity).

It will not be a day of escape by placing blame on others, and there will be no appeal. The judgment will be righteous (Acts 17:31), based on each man's deeds (2 Cor. 5:10), as compared with the books (Old and New Testaments), and the Book of Life (Rev. 20:12-15). Jesus said: “He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day” (John 12:48). For all living in the Christian age, the basis of judgment will be the Word of Christ. Teachings of Islam, Confucius, Buddhism, Hinduism, etc., will not be the basis of judgment.

Friends, God means what He says, and He will have the last word. There will be a day when Christ will judge the world (Jude 14-15). None will avoid this day when the Lord will decree eternal destinies for all. For the righteous, there will be great reward, but for the wicked, there will be eternal punishment. Certainly, it behooves us to be ready. Watch and pray!

THURSDAY CLASSES MEMPHIS SCHOOL OF PREACHING

The Fall Semester Classes of the third-year, graduate level program of the Memphis School of Preaching will begin on August 27, 2009. Classes will meet on-campus in Room 405. The courses may be taken toward a graduate diploma from the MSOP, or the student may wish to take these courses for university credit toward a fully accredited Bachelor of Arts degree [contact the MSOP for further details]. The classes may also be audited by those interested in simply acquiring the knowledge.

Thursday Course Offerings

11:00 AM--2:00 P.M.	<i>History of the English Bible</i>	Mosher	4 Sem. Hours
2:00--5:00 P.M.	<i>Archaeology and the Bible</i>	D. Cates	4 Sem. Hours
6:00--9:00 P.M.	<i>God and the Physical Universe</i>	C. Cates	4 Sem. Hours

Instructors and Course Descriptions

History of the English Bible, taught by Keith A. Mosher, Sr. [M.Th., D.Min.], is designed to give the student a history of our present English Bible from early Hebrew and Greek manuscripts to the latest English versions. It emphasizes the integrity and authenticity of the text and canon of the Bible.

Archaeology and the Bible, taught by Daniel F. Cates [B.A., M.A.], is an advanced study in archaeological methods and in the contributions of archaeology to the understanding of the Bible. Special attention also is given to discoveries in Palestine.

God and the Physical Universe, taught by Curtis A. Cates [M.Th., Ed. D.], is a survey of astronomy's history and methodology and of its solar, planetary, galactic, and cosmological aspects. A course in Christian evidences, it will examine the scientific facts and the question of origins.

The courses will be of special interest to preachers, elders, Bible class teachers, indeed all Christians. There is no charge by the MSOP for tuition or fees. Registration will take place at the first class meeting, August 27, 2009.

Those interested in taking it for university credit should contact the Memphis School of Preaching immediately.

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