

ANNOUNCING
Memphis School of Preaching
WORLD MISSIONS PROGRAM



Beginning January 23, 2012

Bobby Liddell, Editor
 FOREST HILL CHURCH OF CHRIST
 Under the Oversight of the ELDERS
 NEWSLETTER FROM MEMPHIS SCHOOL OF PREACHING

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**WORLD MISSIONS PROGRAM
 AT MSOP
 TO BEGIN JANUARY 2012**

The Memphis School of Preaching World Missions Program will begin training men for mission work, January 23, 2012.

PURPOSE OF THE PROGRAM

The purpose of the Memphis School of Preaching World Missions Program is to help the church to fulfill the Lord’s command to preach the Gospel to the world (Mat. 28:18-20), by preparing qualified men for missions in the United States, and in foreign countries, by providing to these men sound instruction, practical advice, and sufficient preparation.

WHOM SHALL WE TRAIN?

We are looking for faithful, evangelistic, mature men, who love souls, and who are willing to make a commitment to missions.

STARTING DATE

Classes will begin in January 2012, and in each January thereafter. The program will be one year of full-time instruction.

HOUSING

Students will live in the Residence Halls on campus.

FACILITIES

Current MSOP facilities will provide classroom space.

FACULTY

Faculty will consist of Instructors at MSOP, and experienced missionaries, utilized for specialized instruction.

REQUIREMENTS FOR APPLICATION

Applicants must be mature men of upright character.

They must have proven ability, with a minimum of five years productive labor in local work.

They must have shown stability in their lives – spiritually, emotionally, mentally, physically, and financially.

If they are married, their wives must be behind the work, and willing and eager to go into the mission field.

If they have families, they must be prepared for their children to be with them in the field.

They must have a minimum of a two-year Bible education (from a sound school, like MSOP), or have the equivalent in lifetime learning.

They must have proved themselves to be honest, ethical men.

They must have worked with elders, or have demonstrated their ability to work under proper oversight.

They must have shown themselves to be active in evangelism.

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“Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature” (Mark 16:15).

They must be willing to make a multi-year commitment to mission work.

Upon graduation, graduates are to go, as quickly as possible, into the mission field.

SUPPORT

There will be no tuition or fees.

Students must have support for textbooks, living expenses, and for evangelistic campaigns.

CURRICULUM

There will be four ten-week quarters, and eight weeks of campaigns. Courses will cover the following general areas.

Guided research into the culture, customs, geography, housing, transportation, currency, and government requirements of the area to which the student intends to go.

Daily language study.

Methods of evangelism.

Practical studies concerning working with a sponsoring congregation, fund raising, reporting, stewardship, developing self-sufficient congregations, etc.

Communication skills (including broadcasting, using the internet, the printed page, correspondence courses, etc.).

Doctrinal challenges on the mission field.

Challenges to the missionary family.

General knowledge of the Bible, with special emphasis on biblical themes of missions and evangelism.

Student wives will have courses especially suited to their preparation for entering a different culture, and for their being helpful coworkers with their husbands.

WHY ARE WE ESTABLISHING THE WORLD MISSIONS PROGRAM?

Every aspect of the work of the church is about souls.

There are about 7,000,000,000 people living today.

Each of these seven billion people has a soul, and each soul is precious.

Each precious soul will live eternally--either in Heaven, or in Hell.

Yet, most have never heard the good news of a loving Savior, who died for them.

Without the gospel, these precious souls have no hope.

There are good men, who are eager to take the message of salvation to the lost, but who are not adequately prepared.

Congregations, interested in mission work, need to know they are supporting men ready to meet the challenges of mission work, and equipped to continue for the long run.

Therefore, faithful brethren need to train good men, who are able and willing, that they might go into the mission field, and accomplish what the Lord intended.

Thus, there is the need for the Memphis School of Preaching World Missions Program.

“WHAT CAN WE DO TO HELP?”

For those who are wanting to be a part of this work, here is what we need from you.

We need you to help us get out the word about this new program.

We need men who want to be missionaries.

We need congregations and individuals who will support students in this program--both while they are in school, and after they graduate.

We need churches that will serve as sponsoring congregations for our graduates.

We need the prayers of righteous brothers and sisters.

Will you help?

INFORMATION

To learn more about the Memphis School of Preaching World Missions Program, or to learn how you may support this work, contact:

MEMPHIS SCHOOL OF PREACHING
3950 Forest Hill Irene Road
Memphis, TN 38125
901-751-2242
msop.org

ABOVE AND BEYOND

Astounded. Overjoyed. Humbled. Why? Ninety-one people assembled and contributed \$66,043 to evangelizing the world. This was the second contribution of the morning, and it followed the regular weekly contribution of approximately \$4,000. Ninety-one souls (counting children) united together to give over \$70,000 back to the Lord. \$66,043, would serve as the congregation's missions budget for the coming year.

What congregation this is, is not relevant. What is relevant is what a small number of Christians can accomplish when they apply their hearts to the Lord's work. Such liberality did not occur overnight or accidentally; it resulted from years of leadership from the elders, emphasis from the pulpit, and involvement from the pews.

Leadership From The Elders

Over a decade ago, the elders decided to set aside a special contribution for missions. Their goal was not only funding, but also focus. When brethren are uninformed and uninvolved, world evangelism becomes unimportant. Jesus left standing orders for His church: preach the Gospel (Mat. 28:18-20). The local congregation's participation in this effort is twofold: teaching at home and contributing abroad (Acts 2:46-47; 20:20; Phi. 4:15-17). Sadly, congregations often become detached from the missionaries, or preacher students, whom they support; in many cases the missionary becomes a mere picture on a bulletin board and a name remembered only by the person writing the monthly checks. In order to keep the church informed and involved the elders chose to approach emphasize both missions and stewardship.

Emphasis From The Pulpit

Bulletin articles are beneficial, and announcements are advantageous, but an undertaking of this importance deserves to be preached from the pulpit and conveyed in the classes. A certain month was designated as Missions and Stewardship Emphasis month. For one month the Sunday morning Bible classes and Sunday morning sermons alternate between the topics of missions and stewardship. These subjects are stressed because the Lord has given His church a mission to accomplish (Mark 16:15-16) and the means to accomplish it (Jam. 1:17; 1 Tim. 6:17; 2 Cor. 9:7).

By the final Sunday of the month, eight lessons have been taught on Sunday mornings: four focusing on evangelism and four on stewardship. Each sermon and class has a different title, text, and theme, but the theses combine to emphasize one indisputable truth: the Lord's church has a job to do and the ability to do it. The special collection for missions is held on the final Sunday of the month, at which time each member of the congregation has the opportunity to reflect over the teaching of the previous month and to put his treasures where his heart is (Mat. 6:19-20).

Involvement From The Pews

All of the planning and emphasis are for naught if members are not involved. Brethren need encouragement and examples, but they also need goals. The first year, the congregation was encouraged to set aside an extra week's worth of offering. The following year, the members were asked to allocate an additional two weeks' contribution for the

special missions collection. Each year the collection grew. As time passed, the goal was not to give a certain amount. Such was no longer necessary. The precedent had already been set. The most recent missions collection was equivalent to over nineteen weeks of the average collection. New members see the example from the past, hear the emphasis from the pulpit, and become involved in giving an extra portion.

The brethren no longer need to be encouraged to give even if it hurts; they have learned what it means to give until it feels good. Paul once told the Corinthians that "God loveth a cheerful giver" (2 Cor. 9:7). The word "cheerful" indicates that which is done willingly and merrily. Imagine if brethren were cheerful to the point of smiling when contributing to the work of the church each Lord's day. If more Christians took the time to think about what is accomplished by their giving, perhaps more would wear a smile when the plate is passed. On the other hand, some Christians might be brought to tears upon contemplating what little their stingy contribution can achieve. Jesus commended the widow who gave two mites, because that was all that she was able to give (Mark 12:42-44); He does not commend those who give two dollars because that is all that they are willing to give. God loveth a cheerful giver, therefore Christians should give until it feels good.

Destructive natural events impacted the local church numerically and local Christians economically. The congregation's membership is approximately sixty percent of what it was before "The Storm." However, even in the aftermath of these disasters, the brethren's generosity has only grown. Brethren have not cited the economy as a reason to cut back on outreach; instead, they have followed the example of the Macedonians, who, "first gave their own selves to the Lord, and unto us by the will of God" (2 Cor. 8:1-5).

While the importance of worldwide evangelism must not be overlooked, a special collection need not be limited to mission work. The Lord's church sees various occasions that necessitate giving above and beyond the weekly contribution. The brethren from Philippi were persistent in supplying the needs of Paul in his missionary efforts (Phi. 4:15-17). Those same brethren were among those from Macedonia and Achaia who entrusted Paul with a special collection intended to assist the poor saints in Jerusalem (Rom. 15:25-26). When a needful occasion arises, Christians rise to the occasion.

The giving comes from the inward man, the Gospel goes outward, and the glory goes upward. No matter how generous any congregation may be, the glory always goes to God. "For all things are for your sakes, that the abundant grace might through the thanksgiving of many redound to the glory of God" (2 Cor. 4:15). The glory is God's. The responsibility is ours. We can do it, brethren.

Name Withheld

Editor's Note: We have, by request, withheld the name of the congregation, located in another state, and the name of the writer. I asked our good brother to send this information as an encouragement to all of us. I was present on that Sunday, and was blessed to have the opportunity to speak on the subject of giving. Let us all give with cheerfulness, and with true recognition of why we give, to Whom we give (God), and the souls that will benefit eternally from our giving.