

# YOKEFELLOW

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## THANKS TO OUR GRADUATES

I cannot commend our elders and congregation enough for their steadfast support of the work of the Memphis School of Preaching. After 40 years, the school is still going strong and expecting a record enrollment this Fall. The congregation at Forest Hill has faithfully followed Paul's admonition, "And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also" (2 Tim. 2:2). The school has been capably directed through the years by Roy J. Hearn, Curtis A. Cates, and presently, by Bobby Liddell. Sound and solid gospel preachers have taught, and continue to teach, in the school.

However, the Forest Hill church realizes without faithful men willing to come and study, the school of preaching would not exist. We are grateful for all those whose confidence in us has led them to us.

When these men (over 1,000 of them now) complete their studies, they go out and spread the word concerning the Memphis School of Preaching. As they faithfully discharge their duties as evangelists, they represent the Lord Jesus and the school very well.

Among our superb graduates is Mike Dugger, who preaches for the Hartsville, Tennessee church of Christ. Mike recently wrote the following in his bulletin, *The Hartsville Herald*:

### A WORK WORTHY OF YOUR SUPPORT

**Memphis School of Preaching:** I graduated from the MSOP in 2005. The MSOP is a two year school wherein young men are trained to preach the Bible and to know how to study it for themselves. Did you know that each student signs an agreement that he will study one hour out of class for every hour he is in class, per DAY? That means an average day for an MSOP student is filled with 12 hours of study. I can remember studying for at least two or more tests more than 10 hours each! The things you hear me teach and preach are not things I made up. I am not that smart. I did,

however, have excellent training and learned verse by verse what the Bible teaches. I learned it from the outstanding teachers at the MSOP. Did you know the tuition at MSOP is free? That's right, there is no charge for attending. Students are required to raise support in order to live, but there is no cost for attending the school. The school is a work of the Forest Hill Church of Christ, and is overseen by her faithful elders. Recently the church completed the new student apartments, which will save the school literally thousands of dollars a month in rent. They owe only about 800k on these apartments. There are currently more than 50 students at the school who are learning to preach the Gospel just the way the Bible gives it. Please consider helping them financially this week and this year if you can.

Thank you, Mike, for your loyalty to Christ, His church, and His truth. Also, thank you, and all of our graduates, who faithfully support the work of the Memphis School of Preaching. May all of us through our labors bring glory and honor unto the Lord as we seek and save the lost.

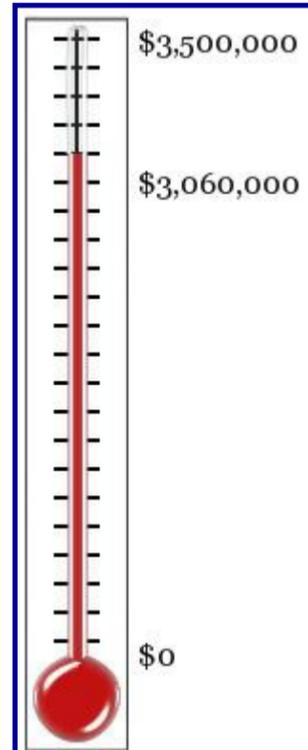
**Barry M. Grider**

### STUDENT HOUSING UPDATE

We are happy to announce that we are **only \$440,000** from our goal!

With God's blessings, we hope to reach \$3,500,000 **by the end of 2008**. Thanks to all who have given so generously. The end is in sight, but we still need your help.

We also have a good "problem"--more students are coming than we can house, on campus, but we are thankful for the apartments we have, and for the great benefits they provide.



### INFORMATION ABOUT

#### MEMPHIS SCHOOL OF PREACHING

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*Under the Oversight of the Elders*  
**FOREST HILL CHURCH OF CHRIST**

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# THE REALITY OF SIN

**Bobby Liddell**

Sin is real. Wicked men, who desire to continue in sin, yet escape the stigma of guilt, or who wish to seduce others to join them, deny the reality of sin, or seek to excuse sinners—but in vain. False philosophy labors to reason away sin, false science calculates the idea of sin incompatible with man's development through organic evolution, and false theologians twist the Scriptures to minimize sin, to mythologize sin, or to affirm it is just a figment of man's imagination.

Sin's existence is not the result of inherited depravity, genetic deformity, or environmental deficiency (Eze. 18:20). Yet, sin exists. C. D. Cole states: "Sin is a fact of experience, of observation, and of revelation" (sounddoctrine.net).

What is sin? Sin means to miss the mark (John 1:29), to violate one's conscience (whether properly trained, or not [Rom. 14:23]), to fail to do the good one should (Jam. 4:17), to transgress the law (1 John 3:4), and to do unrighteousness (1 John 5:17).

Lehman Strauss (bible.org) cites Ryrie's list of eight basic words in the Hebrew (Old Testament) which describe sin. He gives them as: bad (Gen. 38:7), wickedness (Exo. 2:13), guilt (Hos. 4:15), sin (Exo. 20:20), iniquity (1 Sam. 3:13), err (Isa. 28:7), wander away (Eze. 48:11), or rebel (1 Kings 8:50).

Ryrie lists twelve basic words in the Greek (New Testament). They are: bad (Rom. 13:3), evil (Mat. 5:45), godless (Rom. 1:18), guilt (Mat. 5:21), sin (1 Cor. 6:18), unrighteousness (1 Cor. 6:9), lawlessness (1 Tim. 2:9), transgression (Rom. 5:14), to be ignorant (Rom. 1:13), to go astray (1 Cor. 6:9), to fall away (Gal. 6:1), and hypocrite (1 Tim. 4:2).

The first time the word sin appears in our English Bibles (King James Version), of the hundreds of times it does occur, is in Genesis 4:7. The original word (in Genesis 4:7) can mean an offense, or the offering for the offense. In this passage, it indicates an offering which must be made because of sin; that is, the commission of sin necessitated an offering made to God in order for the sinner to obtain forgiveness. This is an important Bible principle (cf. Lev. 17:11).

Sin entered the world when Adam and Eve transgressed the plainly given command of God (Gen. 2:16-17), a command which they both understood (Gen. 3:2-3), but which they both disobeyed (1 Tim. 2:13-14; 2 Cor. 11:3). By Adam, sin, and its tragic results, "entered into the world."

Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned: (For until the law sin was in the world: but sin is not imputed when there is no law...) (Rom. 5:12-13; cf. 1 Cor. 15:21-22, 45).

Sin had existed outside the world before the fall of Adam and Eve, for Satan had sinned "from the beginning": "He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil" (1 John 3:8; cf. John 8:44). Apparently, Satan was one of the angels of Heaven, but sinned [perhaps, because of pride] (Jude 6; 2 Pet. 2:4; 1 Tim. 3:6; Luke 10:18).

His temptation of Adam and Eve, through the three avenues of "the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life" (Gen. 3:6; cf. 1 John 2:15-17), and their succumbing to temptation (Jam. 1:13-16; 1 Cor. 10:13; Luke 11:14), was by their hearing, believing, and obeying a lie (Gen. 3:4)—and, resulted in their being cursed and cast forth from the Paradise of Eden (Gen. 3:16-19, 23-24). The sad account of the fall of Adam and Eve forcefully and vividly demonstrates the reality of sin.

## THE REACTION TO SIN

God's reaction to the sin of the first pair, Adam and Eve, shows just how serious our Heavenly Father considers the problem of sin to be. Another example of God's reaction to sin is in the divinely given record of events prior to the worldwide flood in Noah's day.

And GOD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. And it repented the LORD that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart. And the LORD said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth; both man, and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air; for it repenteth me that I have made them (Gen. 6:5-7).

God's destruction of the world by the flood, because of man's sin (2 Pet. 3:5), exhibits how God hates sin—it is an abomination to Him (Pro. 6:16-18). Therefore, God has warned man of a prepared place of perpetual punishment and pain for the wicked (Mat. 25:41), for sin cannot abide in the presence of God (v. 46).

Why should not God so react? Sin destroyed the purity of His creation, put man at enmity with Him, brought forth upon mankind pain, sorrow, suffering, separation, and death, and finally demanded the death of God's Son on the cruel cross of Calvary (Isa. 53). Yes, God hates sin, and rightfully so! While God hates sin, He mercifully proved His great love for all men, by giving His Son to die for sinners (1 John 2:2; John 1:29; 1 Tim. 2:4).

The "Golden Text Of The Bible" affirms the great love of God, even for sinful man: "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16). Likewise, Paul assured the Romans (and all of us):

But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then,

being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life. And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement (Rom. 5:8-11).

We have noted, from the Scriptures, God's reaction to sin. What is man's reaction? Man's reaction may be varied. Some (most), deny responsibility and seek to blame someone else for their sins (Gen. 3:12-13; Exo. 32:22-24; 1 Sam. 15:15, 21). How many lost men have you met who would truthfully admit they were in sin? Some enjoy sin (Exo. 32:6), and revel in its pleasures and excesses. Some are proud of sin, and even boast of their sins to others. Some envy sinners (Pro. 23:17). While they will not do what others do, they really WISH they could! Some tarry in sin, "intending" some time, some how, some way, some day to put sin behind them, and get ready for eternity, but most never follow through on their "good intentions" (Acts 24:25).

Yes, most deny they have sinned (1 John 1:10), but notice the good example for all given by the "prodigal" when he "came to himself:"

And when he came to himself, he said, How many hired servants of my father's have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger! I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee, And am no more worthy to be called thy son: make me as one of thy hired servants. And he arose, and came to his father. But when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him. And the son said unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son. But the father said to his servants, Bring forth the best robe, and put it on him; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet: And bring hither the fatted calf, and kill it; and let us eat, and be merry: For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found. And they began to be merry (Luke 15:17-24).

Instead of repenting of their transgressions and honestly confessing, "I have sinned," some reason this way, "I would repent, but: (1) He (one who wronged them) will not repent, (2) I would be embarrassed, (3) It was just a little sin, (4) I enjoy it and want to continue in it, (5) I am too proud to say I did wrong, (6) I do a lot of good things, (7) Nobody saw me do it [God did], or (8) I did not do any worse than (someone else) did!" How sad! Man's reaction should be one of sorrow, shame, regret, abhorrence of the sin committed, repentance, confession, and after seeking forgiveness, determination to do differently, to do and be better, and to live a holy, pure, righteous life pleasing to God—because of love for God (1 John 5:3), and gratitude for His great grace, matchless mercy, and full forgiveness.

# The Older Woman... A Lingering Fragrance

The life of an older godly woman is compared to a beautiful rose.

1. The mature Christian woman's roots are strong and firm because she is grounded in God's Word.

2. The long graceful stem, with its many thorns, represents her life with many trials and tribulations.

3. A fragile rosebud is pretty, but not until the petal begins to unfold do we see the full beauty of the rose. Likewise, the years unfold showing the true beauty of the dedicated life of the Christian woman. All her love and kindness is as the softness of each velvety white petal.

4. To the heart of the rose comes the bee to gather nectar for its honey, the sweetest food known to man! From the loving heart of the older Christian woman comes the spiritual bread as she teaches and influences the younger woman in all the ways God has commanded.

5. Only when the rose bloom reaches maturity do we catch the full sweetness of the aroma as it emits from the very heart of the flower. So in maturity, a Christian woman keeps Christ in her heart and truly loves as Christ loved.

6. Deep in the heart of the rose is hidden the seed of life itself. In the pure heart of the Christian woman we find knowledge and wisdom of how to live the abundant life. She is not afraid of loneliness, because she knows she is not alone when God is her constant companion. God's ever presence gives her courage.

7. When the dew of the evening falls on the full blown rose, it has reached the height of its beauty. The Christian woman can so live her life that when she reaches the twilight years she will find them to be the best and most beautiful. She does not fear death, for she has faith that God will keep His promise. She finds peace and comfort in the Scriptures, "And lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world" (Mat. 28:20).

(From a 1986 bulletin from Seagoville, TX, as quoted by Paul Sain in "Paul's Teaching On The Role Of Women," **The Apostle Paul: Great Soldier Of The Cross**, 1996 Memphis School Of Preaching Lectures, Curtis A. Cates, Editor.)

