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WHAT IT MEANS TO BE A GRADUATE OF MSOP

Lee Davis

Pride In The Accomplishment

In two years, one is exposed to the equivalent of four or more years of college level, accelerated, and specialized education in the Bible and related courses. I remember being told, and it has proved to be true, that most four year programs and some graduate programs were more easily completed than the two years of training at MSOP. My classmates, who had already taken courses in four year programs, confirmed the truthfulness of this statement. Yes, when I graduated, I felt that I had accomplished something that would serve as a foundation in my life and preaching until I left this world. I still feel this way and believe men graduating today can take confidence in this same truth.

Respect From Others

Because of faithful and dedicated graduates of the school, many brethren all over the world already highly respected and had confidence in graduates of MSOP. Many times this provided for me and others a wonderful heritage of faithful gospel preaching. The same is true today of those who love the Truth. Graduates of Memphis school of Preaching can depend upon the perspectives of faithful men, both past and present, who have recommended Memphis School of Preaching.

Most Of All, A Greater Opportunity To Serve The Lord

The most wonderful thing to come from my graduating from Memphis School of Preaching is the opportunity it has afforded me to serve the Lord in a greater way. The school taught me to preach and teach the Word, and helped me to understand what a preacher should be, and to see myself for what I am, a faulty man preaching to lost men about a perfect God, and how we all can please Him and go to Heaven one day. Thank the Lord for allowing me to have gone through this great school. I know that most graduates feel this way. They should!

Three men encouraged me to go to the Memphis School of Preaching. They are brethren Robert R. Taylor Jr., Owen Solomon, and Jim Franks (the local preacher where my family and I attended). These men recommended the school without hesitation. They told me that if I wanted one of the greatest challenges that life can offer, I should take on this work for two years. Of course, in our family, brother Roy J. Hearn was revered for the great work he had done in Crossville and in the school he had started, with the recommendation of brother N.B. Hardeman.

I had preached since I was 17 and was so very excited about being able to train formally in a brotherhood school in order to preach the Word. I then visited the school while I was a senior in high school. I was able to sit in a class taught by brother John Renshaw. As I remember, the class was on Premillennialism. I was very much impressed with brother Curtis A. Cates as the new director of the school and the great respect he exhibited for brother Hearn's long work with the school. I knew that brother Cates would continue the wonderful legacy started by brother Hearn.

As the school is today, I wish I could go back through the program. The present faculty, including the good and sound director, provides as superlative an education now, as was provided when I went through the program many years ago. Without reservation, I encourage men to go to the Memphis School of Preaching if they want to go to one of the, if not the, premier schools in our great brotherhood.

When a man graduates from the Memphis School of Preaching, he has a multiplicity of reactions to this accomplishment. They will differ from man to man, I am sure. Here is what it means for this man to have been able to graduate from the Memphis School of Preaching.

GARY COLLEY TO TEACH A COURSE AT MSOP

Our beloved and highly esteemed brother, Gary Colley, will teach a course on **"The New Testament Church,"** in our upcoming Summer School program. We are thrilled that our students will have the wonderful opportunity to sit at the feet of our faithful, capable brother; for we know his many years of scholarly study, combined with his fifty-five years of faithful service in local work, and in various other capacities, including teaching at brotherhood schools, writing for and editing papers, directing lectures, authoring books and tracts, and preaching



on radio and television, have prepared brother Colley to teach with knowledge and wisdom. His record of standing for the Truth speaks for itself.

Brother Colley recently began working with the beloved brethren at Getwell, in Memphis. We are thankful that he is laboring nearby, and we know he will do the work of an evangelist in his usual superb way. In addition to preaching, he will be directing the Spiritual Sword Lectures (conducted at Getwell each October).

I was blessed to have brother Gary Colley as one of my instructors when I attended MSOP. The information he imparted has served me well over the last three decades. I often use the notes taken in his class, and they always remind me of his kind, clear, faithful teaching of God's Word.

Brother Colley is married to Maggie, who is a sweet, lovely, godly sister in Christ. They have three children, and six grandchildren--all members of the Lord's church. His father, R. L. Colley, was a faithful Gospel preacher, and his son Glenn, grandsons Caleb Colley and Jeremy Jenkins, and sons-in-law Jeff Jenkins and Ryan Manning are also preachers.

All prospective students should hasten to make application to begin their classes in Summer School that starts on June 29, 2009.

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INFORMATION ABOUT

MEMPHIS SCHOOL OF PREACHING

- Intensive, Two-year, Collegiate Program Of Strong Bible Emphasis
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TONY LAWRENCE TO SPEAK AT GRADUATION

We are excited to announce that brother Tony Lawrence, longtime preacher for the Bybee Branch church in McMinnville, TN, will be our guest speaker for the graduation of the Memphis School of Preaching Class of 2009.

Brother Lawrence is an outstanding proclaimer of Truth, known for his great ability, and for his faithfulness. He will deliver the sermon and address on

Sunday, June 21, 2009, at 5:00 PM. The graduation exercises will follow the conclusion of the evening worship.

We urge all who can to be present for the 2:00 PM. reception for the graduates and friends. This is a special day for the graduates, and their families and friends. We hope you can share it with them.

Thanks to all who have supported these good men and their families while they have been preparing to preach. They have worked diligently and we commend them for a job well done! Their work has shown them to be worthy of your prayers, your encouragement, and your financial support.

YOU ARE INVITED TO GRADUATION 2009!

The Elders of the Forest Hill Church of Christ and Faculty of the Memphis School of Preaching

Memphis, Tennessee
join Mr. and Mrs. Bobby Liddell
in requesting the pleasure of your presence

at the
Commencement Exercises and Reception
in honor of the Graduates
on Sunday, the twenty-first of June
two thousand and nine

Reception: 2:00 - 3:00 P.M.
In the Fellowship Hall of the
Forest Hill Church of Christ

Graduation: 5:00 P.M. at the
Forest Hill Church of Christ
3950 Forest Hill-Trene Road

THE CHURCH TREASURY AND PREACHERS BOBBY LIDDELL

WHY SHOULD THE CHURCH SUPPORT PREACHERS?

Paul, inspired apostle, wrote to the church at Corinth, concerning his rights as an apostle of Jesus Christ, and as one who preached the word given him by God (1 Cor. 9). The Holy Spirit revealed, through Paul, that a preacher of the gospel has the right ("power") to "eat and drink"; that is, to have food (v. 4), and to be married and have a family; that is, to provide for a home--a wife and children (v. 5). To do so requires financial ability, as all of us clearly understand, but how shall the preacher obtain the resources needed for living?

Some preachers work secular jobs (or have retirement or other income) that they might provide part or all of their own support, and they are to be commended for their determination to preach in spite of their double duty (or even hardship). Paul worked (Acts 18:3), and also received support from churches other than Corinth (2 Cor. 11:8), but he wrote to the brethren at Corinth that he had the right to "forbear working"; that is, to forbear working at a secular occupation, in order that he might do the work of the Lord by preaching the word (1 Cor. 9:6). He had the right to receive support from the church, in order that he might live--without working a secular job--as shown by this verse: "If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things?" (v. 11).

As proof that the Lord's church should support preachers, Paul quoted what God said: "Thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the ox that treadeth out the corn" (v. 9). He reminded them (and us) how God also prescribed, under the Old Law, that "they which minister about holy things live of the things of the temple" and "they which wait at the altar are partakers with the altar" (v. 13).

His point is this: "Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel" (v. 14). This point could not be more clearly stated than as the inspired apostle wrote it.

WHY DO SOME NOT SUPPORT PREACHERS AS THEY SHOULD?

Some brethren do their very best to support gospel preachers adequately (and some generously). Surely, they please God when they are not stingy hoarders of the church treasury. Regrettably, some brethren ignorantly and foolishly affirm that all who have decided to preach have "taken a vow of poverty," and they seem to think they are responsible for seeing that the preacher, and his family, live in poverty.

Note what Paul wrote as the illustration of the point: "Who goeth a warfare any time at his own charges? who planteth a vineyard, and eateth not of the fruit thereof? or who feedeth a flock, and eateth not of the milk of the flock?" (v. 7). Shall we send soldiers into battle and expect them to go at their own expense, or shall we give them less than they need? Do we expect the farmer to plant with no hope of benefitting from the harvest? Or, the herdsman to feed the flock, but not to receive any (or very little) milk for himself? Of course not!

Jesus said: "the labourer is worthy of his hire" (Luke 10:7), but some castigate preachers as men who "work only two or three hours a week," or as those who do not have a "real job," or as those who "live off the brethren" because they are too lazy to support themselves.

As one who began working in a cabinet shop at age fourteen, and who has spent all day digging ditches, working at manual labor in the pouring rain, the freezing cold, and the stifling heat, sometimes working sixteen hours, sleeping a few hours, and working sixteen more hours, I think I know what hard work involves. I have worked construction work

in the steel mills, and I have worked in the coal mines, but **the hardest work I have ever done is the work of a preacher.**

One who is a preacher has a difficult, often unappreciated, taxing job, but he preaches because he loves the Lord, he loves souls, and he has chosen to serve the Lord by preaching. He is on call twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. He bears his own burdens, and the burdens of his brethren (emotionally and spiritually), but he also knows the rewards that come from preaching, and he loves his work.

Yes, there are some, who are lazy, yet who claim to be preachers, but they need to repent and get to work, or be fired--and not hired by another church. By far, the preaching brethren I know are hard workers who deserve to be supported, and who do not deserve to have a standard of living that is beneath that of the other church members.

WHAT DOES THE CHURCH SUPPORT A PREACHER TO DO?

A gospel preacher does the work of an evangelist (2 Tim. 4:5). He will do his best to promote the work of the church as a faithful member; and as one whose special duties include preaching and teaching the word of God publicly and privately. Some brethren mistakenly think the church's paying a man to preach means he is hired to do their work. We cannot pay someone else to be what we ought to be and to do what we ought to do (read Mat. 25:31-46), or to be ready FOR US at the day of judgment (Mat. 25:1-13). We cannot hire a man to do the work God has given each Christian (Jam. 2:14-28; 2 Cor. 5:10).

CONCLUSION

The study of the scriptural use of the church treasury is much needed, for into the too often present vacuum of confusion have freely flowed inaccurate conclusions and false doctrines. In spite of God's warning to be on guard (cf. 2 Cor. 2:11), too many brethren have fallen to errors. Churches and brethren have divided over the use of the treasury. Concerning blame, Ralph D. Gentry stated: "The truth of the matter is, whoever is anti-scriptural is responsible for whatever division that exists."³²

(Following are endnotes from previous issues on the church treasury.)

Endnotes

- 1 Eugene W. Clevenger, "The Church of Christ—Its Mission," The Church of Christ, ed. Thomas B. Warren (Nashville: Gospel Advocate Co., 1971), pp. 154-157.
- 2 "The Treasury," <http://www.theexaminer.org/voulme4/number3/treasury.htm>.
- 3 Guy N. Woods, Questions and Answers OPEN FORUM (Henderson, TN: Freed-Hardeman College, 1976), p. 353.
- 4 Ibid., pp. 353-355.
- 5 Guy N. Woods, Questions and Answers Open Forum, Vol. 2 (Nashville: Gospel Advocate Co., 1986), p. 109.
- 6 Thomas B. Warren, When Is An Example Binding? (Moore, OK: National Christian Press, 1989), pp. 149-150.
- 7 David Lipscomb and E. G. Sewell, Questions Answered, ed. M. C. Kurfees (Nashville: Gospel Advocate Co., 1974), p. 142.
- 8 James A. Rix, Financial Guide For Elders (Abilene, TX: Quality Pub. Co., 1973), p. 10.
- 9 Lipscomb and Sewell, pp. 141-142.
- 10 Tommy Hodge, What Saith The Scriptures (Imperial Beach, CA: The Church of Christ, n.d.), 3:53.
- 11 Rex A. Turner, Sr., Annual Lesson Commentary, 1977-1978 (Nashville: Gospel Advocate Company, 1978), p. 31.
- 12 Lipscomb and Sewell, p. 142.

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- 13 Richard Byfield and James P. Shaw, Your Money And Your Church (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1959), pp. 105-106.
- 14 Clevenger, p. 160.
- 15 V. P. Black, Giving Vs. Getting (Chickasaw, AL: V. P. Black, 1976), p. 16.
- 16 Turner, p. 29.
- 17 Leon C. Burns, "Except They Be Sent," Unto All The World, ed. J. D. Thomas (Austin, TX: Firm Foundation Pub. House, 1959), p. 146.
- 18 Rix, pp. 8-9.
- 19 Roy C. Deaver, Ascertaining Bible Authority (Austin, TX: Firm Foundation Publishing House, 1987), p. 63.
- 20 Walter H. Adams, "Practical Cooperation And Its Values," Leadership In The Church, ed. J. D. Thomas (Abilene, TX: Abilene Christian College, 1964), pp. 320-321.
- 21 H. A. Dixon, "Leadership And Church Cooperation," Leadership In The Church, ed. J. D. Thomas (Abilene, TX: Abilene Christian College, 1964), p. 134.
- 22 Guy N. Woods, The Cogdill-Woods Debate (Marion, IN: The Cogdill Foundation, 1976), pp. 197-198, 252.
- 23 John H. Banister, "Scriptural Cooperation," Leadership In The Church, ed. J. D. Thomas (Abilene, TX: Abilene Christian College, 1964), pp. 315-318.
- 24 E. R. Harper, Lectures On Cooperation (Abilene, TX: 1963), p. 41.
- 25 Dixon, pp. 133-134.
- 26 Truman E. Spring, "Co-ordinating Our Efforts," Unto All The World, ed. J. D. Thomas (Austin, TX: Firm Foundation Pub. House, 1959), pp. 155-157.
- 27 Banister, pp. 311-314.
- 28 Harper, p. 75.
- 29 Deaver, p. 65.
- 30 Quoted by E. R. Harper in Lectures on Cooperation (Abilene, TX: n.d.), p. 2.
- 31 John Moore, "The Work of the Glorious Church," The Glorious Church, ed. Paul Sain, (Pulaski, TN: Sain Publications, 2006), p. 93.
- 32 Ralph D. Gentry, A Critical Review of The Anti-Position on Church Cooperation And Orphan Homes (Winter Park, FL: 1992), p. 3.

2009 GRADUATING CLASS OF THE MEMPHIS SCHOOL OF PREACHING

- Matthew Wayne Benfield.....Hiddenite, NC
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- K. Wayne Rodgers.....High Springs, FL
- Kenneth Daniel Rogers.....Killen, AL
- Garrick Sullivan ***.....Eutaw, AL
- Donnie Ray Vick**.....Indianapolis, IN

*Completes work in November 2009
**Completes work in January 2010
***Third Year Graduate Program