



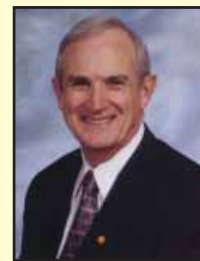
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A Publication of the Memphis School of Preaching

November-December, 2006

Co-Editor's Column

ONLY ONE YEAR  
TO LIVE



## From The Director

MY CONGRATULATIONS TO  
THE FOREST HILL ELDERS  
UPON SELECTING  
BROTHER BOBBY LIDDELL!

At the evening service, December 3, 2006, I learned of the elders' selection of brother Bobby Liddell to succeed the writer on March 27, 2007, as Director of the Memphis School of Preaching. The elders made the announcement to the Forest Hill church before worship began. I enthusiastically commend the eldership, which oversees the School (a part of the Bible teaching program of the Forest Hill congregation), for selecting a great and good man who loves the Truth dearly and is fully capable of continuing the institution in its original mission and purpose.

Bobby Liddell hails from Adamsville, Alabama. He was influenced early by the loved and lamented Bobby Duncan and Franklin Camp. He gave up high-paying employment when he and sister Joan moved to Memphis to prepare in the MSOP, to preach the old, primitive gospel. He was graduated in 1979 having studied under such noted teachers as Roy J. Hearn, J.A. McNutt, Richard Curry, John Renshaw, Frank Young, E. L. Whitaker, and Gary Colley. Brother Liddell was selected by the faculty to receive the "Outstanding Student Award," June 24, 1979. Later, the Alumni Association of the School named him as "Alumnus of the Year," April 1, 1997.

Brother Liddell is well educated (in addition to MSOP), having attended Walker College, the University of Alabama Birmingham, and Regions University (B.A., Summa Cum Laude and Valedictorian, 1985; M.A., 1986; and much additional work toward the M. Div.).

The Liddells have preached the gospel since 1978, working with congregations in Alabama, Florida, and Tennessee for the last twenty-nine years. They have three children who are faithful workers for the Lord: Tony, Nathan, and Keri, and four grandchildren. Tony (who preaches in Alabama) and Nathan (who preaches in Colorado) are MSOP graduates (2003).

Brother Bobby has been a great supporter of MSOP since his graduation. He was added to the faculty in 1994 and has demonstrated himself to be an excellent teacher, very capable Dean of Admissions, and gifted and invaluable Associate Director.

I am very excited about and deeply commend brother Liddell for his selection. He has my pledge of encouragement and support

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What would you do if near the conclusion of this year you went to have your annual check-up, and your doctor, having given you a thorough examination, said very solemnly to you, "I must with sorrow inform you that your condition is serious and you cannot hope to live more than one year"? If you are like most people, your face would reflect, at least to a degree, the shock of such an announcement. In disbelief, you perhaps would be stunned to the point of asking, "Why me?" It is very likely that you would go to one or more additional doctors only to have them verify (if the first one correctly diagnosed the case) your condition.

After that, you (we) would do much serious thinking about our shortcomings and decide that we had better overcome them, since we would soon be standing before God. We would earnestly read our Bibles, seeking all possible information concerning the life after death, and we would put forth our best efforts to be sure that we were following the truth. We would pray often, fervently, and with deep contrition express our sorrow for not having been more faithful in past years. Surely, all of us would right all wrongs which we might have committed, and we would gladly forgive all against whom we had cherished grudges. We would treat our families with greater tenderness, love, and appreciation. We would love the brethren with a tender and appreciative love. If we knew that this year would be our last, we would begin, and continue through the year, many things that most of us are not now doing.

### A TIME FOR RESOLUTIONS AND ACTION

The old year with its happiness, joy, and profit is almost gone. Its heartaches and disappointments, sins, and failures are a thing of the past. It is clear to me that, as we face the new year, promises and vows need to be made.

God in time past has often made covenants with His people. This called for an exchanging of vows. When the law was given at Mt. Sinai, the Israelites responded saying, "All that the Lord hath spoken, we will do." When Joshua called for the people to choose between the true God and idols, they said, "Far be it from us to forsake the Lord...we will serve the Lord, for he is our God." Likewise, all who

(Continued On Page 2)

# Memphis School Of Preaching



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|  |  |  |  |  |
| Curtis A. Cates<br>Director   | Keith Mosher<br>Dean of Academics   | Billy Bland<br>Dean of Students   | Garland Elkins<br>Dean of Public Relations  | Bobby Liddell<br>Associate Director  |

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## NEWSLETTER from MEMPHIS SCHOOL OF PREACHING

Under the Oversight of the ELDERS  
FOREST HILL CHURCH OF CHRIST

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Garland Elkins

### GENERAL INFORMATION

- Intensive Two-year Collegiate Program Of Strong Bible Emphasis Under A Qualified Faculty
- Recognized For Educational Excellence In Pulpit, Local Work, and World Evangelism
- 54 Courses, 164 Semester Hours, 2,960 Clock Hours, Two Full Years Of Transferable College Credit
- Established In 1966--Oldest School Of Preaching East Of The Mississippi
- Classes For Wives (Diplomas Awarded), Third Year Graduate Program
- New, State Of The Art Facility On 15 Acre Campus, N. B. Hardeman Library Building On Campus, Residence Halls Planned To Be Ready Soon
- No Tuition Or Fees, Scholarships And Housing Assistance Available, Approved For V. A. Benefits
- Accepting Applications Now. Write Or Call For Catalog And Application

Attend The Annual

## MSOP LECTURES

Which Begin the Last Sunday of March and Continue Through the Following Thursday.

## BOBBY LIDDELL NAMED AS NEW DIRECTOR OF MSOP

A few weeks ago, brother Curtis A. Cates informed us, the Forest Hill eldership, of his decision to resign his position of Director of the Memphis School of Preaching, as of March 27, 2007. That date will mark his twenty-fourth year in that capacity, his having followed brother Roy J. Hearn, beginning at the Seventeenth Annual Memphis School of Preaching Lectureship in 1983. [He began teaching with MSOP in August, 1982]. It was with regret and reluctance that the elders accepted his resignation as Director, but we understand.

We are happy to commend brother Cates, without reservation, and to express to him our appreciation for his faithful service to Memphis School of Preaching, and to the brotherhood, as Director of the School. Brother Cates' excellent leadership and great vision have guided the School through a sustained period of tremendous growth and accomplishment, while maintaining the high standards of steadfastness to the truth and academic excellence upon which the School was established.

While we are saddened by his decision, we have urged him to continue with the School as Director Emeritus. We are delighted he will continue working with the School, in this position, and will continue his superb work as an instructor. In addition, he plans to spend time in writing—which we believe will result in much benefit to the Cause of Christ. Sister Annette Cates will continue to direct the N. B. Hardeman Library. We look forward to our continued close association with these, our friends.

We wish to announce that the elders have chosen Bobby Liddell to be the next Director of the Memphis School of Preaching, also effective on March 27, 2007. Brother Liddell is well known to the congregation and the eldership at Forest Hill, and has been widely used by the brotherhood. He is a graduate of MSOP (1979), has continued a close relationship with the School, and has been a great supporter and encourager of our work. He is a seasoned preacher of nearly three decades service, and has worked with the School since August 1, 1994. Initially, he served as Dean of Admissions and instructor. In August, 2002, he began his work with the School as Associate Director, and started directing the annual MSOP Lectureship, which includes his editing the lectureship book.

Since then, he has accepted more duties in the daily work of administration; thus, we believe he is well qualified, Biblically, academically, and energetically, for the work we have given to him. We trust he will continue in the same sound, courageous, wise tradition as brethren Hearn and Cates.

We invoke our Almighty God for blessings as this transition takes place at the Forty-First Annual Memphis School of Preaching Lectureship, and we ask you to join with us in prayers. Thank you, dear brethren, for your continued, generous encouragement and support.

Faithfully, The Elders  
Forest Hill Church of Christ

### **(ELKINS Continued From Page 1)**

obey the gospel stand up in the presence of others and confess that they believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God.

There are many (among them some Christians) who face the future with great expectancy, yet refuse to give any assurance to God that they are going to be a better people. Some refuse to make resolutions. They say, "It is better not to make them than to make them and break them." Is there no value in making promises? Is it better never to resolve

to accomplish high and noble purposes, for fear that failure might result? What are some good things that can come from the making of resolutions?

### **VOWS TELL ALL OF THE STAND YOU ARE TAKING**

When a foreigner becomes a citizen of the United States, he publicly renounces all allegiance to the nation from whence he comes and he vows loyalty to our country. When a young man marries a young lady, the vows announce to those who listen that, forsaking all others, he is going to be true to her as long as life shall last. When a person becomes a Christian, he is in effect saying, "I renounce all allegiance to Satan, and from henceforth I will serve only Christ."

### **VOWS INDICATE STRENGTH OF CHARACTER**

When George Washington was notified of his election as President, he is reputed to have said, "Be the journey long or short, although I may be deserted by all men, integrity and firmness shall never forsake me." In our day, when so many people make pledges with no intention of keeping them, it is encouraging to look back at men whose word was their bond.

### **VOWS TEND TO FORTIFY THE WILL**

The new Christian, by reason of the vows which he has taken, finds it easier to say, "No," to temptation and to walk in the true paths day by day. Couples stay true to each other when the hardships of life multiply, partly because they have pledged themselves to do so. Faithful Christians also, will be true to their vows regardless of the price. When the great Christian, Polycarp, who lived in the second century, was captured and taken to the arena in Smyrna, his captors gave him an opportunity to save his life by renouncing Christ. The aged Christian replied, "Eighty and six years have I served him... how could I deny him now?" They threatened to throw him to the wild beasts, but he remained steadfast and was finally burned to death. The call of the new year is the call to noble living.

### **THE TREE THAT BORE NO FRUIT**

One day, as our Lord was teaching, some people brought him news of two tragedies, which had taken place. Pilate had slain some Galileans in the temple area. Their blood actually mingled with the blood of the sacrifices, which they were offering; and in Siloam a tower had fallen and killed eighteen people. This caused some of the people to raise the question, "Were these people more wicked than others, that death should strike so suddenly?" Jesus answered, "No." Death was just as likely to come to ordinary sinners and they would be lost if they did not repent (Luke 13:1-5). Jesus knew that the majority of people were likely to be lost, not because of being great sinners, but because of useless living. He then gave the parable of the fig tree. "He spake also this parable; A certain man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard; and he came and sought fruit thereon, and found none. Then said he unto the dresser of his vineyard, Behold, these three years I come seeking fruit on this fig tree, and find none: cut it down; why cumbereth it the ground? And he answering said unto him, Lord, let it alone this year also, till I shall dig about it, and dung it: And if it bear fruit, well: and if not then after that thou shalt cut it down" (v. 6-9). The owner of the vineyard comes to the servant for figs and finds none. He orders that the tree be cut down. The servant begs for another year, promising to give special attention to the tree, and then, if there were no fruit, the master might have it cut down.

God expects us, as Christians, to bear fruit (John. 15:8). If we fail at this point, what purpose do we fulfill? If we fail to live the Christian life, worship God, teach the gospel, and care for the needy, how can we justify our "cumbering the ground"? Has your life been, if not a useless one, at least far beneath your capacity? If this is the case why not make this new year a time of beginning again? If not a Christian, will you not make it a good year by becoming a Christian? If already a Christian, why not grow "in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ" (2 Pet. 3:18)?

**Garland Elkins**

### **(CATES Continued From Page 1)**

in every way possible. I shall be privileged to continue with the School in the capacity of Director Emeritus and teacher. My heart is with the School, as is only natural after twenty-five years. My health is good, and I look forward to more productive years in the Lord's service, the Lord willing. I pray much success for Christ's work at this place.

Dear friend of the Memphis School of Preaching, please continue your most generous moral and financial support of MSOP and even help more, if you can. Especially remember brother Liddell, the Forest Hill eldership, and me in your prayers. My deepest appreciation is expressed to you for your encouragement of our efforts for a quarter century.

*Curtis A. Cates*

## MSOP STUDENTS AND FACULTY CONDUCT EVANGELISTIC CAMPAIGNS

### **Billy Bland**

Students of the Memphis School of Preaching have just returned from conducting **four evangelistic campaigns October 29 through November 2, 2006**. The student body was divided into four groups that traveled to Clinton, Ripley, and Walls, Mississippi, and to Nashville, Arkansas, for the purpose of establishing Bible studies and inviting the public to hear the Gospel preached.

The campaigns have proven to be an effective means of evangelism. In addition to the fruit that is borne immediately, there are long-term effects as well. Recently, an elder of a congregation informed me that they had a visitor who came to their services, whose door some of the students knocked in a previous campaign five years ago. After two Bible studies, he was baptized into Christ! In one of our recent campaigns, a lady came forward requesting the prayers of the church. The very next day, her husband was baptized into Christ. The following day, their adult son was also baptized into Christ. Obviously, there are people who will obey the Gospel when they are contacted--some even after many years of the initial contact.

The **Chapman Church of Christ in Ripley, Mississippi**, where brother Mark Lindley (1995 MSOP graduate) serves as the local evangelist, hosted one of the campaigns. The students knocked on 814 doors, which resulted in their setting up 50 Bible correspondence courses and 8 home Bible studies. There were 2 baptisms and 1 restoration. Two of the students from South Africa assisted in the actual baptism. I doubt the gentleman who was baptized ever thought that somebody from South Africa would one day baptize him. Billy Bland did the preaching in this campaign.

Brother Bobby Liddell preached the Gospel in the campaign in Clinton, Mississippi. There were 1,473 doors knocked that resulted in 61 Bible correspondence courses and 21 home studies. Brother Robert Berch (2003 MSOP graduate) is the local preacher in the **Clinton Church of Christ**.

The third campaign was conducted in **Walls, Mississippi**, with the **Church Road Church of Christ**. Brother David Johnson (2003 MSOP graduate) serves as the preacher of this congregation. During the week, preaching responsibilities alternated between brethren Greg Dismuke (1998 MSOP graduate) and B. J. Clarke (evangelist for the Southaven congregation, and instructor at MSOP). God blessed the efforts of this campaign with 1,017 doors knocked, which resulted in 27 Bible correspondence courses and 24 home Bible studies. There was one restoration during the campaign.

The **Sunset Church of Christ in Nashville, Arkansas**, hosted the fourth campaign. There were 1,470 doors knocked with 87

Bible correspondence courses and 30 home Bible studies established. Brother Keith Mosher, Sr., preached the Gospel in this campaign. Brother David Williams (1999 MSOP graduate) is the local preacher for the Sunset congregation.

**TOTALS:** The Lord blessed the campaigns with **4,774 doors knocked**, which resulted in **225 Bible correspondence courses** and **83 home Bible studies** being established. There were **2 baptized into Christ** and **2 restored to their first love**. We trust others will follow. To God be the glory (Eph. 3:20-21).

## ALUMNI NEWS

**Lee Harber**, honorary alumnus (1990), passed away November 9. Lee was a faithful child of God who loved the Lord, and sought every right way possible to serve Him. He was a great example and encouragement to all who knew him, and his love for MSOP motivated his prayers, and his contributions and exhortations to the School.

**Jim Franks** (1970) also passed away recently. No other information is available to us at this time.

Remember in prayer **Brenda Rutherford** (wife of Rod, 1974) who is undergoing chemotherapy and radiation treatment. Also, keep in prayer **T. J. Clarke** (1972), faithful gospel preacher, who has prostate cancer. Congratulations to **Matthew and Lauren Martin** on the birth of their son **Jack** (9-7), and to **Bobby and Renee O'Dell** on the birth of their daughter **Salem** (9-18).

**ATTENTION: ALL ALUMNI**--if you do not receive the "**Laborers Together Newsletter**," you may do so by sending your email address to Mike McDaniel, Alumni Association President, at [mmmcdaniel@earthlink.net](mailto:mmmcdaniel@earthlink.net). **Visit the web site at [msop.org](http://msop.org)!**

## END OF YEAR CONTRIBUTIONS

Ever since the Memphis School of Preaching had its beginning forty-one years ago (1966), those **contributions made at the close of the calendar year have been vital** to its work. As you know, the MSOP receives no (it does not wish for, nor would it accept any) federal or state grants, student loans, building loans, or other governmental support. And, it charges no tuition, or fees of its students.

The School is a part of the Bible teaching program of the Forest Hill Church of Christ, and is supported by the Forest Hill congregation, and by other faithful brothers and sisters, individually and congregationally, who are convinced of the continuing need to train men to preach the Gospel of Christ.

The many hundreds of graduates preaching throughout the world tell us their training at the Memphis School of Preaching was the hardest work they ever did--and loved! Equal to more than four years of college in two years (164 semester hours), the course demands that students learn discipline and diligence as they learn the Scriptures and the practical aspects of preaching.

Memphis School of Preaching, now in its forty-first year, has not departed from its purpose. More than four decades of faithful service to the Lord, and to the Cause of Christ, have shown **the School is worthy of the support of brethren**.

These end-of-year gifts are very helpful because of the needs of students who have not raised all of their support for living expenses (some are doing without, but are continuing in their studies), January enrollment of new students, anticipated lectureship expenses in March, and catching up with unanticipated expenses involved in the operation of the School.

**These donations are needed, are fully tax deductible, of course, and they are a Godsend to the work of MSOP. Please help if you can.**