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YOKEFELLOW

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LONGSUFFERING

Bobby Liddell

What is “longsuffering?” Is this a quality, we should seek to have? Is this a characteristic we should develop? What part does longsuffering play in the Christian life? Our study of “longsuffering” begins with Galatians 5:22-23: “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.”

The companions of longsuffering, noted above, certainly give a lofty expectation of what this word means, what it includes, and what it requires of us. Especially, is this the case when we learn that one of the divine characteristics of our God is longsuffering. In issues to come, we shall consider the meaning of “longsuffering,” look at its usage, examine God’s longsuffering, and note the blessings of being longsuffering.

THE MEANING OF “LONGSUFFERING”

Longsuffering is one of the nine characteristics the inspired apostle Paul declared to be “the fruit of the Spirit.” Of the original Greek words makrothymeo and makrothymia, Mounce wrote:

These words are normally translated as some form of “patience, endurance” (especially Heb. 6:9-15; Jas. 5:7-11; 2 Pet. 3:1-15). From macros, “long” (in

terms of time), and thymos, “the soul” as the seat of feelings and passions (including anger, temper), this word group suggests the same as the Heb., “to be long of feeling, delay one’s anger” (as in “longsuffering”) (501).

Longsuffering includes the idea of a long amount of time’s transpiring before one displays anger (counting to ten, and beyond; cf. Jam. 1:19). Therefore, longsuffering includes patient forbearance with the shortcomings and slights of others, as well as the insults and injuries caused by them, and the ability to do so without seeking retaliation or revenge, but with a readiness, not only to endure such affronts, but to forgive. How we need to learn to be longsuffering!

Longsuffering does not mean boasting of one’s goodness, seeking sympathy, or complaining about what one must endure. The attitude of longsuffering is not reluctantly agreeing to some irksome duty, or burdensome imposition; it is not cowardice, or inability to act, but a joyful submission to the Christian way of life, trusting God that His way is always the best way. Thus, longsuffering is such a lovely, desirable characteristic, that Paul could write, “against such there is no law.”

Continued in next issue

BUILDING ON A GOOD FOUNDATION

B. J. Clarke

A Look Back, And A Look Ahead, At FOUNDATIONS
A Training Camp Of The Memphis School of Preaching

One of the greatest joys of my life as a Gospel preacher is the opportunity to assist young men in their development as men of God. Earlier this year, on the campus of the Memphis School of Preaching, we hosted and conducted the second annual FOUNDATIONS training camp for young men between the ages of 13 and 18 years old. During the last week in June, a total of twenty-eight young men, from a number of different states, assembled together for the purpose of learning how to better themselves as men of God.



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SOUND BIBLICAL EDUCATION

Nathan Franson

Abraham Lincoln once said, "Upon the subject of education, not presuming to dictate any plan or system respecting it, I can only say that I view it as the most important subject which we as a people can be engaged in." Nothing could be more wisely stated in terms of a sound biblical education. Firmly planted in the brotherhood today



is the Memphis School of Preaching, an institution which still stands after all these years as a beacon of faithful gospel teaching. For this preacher, there was not a more venerable course of study in which to engage.

The class of 2009 had the privileged opportunity to be the first body of students to enroll for the full two years under the directorship of Bobby Liddell. Everyone soon realized the dedication and commitment he had to secure the integrity of the school and what was being

taught. It was also humbling to study at the feet of so many wonderful, sound brethren who have devoted years of service to preparing men to preach. Their passion and tireless labor were visible in training us to be preachers of the Word instead of just Bible students.

Many have regretted not learning all they feel they should have, but never has anyone regretted the learning he received from such a thorough examination of the Bible, and other significant topics. Since my moving on to preach full time after graduation, those not familiar with the Memphis School of Preaching are amazed and have commented on the sound biblical sermons they hear. This is an encouraging testament to the quality of what was taught and learned in the classes. Jerry Martin provided an uplifting and encouraging sermon which most students at some point have preached titled, "The Future of the Church Looks Bright." It is safe to say that as long as the Memphis School of Preaching continues her unwavering stride, those who graduate, and take seriously what they have learned, will have a precious opportunity to contribute to the bright future of the church of Christ.



BROTHER B. J. CLARKE AND STUDENTS WHO ATTENDED FOUNDATIONS 2009

SYMPATHY

We are saddened by the recent passing of our beloved sister Barbara Curry, wife of longtime and lamented instructor at MSOP, Richard Curry. Sister Curry was the epitome of what a Christian lady should be. We shall surely miss her--until we meet again.

"Her life was indeed a blessing to others. She is one that Christian ladies should emulate. Not only did sister Curry serve as a preacher's wife, but also, she was an elder's wife. Paul wrote, "Even so must their wives be grave, not slanderers, sober, faithful in all things" (1 Tim. 3:11). Indeed her life was the epitome of God's ideal woman as recorded in Proverbs 31. Her life was a blessing because she believed in and followed after the teachings of the Bible. She accepted the Bible as God's inspired word (2 Tim. 3:16,17). She believed what the Bible taught concerning Christ, the gospel plan of salvation, the church, true worship, Christian living, and heaven and hell. She knew that hell should be shunned and heaven should be gained and she prepared accordingly" (From The Forest Hill News).

We also sorrow with brother and sister Wesley Simons (MSOP 1972) in the recent passing of their daughter, Kandy Phillips, who died from a brain aneurism. She was known for her work in teaching the Bible to others. Kandy was 32.

Foundations continued

The Lord's Day

The week began on the last Lord's day in June when the campers checked in on Sunday afternoon and moved into their assigned apartments on the campus of MSOP. Brother Bobby Liddell, Director of the Memphis School of Preaching, met with the campers in the chapel and welcomed them with a brief message. After orientation, the campers attended the Sunday evening services at the Forest Hill church of Christ, where they heard an excellent sermon preached by brother Liddell. Several members of the Forest Hill congregation commented on how nice these young men looked as they filed in, wearing their suits and ties, and occupying nearly two full rows near the front of the building. After services, the campers enjoyed pizza and a devotional before retiring for the evening.

The Classes

Each morning, Monday through Friday, the campers met for breakfast at 7:30. After breakfast the young men were responsible for preparing their apartments for daily inspection, before attending chapel each morning at 8:30. Some of the older campers, and some with previous experience in delivering sermons, volunteered to speak in chapel each morning.

The first classes of the day began each weekday at 9:00. I am very passionate about the need for our young people to be grounded in the area of Christian Evidences, and so I spoke each morning, Monday-Friday, on one of 5 Foundational Facts Of Our Faith: (1) There really is a God in Heaven; (2) The Bible really is the Word of God; (3) God really is watching us; (4) God really does love us, and (5) God really will judge us. The young men were excellent listeners and seemed genuinely enthused with the study.

The students were truly blessed to sit at the feet of several other faculty members of MSOP. Brother Curtis Cates taught the young men how to teach and preach with enthusiasm. If you have ever heard brother Cates speak, then you know that we could not have selected a better speaker for the subject. He has written an excellent tract on this subject, and he condensed this material into two class sessions. His enthusiasm was contagious!

Brother Keith Mosher, Sr. taught two important classes on "Logic and the Bible." Of course, worldly philosophies are bombarding young minds with the notion that there is no absolute truth, as well as the view that logic is unimportant to Bible understanding. Some even argue that the use of logic is a barrier to understanding the Bible. Brother Mosher teaches a Summer School class on "Logic and the Bible," in the two-year program at MSOP; so he was the logical [pun intended] choice to teach on

this subject. He did a great job of simplifying this subject for these young men, and showing its importance to Bible learning.

In trying to impress our young men with the power of the pen and the printed page, I could think of no one more qualified than brother Garland Elkins. His prolific pen has been busy blessing the brotherhood, and the world, literally for decades. In particular, I asked him to tell the young men about his tract, "Come and See," of which over 1 million copies have been printed and distributed. The tract is an invitation for mankind to investigate the Lord's church, the church of Christ. The tract is simple, to the point, and yet very loving in its tone. We need good writers for the generations to come and it is my hope that some of the young men who attended FOUNDATIONS will be motivated to develop a desire to spread the truth far and wide via the printed page.

We were pleased this year to have the assistance of brother Jerry Martin in teaching our training classes. Brother Martin is the Dean of Students and an instructor at MSOP. Additionally, he serves as a preacher and elder at the Cordova church of Christ. Each weekday, brother Martin taught a class entitled "Sermon Prep 101." The class was designed to help the students learn the necessary steps to take in traveling from the text to the sermon. Brother Martin put together some excellent PowerPoint presentations, and blessed the students with detailed handouts of this material. He also challenged the students with homework assignments in order to give them a chance to get some "hands-on" experience in traveling from text to teaching. Brother Martin's love for young people, combined with his analytical skills, blended together to offer a rewarding study of how to develop a sermon from the text. These classes, as well as instruction given in other classes, gave the campers a foundation for preparing the sermons they were assigned to deliver on Friday.

Classes on a variety of other subjects continued throughout the day, and throughout the week. Jason McDade taught a class on how to lead singing. Once again, the teacher was definitely suited to the subject. Brother McDade is an excellent song leader, and he related well to the young people. Phil Carver, a member of the Cordova church of Christ, delivered a stirring and motivational message to the young men on Friday morning. We appreciate his willingness to volunteer in this area! There were also other classes designed to help young men lead effectively in worship: (1) how to read Scripture effectively, (2) how to lead in public prayer, and (3) how to preside at the Lord's Table.

As important as it is for men to be trained in matters pertaining to the worship of

the church, it is just as important to train them in the work of the church. Consequently, we also provided instruction on the vital subjects of how to become an elder or a deacon in the Lord's church. We encouraged the young men to start preparing themselves right now, so that in years to come they will be ready and qualified to take on the work of an elder or a deacon.

The Evening Activities

We mixed in a little fun with our learning, by taking time out for some bodily exercise (1 Tim. 4:8). We went bowling on Monday evening and enjoyed some miniature golf, go-karts, etc. on Thursday evening. Tuesday night, we were blessed to enjoy a meal and excellent devotional at the Cordova church of Christ.

The highlight of the evening activities was on Wednesday night. The young men traveled to Marion, Arkansas, and conducted the service for the Highway 77 church of Christ. This congregation treated the young men to a marvelous meal before services, and the young men did a great job in reading scripture, leading prayers, leading singing, and preaching some short sermons.

The Helpers

We are grateful to Tish Clarke, and the following congregations, for providing meals throughout the week: Olive Branch, Nesbit, Coldwater, Woodland Hills, Highway 77, and Forest Hill.

The Sermons

The highlight of the week was to sit and listen on Friday afternoon to the campers as they presented the sermons they had worked on all week. They did an excellent job! The camp closed out on Friday evening with a banquet, at which time the campers received certificates acknowledging their completion of the FOUNDATIONS training program. It was a truly uplifting and beneficial week!

It Is Not Too Early To Plan For FOUNDATIONS 2010!

We are eagerly anticipating FOUNDATIONS 2010 with the theme "Let No Man Despise Thy Youth."

Next year's camp will start on Saturday afternoon, June 26th, 2010 and continue through Friday evening, July 2nd, 2010.

Applications may be downloaded and printed from www.msop.org or you may contact the school and request one or more applications. We only have enough space for the first 30 approved applicants, so do not delay in sending in your application.