

Fulfilling the Ministry

"Do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry" (2 Timothy 4:5)

———— Faculty and Student Newsletter of the Brown Trail School of Preaching ————

April 2006
No. 57

ELDERS

Maxie Boren
Guy Elliott
Eddy Parker
Phil Pope
Larry Rice
Bobby Watts

DIRECTOR

Robert Stapleton

FACULTY

Willie Alvarenga
Gerald Ball
Charles Billingsly
Bill Burk
Owen Cosgrove
Perry B. Cotham
Robert Dodson
Ken Gardner
Ken Hope
Heriberto Martinez
Randall Morris
Hardeman Nichols
Obed Rodriguez
Heath Stapleton

Contact Info:

P.O. Box 210667
Bedford, TX
76095

(817) 268-3222
www.browntrail
schoolof
preaching.com

From the Director's Desk

Robert Stapleton



Time is passing so quickly, and there is so much that needs to be done. The work of training preachers is an endless, but rewarding job. We are excited as we see the growth of the men who come to

BTSOP. Please pray for their success as we endeavor to assist them to better serve the Lord and His kingdom.

For some time I have been mentioning that we have a man desirous to begin full time work with the school, but have been unable to let you know who that man is. Finally, the time has come when I can do so. Brother Kenny Gardner, a 1979 graduate of BTSOP, is working out a plan with the Plano East congregation, where he has preached for the past 15 years, that will allow him to work part time with them and full time with us. I am so excited to see this becoming a reality.

At the present Kenny plans to begin this schedule January 1, 2007. In order to accomplish this he is in need of your financial support. Plans are for the Plano East congregation to supply half of his needed salary, leaving him to raise the other half. We are including in this issue an envelope that will allow you to send your commitment to help Kenny fulfill his dream of serving here in a full time capacity. Your commitment of whatever you can on a monthly basis will help considerably with his efforts. Please note the form inside along with the envelope.

If you have any questions concerning this, please feel free to contact me or Brother Gardner. He can be reached at 469-323-

6017 or at kengardner@planochurch.com.

It is amazing how far some will go to destroy a work like BTSOP. Recently I found listed in various congregational Guest Books (One as far away as Singapore) a reference to a particular Web Site. Then a response, either from "R. Stapleton" or "Robert Stapleton". Following that an attack on me for what "I" said. The "strange" thing about this is I never sent the response they are attacking. Actually, we have learned that on at least one such location all three emails came from the same email address. I, also, found some of the same information in denominational Guest Books, along with Web Sites not even associated with religion in general. Those who have submitted this information are using email address boxes that cannot be replied to, along with falsely using my name. This should speak loudly about the character of those who are doing this. Please pray for these people, as you do for us.

Hispanic Department

The Hispanic Department of BTSOP is fulfilling a great need within the brotherhood today. There is no doubt that the number of Spanish speaking people in the US has increased over the past several years. Thus the need to prepare men to take the gospel to them. Your continued prayers and financial support of this effort are so sorely needed.

Willie Alvarenga, 2001 graduate of the school, is doing a great job in heading this up, but he could do so much more if he were full time here. It is still our hope that this can be realized before too much time passes.

Why not consider assisting this program with monthly or one time support?

A “Word” From Kenny

To the Work, To the Work

“To the work, to the work, we are servants of God.” I wonder how many times we have sung that song? (Sometimes I wonder if we spend more time singing about working than actually working!). We do sing about work, talk about work, and to varying degrees appreciate the value of work. Thomas Carlyle said, “Work is the grand cure for all of the maladies that ever beset mankind.” He also stated, “All work, even cotton spinning, is noble, work alone is noble.” That reminds us of Proverbs 14:23: “In all labor there is profit.” Certainly the Bible teaches us to be industrious and hard-working. “The Lord God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it or to work it and take care of it” (Gen. 2:15). God made us working beings. The Israelites were commanded, “Six days you shall labor” (Ex. 20:9). In Ecclesiastes we are advised, “Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with your might” (Ecc. 9:10, NKJV). The people of the northern kingdom of Israel were condemned for abundance of idleness (Eze.16:49). This was one of the reasons why they were destroyed! The apostle Paul actually states that we should labor or work hard in order to support the weak! (Acts 20:35; cf. Eph. 4:28). He told the Christians at Colosse to “work heartily, as to the Lord and not to men” (Col. 3:23). He instructed the brethren at Thessalonica to work so that they wouldn’t need anything or be dependent on anyone (I Thes. 4:11- 12, ESV). He also told them, bluntly, that if anyone refused to work, then let him starve (II Thes. 3:10).

Of greater importance is the work we do (or should do) in the spiritual realm. Jesus stated that the harvest is plenteous, what is needed is workers! (Matt. 9:37-38). Workers are needed so desperately that Jesus tells us to pray for more of them! Paul reminds us that we are doing God’s work, that we are (if we can fathom it) God’s fellow-laborers! (I Cor 3:9; II Cor. 6:1). Years ago Gus Nichols wrote in the Spiritual Sword, “As a member of the church for 61 years, my greatest source of joy has been to engage in hard work for Jesus and others.” One of his mottos was “THANK GOD FOR MY WORK: FOR I LOVE IT.” He also stated that Christians who don’t work need to be converted (Spiritual Sword, October, 1970).

So we appreciate the value of work, and the Bible instructs us to work, but we often fail to work as we should. Why? Because we’re not focused, and goal-oriented, and because we don’t remind ourselves often enough of the importance of what we are doing. The people of Nehemiah’s day, despite severe opposition, were successful in rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem not only because they “had a mind to work” (4:6), but also because they had a definite goal. Nehemiah urged them “Come, and let us build up the wall of Jerusalem”, and they responded, “Let us rise up and build” (4:17). In Hebrews 11 one of the reasons many became our heroes of faith is because they had goals: Noah “prepared an ark to the saving of his house”; Abraham “looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God”; Moses gave up everything to side with slaves because he looked to the reward; some refused release from torture so that they might obtain a better resurrection; and all of them were seeking a country of their own and desired a better country, a heavenly country. In that same context we today are reminded to diligently seek God in order to receive a reward from Him. Even Jesus endured the cross in order to receive “the joy that was set before him”. Paul encourages us to “seek those things which are above and set your affection on things above” (Col. 3:1-2).

At the Brown Trail School of Preaching, we believe in hard work, perseverance, and goal-setting. We will continue to train men to proclaim the old Jerusalem gospel for, after all, Brown Trail is “where the old paths are still new”. But we need your help. We are asking for 100 congregations to include the school in their budgets for next year. And we are asking 100 of our graduates to contribute monthly to the school. These funds are needed not only for the financial support of students and faculty, but also for our Hispanic department. Right now our Hispanic instructors are only being reimbursed for their travel expenses. Their dedication and sacrifice is truly remarkable.

You can have a part in this great work of training men to preach the gospel. All of us have a responsibility to send those who preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things (Romans 10:15). By supporting those who go, we are fellow workers for the truth! (III John 8).

I often tell myself that I may not be a Guy N. Woods or Thomas Warren or Andrew Connally or Gus Nichols, but I can support great men and great works.

Won’t you support this great work?

As you can see from the above article, Kenny has a passion for the work of the Lord. Your financial support of him on a regular monthly basis will help him and the school accomplish the much needed job of better preparing men to serve as Gospel Preachers. Please prayerfully consider his words, and help as you can. Thanks! - Robert Stapleton

In Honor * In Memory

The following have recently made a donation to BTSOP as a memorial or honorarium. Please keep in mind that your financial donations to BTSOP, as a honorarium or memorial, goes a long way in training men to be gospel preachers.

RUBY BAKER

Sue Keele

COMER CLAY

Carl & Doris Powell

KEN HERBERT

Bobbie & June Watts

BILL PAINTER

Fritz & Gay Barnett

Maxie & Fran Boren

Kevin & Kathy Carroll

Bob & June Carrothers

Mattie Dabney

James & Elsie Dodson

David & Marie

Pennington

Phil & Mary Pope

Carl & Doris Powell

Mark & Gwenda Selby

Leon & Mary Sheppard

Ann & Cindy Simmons

Bob & Marcia Stapleton

Lisa Stapleton

Bobbie & June Watts

Walter & Gwendolyn Woodard

Bill & Vivian Wren

VELMA BAKER

Bobbie & June Watts

Bob & Marcia Stapleton

EARL FOSTER

Edgewood church of

Christ

MARY McCLURE

Adeline Hill

KENNY VAUGHN

Leroy & Pansy

McClendon

RUBY WIGINTON

Bobbie & June Watts

EVA WILSON

Bob & Marcia Stapleton

Bobbie & June Watts

HONORIUM

MARJORIE ANDERSON

Perry Cotham

CHARLES & JOAN RHEA

Kyle & Lesley Johnson

John & Mary Nelson

This Form Is Provided For Your Convenience.

In Honor Of/Memory Of _____

Send Acknowledgement To:

Mr./Mrs./Miss _____

Address: _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Donated By _____

Sermon Starters

SPIRITUAL DROPOUTS # 2

INTRODUCTION:

1. Parents and school systems all over the land are concerned about school dropouts.
 - A. And they rightfully should be.
2. But there should be a greater concern when it comes to the church and the number of spiritual dropouts that we experience.
 - A. It has been said by some that the church loses 50% of its new members within the first seven years following their conversion.
 - B. If this is true, then the number is staggering.
3. The N.T. teaches the possibility of such—Galatians 6:1; 2 Timothy 4:10; James 5:19, 20; 2 Peter 2:20, 21.
4. Let's notice some reasons why men leave God and become spiritual dropouts.

BODY:

1. THEY FAIL TO BE LED BY THE WORD OF GOD

A. They do not study as they should—2 Timothy 2:15

B. We need to daily study the word.

C. We need to daily search the scriptures—John 5:39.

2. THEY FAIL BECAUSE OF THE WILL TO BE RICH

A. 1 Timothy 6:6-10

B. No matter how rich we are, we will not take it with us.

C. Christians are cautioned to love not the world - 1 John 2:15-17.

D. We are to "seek first the kingdom" - Matthew 6:33.

3. THEY FAIL BECAUSE OF FALSE DOCTRINE

A. Acts 20:28-30

B. We often believe what man says rather than what the Bible says.

4. THEY FAIL BECAUSE THEY ARE SET IN THEIR OWN WAYS

A. Often man would rather be "right" than to be obedient to God—Proverbs 14:14.

B. We believe it is okay if it is wrong so long as it is our way— Proverbs 14:12.

5. THEY LOSE THEIR LOVE FOR GOD

A. John 14:15

B. Matthew 24:12

C. We say we love God, but we are unwilling to prove it—Revelation 2:4, 5.

D. We are not willing to do what He would have us to do—James 4:17.

6. THEY FAIL DUE TO INACTIVITY

A. James 2:24

B. We believe all we need to do is attend from time to time, but we are wrong—Matthew 6:33.

CONCLUSION:

1. Are you a spiritual dropout?

A. If so, now is the time to repent—Acts 8:22.

News from Alumni

Rick Parker (2004)

Rick is now serving as the located preacher for the Linden church of Christ. His address is 201 West Frazier Street, Linden, Texas 75563. His home telephone # is 903-756-5080 and his email address is Rickparker@yahoo.com. I am sure Rick would be happy to hear from other alumni of the school.

Class Ring/Pendants

Shane Coleman actually showed me his ring recently. They are now available. Dunham Jewelry Manufacturing 7365 Remcon B-204 El Paso TX 79912 . Phone: 915-845-1722 Toll Free: 1-866-545-1722 7365; Fax: 915-845-7584; Email: lulumartinez@dunham-mfg.com— Web Site: www.dunham-mfg.com. Please contact the company for information. Thanks.

Student Enrichment Fund

It is so important for our guys to be able to travel to various events such as the Spiritual Sword Lectures in October. Your financial assistance with this helps them to be able to do so. Anyone who has attended a school of preaching knows full well the “shoe-string” budget they often must exist on. This is why your financial assistance is so valuable.

Gospel Meeting

Our students in the English Department have recently assisted in campaign and Gospel Meeting work for

the Heritage congregation in Denton, Texas. Immediately following that, the students in the Hispanic Department worked with two Spanish speaking congregations in a similar activity.

At the end of April and beginning of May students in the English Department will be assisting the church at Kennedale, Texas with a campaign and Gospel Meeting and the Briar, Texas congregation with a campaign. All of the activities assist the students and the congregations who host them. If you would be interested in our assisting you some time in the future, please let us hear from you. We are already looking to book activities for 2007 and later.

Ways To Help

Yes, I would like to financially assist with the work of BTSOP.

Kenny Gardner's Support _____ Monthly
_____ One Time

Willie Alvarenga's Support _____ Monthly
_____ One Time

English Department _____ Monthly
Student Support _____ One Time

Hispanic Department _____ Monthly
Student Support _____ One Time

Hispanic Instructor _____ Monthly
Support _____ One Time

Amount: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone or email: _____

Note to all alumni: If you have a change of address, family news, work news, unusual experience or anything else that you would like to share with other alumni, please let us know. You may e-mail the information to Bob Stapleton at chimalabob@yahoo.com, or fill out the form on our Web Site. Either way, be sure to include name, address, graduation year, congregation you work with and the news item you would like to have included in the newsletter.

FULFILLING THE MINISTRY is a publication of THE BROWN TRAIL SCHOOL OF PREACHING, P.O. BOX 210667, BEDFORD, TX 76095. A work of the Brown Trail Church of Christ.

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
HURST, TEXAS
Permit No. 1

Return Service Requested