

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 ————

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From the Director's Desk

Robert Stapleton



It can't be true! 2005 must still be around somewhere! James well described the brevity of life when he wrote of it being as a "...vapour, that appeareth for a little time,..." (James 4:14). It seems like

it was just a few days ago that we were making plans for the incoming students who would arrive in January of "05" and now we are already a month past the beginning of school for another new year.

Classes began on January 2nd with 11 new full and part time students. This brings the school to a total of 35 full and part time students now attending classes. We, need less to say, are excited about the continued growth of the school and ask your prayers on behalf of both students and faculty.

It is my belief that there is no greater vocation in the world than being a Gospel Preacher. Yet, we have been hearing for years that we are only training 300 men per year (and clearly not all of them are sound in the faith) while we are losing 600 per year. Another study indicated that 25% of congregations of the church do not presently have a full time preacher working with them. Of course, some have chosen this direction, but many more are compelled to this due to the lack of men who are sound in the faith who can fill their pulpits. This problem is only going to get worse unless we do something.

The only thing that I know to turn the tide is supporting sound schools of preaching like BTSOP while we seek to

encourage more men and their wives to commit themselves to this grand vocation.

Additionally, in order for BTSOP to be able to provide the best possible education that we can, we are in need of more full time staff. Presently, I am serving as Director, Dean of Admissions, Dean of Students and teaching 17 and a half hours of classes a week. In addition to this I am teaching a class at the Brown Trail congregation and preaching on Sundays. In attempting to do all of this, I am sure some things are not getting done that need to be done. As indicated in the last couple issues of Fulfilling the Ministry, we have a man ready to begin work with us once we are able to raise his support.

Brethren, lets not "wake up" a few years from now with no where near enough sound Gospel Preachers available to fill "our" pulpits. Let us hear from you.

Hispanic Department

It is exciting to see the Hispanic Department, which is less than two years old, continue to grow. There is such a need to provide sound teaching to those who can speak Spanish to the growing number of Spanish speaking people in the US, along with those from other countries.

As mentioned before, in order for this program to grow as we would like it, it is necessary that we raise the funds to allow Willie Alvarenga to come on board in a full time capacity. I am sure Willie would be more than happy to discuss with you our plans, along with what it will take to get him on board here. The future is before us, and we are accountable for doing that which is necessary to be prepared for it.

News from the School

December, 2005 Graduate

On December 18th Brent and Jessica Fluegel brought their two year stay at BTSOP to a conclusion. Brent was the first student to complete two years of studies following my coming here in December of 2003.

They are now working with the church in Maysville, Oklahoma. Please keep them in your prayers as they settle in and begin their labors for the Lord.



Brent and Jessica Fluegel

Web Site

With each issue of Fulfilling The Ministry we try to remind you of our Web site. There are several areas that may be of benefit to our graduates, and we hope to add more areas in the not too far off future. If you have any suggestions on what we could add to assist our Alumni please let us hear from you. You can check out the Web site at the address below.

www.browntrailsschoolofpreaching.com

Class Ring/Pendants

Shane Coleman provided me with the following info on this project: "We must order one ring to set the cast and then order on web site. The rings can be ordered after March 15, 2006. 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: dunham@dunham-mfg.com."

Shane has asked me to convey his apologies concerning the amount of time it has taken to get this project going but, even in this age of email and other convenience of communications, things still take a lot longer than we would like. We are thankful that Shane took on this project and it has finally completed.

Preachers Available

On a regular basis students go forth from BTSOP to assist congregations on a fill in basis. With the number of students continuing to increase it is important that we add additional congregations to our list of those who call upon our men for fill in preaching when their preacher is out of town, or ill.

As the men go out to assist congregations in this way a form is sent along with them which allows someone within the congregation to report back to us on various areas of the student's visit with the congregation. This allows us to get a good feel on how well we are doing in preparing men. It is also rewarding to receive news that the guys have done well.

Please feel free to contact us if we can assist you in any way.

New Student Body

As already indicated, the student body at BTSOP is on the increase once again. The picture below is of several of the students, although a few were missing when it was taken. We presently have students that have come to us from Kansas, Mexico, North Carolina, Oklahoma, Texas, and New Mexico.

We are fortunate that, as you can see, several of the wives of the men in the Hispanic Department are able to attend full time classes. We are sure this will benefit both husband and wife as they work with congregations once they leave the school.

Please keep all of the men and women in your daily prayers.



January 2006 Student Body

"Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine." 2 Timothy 4:2

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.

ESTELLE ADAMS

Bob & June Watts
Nancy Hart

LINDA BARNETT

Henry &

MARY BARNUM JR.

Bill & Jo Ann Sharbine

E.M. BILGER,

Mattie Dabney

Bob & Marcia Stapleton

BEAULAH FLEMING

Bob & June Watts

DAWSON

FLUEGEL

Kevin & Kathy Carroll

BEA GILLETTE

Nancy Hart

Henry &

Carl & Doris Powell

Carl &

Doris Powell

Bob & Marcia Stapleton

CHARLES HILL

Martha Kay Hill

HAROLD

McWILLIAMS

Bob & Marcia Stapleton

V. Gay Knox

GRACE OVERSTREET

Adeline Hill

ED STOVER

Bob & Marcia Stapleton

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In Honor Of/Memory Of _____

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Mr./Mrs./Miss _____

Address: _____

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Donated By _____

School Campaigns

Each year we attempt to conduct two campaigns designed to assist in the building up of local congregations, along with providing our students some "hands on" experience. We have two openings this year. One in the March to June quarter and the other in the July to September quarter. If you would be interested in our assisting you this way, please contact us soon.

Sermon Starters

SPIRITUAL DROPOUTS # 1

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 COUNT THE COST**
 - A. Before conversion—Matthew 16:24.
2. **THEY FAIL TO LISTEN TO GOD'S MESSENGER**
 - A. Consider 2 Timothy 4:1-6.
 1. Why did Paul write this?
 2. Because some would become spiritual dropouts.
3. **THEY FAIL TO DEVELOP CHRISTIAN VIRTUES**
 - A. Consider 2 Peter 1:5-8, 10.
 1. Dropouts fail to add these to their lives.
 - B. They fail to add what is needed to make them strong.
 1. Things like:
 - A. Patience
 - B. Brotherly kindness
4. **THEY FAIL BECAUSE OF WRONG ASSOCIATIONS**
 - A. This was Solomon's problem—1 Kings 11:4.
 - B. Evil companions corrupt good lives—1 Corinthians 15:33.
 1. Either good or evil will rule our lives.
 2. We sow to the spirit or we sow to the flesh - Galatians 6:8.
5. **THEY FAIL DUE TO THE DEMANDS OF LIFE**
 - A. Consider Luke 8:14.
 - B. How often do we put temporal things before the Spiritual?
 - C. How serious are we about seeking first the kingdom of God? - Matthew 6:33.
 - D. We must remember that the things of the world will soon pass away - 1 John 2:15-17.

News from Alumni

Brent Fluegel (2005)

As already indicated, Brent and Jessica have located with the Maysville, Oklahoma church of Christ. Their address is P.O. Box 445, Maysville, OK 73057. Telephone numbers are (405) 822-0491 (cell) and (405) 425-4807 (office).

Jason Stapleton (2003)

Jason and family have completed two years of mission work at Chimala Mission, Hospital and Schools in Tanzania, East Africa. They have accepted the work of serving the Plainview church of Christ, Paoli, Indiana, as located preacher, and will begin February 1st. They can presently be reached at the following email address—jmlstapleton3@yahoo.com.

Alumni Association News

A meeting of many of the Alumni that were present for the Alumni Banquet on Monday night of the 9th of January was conducted following the Banquet. I am not sure as to what was discussed, since I did not attend the meeting. However, I am sure that Landon Rowell would be able to provide you with the information if you would like to contact him. His email address is:

lrowell222@cebridge.net

Please feel free to contact him about anything relative to the Association.

I know this project has been a little slow in getting up and running. However, it appears that once it is completed it will be worth the wait.

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.

Sympathy Extended

Students and staff of BTSOP extend their condolences to first year student Ed Stover at the passing of his father Ed Stover, who passed to his reward on January 11th. As part of the BTSOP "Family" we "weep with those who weep".

Although we feel the "void" left by departed loved ones, it is great to know that we shall some day meet those who departed this life in Christ "in the air" - 1 Thessalonians 4:16, 17. Surely, we can be "comforted" with "these words" - 1 Thessalonians 4:18.

Student Enrichment Fund

"Field trips" are so important to the overall progress of our students. However, the funds are often not available to travel to Gospel Meetings, Lectureships, or other valuable sources of education. Our Student Enrichment Fund was established to provide funds for these projects. So far very little funds have been designated for this area. If you can assist with this project please indicate so on your check. I can promise you, it will be appreciated.

Thank You

Each year at the Annual Fort Worth Lectureship, which is held at the Brown Trail building, Sister Shirley Farris purchases a Lectureship Book for each of the Full Time Students. These books are a great asset and we do appreciate her doing so!

Although "much study is a weariness of the flesh" (Ecclesiastes 12:12) it is very much a part of the life of the Gospel Preacher and such books are of great value.

FULFILLING THE MINISTRY is a publication of THE BROWN TRAIL SCHOOL OF PREACHING,
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