

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 ————

January 2018
No. 103

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From the Interim—Director’s Desk

Heath Stapleton



“Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine,” 2 Timothy 4:2. Only the Lord knows how many times my father, **Robert Stapleton**,

quoted this verse. In every sermon he ever delivered during chapel, he would quote this verse. I know it was not his favorite verse, his favorite came from Romans 8. But, 2 Timothy 4:2, sums up the preacher's job, his goal, and the commitment a preacher must have toward the truth. I am saddened I will never hear him quote this verse again, yet thrilled there are hundreds of preachers worldwide who will continue to quote God's word, because of the training they received under my father.

On the 31st of December, 8:05 AM, on the Lord's Day, which is so fitting, the father of **Heath, Darrin, Jason** Stapleton, and **Lisa Hendrix** went on to his reward. And within the hour, we stood at mom's house deciding what to do for worship, and like we were trained to do from diapers, we all stood up, in a small ice storm, and we went to worship our Creator. The songs that were led and the sermon preached seemed perfect for the occasion.

I am saddened to announce the passing of mom's husband, our father, a great gospel preacher and the director of **Brown Trail School of Preaching**. Dad served the school for 15 years, the first two as an instructor and the last 13 as instructor and director. This made him the longest serving director in the school's history. I beg of those reading this newsletter that

congregations at **Brown Trail**, and **Venus**, and myself in your prayers.

On behalf of my family, we love each and every one of the school's supporters. You do not know it, but when we often refer to you, we do not refer to you as our supporters, but typically as “The School Family.” We love the School Family, and we appreciate all the prayers, calls, cards, messages, and visits we have received. We know many more would have visited and called, had you known. But, as I told one brother who was unable to attend the memorial service, “I know you, and I know if you could, you would have been here with us.” And we know that to be true of so many more of you. Thank you and God Bless.

Interim Director

Two newsletters ago it was announced that I had accepted the position of **Assistant Director for Development**. The initial purpose of this position was two-fold. First, the school was hemorrhaging money; we were approximately \$45,000.00 in the red after the first four months of 2017. With my past fund raising experience, it just made sense for me to fill that role. Secondly, I was to start working close with my father to help ease his burden. Many don't know or remember, but, when Dad accepted the Director job 13 years ago, the school was dealing with some issues, and because of those issues, we lost some funding and we could no longer afford the staff on hand. My father took three different positions, and rolled them into one. This, and along with BTRadio.net, caused him to start coming to the school earlier and earlier each year, until he was getting here at 1:00 am, just to get everything done. So, I was to be here to help, especially with his health declining. With his

“If ye love me, keep my commandments.” - John 14:15

passing, it is just “natural” for me to fill in for him now as the interim-director, until the school’s leadership can decide where to go from here. We are not in a hurry. There will be no replacement soon. The school has operated before up to 18 months or longer on an interim basis. We do not want to choose a new person in haste. From my understanding, we will probably wait a couple of quarters and then prayerfully and thoughtfully begin a slow and methodical process of finding the perfect fit to continue this ministry. Please keep me in your prayers; I covet them for wisdom and patience. I have taught at schools of preaching before, and directed one that found itself with over 60 students at one time.

New School Year

The new school year started on the 8th of January, with six new students from Jamaica, Mexico, El Salvador, and Texas. We had two others who could not get their support raised in time, from Indiana and India, and Lord willing they will be able to start their classes during the second semester. Please keep these students in your prayers as they are about to embark on a very difficult and strenuous journey to prepare themselves for ministry. The preparation is two years of intense study. All the prior students will tell you it was very difficult, but the reality is, if they cannot handle two years of intense Bible training, they will not be able to handle a pulpit. Also, let’s not forget to pray for our second-year students as well. I find it hard to believe they have already been here a year.

I feel the need at this moment to share my gratitude for **Brother Tavaris Armstrong**, our **Dean of Students**. He has been a tremendous help in getting things ready for the new school year. I felt for him on many occasions. He and dad were very close, and while my brothers and I were in Dad’s office trying to figure out what to do with everything, **Tavaris**, often sat there behind my father’s desk, working and preparing for the school’s opening. I know that had to be uncomfortable for him. Please keep him, **Willie**, **Jesse** and the adjuncts in your thoughts and prayers as well. We all know the school will continue, and we will do a great job, but, as far as we are concerned, things will just never be the same.

New Instructor

We are very grateful to the number of people who have always shown interest in teaching at the school. We wish we had classes for every sound gospel preacher who desires to teach here, but we don’t. With my father’s passing we have six of his and one of mine to fill. For the first quarter **Brother Kenny Gardner** will cover the class “The Home As God Would Have It.” And we are grateful to announce that **Brother Kevin W. Rhodes, MA**, the pulpit preacher with the **Granbury Street** congregation in Cleburne, Texas, since 2003, is joining our family. Kevin is a graduate of the Midwest School of Biblical Studies, and he has preached for congregations in Missouri, Alabama, and Texas, as well as serving as an instructor at **Midwestern School of Preaching**. He will be teaching our “Practical Principles of Preaching” class this first quarter. Please keep Brothers Gardner and Rhodes in your prayers.



Class notes are available on a number of books of the Bible. Each outline costs around \$5.00, plus shipping. If you would like a list of what is available, please let us know, and we will email you the list. Also, we have a number of sermon outline books available. There are 50 outlines in each book, and the cost is the same as the class outline books.

Special Contribution

I started working full-time with the school back in August, 2017 in order to raise money. I am very grateful for the numerous individuals and congregations that gave one-time donations and who have agreed to support us monthly. We are still trying to raise about \$150,000.00 a year to come in through monthly support, which is 125 congregations or individuals supporting \$100.00 a month. We firmly believe this will eventually come in, but until then, we are still training preachers. Please, dwell on these numbers, 600 and 300. It is said we are losing 600 preachers a year to retirement, secular work, health issues, and death, and we are only replacing them with 300 a year. I know my house cannot survive if we spend \$600.00 a week and only bring in \$300.00. What does that say about the future of the Lord’s House in America? Though we have never done this before, and it is not our desire to do this perpetually, we are going to start an annual “Special Contribution,” on the first week of April to try and raise what we perceive each year’s deficit will be. Our budget for 2018 is set at \$465,000.00 and we have \$315,000.00 of that committed, which is up considerably from last year. Our hope is this \$150,000.00 will slide and quickly be reduced to nothing, and we will not have to plea for a special contribution each year.

We are asking that congregations and individuals prayerfully consider this, and that leaderships will plan on the first Sunday of April, to take up a special contribution, to help us continue to prepare preachers and preacher’s wives for years to come. Please contact me if you have any questions.

Lisa (Stapleton) Hendrix

Robert Stapleton’s family was very important to him, and because of that, my sister Lisa wanted to write a few words about him to share with our supporters.

Robert William Stapleton

Husband. Father. Grandfather. Friend. To me, he was dad.

Many knew my dad for his work with the **Brown Trail School of Preaching**. Others knew him for his work with the **Chimala Mission**. Still more knew him for his preaching and teaching. I am proud that he is thought of well for each of those endeavors. As his daughter, I knew him for so much more.

*I knew my dad to be the young man who saw a pretty girl in a mustang at a stoplight in 1970 and followed her because he wanted to talk to her. My dad and that pretty girl, my mom, were married three months later.

*I knew my dad to be the young man who moved his new wife with him from Ohio to Houston, Texas where he worked building houses the first year of their marriage.

*I knew my dad to be the young man who became a Christian after he and my mom moved back to Ohio and were

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, go a long way in training men to be gospel preachers.

BILLY BICKHAM

Broadway church of Christ
Burney Wilson
Cliff Walker

NEVA BOLLER

Daniel, Keely, Elora & Avonlea
McCary
Bobby & June Watts

ROSE MARY COLLINS

Julia Bridges
Bob & Marcia Stapleton

DINAH LANGLEY

Carlisle Langley

BILL MARIN

Donna Brinkley

CHARLES O. MORRIS

Debra Morris

JUDY PONDEXTER

Julia Bridges

EVELINA ROSS

Julia Bridges
Bob & Marcia Stapleton
Bobby & June Watts

ROBERT STAPLETON

Julia Bridges
Kendall Coker
Jerry Miller

DOROTHY WATSON

Bobby & June Watts

ABBIE WILSON

Ralph & Kathleen Adkison

WENDELL WINKLER

Rick Estes

Continued From Lisa

presented with the inerrant truth of God's Word.

*I knew my dad to be the young man who worked in carpentry building houses, began preaching soon after becoming a Christian, was an EMT, drove school buses, coached baseball, and fathered four children.

*I knew my dad to say such things as, "Words have meaning," "God said it and that settles it, it doesn't matter what you believe," "Merry Christmas" and "Happy New Year" anytime except Christmas and New Year time, "What part of that don't you understand?", and "It is what it is."

*I knew my dad to be a good driver, even if he would usually veer to the right in the lane and scare me at times.

*I knew my dad to be sarcastic. I know, you're surprised.

*I knew my dad to love to tease. He especially enjoyed teasing his little grandchildren because little children love to tease back.

*I knew my dad to always be thinking of the well-being of his family. Always trying to help us without overstepping any boundaries he thought were there.

*I knew my dad to be proud of my mom. He gave her the credit for the faithfulness of us kids and for his sons becoming preachers.

*I knew my dad to be the man who only ever changed one diaper when us kids were young, but to become the man who would jump up and clean the kitchen for mom on a regular basis.

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

This Form Is Provided For Your Convenience

In Honor Of/Memory Of _____

Send Acknowledgement To:

Mr./Mrs./Miss _____

Address: _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Fill In Preaching

We want to remind you that students and staff are available for fill in preaching. If your congregation is in need of someone to do so, please contact us as early as possible, so we may be able to assist you. If you cannot reach us by phone, please leave a message giving your name, congregation name, dates when someone is needed, and a call back phone number and email address. We will get back to you as soon as possible.

Seminars/Gospel Meetings

Please note that many of our staff members have been preaching and teaching God's word for decades. During their time in the pulpit, they have preached multiple Gospel Meetings and have held several different types of seminars. Our instructors have taught seminars on Marriage and the Home, Raising Children, Church History, Restoration History, Singing and more. Please feel free to contact us if where the congregation you attend would be interested in having one of our instructors host a seminar or Gospel Meeting.

Sermon Starters

THE DAWNING OF HOPE ROMANS 5:1-2

INTRODUCTION:

1. A Christian is asked "Are you saved?" To which he often replies, "I hope so."
 - A. In his reply you immediately notice an uncertainty.
2. This individual is not rejoicing in his hope, but rather is filled with anxiety about his salvation.
 - A. As a result this person is not able to say with Paul, "we rejoice in hope."
3. Do you see yourself described in the description of this individual?
 - A. Are we destined to a life of uncertainty in Christ?
 - B. Is there an answer to doubtful hope?
 - C. Is you feel doubt about your salvation, then let me assure you that there is an answer!
4. A better understanding of hope will lift the Christian from a cloud of uncertainty to hearts filled with joy.

BODY:

1. THE DEFINITION OF HOPE

- A. Defined in Scripture as favorable and confident expectation.

News from Alumni

HEINER MONTEALTO (2014)

Brother Heiner will be teaching at the new Theological Institute of Costa Rica in San Jose.

Sermon Outline Continued

- B. Hope illustrated is a child desiring and expecting to receive a gift on his birthday.
- 2. THE SOURCE OF HOPE**
- A. If there is no source then there is no hope.
1. If there is no hope there is no reason to rejoice.
 - B. The source of hope is God, Rom. 15:13, Eph. 2:12.
- 3. THE BASIS OF HOPE**
- A. Hebrews 11:1
1. Deep trust in God that forms the foundation upon which our hope can be built.
 2. If we trust God to give what He promises, then we will respond to Him with lives filled with genuine hope.
- 4. THE VALUE OF HOPE**
- A. Leads us to be pure.
1. Everyone who has a hope of being like Christ will purify himself, 1 John 3:2-3.
- B. Provides us with strength.
1. Hope is a valuable part of the armor of God, 1 Thess. 5:8; Eph. 6:18-19.
- C. Anchor of the soul, Hebrews 6:18-19.
1. A steadfast hope will keep us from drifting.
- 5. THE OBJECT OF HOPE**
- A. The object of our hope will give us reason to rejoice.
1. The object of our hope is salvation in Christ, 1 Thess. 5:8.
 2. This is expressed in several ways in the N.T.
 - A. Hope of eternal life, Titus 1:2; 3:7.
 - B. Hope of being like Jesus, 1 John 3:2-3.
 - C. Hope of the glory of God, Romans 5:2.
 - D. Hope of the Gospel, Colossians 1:23
- 6. CONCLUSION**
- A. If you lack hope, then now is the time to obey that form of doctrine that will give you hope that will provide rest for you soul.

Specific Financial Needs

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

Willie Alvarenga Support _____ Monthly
_____ One Time

Tavaris Armstrong Support _____ Monthly
_____ One Time

Jesse Martinez Support _____ Monthly
_____ One Time

General Fund _____ Monthly
_____ One Time

English Department _____ Monthly
Student Support _____ One Time

Spanish Department _____ Monthly
Student Support _____ One Time

Amount: _____ Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone or email: _____

We, also, have students who come to school who do not have computers. If you have a computer, laptop or desktop, that is in good working order, and you are not using it, we would appreciate you donating it to the school. We will be happy to supply you with a Tax Donation Receipt.

“For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.” (Romans 1:16)

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 Heath Stapleton at chimalaheath@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.

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

Please help us in passing the word to congregations and individuals, that our regular programming is aired over the Internet at:

www.btradio.net and
www.KnowTheTruthRadio.org.

For those of you that have a smart phone or tablet, you can download the **TuneIn Radio App** and access our programs this way. Once you have downloaded the App, search for **Brown Trail Radio** and select it. You can then save it and be able to access our programs whenever and wherever you are, so long as you have phone service.

Please note our schedule for 2017 below. Some changes have been made with the speakers and the times the programs are aired.

2017 Btradio.net Schedule

Searching the Scriptures (Robert Stapleton)	Mon.-Fri.	6:00 a.m. 12:00 p.m.
What is Truth? (Tavaris Armstrong)	Tue.-Thur.	10:00 a.m. 2:00 p.m.
Let the Truth Be Told (Ronnie Fisher, Jr., Ronnie Fisher, Sr. & Victor Miles)	Monday	7:00 a.m. 11:00 a.m.
Behold, I Thought (Michael Windham & Adrian Sampson)	Tuesday	4:35 p.m. 8:00 p.m.
Life in the Son (Brandon Ferguson & DuJuan Johnson)	Wednesday	6:30 a.m. 1:00 p.m.
Contending for the Faith (Dale Choate & Charles Murrell)	Thursday	4:00 p.m. 8:00 p.m.
Foundational Principles (Rickey Brown, Joe Nimock & Joe Harris)	Friday	7:00 a.m. 11:00 a.m.
In Search of the Truth (Cody McCoy, Nathan Boyd & Joe Moon)	Friday	4:00 a.m. 8:00 p.m.

Campaigns/Gospel Meetings

Each year we endeavor to conduct at least four door knocking Campaigns by both the **English** and **Spanish Departments**. There are two Sunday through Wednesday Campaigns and two Friday through Sunday Campaigns. With 2017 quickly coming to an end, we have wrapped up all the campaigns for this year. As we make plans for 2018 and beyond, if the congregation that you attend would be interested in such an event, please get in touch with us so your name can be added to the upcoming schedule.

MTSM Program

Our **Moving Toward Spiritual Maturity** program continues to reap great benefits for those that take part in it. This program is for students that have recently graduated from High School, and who may be planning to attend college. If interested, please call us to set up an appointment to visit with you.

“For though I preach the gospel, I have nothing to glory of: for necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel!”
(1 Corinthians 9:16)

Fill In Preaching

We want to remind you that students and staff are available for fill in preaching. If your congregation is in need of someone to do so, please contact us as early as possible, so we may be able to assist you. If you cannot reach us by phone, please leave a message giving your name, congregation name, dates when someone is needed, and a call back phone number and email address. We will get back to you as soon as possible.

Class Material Available

Class notes are available on a number of books of the Bible. Each outline costs around \$5.00, plus shipping. If you would like a list of what is available, please let us know, and we will email you the list. Also, we have a number of sermon outline books available. There are 50 outlines in each book, and the cost is the same as the class outline books.

Fulfilling the Ministry

Please let us know if you would like to receive your copy of **Fulfilling the Ministry** via the Internet. We would be more than happy to add your name to our email list!

Also, please, if you are relocating, send us an update with your new mailing address as we have to pay First Class postage for each one that the Post Office returns.

Alumni Association Annual Lectureship

Please mark your calendars for the third week of January, 2018 as the **BTSOP Alumni Association** will be hosting its yearly **Annual Lectureship** here at the Brown Trail building. The dates will be **January 14-17** with the theme **“Homecoming: Rebuild, A Study of the Book of Nehemiah.”**

Please note that this Lectureship is not only for graduates of **BTSOP**. Although most, if not all the speakers will be graduates, it is for the benefit of brethren far and wide!! Presently we have plans to air the Lectureship over **btradio.net** and the Brown Trail web site at <http://btcoc.com/index.php/multimedia>.

If you would like further information on this event please contact us and we will see that you receive a brochure once they are printed.

Graduation Activities - 2017

Please take note that our **Graduation Banquet** will be December 15th at 6:30 p.m. in the multi-purpose room at the Brown Trail building and **Graduation** December 17th at the conclusion of the 2:00 p.m. Sunday afternoon services, also at the Brown Trail building. All are invited to attend these activities.