

Fulfilling the Ministry

Brown Trail School of Preaching

A Year of Firsts

Kevin W. Rhodes, Director



The calendar demands that October marks the first anniversary of my coming to serve as Director at Brown Trail. However, that still seems incredible to me personally. The past year has flown by due to the challenging

pace of the school and my attempt to work on my courses while introducing some changes along the way.

In the last year we have adopted a new daily schedule to provide additional fifty-five minutes of classtime to each day, reorganized the curriculum to increase the skills we can address in the program, introduced a new type of course that combines the biblical text with practical skills, adjusted the schedule to accommodate additional seminars and workshops, built a visitation program for the students, and created an orientation week designed to teach skills important for success in an academic environment.

In August we enjoyed a Singing Seminar with Andy Baker and then traveled to Sevierville, Tennessee to attend Polishing the Pulpit. It was my privilege, as well as others on the faculty, to give some lessons, but the benefit to the students was tremendous, even exceeding my own expectations. They had the opportunity to hear lessons specifically addressing some of the practical issues they will face as preachers, to sit at the feet of outstanding communicators and Bible students, and to enjoy the fellowship with thousands of Christians they would otherwise not have had the privilege of meeting. The students were like kindergarteners at Christmastime. We are so thankful for those who contributed to make this possible for them. We are already making plans to return next year. In September the students completed their third campaign of the year, traveling to Sedalia, Missouri. In October, we

will join with hundreds of congregations and dozens of brotherhood works to knock doors and reach out to our community.

During the past year, I have taught Expository Preaching, The Godhead, Leadership in Nehemiah, Hebrews, Introduction to Teaching, 1 & 2 Thessalonians: A Teaching Practicum, Greek Exegesis of 1, 2, & 3 John, and Introduction to Public Speaking, plus a Principles of Teaching course in the Wives' Program. Due to the changes to the curriculum, my schedule next quarter will be extremely full. I will be teaching Textual Preaching, Leadership in Nehemiah, The Godhead, Writing with Style, and Romans. Fortunately, two of these I have taught previously, easing the preparation load. Regardless, this has kept me busy in the classroom in addition to my other responsibilities.

Over the fall break, I am traveling to Cape Town, South Africa for a two-week stint to teach in Cape Bible School as part of our partnership. In addition to this, Mike Roberts, preacher for the church in Porter, Oklahoma and a 2009 graduate of Brown Trail, has agreed to become our Envoy to Cape Bible School in South Africa and will travel and teach regularly in their program. We are thankful for the congregation at Porter and for Mike's willingness to join us in this endeavor.

This December we will graduate two more students from Brown Trail. In conjunction with that, we anticipate making some adjustments to our graduation banquet on Friday night to provide more levity as students reminisce about their school experience. We have also moved the graduation and reception to Saturday afternoon to create a distinct experience and to make it possible for more supporters to attend.

I have learned much in the last year, and there is still so much to learn. But I am ever thankful for the encouragement and support that has made this past year possible. We have made great strides in many ways. With the help of God and your continued assistance, we have confidence that this is only the beginning of an even brighter future.

Elders

Stephen Alexander
Kevin Carroll
Russ Floyd
David Hamrick
Bobby Watts

Director

Kevin W. Rhodes

Director Spanish Department

Willie Alvarenga

Academic Dean

Pat McIntosh

Dean of Students

Roy Gafford

Director for Development

Heath Stapleton

Field Representative Spanish Department

Salvador Del Fierro



Chapel: Becoming a Man of God

The daily chapel at Brown Trail School of Preaching is a different experience than the typical abbreviated assembly. We do indeed make announcements, consider prayer requests, worship in song, read scripture, and offer prayer to God, but the study portion of chapel is deliberately devotional in character. The scripture readings follow a plan designed to encourage introspection and spiritual reflection. In the last several months these themes have focused on preaching, characteristics of Jesus, discipleship, thankfulness, character, the Christian graces, metaphorical descriptions of God in the Psalms, the Christian walk, and Christian unity. Immediately after the scripture reading, the Director (or faculty member in his absence) offers a prompt for all present to consider. Then, for the next five minutes, all present consider the text not only for its meaning but especially for its personal application—not for others, but for ourselves. After recording individual thoughts in journals for that five minute period, there is a brief discussion combining all the lessons learned, followed by the Director's applications.

A recent chapel considered the text of 2 Kings 1:1-18. This section, which I encourage you to examine yourself, records how Ahaziah, son of King Ahab, injured himself in a fall and sent messengers to appeal to Baal-Zebub rather than Yahweh regarding his health, demonstrating the idolatry of his upbringing. In response, the LORD sent Elijah out to meet these messengers and give the LORD's answer anyway, which the prophet subsequently did, announcing the certainty of Ahaziah's approaching death. When the messengers returned to Ahaziah with this report, the king immediately recognized Elijah by his clothing, reputation, and stand for God. Therefore, he commanded a unit of fifty men led by an officer to confront Elijah and demand that he submit to the king's will. Elijah responded by calling for fire from heaven to consume them, which it subsequently did (something the disciples wanted to do as well but were denied, Luke 9:54). Ahaziah then sent another unit which then met with the same fate. When the king sent yet another,

the captain pled with Elijah for his life, which was granted to him. Elijah then accompanied the captain on his return to Ahaziah where God's man delivered the original message from the LORD. Ahaziah did indeed die, and various events from his life were chronicled in Israel's records, but in God's account, this was the one single event that really mattered.

From this passage, the students then considered the following prompt: What should characterize a man of God? They continue to improve in their ability both to analyze a passage and apply it personally, and this passage was no exception. However, these are the thoughts I offered on that occasion:

1. A man of God stands up for God. vs. 1-3
2. A man of God speaks even hard things when people need to hear them. v. 4
3. A man of God is known for his work—not for his show. vs. 5-8
4. A man of God stands against opposition when necessary. vs. 9-10
5. A man of God remains tenacious in the midst of adversity. vs. 11-12 (Think about how this occurred in Elijah's life after the events of 1 Kings 19.)
6. A man of God shows compassion where appropriate. vs. 13-15
7. A man of God personally follows the Lord's directions no matter what anyone else does. v. 15
8. A man of God is consistent in the message proclaimed. v. 16
9. A man of God ultimately will be justified for standing for what is right. v. 17
10. A man of God does not serve for acclaim or notoriety but for God. v. 18

Chapel is not designed for sermon preparation or intense exegesis. It exists to remind us all that, as preachers, we have a responsibility to feed our own souls and apply God's Word personally before we ever set foot into a pulpit. My prayer is that this daily exercise will become a lifelong discipline for each and every student at Brown Trail.

Notes and Needs

In Memorium

The following have recently made a donation to Brown Trail School of Preaching as a memorial or honorarium.

EARLENE DENTON

Marcia Stapleton

TOMMIE GREER

Patsy Ainsworth

Jean Cearley

Richard and Karen Glaszczak

LILLIAN HALL

Suzanne Seely

LOU WARD

MaryLea Stephens

Your financial contributions to Brown Trail School of Preaching, such as this, help immensely in the training of gospel preachers. Thank you so much for being part of our work in this way.

Like a Visit?

Would you be interested in having someone from Brown Trail talk to your congregation about our work? We would love to do so. If you would like an introduction to the school and our financial needs, information on our Spanish Department, or an update on some of the new things we have introduced in the last year, we would love to visit with you about them.

Transformed

Mark your calendars now to join us for our **Transformed** workshop, February 20-23, 2020, where we will focus on **The Christian Home**. We will have sections dedicated to youth and seniors, classes designed specifically for preachers, some classes for women, and something for everyone. We hope prospective students, alumni, supporters, and Christians everywhere will join us for a powerful weekend.

Please note...

- **The Nature of Support.** The work at Brown Trail depends on the financial support of Christians just like you. We remember this daily and appreciate it immensely. We have made tremendous strides in the last two years toward establishing a secure foundation for our financial future, and we are thankful for those who have participated with us in the process.

We are so thankful that our students in the English Department have the support they need. Considering the number of new students who have joined us this year, we are especially thankful for your help. Moving forward, though, we must make sure that we also have consistent funds available for those who instruct them and for daily operations rather than depending upon one time contributions to make up the difference. It certainly does not have the appeal of youth and excitement that a young student can bring, but it is what makes the experience for all of those students possible. And all those who support someone on staff or the general fund are deeply appreciated. We hope you will consider adding us into your budget in the coming year as we mentor the next generation of gospel preachers.

Notes from Willie Alvarenga, Director of the Spanish Department

- For the last fifteen years, we have been blessed with the opportunity to train Spanish-speaking gospel preachers in their own language. Our graduates are preaching the Gospel in Costa Rica, El Salvador, and Mexico, as well as in the United States. Like all preaching students, our students need financial support to be able to receive quality of biblical training. However, unlike many others, our students come from areas where there is little money to spare for preacher training.

At present, we have **four** students who would like to begin their studies in January of 2020. However, even if all goes well, we might be able to admit only **two** due to the lack of student support. With this in mind, would you please prayerfully consider supporting a student in the Spanish Department? If so, please contact me and I will be more than glad to provide you with the necessary information as to how you can do so. You may call me at (817) 681 4543 or (817) 268 3222 or email me at buscandoalperdido@yahoo.com.

Financial Needs

Circle One	Amount
Robert Stapleton Endowment _____	
Student Books and Software _____	
2020 PTP Expenses _____	
Willie Alvarenga Support _____	
Jesse Martinez Support _____	
Pat McIntosh Support _____	
Kevin W. Rhodes Support _____	
Heath Stapleton Support _____	
General Fund _____	
Student (English or Spanish) _____	
(Underline which)	
Tomorrow's Men Today _____	
(Future Leaders Camp)	
South Africa Travel Fund _____	
(Cape Bible School)	
Where Needed _____	

Speaking Schedule

Sept 15	Brown Trail
Sept 22	Jacksonville, AL
Sept 23-Oct 9	Cape Bible School Cape Town, South Africa
Oct 20	Birdville Lectures North Richland Hills, TX
Oct 26-27	Marriage Seminar West, TX
Nov 3	Colleyville Lectures Colleyville, TX

Calendar of Events

Oct 5	Doorknocking Day
Oct 7	Fall Quarter Begins
Nov 8-11	Evangelism Sem.-Rob Whitacre
Nov 27-29	Thanksgiving Holidays
Dec 6	Director's Christmas Party
Dec 16-19	Finals Week
Dec 20	Graduation Banquet
Dec 21	Graduation and Reception
Dec 22-Jan 1	Christmas Break
Jan 2	Winter Quarter Begins
Feb 20-23	Transformed
Mar 6	Game Night at Brown Trail
Mar 9-13	Finals Week

English Faculty

Willie Alvarenga
Dewayne Bryant
Bill Burk
Will Cammack
Robert Dodson
Roy Gafford
Ken Gardner
J.J. Hendrix
Bryan Hodge
Ken Hope
Richard Massey
Pat McIntosh
Randall Morris
Eddie Parrish
Rick Popejoy
Kevin W. Rhodes
Jason Sparks
Jeremy Sprouse
Heath Stapleton
Jon Warnes

Envoy to CBS-South Africa

Mike Roberts

Spanish Faculty

Willie Alvarenga
Marco Arroyo
Salvador del Fierro, Jr.
Jaime Luna
Juan Luna
Jesse Martinez
Rogelio Medina
Obed Rodriguez
Osbaldo Rodriguez

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