



Laborers Together Newsletter

Memphis School of Preaching Alumni Association

“For we are laborers together with God. . .” (1 Cor. 3:9)

Editor: Mike McDaniel, MSOP Alumni Liaison

Wayne Rodgers, President
Rick Lawson, Recording Secretary
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Joey Davis, Vice President
Keith A. Mosher Sr., Treasurer
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ENCOURAGEMENT RECEIVED

Wayne Rodgers (2009), President

I doubt that it is the case that I am the only alumnus to sit and ponder his time at the Memphis School of Preaching. I certainly think back with fond memories of instructors, classmates, and congregations which supported my family while attending the school. One thing I am reminded about is how many alumni were around me either encouraging me to preach and to go to the school or later while studying to keep up the work. Echoes of words like Brother Liddell's, “you can do it, brother” still ring in my ears. Still, even today, many of my classmates and alumni continue to encourage me.

Some of them “encouraged” (some arm-twisting...lol) me to serve as the Alumni President, and I agreed. There have been many who have served that office well before me, and I so appreciate all they

did to help not just leading meetings but helping to see the needs of our alumni and brotherhood were met. I will do my best, following in their steps, to do the same.

I often hear compliments of our alumni about the work and fellowship that is done, including the influencing of so many young and older men to attend the Memphis School of Preaching. Let us continue that great tradition leading those whom we serve in our local congregations to also want to serve and minister and finding no greater Bible education than on the campus of the Memphis School of Preaching.

May God bless each of your works in the Kingdom. What a blessing to serve in any capacity in His Kingdom, but to preach His Word and serve His people is an honor.



FROM THE DIRECTOR

B. J. Clarke

This is one of the busiest times of the year at the Memphis School of Preaching! Nine students graduated on Father's Day. After a one-week intermission, Summer School began on June 27th. The students take three classes over a 6 week period with two weeks of study per class.

The Foundations training camp, for teenage boys and girls, was conducted on the MSOP campus from June 25th to July 1st. We had nearly 150 teenagers come from several parts of the country to study the theme: "Rejoice In The Lord, Always." At a time when so many young people are shown on television acting out and rebelling against all that is good and holy, how refreshing it is to see so many young people come together to study the Word of God and try to be more like Jesus! We are already looking forward to next year's Foundations, which will feature the theme "In Christ Alone." It will be conducted June 24-30, 2023.

Summer School will end in early August and the students will have a brief break from School. Orientation for the new School year will be on August 17th, after which the students will travel to Polishing the Pulpit in Sevierville, TN for a concentrated week of special studies.

We are beginning to see our enrollment trend upwards again, closer to pre-pandemic levels. Of course, we are not seeking just quantity, but are looking for quality students who desire to learn the Word and to "Preach the Word" (2 Tim. 4:2).

Considering the condition of our world today, we are bold to say we would love to have an even greater quantity of greater quality students, so that even greater numbers of the lost could be brought to Christ! If you know a quality student, send them our way!

We thank you for assisting us in this quest to seek and to save the lost (Lk. 19:10). Your support means much to us, whether it is a one-time contribution or consistent monthly support. We do appreciate especially those who help us with monthly support to help offset the monthly expenses that are a part of operating a School. You are helping us to help others find the Savior! Thank you, and thank you again!

ALUMNI NEWS

Death

We extend our sympathy to the family of Jerry Wright, former member at Forest Hill, who passed away June 21. His memorial service was conducted on June 23rd at Blackwater Macedonia Church of Christ in Jasper, Alabama. Visitation will be at 6 P.M. with the memorial service to follow at 7 P.M. Ben Wright (1997) wrote, "My dad gained his reward today. He died in a peaceful way and very quickly, which was a great blessing. His body just could not rebound from two serious surgeries so close together. Dad's smile and wit are going to be missed greatly. Bobby and I ask that you keep our mom, Patricia Wright, in your prayers. She has dedicated her life to God and taking care of Dad and now a great portion of her life has changed."

Congregation Needing A Preacher

The Berryville church of Christ in Berryville, Arkansas has asked us to announce that they are looking for a preacher. One of the elders is Bruce Foster, and he is the contact person. His number is 870-423-8843.

Wedding

Erik Harmon (2014) writes, "On June 24, 2022 the former Ms. Toni Sabo and I were wed in Great Falls, Montana. We will continue to labor with the Ashville Church of Christ in Ashville, Alabama where I have been since April of 2019. Toni will be teaching 8th grade math at O. D. Duran North Junior High School in nearby Pell City. This will be her

11th year in education.

Bob Hawkins (1991) writes, "Mike, hope all your family is doing well and your work is prospering in the Lord's service! Since you mentioned updates I could not remember if I had ever given our congregation's website address that has our radio sermons available, which I record each week, and they are about 29 minutes in length. Here is the address: www.morganstreetchurchofchrist.org. Best regards to those at MSOP!

Chuck and Marci Cordon (2019) are continuing stateside work with the Concord church of Christ, NH. They are off to Nigeria and Uganda, Aug. - Nov. for their 3rd campaign with the School of Biblical Studies, Jos Nigeria. They kindly request your prayers in this work. <https://www.savannahchurchofchrist.com/missions> and <https://www.thegospeltoafrica.com/>.

"Grubb Mission Work" Oversight Moves to the Schertz Church of Christ

John Grubb (2013-HA) writes, "As you read this new report, we are now working with the Schertz Church of Christ, 501 Schertz Parkway, Schertz, TX 78154. This is now the beginning of my 41st year in mission work. Beginning now (July 1, 2022), we ask all of supporters to send their contributions to: "Grubb Mission Fund" c/o Schertz Church of Christ, 501 Schertz Parkway, Schertz, TX 78154. Please continue to make out your checks to "Grubb Mission Fund." <https://grubbmisionwork.blogspot.com/>.

Writing Full Time

Rod Rutherford (1974) writes, "Mike, here is an update on my activities: I am now giving my full time to writing. Currently, I am working on a book on "Denominational Doctrines in the Light of Scripture." This is based on my little book I put out in outline form many years ago. It has been very popular. I have revised the book to bring the information up to date and added several chapters. It will be in full text form rather than the outline form of the original version. I hope to have it printed by Amazon. There will be 26 chapters and an estimated 280-300 pages. I hope to have it done and ready for the market by October. Brenda and I are well at present. I will be 83 in a few days. Brenda will have a milestone birthday in August. I am happy MSOP has a new teacher on the staff. I have known him for 55 years and can wholeheartedly recommend him."

Bible Lands Tour

Tony Lawrence (2004-HA) writes, "Over the years I have had several graduates ask me about a Bible Lands tour, and I have another one planned for next March 13-22, 2023 to Israel. While I would prefer they contact me directly about a digital or paper copy, I also have it available at my website biblelandphotos.org. The maximum for the trip is 32 and I already have 10 registered. There is still an early bird discount to register until September 25. Thanks! Tony Lawrence, Church of Christ at Bybee Branch, 1165 Old Smithville Road, McMinnville, TN 37110-1008, (931) 473-2486 Office.

Africa Mission Work

Ron Gilbert (1973) writes, "Greetings to you all in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. June was a great month with 1,541 baptisms reported, 2,668 restored, 22 new congregations being established, with 1,077 of these baptisms from students reporting on their work January through June 2022. Of these baptisms, 54 were from the radio program in Malawi. The radio program continues to reach many souls with the Gospel. They are studying with over 1,000 contacts from the program and are having baptisms each week. There were 42 baptisms from Gospel Meetings in June. Our thanks to those of you who have given \$300.00 for a Gospel Meeting in Africa. Many souls are being taught the Gospel through these meetings. There were 5 baptisms with the work with orphans in Tanzania and 8 more Bible studies currently ongoing. The 17 preacher students in Malawi went home for a break and during their break, they reported 104 baptisms and 302 restored. These men were very busy in evangelism. In Tanzania, 470 new BCC students were enrolled during the month of June. During the month of June, \$1,000.00 was sent to purchase Bibles in local languages in Africa and \$3,300.00 for Gospel Meetings as well as \$5,500.00 to purchase food to help feed those suffering from a drought. The new preacher school building at Bomet, Kenya is completed now, and the brethren have moved into this building. We are currently building a security wall and gate at the front entrance of the school...Our mission trip in August is looking good at this point. We have raised

the needed funds for this trip. Our thanks to everyone that helped. We will send a financial report to those who helped when we return from Africa. We recently shipped several thousand Gospel tracts to Zambia. We hope the tracts will arrive there before we do.”

Spanish Bible School

Marlon Retana (2017) writes, “I am thankful this work of the Lord is not a one-man band’s effort, but a team effort, having a wonderful band of brothers working with us. Almost 3 years ago, I got an email from WVBS asking me if I would like to translate into Spanish and record three of their most popular videos. We have already surpassed 1.3 million views on YouTube with one of those videos. From that time to now, more than 90 videos in Spanish have been published, and, in the upcoming days, 33 video lessons for the course on the book of Acts and 16 video lessons on Greek will be available on the School website. We also recorded 3 topical videos (2 on Premillennialism and 1 on Miracles) during our visit to WVBS this month. One email based on one recommendation started this wonderful relationship we have between the Spanish Bible School and World Video Bible School. God certainly opened a big door to reach the Spanish-speaking world with His Word. I wish I could thank everyone at WVBS by name but I know a name might be missing, so, I just want to say that we love everyone at WVBS and are very thankful for their service to the Lord.

Books For Sale

James Hill, Jr. (1991), has boxes

of books for sale. He may be reached by telephone at 662- 552- 3750 or hillusmcfd9395@gmail.com.

Moved

Ronnie Scherffius (2002) writes, “August 1st I began my new work with the Buda-Kyle church of Christ in Buda, TX. No contact information has changed at this time other than the mailing address: 733 Hot Spring Valley, Buda, TX 78610.

Prayers

Stanley Ryan (1979) informed me on August 2nd that Patti was in Vanderbilt Hospital undergoing cancer treatments, and they requested our prayers. Please pray for Patti Ryan.

Prayers are requested for flood victims in Eastern Kentucky. **Tony Belcher (1986)** writes, “the flooding took place farther east of us where there are more hills and valleys. Heavy, sustained rains washed down into the valleys and flooded creeks and streams. Many people were not aware of the flooding until they heard the roar of water or felt their house moving. It was truly an historic event, unlike any other anyone alive today has ever seen in this area.” Brother Belcher preaches for the South Irvine church of Christ in Irvine, Ky.

Masters Degree

Eddy Gilpin (1985) writes, “Hope all is well. Thanks for keeping us all updated. I don't know if he has mentioned it or not, but my son (Kyle- 2008) is graduating from Jacksonville State University (Jacksonville, AL) with his Masters in history. Naturally, we are very proud of him for this accomplishment.

Prayers

Clifford Newell, Jr (1976) writes that Diane Newell has breast cancer. She had three chemo treatments before surgery and three weeks later, she had a double mastectomy. They are following up with Immune Therapy every three weeks. He says, “She has not been feeling well since March, but we know that God is good all the time.”

Moving

Joshua Ankiah (2001) writes, “I will be working with the Lake Norman Church of Christ in North Carolina. I accepted this position since our return from South Africa in March, where we spent 12 1/2 years in the mission field.”

Congregation Needing A Preacher

David Stafford (2017) writes, “I have been asked to inform the school that North Arkansas Street church of Christ in Springhill, Louisiana is looking for a gospel preacher. This was my first work. Jonathan Jenkins just left there to move to Georgia. The address is: 902 North Arkansas St., Springhill, LA 71075. Contact: Huey Mayfield, 318-402-6081.

Obeded The Gospel

Mike Swims (2013) writes, “Jennifer and I are happy to share the news with you that our oldest son, Conner Christopher Swims, was baptized into Christ on July 1st, 2022. He has always had such a tender heart for the Father and Jesus, and now we take great comfort knowing that They've also made that tender heart pure. I had the privilege of baptizing him into Christ. It struck me how much his little brother Cooper (who has passed) was on his mind during this event,

because the first thing he said to me after coming up out of the water was, "Now we all get to be together again as a family someday with Jesus." From the hearts and mouths of babes!”

Reminder of Dues

MSOP Alumni Association voluntary dues are \$40 a year and may be sent to MSOP in care of our treasurer, Keith Mosher, at 3950 Forest Hill-Irene Rd., Memphis, TN 38125. Make checks payable to MSOP Alumni Association. If it is more expedient, just go to the alumni page of the website at www.msop.org and pay using your PayPal account. Funds are used to pay a \$250 death benefit to families when an alumnus passes away. They are also used to help fund special projects and to support MSOP in special purchases.

New Fence

On July 31st, brother B. J. Clarke showed me a video of the new security fence near the apartments. It looks splendid! All that is left is for the security gate to be installed.

A Visit With Gary Colley

Being in Huntsville, Alabama in for a few days, I was able to make an appointment to see my long time friend and colleague, Gary Colley, on June 14th. I was delighted to see him, and we were able to reminisce and catch up on things. I brought him a signed card from the faculty and students of MSOP. If you would like to send Gary and Maggie Colley a card, you may send it to: Gary Colley, Madison At The Range, Room 203, 10801 County Line Rd, Madison, AL 35758-3675.

FOUNDATIONS 2022



Attentive Listeners



**Our Newest MSOP Faculty Member
Kevin Rutherford**



**Forest Hill Evangelist Scott Cain
Teaches The Young Men**



**Quality Instruction From
Daniel F. Cates**



Some of the young men from Foundations made the trek to the Somerville Church of Christ and conducted their midweek study. Pictured with them are the Elders (Darrell Beard & Al Helm) and the pulpit preacher (Ryan Manning). We are thankful to good congregations like this for opening their doors to us.

OUR USE OF THE WORD “PRIDE”

Mike McDaniel

Back in the 1990's, a good sister in Christ who was teaching a ladies' Bible class at the time, asked me about the word “pride.” She said that from her study, pride was always used negatively in the Bible and was a sin. She wondered if we should not make statements such as “I am proud of you,” or “I am proud that you achieved that accomplishment” since the word was always used negatively in the Word of God.

In his book, *A Word For The Day*, J. D. Watson agrees with this view. He wrote, “It truly is amazing how often Bible principles and obvious Bible verses are simply ignored, even by Christians and Christian leaders. We give lip service to the Bible, but disregard what it actually says. Totally ignored, for example, is the clear fact that in the forty-nine occurrences of the word *pride* and in the forty-eight occurrences of the words *proud* in Scripture (KJV), not a single one is used in a positive way. Never is pride tolerated, much less praised as it is today.”

Obviously, we should teach and preach against the sin of pride. James was inspired to write in James 4:6, “But he giveth more grace. Wherefore he saith, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble.” We should be warned that “Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall” (Prov. 16:18). However, is it the case that

“proud” or “pride” can never be used by us in a positive sense for such would be unscriptural and out of keeping with the teaching of the Bible?

I remembered that conversation with my sister in Christ when I was recently studying Paul's words in Second Corinthians 7:4, “Great is my boldness of speech toward you, great is my glorying of you: I am filled with comfort, I am exceeding joyful in all our tribulation.” Paul said that because of his great love and affection for them, he spoke freely, openly, frankly, and plainly to them with the confidence that they would listen. He also had gloried or boasted of them to others. Paul had boasted of the Corinthians to Titus. “For if I have boasted any thing to him of you, I am not ashamed; but as we spake all things to you in truth, even so our boasting, which I made before Titus, is found a truth” (2 Cor. 7:14). He had boasted of them to the Macedonians. “For I know the forwardness of your mind, for which I boast of you to them of Macedonia, that Achaia was ready a year ago; and your zeal hath provoked very many” (2 Cor. 9:2).

I began to study the Greek word *kauchesis* which is translated “boasting” in the KJV. In his notes, my friend Brian Kenyon, the director of the Florida School of Preaching, pointed out: “This word is used in a negative way in Romans 3:27

and James 4:16. However, it can also be used positively, as Paul does every time he uses it in Second Corinthians (1:12; 7:14; 8:24; 9:4; 11:10,17). Paul often boasts about what Christ accomplished through him (Rom. 15:17-21; 1 Cor. 15:10).” In a footnote on this word brother Kenyon said, “Compare with the English word ‘pride,’ which can be used in a negative way to refer to arrogance or in a positive way to refer to pleasure or satisfaction in an accomplishment, in another person, etc.” Being intrigued, I studied further.

William Mounce in his *Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words* says *kauchesis* “refers to the act of boasting. It can be negative or positive (eg. Having a sense of legitimate “pride” in a person or “glorying” in God)” (Page 537).

Stephen D. Renn in his *Expository Dictionary Of Bible Words* speaks of the positive usage of *kauchesis* by writing, “Positively expressed, ‘rejoicing’ in one’s ministry in Christ is noted in Romans 15:17; 2 Cor. 1:12. First Corinthians

15:31 speaks of ‘boasting’ or ‘rejoicing’ in Christ. ‘Rejoicing’ in the spiritual growth and maturity of one’s flock, or congregation, and one’s fellow workers, is a characteristic of the apostle Paul’s letters in 2 Cor. 7:4,14; 8:24; 11:10; 1 Thess. 2:19. See also 2 Cor. 11:17.”

The Greek word *kauchesis* is translated *glorying* (KJV), *boasting* (NKJV), and *pride* (ESV). Based on Paul’s usage of this Greek word which can be rendered *pride* and comparing it with the positive use of the English word *pride*, I have come to the conclusion that there is nothing unscriptural or wrong in saying, “Son, I am proud of you” or “Daughter, I am proud of your great accomplishment.” In such an instance, we are using the word to indicate rejoicing, pleasure, or satisfaction in another person or in something they have done. I am proud of brother Brian Kenyon for sharing a new insight on this Greek word *kauchesis*. It helps me to answer a question first asked of me about twenty-three years ago.

Thank You Note From Don Blackwell



Jamie Long (1997) presents Don Blackwell (1996) with the 2022 MSOP Alumnus of the Year Award

“I wish to express my sincere appreciation for the 2022 Alumnus of the Year Award. My time at the Memphis School of Preaching was absolutely invaluable to me. I have often expressed that I would not trade it for all of my other education combined. I have the greatest confidence in the school’s present staff. In addition to the current faculty, brother Clarke has put together a “dream team” of instructors who are not only capable, but who exemplify what it means to be a Christian. I am honored to be a graduate of MSOP, and I strongly recommend it to those who are looking for a solid education as a gospel preacher.”

MY BIBLE

Charles R. Brewer

[Editor's Note: B. J. Clarke, Michael Clarke, and Scott Cain recently served as panelists on *A Bible Answer* with me. We recorded two special programs on "Is The Bible The Word Of God?" In view of a recent Gallup Poll, these programs are desperately needed. They will air on September 4th and 11th, 2022. Please look for them on A Bible Answer TV's YouTube channel or on our website at www.abibleanswertv.org. I read the following poem at the end of the second program. It was written years ago by brother Charles R. Brewer and published in his book of poetry entitled, **Above The Shadows.**]

What's in my hand? Please take a look –
What am I holding, just a book?

Ah, more than a book, my friends, by far,
For as the sun outshines a star
So stands this Book of truth sublime
Supreme upon the shelves of time
Others come and quickly go,
But no passing shall it know
And the wisdom of its pages
Can guide the world through all the ages

Our founding fathers knew its worth
When our great nation had its birth
Their hopes were strong, their laws were just
For in its God they put their trust.
And as we honor it – so long
Shall we continue to be strong
When from its truths we turn away
Our nation then falls in decay.

I hold in my hand more wealth than gold
Though all earth's treasures should unfold
I hold in my hand The Living Word:

The sweetest story ever heard
I hold a lamp whose steadfast light
Shines brightest in the darkest night
I hold staff that is my stay
When I grow weary on life's way
I hold a song whose vibrant ring
Lets me hear how angels sing.

I hold an anchor to my soul
When tempests rage and storm-waves roll
I hold a glass that lets me see
A wonder-world that is yet to be
I hold a will that makes me heir
To a home eternal over there.

By this Book I face the years
With loving trust, unmoved by fears.

