

# ROY J. HEARN, TRAINER OF PREACHERS

*Billy Bland*

My first recollection of meeting brother Hearn was when I visited the Memphis School of Preaching with the idea of attending the school. I would come to appreciate him more and more as I had the privilege of sitting at his feet day by day for the two years that I attended the School. A student not only obtains "book knowledge" from his instructor, but also learns valuable lessons from observing various traits from his teacher. Brother Hearn was an effective teacher to preachers both by his ready knowledge of the Scriptures and with the reverence he demonstrated toward his work. He taught us not only with his words, but also with his actions.

Brother Hearn taught that preachers are to be servants. He reminded us of the fact that Jesus came as a servant. He would often quote the following passage – "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth: And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father" (Phil. 2: 5-11). Brother Hearn wanted all the students, first and foremost, to be servants of God. He would remind us that we should become and remain "humble." There is no place for arrogance or pride in a preacher.

Brother Hearn taught that preachers are to "preach the word." Brother Hearn himself was a man of the Book. He was not a teacher or preacher of man's philosophy or ideas. His lessons were filled with a "thus saith the Lord." It was obvious from listening to brother Hearn that he had spent much time in an in-depth study of God's word. When one sat in one of brother Hearn's Bible classes, he came away with many notes and a greater understanding and appreciation of God's word. He often reminded us of God's warnings relative to adding to or taking from God's word. Brother Hearn would remind us of the curse of God that rests on any who taught a different Gospel than the one revealed by Christ (Gal. 1:8-9). Brother Hearn taught us that we do not need a new gospel for a new age. He knew that man's spiritual problem and remedy remains the same throughout all ages.

Brother Hearn taught that preachers are to sacrifice in order to preach the Gospel. While a student is in the Memphis School of Preaching, the workload is such that one cannot work a secular job to support himself and his family. Consequently, while he is in school, he must be supported by congregations and individuals. Brother Hearn never let us forget that there were widows, who lived on a limited income, who gave sacrificially in order that students may give full time to a study of God's word. He would remind us that Christ Himself sacrificed greatly for us – "For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich" (2 Cor. 8:9). Brother Hearn would preach anywhere he had an opportunity without regard for how much he would be paid for such. He also sought to instill this same attitude in his students. Yet, brother Hearn himself was a generous man. I personally have known of him to help students who may have needed money for transportation to or from school.

Brother Hearn taught that preachers should realize the seriousness and importance of preaching. Brother Hearn expected a student to do his best. This concern affectionately won for

him the respected title, "stern Hearn." He expected the students to do their best in using correct grammar and composition. He knew we were communicating heaven's message and thought that we should do our best. After graduating and "getting into the field," one appreciates the exactness that brother Hearn demanded of his students. He genuinely believed (and taught) that we were doing the greatest work in the world. In all things, brother Hearn taught us that we should have Jesus as our example (1 Peter 2:21). Brother Hearn was not a perfect man, but he knew one who was – "Jesus!" We were taught to look to Jesus as our guide and example (Heb. 12:2). All who ever sat at the feet of brother Hearn have been blessed. I am thankful that I had the privilege to know brother Hearn and that in the good providence of God, I was privileged to study God's word under his influence [Taken from the Yokefellow, Vol. 27, No. 12, December 14,2000].