

ANNOUNCING
Memphis School of Preaching
WORLD MISSIONS PROGRAM



Beginning January 23, 2012
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NEWSLETTER FROM MEMPHIS SCHOOL OF PREACHING
 Under the Oversight of the ELDERS
 FOREST HILL CHURCH OF CHRIST
 Bobby Liddell, Editor

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ELDERS OF THE FOREST HILL CHURCH OF CHRIST



Keith B. McAlister, Harold D. Mangrum, J. D. Crowe, Anthony D. Callahan, Gregory D. Mangrum, Floyd M. Hayes, and Leonard Watson

The elders of the Forest Hill Church of Christ oversee the work of the Memphis School of Preaching (a part of Forest Hill’s educational program). Students and supporters may rest assured that these seven men are well qualified for the job and lead in an exemplary way (Tit. 1:5; 1 Tim. 3:1ff).

God’s plan for church organization is that every church have elders (Acts 14:23; Tit. 1:5), a plurality of men who act in concert as elders, or presbyters (1 Pet. 5:1); as bishops, or overseers (Phi. 1:1); and, as shepherds or pastors (Acts 20:28). From Miletus, Paul “sent to Ephesus, and called the *elders* of the church” (Acts 20:17). To them, he

said, “Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you *overseers*, to *feed* (as shepherds, BL) the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood” (Acts 20:28).

The Lord’s church owes a real debt of gratitude to these faithful men. For more than four decades, the program at MSOP has been in the capable hands of godly elders, and continues to this day, under the oversight of God-fearing, Bible-believing men. They do not seek to be honored, but they are well worthy. Let us join together to honor and encourage them, and let us pray for them often. *BL*

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SINNING

“THROUGH IGNORANCE”

And if any one of the common people sin through ignorance, while he doeth somewhat against any of the commandments of the LORD concerning things which ought not to be done, and be guilty; Or if his sin, which he hath sinned, come to his knowledge: then he shall bring his offering, a kid of the goats, a female without blemish, for his sin which he hath sinned (Leviticus 4:27-28).

The ones who sinned through ignorance were “the common people.” They were common in that they were ordinary people, not priests (vv. 3-12), or rulers (vv. 22-26). The sin, “through ignorance,” was doing “somewhat against any of the commandments of the Lord,” and concerned things that “ought not to be done.” Thus, the sinner was guilty, though unaware.

Some criticize those who call some sins mistakes, and not all sins are mistakes, but in this case, the word mistake could be correctly applied. Sinning unwittingly means to sin without knowing it; that is, to do so inadvertently, or unintentionally. It might involve making a mistake, or error. It could also involve omission or neglect. Surely, we can all remember times when we have done wrong, or failed to do right, without realizing it at the time. Only later, when we were better instructed, or when someone who loved us enough told us of our sin, or when we reflected upon what we had done (or failed to do), did we come to see the guilt we bore – and the need for repentance, restitution, and forgiveness.

How could one be guilty, even though he was ignorant of his sin? Some deny such a person would have guilt, but our Holy God justly declared him to be guilty. The old adage, “Ignorance is bliss,” often has been misapplied by religionists and their followers, but in vain (2 Cor. 5:10).

Many years ago, while I was studying with a lady in her home, I asked her to turn to Acts 2:38, and to read it aloud from her Bible (she had the KJV). She immediately replied that Acts 2:38 was not in her Bible. Caught off guard by such an amazing statement, I said, “Surely, it is.” She stated again, “No, it is not in my Bible.” I asked, “How can that be? You have the King James Version, and Acts 2:38 must be in it.” She said, “No it isn’t. I cut it out.”

Being a young preacher, I had never run across such a thing. “Why did you cut it out?” I asked. Her reply was, “Because if I read it, I would be obligated to do it.” “Ma’am,” I said, “You are obligated to do it, whether you read it or not.”

Why do some think ignorance means salvation? If this were true, the very best thing we ever could do, by far, and which would be of the greatest benefit

to the whole world, would be to destroy all Bibles, shut down all churches, stop all preaching, cease all reproof, rebuke, exhortation, and instruction, and seek that we might get “ignoranter and ignoranter” until we all were innocent by reason of ignorance. By so doing, according to this misconception, we could insure universal salvation!

James E. Smith (*The Pentateuch*, pp. 361-362) wrote:

Two offerings were required when sin entered the life of an Israelite: (1) the sin offering, and (2) the trespass offering. These offerings were introduced by Moses, and thus a more detailed description of the meaning and purpose of them is given. Nine times the text states that the one who offered these two offerings “shall be forgiven.” The sin and trespass offerings were designed to restore a believer’s fellowship with God once that fellowship had been broken by sin.

Smith then stated, concerning the sin offering (Lev. 4:1-5:13),

Emphasis is continually placed on the fact that sin offerings were valid only if the transgression was unintentional. The guilty party was “unaware of the matter” and was only “made aware of the sin” later. That his action constituted a sin had not occurred to him. The assurance is given throughout that the presentation of the sin offering would be followed by atonement and forgiveness (4:20, 26 et al.).

In connection with our study, let us consider why God commanded offering an animal for sin.

First, it was to impress upon the sinner the seriousness of sin, and the loathing abhorrence all men should have for it, by the sobering fact that sin brings death (Rom. 6:23). “But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die” (Gen. 2:17).

Second, it was to show very vividly, since sin brings death, that atonement for sin requires life be taken, shedding the blood of the victim, the “life of the flesh”; thus, the animal had to be killed that the blood might be applied. “For the life of the flesh is in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul” (Lev. 17:11). “And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission” (Heb. 9:22; 10:4; cf. Rom. 5:8-9; Rev. 1:5).

Third, it was to impress upon the sinner the need for personal accountability by his acknowledging and confessing his sin (cf. 1 John 1:8-10). The one who sinned was to act, as God commanded, and could not pay another, require another, or allow another to discharge his responsibility for him.

Fourth, the sacrifice wonderfully pictured the sinner’s being forgiven, by his putting his hand on the head of the animal to be slain, which then he killed, and which the priest offered in order to make atonement for the unwitting sinner (2 Cor. 5:21; 1 John 2:1-2; Rom. 5:11).

Fifth, though the sin required the death of the animal sacrifice, the female kid of the goats, or of the lambs, all such sacrifices were typical of the ultimate sacrifice of Christ (Heb. 9:13-10:12). So, the sacrifices under the Old Law were to accomplish the objectives listed above, but, most importantly, were to direct men to the Lamb of God, Who is our atonement.

CONCLUSION

Sins of ignorance were different, especially from the standpoint of one’s attitude, from presumptuous

sins, but still brought guilt to the one who committed them. For forgiveness of such sins, God gave particular requirements, as noted in Leviticus 4, in order for atonement and forgiveness.

Jesus said, “And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free” (John 8:32). Knowing truth (which involves obeying truth) brings salvation, but ignorance brings sin and condemnation (1 Cor. 2:7-8; Rom. 10:3; 2 Cor. 2:11; 2 Pet. 3:1-8). Let us all seek to know God’s Law (Gal. 6:2), honestly examine ourselves, and when we find sin in our lives, be quick to repent, confess, make restitution, and seek forgiveness made possible by the sacrifice Christ made for us (Heb. 10:12) – remembering, the one who cannot have God’s forgiveness is the one who will not seek forgiveness as God has instructed. *Bobby Liddell*

MEMPHIS SCHOOL OF PREACHING WORLD MISSIONS PROGRAM

The church of Christ has a tremendous task before her. Jesus issued the marching orders: “Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen” (Mat. 28:18-20). The word “therefore” directly connects the words “go” and “teach” to the authority (“power”) of Jesus. The point is, we cannot ignore the command to “go” and “teach all nations,” and yet claim we are submitting to Christ’s authority. Mark states the commission a little differently, “Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned” (Mark 16:15-16). Whereas Matthew states “all nations,” Mark writes, “every creature.” Consequently, we are commanded to teach and preach the Gospel to every creature in every nation! This is an awesome responsibility! Yet, it can and must be done.

Lord willing, January 23, 2012, the Memphis School of Preaching will begin a “World Mission Program.” This program is offered free of charge to faithful, dedicated Christian men who wish to equip themselves better, in order to obey the Lord in going into the mission field to preach the Gospel of Christ. The Lord, through His good providence and the generosity of the brethren, has blessed us with good training facilities (and housing), where men and their families may come and be trained in “World Missions.”

How can you be a part of this very important and essential work? It could be some who are reading this wish to dedicate themselves (and their families) to missions. If you have previous training in a sound school, or have been faithfully involved in the work of the Lord for a number of years, you can apply for the program. If you are accepted, you can live in one of the apartments on the premises, and prepare yourself by attending the one-year training program, that will be taught by faithful “men of the Book.” Not only will you be better prepared for the mission field, but sponsoring churches also will be able to have more confidence in sending a man into the mission field who has been adequately prepared.

Another way to help is by financially supporting someone to go through this training. Because of the workload of those enrolled in this program, they will not be able to work outside school. These men will be full time students dedicating themselves to the hard work of preparing to go into the mission field. They will need your support. By supporting them to go into all the world, preaching the Gospel of Christ, you also will have fruit borne to your account, just as the church in Philippi had fruit borne to their account when they supported Paul (Phi. 4:17).

We are excited about the possibilities of the good work that can be accomplished for the Lord in the “World Missions Program.” Please pray for this work. Readers may find more information relative to the “World Missions Program” by viewing the video and reading the brochure located on our web site at msop.org. You may also write or call us for a free brochure. *Billy Bland*