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REX A. TURNER, JR., ENCOURAGER OF MSOP, PASSES Curtis A. Cates

On August 11, 2008, brother Rex A. Turner, Jr., faithful gospel preacher, elder in the Lord's church, and gifted president of Amridge University [formerly Alabama Christian School of Religion] died unexpectedly of a blood clot, days after brain surgery in Baptist Hospital South, Montgomery, Alabama. He was sixty-two. He was a devoted friend of the Memphis School of Preaching and of the writer. He was the son of Rex Allwin and Opal Shipp Turner.

Rex was graduated from Alabama Christian College, B.A., Troy State University, B.S. and M.S., Alabama Christian School of Religion, M.R.E. and M.Th., and the University of Alabama, Ed.D. Having preached his first sermon in his father's home congregation, Antioch in Corner, Alabama, Rex [and Barbara, his beloved wife] preached at Mt. Olive, Ozark, and Clanton, Alabama. He helped to establish the Marler Road Church of Christ, Montgomery, where he also served as an elder.

Having succeeded his father as president of Alabama Christian School of Religion in 1987, brother Rex moved the School to full regional accreditation with the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools [December 1989]. He expanded the programs of Bible and Religious Education [leading to the M.A., M.R.E., and M.Th.] to include programs leading to Ph.D.'s in professional counseling, in marriage and family therapy, and in Biblical studies. The growth and development of Amridge under his tenure as president has been phenomenal.

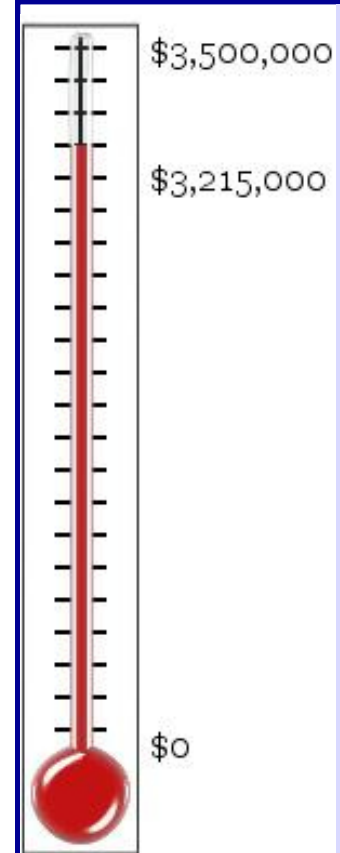
All through the years, Rex has encouraged the MSOP and our graduates. Like his father before him, he accepted two full years of college credit from the School and greatly encouraged our students to pursue advanced studies in the University. Many of our graduates have been graduated from Amridge, including brother Jerry Martin [our Dean of Students, and preacher of the Cordova Church of Christ], who has just completed his Ph.D. in Marriage and Family Therapy. Our students also for several years have been the guests of President Rex Turner, Jr., and Amridge at their Annual Mission Forum. He and Barbara additionally have shown great generosity to my family and me.

The funeral service of brother Rex took place at Leak Memory Chapel in Montgomery on August 14th. A huge crowd of friends gathered to express sympathy to sister Barbara and their family. Those participating in the service were Curtis Sampley, Blake Parker, Raymond Elliott, Roger Dill, Demar Elam, Douglas Patterson, and Curtis A. Cates [graveside remarks, Greenwood Cemetery].

Rex A. Turner, Jr., deeply loved the Lord and His church, dearly loved his family, treasured his friends, worked tirelessly in Christian education to the glory of the Lord and the advancement of His kingdom, and was characterized by humility and compassion. All of us at the Memphis School of Preaching express keep sympathy to Barbara, to their children Michael Turner, M.D., and Laina Costanza, and to their families, who have many precious memories and a great and enduring hope in Christ.

NEW WAY TO ORDER MSOP BOOKS

To order MSOP lectureship books, past and present, please call **1-800-782-8175**, or contact **tyromw@comcast.net**. We will no longer be selling MSOP books through the School bookstore. We will continue to produce annual lectureship books as in the past, and we hope you will still take advantage of the opportunity to obtain these helpful volumes--not only for yourself, but as welcomed and beneficial gifts to others.



STUDENT HOUSING UPDATE

We are happy to announce that we are only **\$285,000** from our goal!

With God's blessings, we hope to reach \$3,500,000 **by the end of 2008**.

Thanks to all who have given so generously. The end is in sight, but we still need your help.

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THE GOSPEL OF GRACE (III)

Curtis A. Cates

ARE PEOPLE SAVED BY GRACE, LAW, FAITH AND WORKS OF OBEDIENCE IN THE CHRISTIAN DISPENSATION? INDEED!

In the New Testament, the process is reversed, but the same principles are involved and necessary. Whereas, under the Law of Moses, the sacrifices (works of obedience) produced faith, and had to be tied by faith to the coming Messiah Who would die for every man (Heb. 2:9), under the Law of Christ, the message of the cross produces **faith** in the reigning Messiah Who died for the sins of the world (John 12:32). See John 8:24, 21; Mark 16:16. Faith must produce **works** of obedience. Faith, minus works, is "dead faith" (Jam. 2:20-26). Faith without works is as lifeless as a corpse; thus, cannot save.

One who denies the necessity of obedience to the commands of Christ flies into the face of, and denies, such clear passages as Matthew 7:21-23; Luke 6:46; John 14:15; Acts 2:26-41; Hebrews 5:8-9; John 12:48; Philippians 2:12; et al. Faith which obeys enables God's grace to flow to the sinner. But, denominational preachers say, "Trust God and do nothing; if you have to obey ('work'), then you take the grace out of it." They have no exhibition of faith. But, Bible belief is trust conjoined with, combined with, obedience (see the earlier discussion on John 3:16).

Trust is expressed in action; if not, it is not Bible faith. No blessing is received anywhere in the Bible until faith expresses itself vividly. Note James 2:18, where it is clear that one must **show** his faith by works, else it is not saving, Biblical faith. Faith must be shown, visible, demonstrated; it can be seen. Bible faith is an expression of one's trust in God, **in the manner directed** by God.

How did the Israelites show their trust and thus conquer Canaan (cross over Jordan on dry land, capture the city of Jericho)? The very **moment** they trusted God, according to "faith only"/"grace only" doctrine, the two to three million Israelites all should have been over in Canaan, and should have been in possession of Jericho with the walls having fallen ["He that hath ears to hear, let him hear."]

The very minute they responded, "We trust thee," then the receiving of God's "gift" should have been **immediate**; but that is not the way it happened: "By faith they passed through the Red sea as by dry land" to receive the gift (Heb. 11:29); "By faith the walls of Jericho fell down, **after** they had been compassed about for seven days" (v. 30).

Was Rahab saved before, or after, she hid the spies, hung out the scarlet cord, and stayed in her house (v. 31)? Salvation is by faith that expresses itself in obeying any direction God commands; never is it Bible faith otherwise. Why is such obedience never meritorious? It is because by trusting in God,

and by that trust's expressing itself as God directs, it is never a work of merit. Trust in God takes away the merit.

Scriptural obedience is but an expression of one's trust. That is why obedience (even to Christ's commands) must never be separated from trust, faith in the cross, because if it were separated from faith, and if it brought any blessing through it, then that would become action that had merit. It would become legalism (the attempt to be saved by obedience alone, apart from trust in the redeeming blood of Christ).

Thus, scriptural, saving trust that is expressed in obedience enables grace to provide the blessing, and therefore is not meritorious. We are saved also by **law**, the system of faith, the scheme of redemption, the law of Christ. Some attempt to affirm that, in the Christian Dispensation, we are "saved by grace, not by law or by law-keeping"; even some of our "brethren" have attempted to promote this sectarian falsehood, a gross misapplication of John 1:17 and other passages which teach we are not saved by the Law of Moses today.

Of course, this is a blatant denial of such clear passages as Isaiah 2:2-4; Romans 8:1-2; 1 Corinthians 9:21; Galatians 6:2; James 1:22-25; 2:8, 12; et al. The Law of Christ is a law of faith, just as was the Law of Moses; had the Law of Moses been a law of works, and had salvation been through works alone (apart from faith), then Christ would not have had to die; we would be saved by a law of works, the same way, today. A law of works has **never** saved; however, that is **not** to say that one is saved apart from obedience—far from it!

Now, which element can one leave out and still be saved? Can grace be omitted? Can we save ourselves? Can one scripturally affirm that there is no plan or pattern (law) given by God for our lives? Can we be saved without trust in Christ? If so, why would one "call" upon Him (Rom. 10:13-17)? Can one reject submitting to the commands of Christ and obedience from a heart of love, and still demonstrate his trust? To leave out even one of these necessary ingredients of salvation is folly!

CONCLUSION

Man cannot save himself. Never in history has anyone received God's blessings apart from grace, law, faith, and works. Paul stated, therefore, "For this cause it is of faith, that it may be according to grace" (Rom. 4:16). The Holy Bible is a book of tremendous harmony and consistency. Submit your life to the law of Christ by the obedience of faith in repenting of sin, confessing Christ as God's Son, and being baptized into Christ, thus trusting and obeying for remission of sins, saved by God's "amazing grace."

Note: I am indebted to the late Franklin Camp (outstanding preacher and scholar whose classes the writer was privileged to attend from 1966-1969 while preaching at Warrior, Alabama) for some of these vital points.

Works Cited

Arndt, W.F. and F. W. Gingrich. A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1957. 228.

Liddell, H. G. and R. Scott, A Greek English Lexicon. 491-2. Thayer, John. Thayer's Greek English Lexicon.

ALUMNI NEWS

Mike McDaniel

Known Transitions

Jeff Scott (97) to the Middleton (TN) church of Christ.

James Hill, Jr. (92) to Eupora church of Christ, Eupora, MS. He is also one of several certified chaplains for North Mississippi Medical Hospital - Tupelo, Eupora, MS.

Bob Horn (06) to Central church of Christ in Harrisonburg, VA.

Keith Dixon (80) to the Cleveland church in Bankston, AL.

Keith McNeely (89) to Curry Street in West Plains, MO.

Evangelistic Endeavors

Paul Haley (82) and his wife **Susan** have moved to Tuscumbia, AL, her home town, to be near her aging mother. Susan started teaching in her old elementary school. Paul was laid off from GMAC, after 23 years, this past June. He is now looking for an opportunity to preach in the Colbert County, Muscle Shoals, or Tuscumbia area.

Anthony Brown (82) and his wife **Shasta** wrote that they are returning home for a furlough after two years in the mission field of Tanzania. They stated: "We have seen the number of missionaries here grow and shrink some. We have seen the church at Monduli grow in faith and maturity to a point where they are self reliant. For all of this we want to thank you for your faithful support of us with words of encouragement, prayers, and financial support. Without YOU, yes, I mean you, we could not have come here to serve the Lord and work in the TZ2000 mission work. As we enter our furlough for this year we will be making visits to some of our supporting congregations to renew ties and friendships and say thank you in person. We also will have some decisions to make. We pray that you will continue to keep us in your prayers as we keep you in ours."

Perry Sexton (88) writes: "We are in need of others to help in a mission effort in the USA of going into counties where the church does not exist (there are over 700). We are door knocking and setting up studies, correspondence courses, passing out tracts and the DVD Searching For Truth and will have gospel meetings in select areas. Our goal is to work in the southern states in the winter and in the northern states in the summer months. We are in need for others to help door knock, etc. part-time or full-time. We need preachers who have their own support with tents to hold meetings... For more information or a work plan you can write to Perry Sexton, 8113 US Hwy. 340, Shenandoah, VA 22849 or email at jpsexton@peoplepc.com. <<mailto:jpsexton@peoplepc.com>> The Greenfield church of Christ in Greenfield, TN is our sponsoring congregation."

Dale DuVerney (97) writes, "The church plant in Rogers City, MI has been great. We have grown from seven to thirty-two in three years! We have been growing as the Lord has been giving the increase to our planting and watering. We are really looking forward to a 2010 campaign with MSOP!!! We are moving forward with plans to raise funds for a down payment for our new church building -- once that is raised, we will be able to have a fixed location in town and the town folk will look at us as a fixture in the community. Pray for our work."

Rod Rutherford (74) writes, "We are back from Malawi. We spent five weeks there and had a great time. We taught an average of 650 men, women and children each week in the Malawi Mobile Bible School. We taught four hours a day five days a week and spent an average of four hours a day driving over some of the roughest bush roads in the world getting to the locations for our classes. We drove a 4-wheel drive, stick shift pick-up. My back and hips are giving me problems as a result. Brenda did very well. I taught Revelation to the men and was amazed at how well they understood it. The educational level is not very high. The average would be 3 to 4 years, I suppose. We taught in mud brick church buildings, public buildings that were open ended and also outside. We had competition from braying donkeys, straying dogs, crowing roosters, etc. but the students were among the most attentive, most interested students I have ever had."

We are glad the Rutherfords had a safe and successful trip. Please continue to send your news to me at mmmcdaniel@earthlink.net. <<mailto:mmmcdaniel@earthlink.net>> for publication in the printed Yokefellow and/or our electronic newsletter: The Laborers Together Newsletter. All alumni, including new graduates, who are not receiving my newsletter which I send out periodically by e-mail, are asked to go to the alumni page of www.msop.org <<http://www.msop.org/>> and update their personal information including their e-mail address. This is the best way to insure that the MSOP computer will have your correct information, and I will automatically be sent your e-mail address. - Mike McDaniel]

END OF YEAR CONTRIBUTIONS

Ever since the Memphis School of Preaching began in 1966, **contributions made at the close of the calendar year have been vital** to its work. MSOP receives no federal or state grants, or other governmental support, and charges no tuition or fees of its students. Instead, the School is supported by the Forest Hill congregation, and by other faithful brothers and sisters, individually and congregationally, who are convinced of the continuing need to train men to preach the Gospel of Christ.

The many hundreds of graduates preaching throughout the world tell us their training at MSOP was the hardest work they ever did--and loved! Equal to more than four years of college in two years (164 semester hours), the course demands that students learn discipline and diligence as they learn the Scriptures and the practical aspects of preaching.

These end-of-year gifts are very helpful because of the needs of students who have not raised all of their living expenses (some are doing without, but are continuing in their studies), January enrollment of new students, anticipated lectureship expenses in March, and catching up with unanticipated expenses involved in the day-to-day operation of the School.

More than four decades of faithful service to the Lord, and to the Cause of Christ, have shown the School is worthy of the support of brethren. **These donations are needed, are fully tax deductible, of course, and they are a Godsend to the work of MSOP.**

Please help if you can.