

YOKEFELLOW

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September-October 2008

A LOOK BACK AT "FOUNDATIONS" A Training Camp Of The Memphis School Of Preaching B. J. CLARKE

The week of June 22-27, 2008, was an historic one for the Memphis School of Preaching. Twenty-eight young men (ages 13-18) attended FOUNDATIONS, the first annual training camp conducted on the campus of the Memphis School of Preaching. These men came from far and near to learn how to be better servants for the Lord Jesus Christ. We were blessed to have young men from California to North Carolina, and from Indiana to Florida. We also had young men in attendance from the states of Georgia, Alabama, Tennessee, Arkansas, and Mississippi.

The campers arrived on Sunday afternoon, June 22, and took up residency in the available student apartments on the campus of MSOP. The campers met Sunday afternoon in the chapel for a welcome and message from brother Bobby Liddell, Director of the Memphis School of Preaching. After a brief period of orientation, the campers attended the evening worship service and MSOP graduation service at the Forest Hill church of Christ auditorium.

It was encouraging to watch these younger men watch other young men graduate from the Memphis School of Preaching. Prayerfully, some of the young men who attended FOUNDATIONS will one day walk across the platform to receive their own diplomas from MSOP.

Monday through Friday, the campers met each morning at 7:30 for breakfast. After breakfast, they prepared their apartments for daily inspection, and attended chapel at 8:30. Special gratitude is due to Andy Cates, Donnie Vick, Kenny Taylor, Morne Stephanus and Garland Elkins for five excellent chapel sermons. I do not think the campers will ever forget brother Elkins' reciting (from memory, of course) a lengthy poem summarizing the Book of Jonah.

Training classes began each day at 9 A.M. The young men were on the edge of their seats, captivated by such teachers as Curtis Cates, Keith Mosher, Sr., Paul Sain, Robert Hatfield, Billy Bland, Tim Wilkes, and Dan Cates. The first class of each day was designed to give them a foundation for their faith. These classes focused on Creation versus Evolution, How We Know The Bible Is The Word of God, and How Archaeology Proves The Bible Is True. The comments from the young men clearly evidenced that their faith was stronger from having heard these lessons.

(Continued On Page 3)

JERRY L. MARTIN RECEIVES DOCTORATE

On Tuesday, September 2, 2008, Jerry L. Martin, Dean of Students and Instructor at MSOP, completed his course, and received the Doctor of Philosophy Degree in Marriage and Family Therapy from Amridge University (Amridge University is accredited by the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools.)



Brother Martin's education began with his attending the Memphis School of Preaching, from which he graduated in 1979. He continued his training, receiving his B.A. in Bible, and M.S. in Counseling degrees from Amridge University.

For the last 10 years, Jerry has preached for the Cordova Church of Christ, Cordova, Tennessee, where he also serves as one of the elders. In 2000, the Forest Hill elders invited brother Martin to become a part of the MSOP faculty, and in 2007, he became Dean of Students.

We congratulate brother Martin on his obtaining the terminal degree in his field. We appreciate his faithful labors, and look forward to many years of his fruitful service with the Memphis School of Preaching.



EVAN MANNING PREACHING AT FOUNDATIONS 2008

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THE GOSPEL OF GRACE (II)

Curtis A. Cates

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

An example is Noah, who was saved from the waters of the universal flood. Was he saved by mere consent that God could save him without trust and/or obedience? Noah was saved by **grace** [which, incidentally, existed in the Old Testament as well as in the New]: "But Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord" (Gen. 6:8).

Was that sufficient? Noah was saved by **faith**.

By faith Noah, being warned of God concerning things not seen as yet, moved with godly fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; through which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is according to faith (Heb. 11:7).

Was that alone sufficient? Noah was saved by **law**, God's commands: "Make thee an ark of gopher wood" (Gen. 6:14ff).

Was that enough? Noah was saved by **obedience**: "Thus did Noah; according to all that God commanded him, so did he" (v. 22).

Man has always been saved by Biblical faith, which is trust and obedience to God's commands. In this way, God's gifts [such as Noah's salvation in the ark from the flood water] have always been conditional, yet not meritorious. Faith that blesses is faith that obeys; Noah did not merit salvation, but he did have to obey. God has never saved persons without their having received His commands, trusted in Him, and complied with the conditions that He stipulated.

WERE PEOPLE SAVED BY GRACE, LAW, FAITH, AND WORKS OF OBEDIENCE IN THE MOSAIC DISPENSATION?

First, notice the principles that provided the Israelites the land of Canaan. Note that it was a gift—grace (Jos. 1:2-3); "the land which I do give to them." Notice that they did not deserve, merit, the land.

Hear, O Israel: Thou art to pass over Jordan this day, to go in to possess nations greater and mightier than thyself, cities great and fenced up to heaven, A people great and tall, the children of the Anakims, whom thou knowest, and of whom thou hast heard say, Who can stand before the children of Anak! Understand therefore this day, that the LORD thy God is he which goeth over before thee; as a consuming fire he shall destroy them, and he shall bring them down before thy face: so shalt thou drive them out, and destroy them quickly, as the LORD hath said unto thee. Speak not thou in thine heart, after that the LORD thy God hath cast them out from before thee, saying, For my righteousness the LORD hath brought me in to possess this land: but for the wickedness of these nations the LORD doth drive them out from before thee. Not for thy righteousness, or for the uprightness of thine heart, dost thou go to possess their land: but for the wickedness of these nations the LORD thy God doth drive them out from before thee, and that he may perform the word which the LORD swore unto thy fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Understand therefore, that the LORD thy God giveth thee not this good land to possess it for thy righteousness; for thou art a stiffnecked people. Remember, and forget not, how thou provokedst the LORD thy God to wrath in the wilderness: from the day that thou didst depart out of the land of Egypt, until ye

came unto this place, ye have been rebellious against the LORD. Also in Horeb ye provoked the LORD to wrath, so that the LORD was angry with you to have destroyed you (Deu. 9:1-8).

The people of Canaan were much stronger than Israel, and Israel had been wicked; yet, God fought their battles and stirred fear in the hearts of the Canaanites. They had to have faith in God and trust Him (Heb. 11:29-30). They conquered the land also by God's commands, His law (Jos. 3-6). They crossed over Jordan and took Jericho when they obeyed God's commands.

God's gift of Canaan was not received by mere consent that God could give it to them, else they would have possessed the land while still on the east side of Jordan, had they not passed over; had they not gone "armed" into Canaan and taken the land which God had given them (Jos. 2:14). Why were "mighty men of valor" needed; why did the other tribes need the help of the two and one-half tribes who had been given land east of the Jordan, in order to conquer the land, if God's grace is always unconditional—grace only?

How was their trust in God demonstrated; was it not by the priests' stepping into the raging river; the people's trusting God to hold back the waters as they crossed, and the people's marching around the city of Jericho as God commanded?

Second, observe the principles necessary for the Jews to be saved under the Law. The Israelites were commanded to offer animal sacrifices, for "apart from shedding of blood there is no remission" (Heb. 9:22) of sins. Those sacrifices (**works** of obedience) produced **faith** in the cross, in the Lamb of God Who would shed His blood once for all for remission of sins (John 1:29). He would bruise the head of the serpent. Abraham saw Christ's day and was glad (John 8:56); "the gospel was preached before unto Abraham" (Gal. 3:8).

The Law of Moses (John 1:17) alone could not save; there had to be faith in the coming Messiah. Obedience (works) to the Law of Moses alone would be "legalism," and works, minus faith, are "dead works." The Jews would have to have their hearts cleansed "from dead works to serve the living God" (Heb. 9:14). Their works of obedience conjoined with, producing faith, enabled God's **grace** to flow to them, thereby forgiving their sins in promise [providing an avenue of approach, around those sins, to God]; however, those sins were remembered year by year until the cross (Heb. 10:1-10; Rom. 3:24-26; et al.). See also Matthew 11:28-30.

By what kind of law were the faithful Israelites saved? Was it a law of works, as many suppose? The Law of Moses was not a law of works, but a law of faith. Man has never been saved by a law of works; else, the Lord would not have had to die on the cross, and man could have been saved by legalism, apart from faith.

Most of the Jews attempted to make the Law of Moses a law of works, which it was not! Listen to Paul in Romans 9:30-33. The Gentiles attained to the purpose, the end of the Law of Moses, for they had faith in the Messiah (v. 30). Israel, even having the law, did not arrive at the law's purpose (v. 31). Why not? It was because they "sought it not by faith, but as it were by works"; they refused to **believe** in the Messiah and **made** it a law of works—thereby seeking to be saved by law without faith—legalism (note Rom. 10:4ff).

So, how were the faithful Israelites saved, and their sins forgiven in promise (Heb. 11:40)? They were saved by the same principles and elements through which men have always been saved. They were saved by grace, law, faith, and works of obedience. If not, which one could they have omitted and still be saved?

(Continued Next Month)



STUDENTS AT FOUNDATIONS
EAGERLY RECEIVING INSTRUCTION

(Continued From Page 1)

The vast majority of other classes, throughout the week, were designed to train men to serve in various capacities in the Lord's church. The first part of the week focused mainly upon training for sermon preparation and delivery. This gave the campers a foundation for preparing the sermons they were assigned to deliver on Friday. We also provided instruction on the vital subjects of how to become an elder or a deacon in the Lord's church. We encouraged the young men to start preparing themselves right now for the work of an elder or a deacon.

There were also classes on the following subjects: (1) Reading Scripture In Public; (2) Leading Public Prayer; (3) Presiding/Serving At The Lord's Table; (4) How To Become A Missionary; (5) How To Lead Singing; (6) How To Make A Powerpoint Presentation; (7) How To Conduct A Home Bible Study; (8) How To Make A Hospital Visit; (9) How To Comfort The Bereaved; and (10) How To Prepare A Church Bulletin.

In addition to our study time, we found some time for fun and recreation on Tuesday and Thursday evenings. We also enjoyed visits to the Cordova congregation for a meal and devotional on Monday evening, and we went for a meal and Wednesday night services at the Southaven church of Christ. We are grateful to Tish Clarke, and to the following congregations for providing meals throughout the week: Olive Branch, Nesbit, Coldwater, Woodland Hills, and Forest Hill.

The highlight of the week was to sit and listen, on Friday afternoon, to the campers as they presented the sermons they had worked on all week. They did an excellent job! The camp closed out on Friday evening with a banquet, at which time Robert Jefferies spoke on "The Portrait Of A Servant." In addition to receiving box loads of free books throughout the week, at the banquet, all twenty-eight young men received a free CD containing all of the MSOP lectureship books. The banquet concluded with the presentation of certificates acknowledging each young man's completion of the FOUNDATIONS training program. By all accounts the camp was a tremendous success.

We are eagerly anticipating **FOUNDATIONS 2009** with the theme "**Rise Up O Men Of God!**" Next year's camp

will be conducted on the campus of MSOP from **June 28-July 3, 2009**. If you would like to attend, you may download your applications from www.msop.org.

(Editor's Note: A very special thanks goes to B. J. and Tish Clarke for their tireless labors in making FOUNDATIONS a reality. We are already greatly anticipating FOUNDATIONS 2009!)

THANKS TO OUR SUPPORTERS!

We are deeply grateful for all who join with us in the work of preparing men to go forth, preaching the glorious, soul-saving gospel of Jesus Christ.

We beseech you to pray for us, and for our efforts.

Please pray for our students. Many are still seeking sufficient support for their living expenses.

Please pray that God will bless our efforts to pay off the debt on student housing by the end of 2008.

Please pray that more men and their families will commit themselves to the greatest work in the world, preaching the pure gospel.

Thank you, brethren. We believe God will hear and answer the prayers of the righteous.

THANKS TO THOSE WHO PRINT AND PREPARE YOKEFELLOW

We are happy to recognize their labors, and to express our sincere and deep gratitude to the hardworking men and women associated with Paul Sain and Sain Publications, for their outstanding work in producing Yokefellow. They always do a great job! Thanks to:

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FOUNDATIONS

*Training Servants Now – And For
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June 28-July 3, 2009

"I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon" (1 Cor. 3:10).