

# Y O K E F E L L O W

## INTRODUCING THE MSOP GRADUATE PROGRAM

B. J. Clarke

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### EDITOR

Bobby Liddell

For nearly 60 years, the Memphis School of Preaching has trained men to “preach the Word” (2 Tim. 4:2). The two-year program is robust, providing more instruction hours than degree programs in colleges and universities. Moreover, the two-year program offers much more in-depth verse-by-verse study than college or university classes typically do. Our graduates leave MSOP with a thorough knowledge of the greatest Book in the world. Nevertheless, the Bible is so rich in content that one man is quoted as saying, “Every time I approach the Bible to study it, I feel like a man walking to the ocean with a teaspoon to dip it dry!” There is always more to learn!

Consequently, years ago, MSOP began a third-year program, now known as the M.O.S.T. program (MSOP Ongoing Spiritual Training). This program, coordinated by our Dean of Apologetics, Dan Cates, offers both on-campus and online learning opportunities. This program is not the same as the two-year program, and one does not have to be a graduate of MSOP or any other program to take these classes. This program will remain part of our educational offerings. Additionally, the World Missions Program, overseen by MSOP’s Associate Director, Billy Bland, established years ago as a separate learning program, is distinct from the two-year program and the M.O.S.T. program. The purpose of the World Missions Program is to prepare men for the mission field. Applicants must be graduates from MSOP, or another school, or possess equivalent life experience, to qualify for admission. We are excited that the Missions Program will continue, as one of the available concentrations in our new MSOP Graduate Program described below.

In the new MSOP Graduate Program, we will be offering graduate diplomas in the following fields of study: Apologetics, Leadership, Missions, and Religious Broadcasting. With the world increasingly antagonistic to Christianity, we must be ready to give an apologia (defense) of our faith. Intensive study in the field of Apologetics is so needed for such a time as this. Likewise, godly leaders have never been more needed. We want to do our part in equipping men of God to become godly leaders for the present and the future.

Additionally, the Great Commission remains our mission, so we will continue to offer graduate-level instruction in Missions. Last, but certainly not least, with so much misinformation circulating via the airwaves, those who possess the Truth need to know how to effectively broadcast the saving message of the gospel to the whole world. The Religious Broadcasting diploma will equip students to do just that.

One is not required to take all four tracks of study in the Graduate Program. Still, conceivably someone could come to MSOP for the two-year program, spend two years pursuing all the graduate tracks of study, and ultimately leave MSOP, having earned more than the equivalent of a Bachelor’s degree (in the two-year program) and more than the equivalent of four Master’s degrees in the graduate program!

At my request, brother Bobby Liddell graciously consented to serve as the Dean of Graduate Studies. He is doing a great job and has worked diligently with brother Bland to launch the Graduate Program in Apologetics, and the revised Graduate Program in World Missions, in August 2025. The Graduate Programs in Broadcasting and Leadership are set to begin January 2026. This special issue provides an in-depth explanation of this new program. I am confident you will be excited about the MSOP Graduate Program. To God be the glory!



## THE GRADUATE MISSIONS PROGRAM AT MSOP

Billy Bland

“But when he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd. Then saith he unto his disciples, The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few; Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest” (Mat. 9:36-38).

We are blessed to have a Savior who is moved with compassion regarding our eternal welfare. He desires all men to be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth (1 Tim. 2:4). However, people must be taught the truth (John 6:44-45). The question is, “**Who will teach them?**”

### Are you willing to help?

The Graduate Program in Missions is designed to help train faithful Christian men, to better equip themselves, in obeying the Lord, by going into the mission field (at home or abroad), to preach the Gospel of Christ. Jesus promised to be with those who teach His Word (Mat. 28:18-20).

The Lord, through His good providence, and the generosity of the brethren, has blessed MSOP with good training facilities, and student housing. If you meet the requirements, you may apply to the **Graduate Program in Missions**. If accepted, you may live in one of the three-bedroom, two-bath apartments located on the secure premises of the Forest Hill congregation, and prepare yourself by attending the six-month training program. The courses are taught by faithful men of the Book, who have years of experience preaching the Gospel and working in (or with) missions. Not only will you be better prepared for the mission field, but sponsoring churches will also have more confidence in sending a man and his family into the mission field knowing they are adequately prepared.

Attending the Missions Program, one will study such important subjects as: Cultural Preparation For Missions, Understanding World Religions, Principles of Personal and Professional Ethics, Destination Research, Doctrinal Challenges On The Mission Field, plus **many other vital topics** which

will help equip one for mission work.

Jesus commanded that the Gospel be preached to every creature (Mark 16:15). Christians, in the first century, fulfilled the commission in their generation (Col. 1:23). We, too, can fulfill the command of Jesus in our generation.

## THE NEW MSOP GRADUATE PROGRAM IN BROADCASTING

Kevin Rutherford

The Memphis School of Preaching recognizes the importance of the church's using all available Scriptural evangelism methods including those made available through digital technology. Over the last couple of years the school has stepped up its efforts to train men in technology, formal broadcasting, and Biblical podcasting.

**Now, the Memphis School of Preaching is adding a graduate level course in Broadcasting as a part of its new graduate program.**

MSOP has been blessed, through the generosity of loving brethren, to have been able to update its **broadcasting/recording studio**. Use of this modern technology will feature prominently in the new graduate program.

In addition, new equipment has been purchased for a **portable recording unit** that can be taken nearly anywhere. While the studio will be the primary classroom for this new course, students will also be learning in the field, as they film on location.

Classes will focus upon *Introduction to Bible Broadcasting, Technology, Formal Bible Broadcasting, Podcasting, Fundamentals of Faithful Gospel Preaching, Ethical Responsibility, Fundamentals of Communication, On-Location Broadcasting, Biblical Persuasion, and Developing Video Documentaries*. *Electives will include: Understanding Your Audience and Connecting With Them, and Polishing Your Public Speaking Skills.*

We also plan additional seminars that will allow us to invite experts in the field to share their expertise with our students, that we might stay up-to-date in technology and techniques.

Those interested in taking any of the graduate courses of study at the Memphis School of



Preaching are welcome to go to [msop.org](http://msop.org) and make application. We look forward to hearing from you. Feel free to ask questions, and please pray for the Memphis School of Preaching as we seek to glorify God in all that we do.



## THE GRADUATE PROGRAM IN LEADERSHIP

Michael J. Clarke

The church must continue its training of current and future leaders. The question is not

whether the church will cease to exist (Dan. 2:44), but whether weak leaders make the church's functionality more difficult. ***Will strong men stand in the gap and hold the line?*** With the Graduate Program in Leadership, we seek to equip men with greater ability to serve. **Here are three reasons why the Leadership Program is worthy of consideration.**

### LEADERSHIP IS ENVIRONMENTAL

Joshua, first appears as a military leader. Moses commanded him to "Choose us some men and go out, fight with Amalek" (Exo. 17:9). First, the Israelites' environment was such that a man like Moses could locate Joshua. Moses cultivated a style of leadership that transformed men. When he needed someone, he quickly pinpointed Joshua. Second, Joshua could also pick his own "mighty" to fight. He had direct access to the leadership of Moses (Exo. 33:11), and witnessed many milestones in Israel's journey (Exo. 7-12; 14; 19-20). What should our environments look like for future leaders of the church? We must intend to cultivate an environment that breeds future leaders like Joshua!

### LEADERSHIP IS EDUCATIONAL

There is also a necessary component of education for leadership. Moses instructed and commissioned Joshua (Deu. 31:7-8), and had Joshua prepared to succeed him (Num. 27:18-23). Joshua was not just trained by Moses, but had a "leadership curriculum" given by God Himself (Jos. 1:7-8)! He did not get strength in leadership from his strong military background only, but from his adherence to God and His instruction. How can we train the leaders God wants in His Kingdom? By educating them in

the Word, encouraging them to meditate in God's Word day and night!

### LEADERSHIP IS EXPERIENTIAL

Leadership requires a hands-on approach to be genuinely beneficial. This mode of training benefited Joshua more than anything else. It is great to have an environment of leaders, and to receive training, but leaders need the experience to take the next step (Exo. 17:9-13; Num. 14:6-10; Jos. 1-12)! Joshua's leadership was not just hypothetical—it was proven in the field. His experience also did not shield him from challenges (Jos. 1:6-9), but God strengthened him through hardship. The Hebrew word for courage (Jos. 1:6-9), implies physical and moral fortitude. This is not just a motivational phrase, but an imperative to spiritual leadership.

### CONCLUSION

The church needs leaders like Joshua, trained in the theological realms of the Bible, but also in sacrifice and service. He was shaped by his environment, his education, and his experience, and we, too, must invest in these three aspects in training leaders in the church. Godly leadership is not the product of popularity, or personal ambition. Leaders are trained, and when they are, the Kingdom is strengthened.

**What will we do to ensure we are fulfilling our part in bringing future leaders to the Kingdom today?**

## GRADUATE PROGRAM BEGINNING DATE

**August 13, 2025**



# MSOP GRADUATE PROGRAM: APOLOGETICS

Bobby Liddell

The purpose of the Graduate Program in Apologetics is to prepare faithful men to be able to defend the truth, with knowledge and ability, and to do so with an **emphasis upon evangelism**.

**DATES AND TIMES.** The program will cover 2 ten-week quarters, offering 40 credit hours of graduate level training (exceeding the average number of credit hours required for a Masters Degree, which is 32-36 hours).

**MEETING TIMES:** Classes will meet every day, Monday through Friday. Three classes will meet on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, for two hours each day. Three classes will meet on Tuesdays and Thursdays, for two hours each day. Each quarter will offer six classes.

**FIRST QUARTER:** The first quarter will be from August 14 - October 31, 2025. Orientation will be on August 13.

**SECOND QUARTER:** The second quarter will be from November 3, 2025 - January 16, 2026.

**CONTINUATION OF APOLOGETICS CLASSES:** There will be a repeat of the “First Quarter,” beginning in January, 2026, and of the “Second Quarter,” beginning in April, 2026.

**LOCATION OF CLASSES:** Students will meet, for classes, in the Apologetics Program classroom on campus.

**CLASSES OFFERED—FIRST QUARTER:** Methods and Issues in Christian Apologetics; Apologetics Research and Writing; The Historical Jesus; The Existence of God; Logic and Epistemology; and one Elective.

**CLASSES OFFERED—SECOND QUARTER:** Ethics; Biblical Anthropology; The Problem of Evil; Bible Inspiration and Reliability; The Coherence Of Theism; and one Elective. **BL**



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