

Preparing Souls To Serve The Lord

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It Is Worth Repeating

By

Jackie M. Stearsman

There are things we read that make a lasting impression. Some we read and fail to place them where they are easily found and soon forget where we read them. Reflecting later, we wish we had kept them. Such is the following statements made about the Bible. No doubt you have read some of these statements, and if you have forgotten parts of them, or misplaced them, then if you love and respect the Bible a review of these words will be appreciated.

I have copied these thoughts from the pages of a New Testament with Psalms and Proverbs published by The Gideons International.

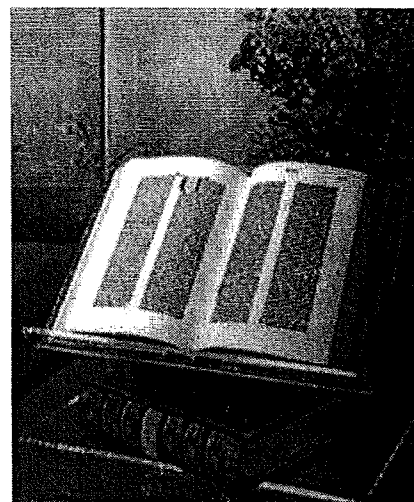
THE BIBLE contains the mind of God, the state of man, the way of salvation, the doom of sinners, and the happiness of believers. Its doctrines are holy, its precepts are binding, its histories are true, and its decisions are immutable. Read it to be wise, believe it to be safe, and practice it to be holy. It contains light to direct you, food to support you, and comfort to cheer you.

It is the traveler's map, the pilgrim's staff, the pilot's compass, the soldier's sword, and the Christian's charter. Here Paradise is restored. Heaven opened, and the gates of hell disclosed.

CHRIST is its grand subject, our good the design, and the glory of God its

end.

It should fill the memory, rule the heart, and guide the feet. Read it slowly, frequently, and prayerfully. It is a mine of wealth, a paradise of glory, and a river of pleasure. It is given you in life, will be opened at the judgment, and be remembered forever. It involves the highest responsibility, will reward the greatest labor, and will condemn all who trifle with its sacred contents.



Gutenberg Bible

The first thing ever printed by the inventor of the printing press, was a Latin Bible printed in Germany in 1455. A magnificent work of art, these Bibles were hand-illuminated with many full-color images and decorations.

In the 1450's Gutenberg invented the movable-type printing press, forever changing how people would communicate.

Do We Understand Church Growth?

This will be the subject for our **LECTURESHIP IN JANUARY 2005**. The dates will be January 17-20.

Plans are being finalized for speakers and assigned topics for our writers and speakers.

We will have all lessons broadcast live each day over internet connection. The printed text of the lectures as well as additional materials in the appendix will be available on CD. These will be available with the bound volume at discount price, or sold separately.

The MP3 audio CDs will also be available following the lectures. Separate audio CDs will be available for individual speeches.

The need to study church growth was recently emphasized by topics suggested by my wife. She suggested that in some circles the following approach might be observed:

1. *Do not rock the boat, you might upset someone.*
2. *Hide and seek—do not tell the elders, tea cup it until we get the majority on our side.*
3. *Big band sound – contemporary music and worship.*
4. *Come grow with us in a great work-out in our new gym.*
5. *Weekend workshop – love and tolerance, learn how to accept your gay brethren.*
6. *Preparing for Winterfest, our most important event of the year.*

It should be obvious that

these will not be topics for lectures at the Florida School of Preaching. However, the principles we will present during the week and in the published materials are designed to show the superficiality of the thinking of some on the subject of church growth.

The studies for the week will begin with an overview of Ephesians 4:11-16. It will be shown in this study what the Lord intended for church growth when it was directly supervised by direct revelation to those with spiritual gifts. Among the other topics for consideration will be the following:

1. We need to understand our obligation to support faithful men and works.
2. We need to understand what it means to have fields that are white unto harvest.
3. We need to understand the harm done by “wolves in sheep’s clothing.”
4. We need to understand the growth difficulties like those seen in Third John.
5. We need to understand the failed unity forums of the past and present that hinder true growth.
6. We need to understand church growth by a study of the church in Antioch of Syria.
7. We need to understand church growth by using the printed page.
8. We need to understand the maturity implied in order to bear fruit unto God.
9. We need to understand it is possible to have a name, but this may not mean true growth.
10. We need to

understand if we are to have genuine growth, we must build on the proper foundation.

11. We need to encourage elders to understand church growth.

12. We need to understand the role of such works as “Alabama School of Biblical Emphasis” in church growth.

13. We need to understand that some may try to grow the church with deficient materials.

14. We need to understand how the early church solved both internal and external problems in church growth.

15. We need to understand some of the difficulties in church growth faced by those in other countries.

16. We need to understand to have true church growth, there are some gatherings we will not support.

17. We must understand that there are many things promoted by unscrupulous persons and institutions that do not contribute to genuine church growth.

18. We need to understand the role of singing as

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TRAINING PREACHERS SINCE 1969

designed by God in promoting church growth.

In addition to these individual topics of discussion, we will have a forum each afternoon. There will be three speakers presenting brief studies of assigned subjects. Following a thirty minute break, these same speakers will answer questions based upon the studies they have presented.

Monday Forum

Hindering Manipulation

This day we will focus on the problems with using contests as a means of promoting growth.

We will reflect upon the faulty comparisons as it relates to church growth.

This forum will also show how some praise the wicked and condemn the just, and these actions do not promote church growth that honors the Christ.

Tuesday Forum

Proper Motivations

The forum for this day will emphasize proper incentives for church growth. It will be shown that we must love the truth, know the truth, and be certain that the Lord approves our work.

Wednesday Forum

Models to Follow

As the Apostle John states in Third John 11, we are to imitate the good if we are to have the approval of God.

With this in mind, we will seek to understand the duty to plant new congregations as did Paul.

We will seek to understand the role of edification, as exemplified by Barnabas.

We will propose to show

the necessity of watering that which has been planted as did Apollos.

Thursday Forum

Preaching

All informed persons know the method and message of preaching dictates the direction of the church.

This being true, we will show the need to understand the importance of preaching.

We will emphasize the need the church has in training preachers.

We will also show the necessity for preachers preparing lessons that will feed and protect the congregations.

Speakers

Among the confirmed speakers for the 2005 lectures are the following: Jimmy Clark, Tom Holland, Robert McAnally, Billy Lambert, Ryan Roark, Gary Summers, Ed Smith, Steve Atnip, Eric Dawkins, Harold Redd, Allen Webster, Bruce Daugherty, Billy Davidson, James E. Rogers, Raymond Sieg, Blaine Cook, Gene Burgett, Steve Riley.

From outside the United States, we have two speakers scheduled. Emmanuel Charles, a graduate of the school and now preaching for the French Speaking congregation on St. Martin will be here.

From Ghana, Edward Owusu-Ansah. Brother Owusu was converted when Ted Wheeler was living in Ghana. Ted is a graduate of FSOP, now part time faculty member and a member of the Board. Brother Owusu now trains local preachers in Ghana.

Report

Gene Burgett

I am sure I have heard more preaching over the past few months than I have ever heard during any similar length of time in my Christian life. The Florida School of Preaching lectureship took place the third week of January. This was followed one week later with the Freed-Hardeman lectures. One week after the Freed-Hardeman lectures I spoke twice on a four day retreat in Okeechobee, Florida. All of these events provided me opportunities to address the great need for preacher training.

During one of my recent trips someone asked me if there is a shortage or a glut of preachers. To be honest I had not really thought about the question very much. My failure to consider the question is due to the fact that whether or not all of our pulpits have men isn't really what we need to be asking. The real question is whether or not there is a glut or a shortage of faithful and competent preachers. I think we all know the answer to that one. Churches suffer and Christians go unfed when all we expect from our pulpit is a warm body to fill it. Competent preachers are no accident. Competency is the result of preparation. The purpose of the Florida School of Preaching is to prepare competent preachers.

Over the past several weeks I have been blessed with a number of opportunities to communicate with men who have been giving thought to making preaching their life's work. Will

any of these men actually become preachers? I have no way of knowing the answer to that question. Do any of us know when we study the Bible with someone whether or not they will become a Christian? We study not because we know the outcome, but because we know it is the right thing to do. The Lord's church needs gospel preachers. Talking with men about preaching is the right thing to do. It is a work that must often be viewed as a long-term goal. People I speak to today may not begin preaching for several years. Some are young men still in school. Some are men waiting to retire from a career. My job is to plant seeds.

Often the key to finding men who would like to attend the

Florida School of Preaching is a concerned third party. Someone who knows someone who has expressed an interest in preaching. Perhaps one of our Harvester readers has recently heard someone say they have been thinking about preaching. We will gladly contact this person, providing them additional information so that they may make an informed decision.

My schedule for the next few weeks is quite busy, but I still have a couple of dates open in May and June for any congregation that would provide me an opportunity to speak with them about the important work of training men to preach. I look forward to hearing from you. Reach me either by E-mail or by

telephone as follows:
burgett@atlantic.net
 352-339-3195

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New Extension Class
Clearwater, Florida
August 2004

In the last Board meeting of the Florida School of Preaching, the decision was made to add an extension class at the Central church of Christ, 1454 Belleair Road in Clearwater.

Brother Billy Davidson, preacher and an elder of the congregation, also a part time faculty member of the Florida School of Preaching will teach the class.

For more information please contact brother Davidson.

billyr@verizon.net
 727-446-8417

Return Service Requested

WEB SITE: www.fsop.net

E-MAIL: fsop@gte.net

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