



# Preparing Souls To Serve The Lord

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## Completing Studies

We have two students who will finish their studies at the Florida School of Preaching in May: Z. Elvis Galbreath and Autumn Kidwell.

**E**lvis' education includes the following: in addition to completing High School, he attended the Detroit College of Business-Business law; Barry University-Computer Science; Florida Metropolitan University-Accounting; Heritage



Elvis Galbreath

Christian University. He has worked with churches in Florida in Plymouth, Pleasant Grove, Flora City and Pine Castle in Orlando. While attending school at the Florida School of Preaching he has worked with, and been supported by, the Pine Castle congregation. He has spoken on a number of youth retreats and summer camps and made preaching trips to Jamaica in 2002 and 2003.

He plans after graduation to be married to Anne Rominski, July 21, 2007. He will be preaching for the Barlow-Vincent church of Christ in Vincent, Ohio.

Elvis states that "God has truly blessed my life through the Florida School of Preaching."

**A**utumn was home schooled K-12, graduating in 2004.

Autumn's employment experiences include the following: World Video Bible School, Maxwell, TX., Allstate Insurance, Lockhart, TX., Gap Clothing



Autumn R. Kidwell

Store, San Marcos, TX., Hobby Shop Craft Store, San Marcos, TX, and Consolidated Rehabilitation Therapy, San Marcos, TX.

Autumn has an outgoing personality, loves children and to talk to others about the Lord. She made a trip to Guyana, South America, in the Summer of 2004. In the summer of 2006, she went with a group to Costa Rica.

Autumn states: "My future plans are to continue working in the Lord's kingdom in whatever capacity He sees fit. I pray that I can continue to teach young ladies and women His truth and I know the knowledge I have received from the school will aid me so much in that!"

## Reflections on Purposing

By

Jackie M. Stearsman

The Bible abounds with admonitions from God for man to make the proper choices, and it provides a abundance of data on the consequences of the choices we make.

One of the most familiar passages reflecting the consequences of choice is that in Joshua. ... *choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve Jehovah* (Josh. 24:15 ASV). *If ye forsake Jehovah, and serve foreign gods, then he will turn and do you evil, and consume you, after that he hath done you good* (Josh. 24:20).

From this text and those like it there are fundamental principles to be recognized: (1) God created us with the capacity to make choices. (2) With these choices God will hold us accountable. (3) The choices we make are not contingent upon others. Joshua stated his family had made a choice and followed through with that choice, and he called upon his nation to do likewise. (4) With choices made there are the potential for blessings (good) or curses (evil). (5) With choices there will of necessity be sacrifices to be made. Let us consider further some lessons on purposing.

### God's Purpose And the Consequences

The Bible makes known to us that God purposed to create

humanity in his likeness with the full knowledge of our potential to sin. In His infinite wisdom, He knew we would have the ability to make mistakes (with free will, it can not be avoided). Not only did God propose to create humanity, but He purposed to provide a scheme of redemption that involved the death of the incarnate Son upon the cross. One of the great summary passages of God's purposing, and the sacrifices that follow from it is the following:

*And we know that to them that love God all things work together for good, even to them that are called according to his purpose. For whom he foreknew, he also foreordained to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren: and whom he foreordained, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified. What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who is against us? He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not also with him freely give us all things? Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth; who is he that condemneth? It is Christ Jesus that died, yea rather, that was raised from the dead, who is at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us* (Rom. 8:28-34).

Please observe the

following: (1) God calls humanity according to His purpose. (2) The purpose of God was known and predetermined in eternity. (3) The purpose of God involved humanity being conformed to the image of His Son. (4) Those that were known to Him, He called, justified and glorified. (5) The purpose of God involved the ultimate sacrifice, the death of the divine Son. (6) Among the abundant blessings from the resurrected Son is that the Son is at the right of God making intercession for those willing to answer His call. (7) To reject this invitation is far greater than rejecting the material blessings promised the people of Joshua's day (Mark 16:16; Heb. 10:28-29).

### The Christian's Purpose And the Consequences

When the Lord chose to provide Christians with a model for making choices, is it any

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wonder that he chose the Apostle Paul? *Brethren, be ye imitators together of me, and mark them that so walk even as ye have us for an ensample* (Phil. 3:17).

### 1. The Choice to Serve

Paul knew and exemplifies what it means to be great in the sight of the Lord. His service exemplifies this trait, and if we are to be the Christian like him, we too must be servants (Matt. 20:26-28). He states that the elders at Ephesus could testify of his service (Acts 20:19, 33-35). By working himself, he was able to help others. He calls upon all brethren to do likewise (2 Thess. 3:6-15).

### 2. The Choice to Change

Paul becomes our model for change. His zeal was unsurpassed in his religious convictions (Phil. 3:4-11).

When his Jewish brethren purposed to stop the spread of Christianity, they chose Saul (Acts 8:1, 3; 9:1-22).

One of the mistaken ideas of the religious world today is the idea that as long as a person has some religion that is sufficient. Let us not forget that Jesus Christ did not come to make us religious, He came to make us right with God (Eph. 2:11-22). If all religions (or religious convictions) are the same then Jesus' death was pointless!

The great Apostle Paul would remind Agrippa, and through Agrippa all others, that all need to change as had Paul, and all were to be like Paul except the bonds (Acts 26:29).

In fact, all the Apostles had to change. Does not the Bible teach us that all must change if

they are not thinking and acting as they should? God commands all men to repent (Acts 17:3-31).

The motivation for change is set forth by God. His thoughts are not our thoughts and neither are His ways our ways. He is higher than are we, and we must recognize that we must change, for He can not. He does not think, will, or do evil (Isa. 55:6-11).

### 3. The Choice to Sacrifice

We have called attention to the sacrifice made by God to enable redemption to humanity to be realized.

Paul's sacrifice in service has also been noted. However, there are others demanded of us, not just working with our hands to support ourselves and others, but a humiliating endurance of hardship that comes to a child of God.

Peter states it as follows: *For let none of you suffer as a murderer, or a thief, or an evildoer, or as a meddler in other men's matters; but if a man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God in this name* (1 Pet. 4:15-16).

There is no such thing as a "cost free" Christianity. In fact, a true Christian is to be a living sacrifice (Rom. 12:1-2). It may be that some would like to make their sacrifice like the first king of Israel. He was on the way to Gilgal to make a great "sacrifice" to the Lord following his disobedience in the matter of the Amalekites (1 Sam 15:17-23).

How different his successor David was when contemplating sacrificing to

God. He stated that he would not offer sacrifices to his God that cost him nothing (2 Sam. 24:24-25).

The sacrifices and offering made by God and the Christ are a great contrast from that which is made by the Israelites following the return from Babylon oppression. They were offering "sacrifices" to God that they would never offer to the governor (Mal. 1:6-8).

### Conclusion

Let us recognize that God demands that we make a choice to serve Him, and that to fail to make the proper choice is eternal ruin (Rom. 6:23; 2 Thess. 1:3-11). Sacrifice is an essential component of serving God. No sacrifice in this life can compare with the glory that shall be revealed to the faithful in eternity (Rom. 8:18-39).

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## Summer Break

Gene Burgett

By the time Harvester readers receive this article we will have begun our summer break at the Florida School of Preaching. I use the word *break* very loosely, for it is not a break from working, rather it is a break from the usual classroom routine. There is plenty of work to be done for the few weeks classes are suspended.

Writing assignments have already been mailed to those who will be speaking on the 2008 Florida School of Preaching Lectureship. This means Brian will soon be receiving manuscripts to be edited, a process that requires a great deal of his time during summer *break*. Instructors will be preparing during the summer *break* for the classes they will be teaching in the fall.

Summer *break* is also a

prime opportunity for me to visit churches and individuals interested in the work of the FSOP. I still have a few open dates on my calendar, so I urge any who would like to meet with an FSOP representative to please contact me as soon as possible.

Also, any Harvester readers who are considering enrolling as a full-time FSOP student, the time to begin that process is today (yesterday would have been better). Assuming one's application has already been accepted, it is time to raise whatever financial support will be necessary to live in the Lakeland, Florida, area for the next two years.

People sometimes are surprised when they hear me mention the need to apply and be accepted as a student at the Florida School of Preaching. One young man, apparently under the delusion that the application process is a mere formality, asked me if applications

are ever rejected. The answer is yes, applications may be rejected for various reasons. Our goal is not to bloat our enrollment figures, rather we desire to provide the training necessary to enable our graduates to do the work of an evangelist. Occasionally it becomes clear that a student has not yet attained the necessary maturity to attend classes six hours a day five days a week. It takes a great amount of discipline to keep up with such intense study. In those situations we sometimes urge the applicant to reapply at a later date. Sometimes it is clear that an applicant does not have the temperament to be an FSOP student. One needs to be able to get along with their fellow students as well as the faculty. Our students spend a great deal of time together and the ability to love one's neighbor is essential. It sometimes happens that one does not have the humility to be

taught. Such an attitude can only lead to frustration for both the student and the faculty.

It is important for our supporters to understand that we do take the application process very seriously. The Florida School of Preaching has been blessed with the support of many generous churches and individuals over the past thirty-eight years. A very important part of our stewardship of these contributions is that we seek men who will truly benefit from the training they receive, and will in turn be a blessing in God's kingdom where ever they serve.

I look forward to hearing from any who are interested in having fellowship with us in the work of training men to preach the gospel.

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