



Preparing Souls To Serve The Lord

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Thomas B. Warren A True Soldier of the Cross

By
Terry M. Hightower

Though some have said that old soldiers never die, on August 8th the valiant soldier of the cross, Thomas B. Warren laid his armor down and passed into the unseen Hadean realm. Our sympathy is extended to Faye Warren, his faithful companion for nearly 59 years, and to the three children. Faithful churches of our Lord across the nation and world mourn his death, and I personally feel the loss of my "mentor" of about 29 years.

Students of the Florida School of Preaching will think of the various school textbooks used which were authored by him, of their appreciation for his time spent editing *The Spiritual Sword* journal which has bolstered the faith of thousands over the years, and of the many articles/chapters coming forth from his pen. I am sure that some will say that they admired this brother and were greatly influenced by him even in their decision to attend a school of preaching or college Bible department in order to prepare themselves to preach the gospel.

Churches across Florida will especially remember supporting the 1978 Tampa "Does God Exist?" debate



Thomas B. Warren

between brother Warren and the world-renowned atheist Wallace I. Matson (from the philosophy department of the University Of California at Berkeley). FSOP's Director, Jackie Stearsman, and myself were privileged to be students of Tom Warren. We were both working with the good Central congregation in Clearwater when her elders

decided to oversee this great public discussion, and these men also were responsible for the excellent debate book later being placed in libraries of Florida universities and colleges, and across the nation. One professor from the University of Tampa said: "Dr. Warren, I was not sure about what to teach as to the objective truth of God's existence until now, but I want you to know that you have settled that question for me." A professor at another college thanked a nearby church of Christ for making the videos available to him and said: "I was pleased to hear that you had these materials and found the debates so stimulating that I was listening to the tapes into the early morning hours.....through these debates I think almost anyone can grasp the struggles that center around the question of the existence of our Creator and Redeemer." Some of you may remember the Marriage, Divorce, and Remarriage Seminar held by brother Warren here in Lakeland and the plain speech with which

he addressed such a difficult issue, or perhaps his great lessons at the Florida West Coast Lectureship.

A fitting headstone for brother Warren would certainly be the passage from Paul's inspired pen: "Prove all things; hold fast to that which is good" (1 The. 5:21). Perhaps more than any one person in our generation, Thomas B. Warren instilled in our great brotherhood the need to love God with all one's MIND (Mat. 22:37b). His total preparation for the task at hand, be it a sermon, a class, a book chapter, a journal article, or a debate, exhibited a person with a passion for the Truth, the whole Truth, and nothing but the Truth! Unless involved with such, you simply cannot understand and appreciate the study and work involved in his "getting ready" for a debate with an agent of Satan. It is no wonder his debates with "antis," "liberals," denominationalists, and with atheists became classic confrontations between truth and error!

His help in practical matters related to ascertaining Bible authority and his stress upon the importance of that task has been phenomenal. Thanks to his numerous writings we can say: "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord....that they may rest from their labors; for their works do follow them" (Rev. 14:13). Perhaps more knowledgeable brethren should be writing before their departure, too.

Tom Warren had the beautiful combination of a high

intellect coupled with a strong desire to uphold and defend God's divine Word against all comers. Yet, as a Christian gentleman he loved and respected men and women, even those with whom he strongly disagreed, and it showed. Though recognized as a scholar and possessing the Ph. D. from Vanderbilt University, he had the ability to explain things from the Bible to the very young. Sometimes very young children would approach him after his lesson in order to discuss what they had learned in hearing that beautiful baritone voice proclaim God's Truth.

Contrary to popular belief (and to those who desired to slander him), he did NOT "dream in syllogisms" and he could enjoy telling or listening to a good joke "with the best of them" —even drawing hilarious cartoons which lampooned himself. [He could have had a lucrative career as a commercial artist, which explains his tremendous ability to draw charts!]. Of course, this is not to say that he could not reach out and up to the highest level of the scholar when necessary in defense of the gospel.

Brethren, I am glad to have known such a humble, yet intelligent and powerful brother who unashamedly believed in using his "thinking machine mind" for the cause of Jesus Christ our Lord. I shall miss him.

**A Tribute to My Friend
Jerry Royalty
August 23, 2000**

I am placing these reflections into words at the request of **Vince**, Jerry's son. Words are not sufficient to express the sense of loss that I feel, and I know **Lois, Nancy**, Vince and the grandchildren must surely feel. The memories I have of Jerry and his family are precious to me. Jerry and his family helped to sustain me in times of deepest loss that brought on depression that nearly overwhelmed me in the early 1980's. Today, I have one less friend to cheer me, I have one less brother to support me and the school and to lift me when I am low. God only knows how we loved him and miss him already.

We last talked when he was selected to be an elder in the church. He asked for a sermon outline that I had preached in Clearwater, Florida. It was E-mailed to him on August 8, 2000. The title of the sermon was "Give Me This Mountain." In the conversation with Jerry by phone, I told him of a meeting I had just finished in Somerville, Tennessee. He wanted tapes of

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TRAINING PREACHERS SINCE 1969

these lessons. I asked the brethren there to send them to him. When I think of my brother and friend, Jerry Royalty, I wonder if you knew him as I did.

Credibility

When we visited in our homes, it was always genuine, down to earth, straight forward and honest association. Often Lois would prepare a meal for me and my two sons, she and Jerry knew we could use a woman's touch in food. I believe Jerry would have given you the shirt off his back. I know of a man who had kidney problems, Jerry offered to give up one of his kidney's for this brother in Christ. He knew the joy of giving to others. Perhaps feeling a sence of loss in this area was a contributing factor to the depression he felt. It is not easy to ask help from others. I would much rather give assistance than to need it and have to depend upon others. I have been there and know how low it can make you feel. Oh, how I wish somehow, someway, I could have helped him this week.

A Student

Jerry was a student of many things. He loved the Bible. He had taken courses on the college level to better himself at understanding and explaining the Bible. He often would ask for books that would better enable him to study the Bible. He purchased a computer and Bible Software Programs to help him in his studies. He would often call and seek judgments on a question that he was pondering. Oh, how I wish he had called Monday.

Family Man

To know Jerry Royalty was to know a man that loved his family. Their needs and desires were foremost in his heart and mind. The well-being of Lois was always a concern he expressed. His concern for Vince and the grandchildren were a perpetual interest of his. His concern for Nancy, her education and marriage and well being was likewise a high priority of his. At every turn of the road, we talked and reflected on these matters of genuine concern to him. Oh, how much I wish we could have talked about his concern for himself on Monday.

Loved the church

In his thinking, the Lord's church was always a high priority. I first met him when he attended church services in Clearwater, Florida. He had questions and was concerned with what he observed in other places. He was planning to bring his family to Florida, and he wanted them to be influenced for what was right. He later served that congregation as a Deacon. When moving from Clearwater, he often called and talked about the condition of the church where he and his family were attending. Within the last month, we talked about how to strengthen the faith of the congregation over which he would be serving as an elder.

I Am Astonished

With the way Jerry has left us, I am truly bewildered. How could such a marvelous human being leave us like this?

I know that every instinct, every impulse in a

normal person is to preserve life, to fight for it, to struggle unto the last breath he has—what happened?

I know that Jerry Royalty loved the Lord, loved his family, and loved his fellow human beings—what happened?

I know that he served a just, merciful, and loving God. I know that what is right will be done.

There is a depth of the unknown in Jerry's death that I can not understand, and I dare not speculate—but, oh we miss him. God help us. —Jackie Stearsman

You Gotta Have Preachers To Have Preaching

By

Charles Hodge

The church began with only preaching (Acts 2). This is God's method (1 Cor. 1). Paul tersely said goodbye with, "Preach the Word" (2 Tim.4:2). So when things go bad down at church look at the preaching. "But our culture doesn't want preaching!" So what? What culture has? God calls us with our ears! Preaching is the "Voice of God." A preacher is not the "Voice of God" ... but he allows us to hear the Voice.

Get the preacher first! We are trying to have preaching without preachers ... lessons, stories, drama, civic-club, after-dinner speeches, pop, motivational psychology, "feely-good," modem dance, wrestling (in Mesquite, TX, last month). In worship the sermon represents God! "Is there a Word from the Lord?" Preachers preach

the Bible—not just infrequently refer to it! God encounters man in the pulpit.

(1) Why do we hire non-preachers as preachers? Inexperienced, incompetent, charmers, church-growth gurus, therapists, entertainers! How can one speak for God who does not know Him? “Show Time” not “God Time.” We have preachers who don't want to preach! Less and less preaching means less and less God! “Ear Ticklers” are not preachers. Hirelings are not shepherds. “PR” guys are not preachers (promoters, too).

(2) In a bus ministry years ago we had “Bible Hour.” Stop to think! God is fixing to arrive in worship (preaching). He is fixing to speak to us. So you need something more practical?!?! Did they hear the “Voice of God” or the “Voice of Puppets”?!?! Children reared outside of worship for 18 years have no connection with the church! When they are dismissed a.m., p.m., and Wednesday p.m. they will dismiss the church! I am preaching today because I was blessed by preachers preaching! In spite of human incompetency I heard the voice of God!

(3) Too many preachers today are ashamed to be

preachers! SHAME ON THEM! We need holy men of God with broken hearts and tear-filled eyes who will proclaim the Word of God! Sheep are starving at the pulpit!

The pulpit is still the most powerful thing on earth because it says, “Thus saith the Lord.” The gospel is still God's power to save! -711 Villa Creek, Duncanville, TX 75137. (Therefore Stand, August 2000, 60).

Two Future Events Of Interest

(1)

Annual Booster Banquet

October 19, 2000

Each year we select someone or some congregation who serves as a representative of those who help sustain the school. This year we will honor **THE HIGH SPRINGS CONGREGATION.**

In addition to being faithful supporters of the school, they have permitted their preacher, Gene Burgett, to teach a class for the school. For several years Gene drove from High Springs, Florida to Lakeland each week to teach the

class. When an extension class was scheduled for that area, it was an obvious choice to have Gene teach the class at High Springs, Florida.

(2)

Florida School of Preaching Annual Lectureship January 15-18, 2001

This annual event is always the third week in January. It begins on a national holiday, Monday (Martin Luther King's Birthday) and thus affords those who are not working that day an opportunity to attend.

The theme this year will be “**DO YOU UNDERSTAND LEADERSHIP?**”

An excellent group of speakers has been selected. The topic is certainly a timely one.

In addition to the oral presentations, there are a number of articles to appear in the appendix of the printed volume.

We will again devote the afternoon sessions to a Forum each day. Speakers will answer questions on crucial issues of leadership. This always contributes to making the lectureship most practical.

Are you planning to be a part of it? Call the office if we may be of help. See you then!

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