



Preparing Souls To Serve The Lord

Volume XXIV

July 2004

Number 12

EXTENSION Classes, Fall Semester 2004 Semester Begins August 16, 2004			
Date _____		Phone _____	
Name _____		S.S.# _____	
Address _____			
City _____		State _____	Zip _____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Check Classes Desired Note Extension Locations			
Hours	Course	Instructor	Credit
Monday ___ 7:00 to 9:30 p.m.	Minor Prophets (21346) church of Christ, High Springs, Florida 520 NE Santa Fe Blvd 904-454-2930	Elledge	2½
Tuesday ___ 7:00 to 9:30 p.m.	Old Testament History (21339) church of Christ, Warner Robins, Georgia 1947 Watson Blvd. 478-922-3056	Stilwell	2½
Thursday ___ 7:00 to 9:30 p.m. ___ 7:00 to 9:30 p.m. ___ 7:00 to 9:30 p.m.	Holy Spirit (21350) Orange Street church of Christ, Auburndale, Florida 310 Orange Street 863-967-1757	Bauer	2½
	First and Second Corinthians (11335) Central church of Christ building 1454 Belleair Road 727-461-2107	Davidson	2½
	Genesis and Exodus (11309) Wesconnett church of Christ, Jacksonville, Florida 5223 Wesconnett Blvd. 904-771-5075	Colwell	2½
Cost: \$5.00 Registration Fee and Text Book Required for Class			

Above and on page 4 of this issue are the topics, instructor and location of classes for the coming semester. All classes on page 4 will be at 1807 South Florida Avenue. Those interested in attending extension classes should note the location of the class and make contact with the assigned instructor. The instructor of a given class will keep a record of class attendance, registration fee, and make textbook assignments for the class he is teaching. All classes may be taken for credit toward a certificate or the classes may be audited. Tests will not be required of those auditing a class.

Why Do You Differ From Others?

In the religious world, there are differences. Some are matters of judgment and should not be the cause of religious division and strife. Other differences explicitly or implicitly violate Biblical mandates, and must result in separations among religious people.

To my knowledge no one agrees that all division and religious differences are acceptable. However, to oppose any difference there must be an objective reference that is understandable and authoritative.

Some are prone to label others as having a "sectarian" spirit, or that a certain segment of the religious world is "unloving." However, when such labels are used, the speaker or writer must be held accountable for his/her judgment. The questions asked by Paul in the following verse provide a basis for introspection. "For who makes you differ from another? And what do you have that you did not receive? Now if you did indeed receive it, why do you boast as if you had not received it?" (1 Cor. 4:7, all quotations from ASV).

With his questions before us, let us ask and reflect upon the following:

Do Creeds, Manuals and Disciplines Cause People to Differ?

It is clear that some differ over religious matters because they follow religious guidelines that are different. Denominational membership and authorized priests, pastors, and ministers are distinguished by their acceptance or rejection of a given set of religious stipulations or beliefs. However, it should be remembered that man made doctrines are rejected by Jesus as a justification for religious differences (Matt. 15:8-9).

Did Paul instruct the

followers of Christ to establish or maintain unity? Did not Paul provide a platform for maintaining unity of the spirit in the bond of peace (Eph. 4:1-6)? Did Paul beg the church in Corinth to be of the same mind and judgment (1 Cor. 1:10)? At the same time, did Paul recognize that differences MUST be a part of true religion? "For there must also be factions among you, that those who are approved may be recognized among you" (1 Cor. 11:19).

May Following a "Special" Person Cause People to Differ?

Some follow the wrong leader. Was following an Apostle who did not walk uprightly according to the truth of the gospel forbidden (Gal. 2:11-14)? Was not a lady forbidden to permit her home to be used for promoting religious error (2 John 9-11)?

Today in some circles, we read and hear much about Alexander Campbell and Barton W. Stone. Some have become so absorbed in these men and their era that they identify themselves with what they term "The Stone Campbell Movement." While it is true that we must be willing to learn from all who may direct us in truth (Prov. 23:23; John 8:32; 17:17; 2 Thess. 2:10-12), it is also true that when men like Peter do not walk uprightly according to the truth of the gospel, we like Paul must differ with them.

Have Some Differed over Race or Ethnic Issues?

Some may feel estranged because their background or upbringing is different. Let it be remembered that the early Christians had to make religious changes. The twelve Apostles were Jewish, and so was the Apostle Paul. The religion of parents is fine if it is in harmony with the teaching of the Bible and if it is the firm conviction of the person advocating the teaching. However, Jesus did not come to make people religious; they were religious before

he came. Jesus came to make men right with God, and in doing so differed with the contemporary Sects of the Jews. The Apostles carried the good news to the world in their day, convicted the world of sin and called upon the world to follow the one faith that opposed religious division and differences (John 16:8; Titus 1:9; Jude 15).

Early in the history of evangelistic efforts there was a need to show that religious differences must not be based upon race or ethnic differences. Study carefully Galatians 2 and Acts 15 for a more complete commentary on the following verse: "and made no distinction between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith" (Acts 15:9). Did not Jesus come to unite all in one body by His cross (Eph. 2:11-22)?

Should Truth Cause People to Differ?

Since religious differences are real, we must be sure that we justify our actions by the objective and authoritative message of the inspired writers (2 Tim. 3:15-17; Col. 3:17; Gal. 1:6-10; 2 John 9-11).

The Sadducees differed with Jesus, and Jesus stated that it was due to their lack of knowledge (Matt. 22:29). Peter stated that ignorance played a part in the unjust condemnation of Jesus (Acts 3:17). Paul says he persecuted the church

The Harvesters

Published Monthly
Florida School of Preaching
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TRAINING PREACHERS SINCE 1969

due to his ignorance (1 Tim. 1:13), and that God no longer overlooks ignorance as He did in the past (Acts 17:30). Truth loving people must, both by word and deed, expose the ignorance of foolish people (1 Pet. 2:15; 2 Tim. 4:1-5).

The Apostle Paul makes us aware of the battle we face when we enter the religious world. If we are to be a part of a religious world that is not hopelessly divided and divisive, we must fight the "good fight of faith" (2 Tim. 4:7). "For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ" (2 Cor. 10:4-5).

With some it may be enough to compare themselves with others for justification of their differences. Such actions must not describe us. "For we dare not class ourselves or compare ourselves with those who commend themselves. But they, measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise" (2 Cor. 10:12).

The informed student of the Bible knows well that, "For not he who commends himself is approved, but whom the Lord commends" (2 Cor. 10:18).

Conclusion

Truly, we are not the same. We differ from many in the religious world. We know why we differ, and many who differ with us know why we differ. Since we are determined to have God's approval for our attitude and actions, we cannot change if we are right. "Depart from me, you evildoers, For I will keep the commandments of my God!" (Psa. 119:115) "Those who forsake the law praise the wicked, But such as keep the law contend with them" (Prov. 28:4). If our differences are

based upon man-made teachings, let someone show us the truth. If we are following a person, let it be shown that we may correct it. If our religious convictions are based only upon our environment or upbringing, let it be shown that we may correct it.

However, if our convictions are clearly and firmly based upon the teaching of the Bible, why not join with us so that there are no differences among us? (Originally written for publication in The Gospel Advocate, June 2, 2004.)

Report

Gene Burgett

We are now well into summer. It is so hard to believe that half of 2004 is behind us. People often think of summer as a down time for schools. This is far from being the case. In many ways it is an even busier time as the faculty and staff of the Florida School of Preaching try to accomplish things difficult to get done while classes are in session.

Brian is already busy with the lectureship book, while Jackie has the usual cares and responsibilities that go along with directing the school.

It has been my pleasure to work with several youth events already this summer. These are valuable venues for speaking to young men about preaching the gospel, but visiting local churches must not be neglected.

I enjoyed visiting with the Burlington-Santa Fe church of Christ in early June. I have had a long and enjoyable relationship with that congregation. I worked for many years with their preacher, Richard Sain, and elders (Horace Rose, Landis Suggs, Don Warner) at Bible camp. The influence of the Florida School of Preaching has been felt by this congregation as one of the elders, Landis Suggs, is a graduate of

the school. It was wonderful seeing them. I especially enjoyed seeing the young people of that congregation. Many of them I have known since they were of a tender age attending Bible camp. They have all grown so that I often had to do a double-take in order to recognize them.

The school has long needed a quality promotional item we can send to prospective students and supporters. It is simply not possible to personally visit every person who expresses interest in the school. It is often difficult to determine if a query is from deep interest or superficial browsing. Having a quality item to send out will help to learn the seriousness of such inquiries. With this goal in mind, a top priority for me this summer is the production of a CD we can send to interested parties telling them about the Florida School of Preaching. By combining informative dialogue with the right visual images, we can say much more in eight to ten minutes on a CD than we could ever hope to accomplish with a brochure. The media is also relatively inexpensive.

Brain-storming sessions have already taken place and the format has been determined. Carl and Nancy Chambers do a great job maintaining our web site, and we are confident that, with their help, we will have a quality product that will do our cause justice. Plans are to have this project completed by the 2005 lectureship.

My plans are to be in Alabama and Tennessee toward the end of July and the beginning of August. I encourage any congregations in that area that would like to learn more about the Florida School of Preaching to give me a call or send me an email.

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Public Relations
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352-339-3195

Registration Schedule

Fall Semester Begins August 16, 2004

Date _____ Phone _____
 Name _____ S.S.# _____
 Address _____
 City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Check Classes Desired Please Include \$5.00 Registration Fee

Hours	Course	Instructor	Credit
Monday 8:30 to 12:00 1:00 to 4:15	Hebrews and Galatians (21343) Topical Studies (11334)	Davis Kenyon	3 3
Tuesday 8:30 to 12:00 1:00 to 4:15	Greek (21322) Preparation and Delivery of Sermons (21303)	Stearsman Burgett	3 3
Wednesday 8:30 to 12:00 1:00 to 4:15	Life of Paul (21362) Ezekiel and Daniel (21314)	Stearsman Kenyon	3 3
Thursday 8:30 to 12:00 1:00 to 4:15	English Grammar (11324) World Religions (21375)	Kenyon Wheeler	3 3
Friday 8:30 to 12:00 1:00 to 4:15	Old Testament History (21339) Sermon on the Mount (21380)	Stearsman Kenyon	3 3

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