

# Preparing Souls To Serve The Lord

Volume XXVI

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## Scenes and Memories from the 2006 Lectures

By

Jackie M. Stearsman



Any endeavor requires "elbow grease." There were many sacrificing souls who made our lectureship an enjoyable occasion. Coordinating the serving was Dottie Fife and her husband Phil, Flo Duffy, and Jeanelle Thrower assisted from the South Florida Avenue congregation. The fellowship was enhanced by congregations from the area

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ding food for the noon meal. The Sixth Street church of Christ on Monday, Laura Street and Spring Head of Plant City on Tuesday, South Florida



Avenue on Wednesday, and North Lakeland and Orange Street in Auburndale on Thursday.



Everyone enjoying the occasions know of the superb quality of the food and service, and for the benefit of those who were "providentially" hindered from attending, these snapshots are provided.



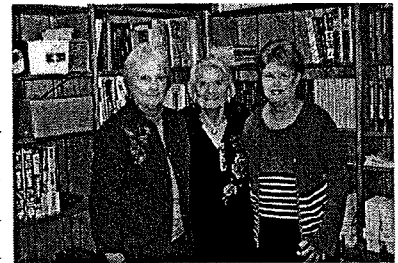
Professional camera work was provided by graduate Marcus Grayson and the Kidwell sisters. As a result of



these combined efforts, for the first time in the history of the Florida School of Preaching, DVD audio/video and audio CDs are available for each of the lectures.

Things in the office were kept running smoothly by the experienced and trustworthy staff of ladies. Bettye, the

secretary in the center of this picture was assisted by Dotty (left). Our books were kept balanced by the loyal and trusted bookkeeper,



Kathy. Without their sacrificial services, the events of the week would have been in total chaos. You may not have seen them, but rest assured that they were ever vigilant in the task of serving the Florida School of Preaching in a most proficient manner.

Amber Kenyon organized the school display with the assistance of her daughter Autumn. With her helpers from early morning to late in the evening our teaching materials, lectureship books and CDs were made available. Katherine Newberry, Frenchburg, KY and Paulette Walker, Eagle Lake, FL assisted her.



The Cozort family

were here with their book business. They provide excellent study materials for those who may not have access to a local brotherhood book distributor. Keith is a graduate of the school and a gospel preacher.

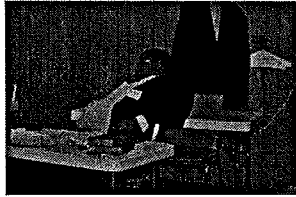
During the break students could "pick the brain" of some of the speakers for wisdom and insight into preaching and working with brethren in a congregational setting.



Some students spent their spare time to catch



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some were even so exhausted from the strain of keeping everything neat and nice that they had to give in to a nap.

Even small children were there, and a number of speakers impressed us with the need to start early if we are to train up our children to respect the Lord and His ways.



These pictures provide a brief caption of many of the enjoyable scenes of the past lectureship. If you were unable to attend this year, why not set aside January 15-18, 2007 for next year. You will be blessed if you do.

While not pictured, Ted Wheeler, J. H. Blackman, Jr., and Carl Chambers handled the on-line program and made master CDs that enables each lecture to be on a CD. Ted has attached all the oral lectures on the WEB SITE (fsop.net) and they may be listened to by going to the site and selecting the specific lecture of interest to you.

Ted further states, "I have converted the lectureship audio in MAC compatible files. So visitors can listen to the lectures in either REAL AUDIO or MAC formats." This enables one to listen to the lesson at any time one has access to the internet.

### Future Possibilities

When funds are available, we would like to provide a live video feed of the lectures, and in the future to archive these for the benefit of those wishing to study in this manner 24/7. With this realized, it would be but a small matter to have video presentation of classes from the Florida School of Preaching made available over the internet.

It is exciting to think of the many ways modern technology can make available the production and distribution of the gospel to the world and our own communities. Pray for us, and if you can, help us make some of these possibilities a reality.

### *Do You Understand the God of the Bible?*

Subject to the approval of the Board, this could be the subject of next year's lectures. It would be in keeping with our "Do You Understand..." series, and it is a needed study.

### Statistical Overview

Brother Wheeler provided me with the following statistical data that reflects the influence of our efforts beyond the immediate area, and the impact is being recognized "world wide."

#### Visits From Beyond the United States

The following locations and number following reflect the first day and a half of our broadcasting the lectures: Italy 170, US Military 105, Canada 45, Singapore 40, Germany 23, Poland 22, Brazil 20, Japan 20, New Zealand 16, US Government 12, Austria 11, Sweden 11, Aruba 7, Seychelles 6, South Africa 4, China 3, Netherlands 3, Russian Federation 3, Czech Republic 1, Denmark, 1, France 1, Greece 1.

The live stream was accessed 999 times during the four (4) days of the lectureships.

230 hours of the lectures were actually viewed via the live stream over the same period. During the lectureship traffic (visits) to the FSOP web-site more than tripled. Some of those visiting the site: 455 visits

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Ted Wheeler

TRAINING PREACHERS SINCE 1969

number of those visiting the site provides an insight into the potential influence of our work.

We appreciate the sacrificial generosity of all those who make these things possible. To God be the glory through His church.

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### A Sad Cry for Help

The following note was given me by a friend. It contains the words of her neighbor who was a college student in his early twenties. Are we prepared to offer our fellow-man more than agnostic skepticism or atheism? I have used this note as an introduction to my Christian Evidence Class to impress upon the students this tragedy and the challenge before us.

If this young man were your neighbor, could you help him? If this young man were your neighbor, and confided in you, could you direct him to someone who could help him? If this young man was in one of our schools would he be told that we cannot know that God exists, that we cannot be sure of our faith, that we must take a "leap of faith"?

If you knew this young man, how many trips to Disney World or Sea World Parks would it take to resolve the question in his soul?

Preachers, if this man had attended your Bible class and heard you preach would he be impressed with your "humility" in doubting that we could be sure of who we were? Would an American Institution that began in "some movement" created by the imagination of men resolve his deep hungering to know God and His ways?

In our Christian Evidence Class, we show that it is possible to know truth, and it is possible to know that God exists, and that we can know the Bible is God's Word, and that it is possible to know that Jesus Christ is God's Son, THEREFORE, it is possible to know that Christianity is the one true religion with God's approval.

Oh how I wish that I could have had thirty minutes with this young man. I could have provided his soul with some solutions, and he could have avoided this tragedy. His cry for help will never leave me.

This is not a tragedy. I did not take my life out of depression, scorn at the world, or any such nonsense, but for an overwhelming obsessive-compulsive curiosity. Ironically I love life, life is awesome. Life is so totally wonderful and absolutely incredible that I must know. I've been studying philosophy.

There is a position 'solipsism' - the theory that I am the sole existent - that is, though psychologically difficult to hold, irrefutable. If this theory is right then this note is unnecessary.

There is a question that plagues my mind, a cosmological question - "why is there something rather than nothing?"

I am an agnostic, that is, I think it impossible to know whether or not God exists. Unlike the atheist, who says we can know that there is not a God, I hold that there is inconclusive evidence for either the affirmation or denial of such. Faith, however, may be possible where knowledge

strictly so-called is not, and hence there is a sense in which it is logically possible to be both a philosophical agnostic and a religious believer. I have faith in God and Jesus. I also think there is a reason for everything, even this. Maybe God created me with this overwhelming feeling for a reason. God, epistemologically, knows everything anyway.

I have to know. I got to know. I don't know if you understand so I won't ask you to, but I will ask you to forgive me. Please Forgive Me.

Again - maybe God has something to do with this, I don't know, but I have to do this. I don't know if you can understand so I won't ask you to. But I will ask you to forgive me.

## Gene Burgett Report

My schedule is a bit unpredictable from month to month. Each new month can find me virtually anywhere in the southeastern United States. January, however, is an exception. God willing, every January my schedule has me in Lakeland, Florida, for the Florida School of Preaching Lectureship. It is a week that is both exhausting and glorious. Our *Do You Understand?* lecture series has produced some of the finest material in the brotherhood and this year's theme, *Do You Understand Restoration?* was no exception. Jackie Stearsman did his usual superb job of matching insightful topics with qualified speakers.

The book of this lecture series is available at the school office along with audio CD's and audio/video DVD's of individual lectures.

Our lectureship was especially meaningful to me as I was also able to make available my new book, *Dear Lisa*. The publication of *Dear Lisa* brings to fruition a project that has been several years in the making. Solomon was right, "A desire accomplished is sweet to the soul" (Prov. 13:19). Anyone interested in procuring a copy of *Dear Lisa* can contact me or

Publishing Designs in Huntsville, Alabama.

Several congregations began financial support of the Florida School of Preaching in January of this year. We appreciate the generosity of the church of Christ in Live Oak, Florida, the Manhattan Avenue church in Tampa, Florida, and the church of Christ in Double Springs, Alabama. It is concerned brethren that make our work possible.

Gene Burgett

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*Dear Lisa* is a book written by Gene Burgett to help combat religious doubt. Gene is director of public relations, a member of our Board of Directors and one of the instructors. He is a preacher and elder of the church. The book may be obtained from Gene, or it can be ordered from—

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