

The Harvester



*Preparing Souls
To Serve The Lord!*



Volume 39

August 2018

Number 1

A “Non-Bible Belt” Appeal

By Brian R. Kenyon

The Florida School of Preaching is not geographically located in the section of the country known as the “Bible Belt.” Thus, we are not as well known as some other preaching schools. As we begin our fiftieth school-year, we want to remind the brotherhood about the work we have been doing in training preachers since 1969. Additionally, we want (and need) more faithful brethren to support this important work of the Lord. Training preachers is necessary, as Paul confirmed when he asked, “How shall they hear without a preacher?” (Rom. 10:14). Even with today’s technology and the instantaneous disbursement of information, someone must still teach and preach the Gospel of Christ!

History of Inception

The Florida School of Preaching became a reality in 1969. Its founding director, B. C. Carr, was encouraged to start the school, especially by two well-known preachers of the time. Both G. K. Wallace, who had recently retired from Freed-Hardeman College, and B. C. Goodpasture, who also served as editor of the Gospel Advocate, saw the great need in Florida for a faithful school of preaching. In the late 1950s and into the 1960s, local churches and schools turned toward “non-institutional-ism” (also known as “anti-ism”) and lines of fellowship became distinct. This left the deep, southeastern corner of the country without a school for training preachers. The South Florida Avenue eldership also supported the formation of a preacher training school. The school operated for the first two years as a night school,

meeting Tuesday and Thursday nights in an upstairs section of the church building. Then, in 1972, when the school received approval from the United States government to receive students using what was then called the “G.I. Bill,” the school began its full-time, Monday through Friday format of daytime classes from 8:30 am until 4:15 pm. The school still offered night classes to help equip those who worked during the day. In the early 1980s, the South Florida Avenue church of Christ added on to their building a special wing for the Florida School of Preaching. The school has operated from this same location since 1969.

Value of the School

Since the Florida School of Preaching was established as a sound alternative for training preachers in a region of the country that drew sharp lines of fellowship over Biblical expediencies, it should not be surprising that the school has faced controversies, strengthening brethren against false teaching along the way. The school has stood strong against anti-Biblical expediency movements, whether from the twentieth century or from recent brethren who claim to be “sound.” Binding what God has loosed is always sinful (cf. Mt. 16:19; 18:18). Additionally, the school has stood firm against what started as the Crossroads Movement, then the Boston Church, and now the International Church of Christ. While “discipling” seemed good and was attractive to many who were genuinely interested in saving souls, personnel associated with the Florida School of Preaching saw the deception and spoke out against it from the

beginning. The damage done to churches in Florida would have been far greater if the school were not equipping souls to battle these unscriptural innovations. In addition to these, the school has also stood strong against various forms of “loosing” where God has bound, such as unbiblical doctrines concerning divorce and marriage, music in worship, and preachers being over the eldership. Through all of these challenges, the school not only has stood strong, but has provided brethren material to understand the issues involved in order to defend the truth.

From its inception, the Florida School of Preaching has operated upon the premise that “All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work” (2 Tim. 3:16-17). This fundamental view of Scripture has permeated every aspect of our work since 1969. In each class (even those like English that do not seem related), the Bible continues to be the main standard. In each semester, our students have textual, topical, and practical classes that help them learn the many lessons in God’s word as well as the many aspects of a preacher’s work. All of our classes are taught by preachers, most of whom are still engaged full-time in “the work of an evangelist” (2 Tim. 4:5). There are no better people to teach and train preachers than experienced preachers themselves! This is confirmed by Paul, who told Timothy, “And the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, com-

mit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also” (2 Tim. 2:2). In our two year program, each student will have gone through the entire Bible, with some sections being handled more in depth than others. Obviously, we cannot teach students everything they will need to know throughout their preaching service to the Lord, but we do teach them the skills and the resources that will help them ascertain the truth on anything revealed in Scripture.

Although the Florida School of Preaching is primarily engaged in training men to preach, we also welcome the opportunity to strengthen and better prepare other souls. Preachers’ wives, other women, and men who do not plan to preach are also encouraged to study with us. Since 1969, some women have graduated our two-year program. The Lord does not permit these women to preach in chapel or to deliver lessons in classes where men are present (1 Tim. 2:9-15), but they can participate in other aspects of the program. Women are of great value to God and His church (cf. Gen. 1:26-27; Mt. 1:3, 5; 1 Cor. 7:3-4; Heb. 11:11, 31, 35; Jas. 2:25)! Over the years, several men with no intention to preach have enrolled as students. These men sought to be better elders, Bible class teachers, or just more knowledgeable Christians. However, like Jeremiah of old, once the word of God got in them, some of these men could not help but to preach (cf. Jer. 20:9)!

Special Thanks To Our Generous Supporters In June 2018

Florida Churches of Christ: Apopka (Tenth Street); Atlantic Beach (Oceanside); Auburndale (Orange Street); Callahan (First Coast); Clearwater (Central); Daytona Beach (Beville Road); Dunnellon; Haines City (Central); Jacksonville (Chaffee); Jacksonville (Wesconnett); Kissimmee; Lakeland (Sixth Street, North Lakeland, South Florida Avenue); New Port Richey (River Road); Okeechobee; Orange Park (Lakeside); Plant City (Laura Street); Poinciana; Sarasota (Osprey Avenue); Sebastian; St. Augustine; Stuart.

Out of State Churches of Christ: Alabama (Double Springs, Shiloh); Michigan (Grand Blanc, Wayne Road); North Carolina (Pike Road); Ohio (Tenth and Clairmont, Fishinger-Kenny, Alkire Road); Oklahoma (Anderson, Seminole, Westside); South Carolina (Seneca); Tennessee (Livingston, Leanna); Texas (Kamay).

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Individuals: Denis L Fontaine Foundation, Inc.

*Our final deposit for the month is usually made on the last Wednesday of the month. All contributions received after that time are reported on the next month’s financial statement.

The Harvester

Published Monthly
Florida School of Preaching
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Training Preachers Since 1969

How Brethren Can Help

The Florida School of Preaching could not operate as it has since 1969 without the help of local churches of Christ and faithful Christians. This assistance is all the more needed since we do not have the “Bible Belt” connections that other preaching schools have. The work we are doing, however, is just as important and necessary, if not more (due to the “Non-Bible Belt” population), than other faithful preaching schools. There are some ways brethren can help us continue training preachers.

First, faithful Christians can become familiar with the work of the Florida School of Preaching. Although we have been training preachers since 1969, there are some brethren in America who have not heard about us. Brethren can become familiar with us by word of mouth, which should involve an invitation to browse our website. This publication, the *Harvester*, is another great way to become familiar with our work. We still send it the “old fashioned way,” although more and more are requesting electronic delivery. This paper contains teaching articles and brief news about the school. Let us know if you or someone you know wants to receive it. Our annual lectureship is another way to know our work. It always begins the third Monday in January, which is easy to remember since Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day became a national holiday, falling on this same Monday. We also have study notes that reveal what we teach. These also make great Bible study material, whether for personal or congregational use. People can also become familiar with the school by taking classes in Lakeland or in other cities where extension classes are offered.


Second, faithful Christians can pray for us. After becoming familiar with the school, more specific prayers can be made on our behalf. We know that the “effective, fervent prayer” of righteous people “avails much” (Jas. 5:16). We solicit your prayers for continued faithfulness to God. We also solicit your prayers for more students. Our numbers fluctuate from semester to semester. For example, in over twenty years since I have worked with the school, the largest number of full-time students was seventeen and the smallest was three. Lately, we have averaged six or seven. While we trust in the Lord’s providence (Rom. 8:28), we would definitely like to have our average number of full-time students much higher. We also solicit your prayers for increased numbers of local churches and individual Christians supporting

this work. Due to supporters passing into eternity and the increased cost of living for students and daily operations of the school, we need more support. Unlike some “Bible Belt” works that are fully funded (some even with surplus), we operate in the “red” most months. However, the Lord has continued to provide through your prayers and financial support.

Third, faithful Christians can make financial contributions themselves. Some are in a financial position to do more than just pray. Some are blessed to be able to give to good works beyond their first day of the week contributions. If you are a church member whose congregation does not already support the Florida School of Preaching, please let the eldership (or men) know about our work and need. If you are a member of a local church that does support the school, and you are able, please consider supporting us individually as well. Supporters can designate their contributions to be used for student support and/or the day-to-day operation of the school. Additionally, if you would like to make a one-time contribution toward a need such as production of the lectureship book or office equipment, that contribution would be welcome. Contact the office for special areas of need the school might have.

Fourth, faithful Christians can include us in their wills and estate planning. Paul confirmed, “we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out” (1 Tim. 6:7). We need to plan the course our money and material possessions will take when we leave this world. Some Christians have no children or heirs. What better way to leave a legacy of service to God than to support training Gospel preachers? Even if Christians have children and heirs, they would likely not miss five or ten percent of an estate that went to help train preachers. Please consider the Florida School of Preaching in your wills and estate planning.

Beyond These Fifty Years

By God’s grace, and with your continued prayers and support, it is our goal to continue training Gospel preachers until the Lord returns! We will do this, Lord willing, by continued faithfulness to God, by staying out of church politics, which often manifest themselves in the “Bible Belt” (and other segments of the brotherhood), and by “looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith” (Heb. 12:2). Will you join us? Can we count on your fellowship through another fifty years and beyond (Phil. 1:3-6)? 

Florida School of Preaching



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George Beals has been added to our part-time teaching staff beginning with this semester's hermeneutics class. He has served churches of Christ as an evangelist and Bible teacher in Texas, New Hampshire, Pennsylvania, Michigan, Massachusetts, and Florida. He is a member of the South Florida Avenue church of

Christ. He received formal education from Northeastern University (associate in electronic engineering technology), University of New Hampshire (BA in ancient Greek and Latin), University of Michigan (MA in Near Eastern studies), and Preston Road School of Preaching (1971 graduate). He has directed the Michigan Bible Lectureship since it began and is the cofounder, codirector, and an instructor in the Michigan Bible School. He has authored *How Implication Binds and Silence Forbids; Is Salvation Outside of Christ or Only in Christ?*; and *The Deity of Christ and the Trinity*. He also held a public debate with proponents of homosexuality, available as a four-DVD set titled, *Homosexuality and Christianity*. He and his wife, Marion, have one daughter and two grandsons. We look forward to his contribution in training preachers! —*Brian*

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