

# YOKEFELLOW

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## A SPECIAL ISSUE FOR A SPECIAL MAN: IN HONOR OF CURTIS A. CATES, SR.

*B. J. Clarke*

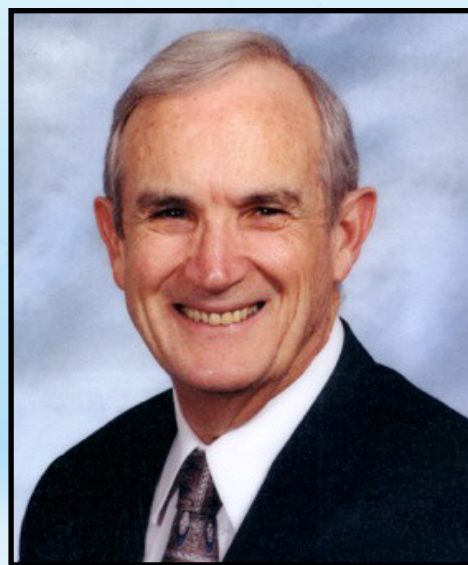
**C**urtis A. Cates, Sr., our beloved Director Emeritus of the Memphis School of Preaching, passed on to his reward on Friday afternoon, October 25, 2013. His memorial service was conducted at the Forest Hill building on the following Monday. Brother J. K. Gossett, and brother Garland Elkins, did a marvelous job in this memorial service.

Brother Cates was such a special man that we wanted to devote a special issue of the Yokefellow to his memory. This expanded edition contains articles from his family, from the elders of the Forest Hill family, from the preacher for the Forest Hill family, and from a number of faculty members who worked most closely with him. There are also articles from some dear friends of brother Cates.

There is no way to capture the entire essence and influence of brother Cates in one 8-page issue of the Yokefellow. Accordingly, we are in the process of producing a book of remembrances of the wit, wisdom and warmth of Curtis Cates. If you would like to contribute to this project, please visit our website at [www.msop.org](http://www.msop.org) and answer the questions there, and send them to the email address mentioned on the main page of our website.

In memory of brother Cates, we have established the Curtis A. Cates, Sr. Memorial Faculty Fund for Educators. All donations to this fund will be used to assist us in our goal of hiring and maintaining quality educators, like brother Cates, for years to come.

We know that you will enjoy this special tribute issue to a special man who was indeed a "true yokefellow" (Phil. 4:3).



### YOUR END OF THE YEAR CONTRIBUTION WILL DO UNENDING GOOD!

**T**he vital work of saving the world requires time, effort and resources. The Memphis School of Preaching, now in its 48th year of operation, has always been dependent on the generous freewill gifts of faithful brethren. While the Forest Hill congregation gives generously to finance the education of gospel preachers, the task is great and the needs are many. Your end of the year contribution to the Memphis School of Preaching would be so beneficial in helping us to carry out the day-to-day operation of the school. Your tax-deductible gift will do much more than lower your tax burden. More importantly, it will increase the spread of the gospel and may help someone to remove his or her burden of sin in the cleansing blood of Christ. Would you please consider making an eternal difference by sending an end of the year contribution to MSOP? Thank you so much for your consideration!

# PRECIOUS MEMORIES

*Andy Cates*

When reflection is made upon Dad's life, often it is his tremendous work of preaching the Gospel and training Gospel preachers that receives attention, and understandably so. But there is another aspect of Dad's life that I would like to share with you. Though he was always extremely busy, he made special time for his family. I am very grateful for Mom and Dad and the way they reared their children. God blessed me with them.

The man who loved and encouraged education at all levels also knew that it had its own place in life. One of my fondest memories of Dad was when he would wake up one of his sons early in the morning, allowing us to miss a day of school, and take us fishing for a wonderful one-on-one bonding experience. We lived in the country a number of years where Dad raised a few cattle and some chickens. The freezer was always stocked with meat for his family, as he was a good provider. As everyone who knew him knows, Dad never did anything "half-way." Realizing Dan and I had childhood imaginations, while living in the country, Dad built us a log fort (chopping down his own trees) that would have made Grizzly Adams proud!

Our family vacations included camping by the Gulf of Mexico, where we would drop crab traps or go swimming at a secluded beach. Dad also enjoyed the Great Smoky Mountains. There, we would spend time hiking and looking for bears and other wildlife. I am very thankful that our family had the opportunity to

celebrate Mom and Dad's 50th Wedding Anniversary in Gatlinburg where they could spend time with their children and grandchildren in a place they loved. And yes, we had a close encounter with a family of bears! I can still see the excitement on Dad's face!

No matter where we lived, Dad always adapted to what Dan and I enjoyed, from skateboarding in Montgomery, to snow skiing in Oregon, and knee boarding on Pickwick Lake. He loved the great outdoors and enjoyed boating and fishing. He had a great fascination with trains and would walk many miles of track together with his sons, and later with his grandson Trey.

One cannot discuss Dad's life without mentioning his love for Alabama football. Growing up, we would attend numerous Alabama games. During the time we lived in Tuscaloosa, Dad would take me to the practices where we would stand by the fence and watch Coach "Bear" Bryant in his tower. I will never forget our family traveling on Highway 78 through Mississippi listening to an Iron Bowl game on the radio. Bama kicked the winning field goal with

seconds left. Dad immediately slammed the car to the side of the road, sprung out of the car, and jumped up and down with hands in the air screaming "ROLL TIDE, ROLL TIDE!" I wonder what passing motorists were thinking of this sight. In the later years, Dad and I shared a continuing bond, going to games and collecting autographs. Dad's enthusiasm for the Crimson Tide carried over to me, and thus later, to my wife and children.

Dad instilled in Dan and me, in whatever we did, always to put God first. Although he encouraged, he never pressured either of his sons to become Gospel preachers. Today, I am very thankful that I did indeed choose to follow in his footsteps, teaching others what matters most and how to obtain eternal life in heaven.

## "THE LIPS OF THE RIGHTEOUS FEED MANY"

*Daniel F. Cates*

These words penned by Solomon (Pro. 10:21) can apply, generally, to any who prudently apply righteousness to their words. I (my apologies, but I cannot

forbear to write this article in the first person or to speak of Dad by that affectionate title) would specifically apply them to one whom I saw prepare many great, spiritual feasts: Curtis A. Cates, Sr. Not only did he feed many, but he equipped many that they might be able to feed others as well (2 Tim. 2:2). Please consider his being a student of God and His Word as gleaned from his own study and being imparted knowledge from others; his being a teacher and preacher of God's Word who left a

legacy of Gospel preaching in his family and students.

Dad was known for his knowledge, much of which was in subjects that others feared to broach--such as Job, Revelation, science, and grammar. He gathered the knowledge from delving into the Word of God and making sure that he studied under others who had done the same. Countless hours he spent deep in the study of the Word, his many handwritten notes on yellow pads, or in the margin of his larger than normal American Standard Version, testifying to that fact! He was a firm believer in what his mentor, Rex A. Turner, Sr., believed, which is summed up in this: It is better to have a basic knowledge of all of the Bible than an in-depth knowledge in just one book or area. He could and did capably preach, teach, and write extensively from both the Old and New Testaments, from the earliest pages of Genesis to the close of the Revelation, because he respected God's entire Word and gave himself to know It! He sat at the feet of and alongside such scholars as the aforementioned Rex A. Turner, Sr., Eris Benson, Willard Willis, Franklin Camp, Gus Nichols, W.B. West, Jr., J.M. Powell, Lynn Smith



(an extremely influential secular teacher of English at Livingston University), and his own father Curtis C. Cates, a scholar in his own right who humbly preached for well over fifty years. Many have commented in the days since Dad's death that they did not realize that he had an earned doctorate, but his Ed.D. in higher education from the University of Alabama was in addition to a B.A. from Alabama Christian College, a B.S. from Livingston University, and an M.S. in English from Samford University--in addition to other courses taken through Abilene Christian University and the University of Georgia. He was known as a student of God's Word, but just how much he studied is fully appreciated by only a handful of people--my brother Andy and I were blessed to have that studious example before us and, as it were, behind us, driving us forward in our own efforts to learn God's Will.

As director of the Memphis School of Preaching, Dad was known as a teacher of preachers; some do not know that he had been an educator for years before coming to the school nor that he had been preaching for years in addition to that! He taught for numerous years at Escambia Christian School, Alabama Christian High School, Alabama Christian College, now Faulkner University, and Alabama Christian School of Religion [especially in distant "cluster" courses], now Amridge University, and served as Academic Dean of Columbia Christian College, later Cascade College, in Portland, Oregon. How many people, especially future preachers and elders in the Lord's church, were taught by Dad can never be known on this side of eternity, but the number is great! While he was a teacher, he also was a Gospel preacher who for over fifty years himself preached the unadulterated Word of God. As a local preacher [often while a student or educator] he served congregations in Saville, AL [during which time he married Annette, who would be his wife of 52 years--just four days short of 53 years], Honoraville, AL, Wald, AL, Hebron, AL, Atmore, AL, Livingston, AL [during which tenure my brother was born], Pensacola, FL, Warrior, AL, LaFayette, GA [during which time I was born], Montgomery, AL, Columbiana, AL, Rock Hill, AL, and Fulton, MS. How many lives were touched by his preaching, again, heaven only knows. He continues to teach through his lectures, sermons, books, tracts, articles and other works, and through the legacy of those who follow in his steps, including his two sons and potentially at least one grandson, and numerous students who likewise are faithful proclaimers and defenders of God's Word. Indeed, "the lips of the righteous feed many."

***"For I know that my redeemer liveth,  
and that he shall stand at the latter  
day upon the earth" (Job 19:25).***

## FROM THE ELDERS

It is with a profound sense of sadness and loss that we bid farewell to Curtis A. Cates, Sr., Director Emeritus of Memphis School of Preaching. When the elders sought a new director for the school upon the retirement of Roy J. Hearn, there was a consensus in the eldership, in the school and in the alumni association that Curtis Cates was the man. His educational credentials, experience in academics, doctrinal soundness, and solid reputation made him eminently qualified for such a position.

After being well served by brother Hearn, the school continued to increase in enrollment and brotherhood recognition. When the decision was made to relocate the Forest Hill congregation and the school of preaching, brother Cates became one of our greatest assets. He was remarkable in his efforts to solicit funds on behalf of this monumental effort. We readily recognize that the relocation to our present property would have been highly unlikely without the long hours expended by brother Cates encouraging others to support this endeavor.

Some live a period of time upon this earth and leave little impact. However, this cannot be said of our friend and brother Curtis Cates. He made a positive difference upon the lives of so many, especially those that came our way with a desire to preach the gospel. The love that his students had for him was clearly evident the day of his funeral and we continue to be impressed with the outpouring of sympathy following his loss.

The elders appreciated the many years that were ours to work alongside brother Cates. He could always be trusted to do what was right and always was respectful of the eldership and our role overseeing the school. We love his good family and look forward to continuing working alongside his widow, Annette Cates, librarian of the school, and his son, Dan Cates, MSOP Instructor.

## CURTIS ANTHONY CATES, SR.

*Barry Grider*

Curtis A. Cates, Sr., passed from this life October 25, 2013, after an extended illness. He was 72. Brother Cates was a Bible scholar, renowned evangelist, author and educator, and a Christian gentleman in every respect. Despite reaching the pinnacle of higher education, he never lost sight of his humble beginnings in south Alabama and never wavered from his love for the truth of God. He was my mentor, instructor, a "father" in the faith, and a good friend.

Born February 8, 1941, in Phenix City, Alabama, he was the eldest child of Curtis C. and Margaret Anthony Cates. His father was a well respected preacher of the gospel. Brother Curtis A. Cates, Sr. married a wonderful lady, Annette Bingham, in October, 1960. Together they reared two fine sons, Curtis A. (Andy) Cates and Daniel F. (Dan) Cates, both gospel preachers.

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# BROTHER CATES

*Bobby Liddell*

One cannot walk the halls and campus of MSOP, without seeing, everywhere he looks, the results of brother Curtis A. Cates, Sr.'s foresight, commitment, and diligent labor. It was my great pleasure and privilege to work closely with brother Cates for twenty years. I never called him Curtis, for I had far too much respect for him to do that. Nothing he ever did or said diminished that respect, but always increased it. He was the epitome of what it means to be a Christian gentleman.

Brother Cates was tough as nails, "strong as horseradish," wise and battle hardened, but he was also gentle, often extending the "milk of human kindness." He never backed down in defending the Truth of God, or the God of Truth; however, he often suffered rather than retaliate against a personal affront, for he was never unkind, hateful, or vengeful. He truly loved the Lord, and the Lord's church. He was a most energetic, enthusiastic teacher; a faithful, scholarly, powerful preacher; and, an able, qualified, visionary leader.

Brother Cates had a great sense of humor, and an infectious laugh, and we often laughed until tears flowed. His favorite jokes got better each time he told them, but he told them only when requested (and we insisted). He was a man of great tenderness. I have seen him weep on many occasions: when dealing with a student's problems; when addressing attacks by enemies; when agonizing in his concern for the wayward; and, when expressing his love for his brethren.

He was generous in his praise, genuine in his compassion, and ready always to help. There are many who may never know to what extent he went, how much effort he put forth, and what personal sacrifices he made in order to help them. He did not do so for acknowledgement or praise, for he was one of the most humble men I have known, but he did what he did to help those who were struggling, in want, hurting, lost, or in need of an uplifting hand. I have not known a better man than brother Curtis A. Cates, Sr. He literally wore himself out in Christian service.

Brother Cates was my mentor. As such, he was kind, considerate, and very, very patient. When he came into my office, and said, "Brother Bobby, what do you think about..." I knew there was an assignment coming, but I also knew it would be one that would help me grow in ways I needed to grow. When I succeeded him as Director of the Memphis School of Preaching, he was more supportive and encouraging than I could have ever asked. Often, he would hug me, and tell me he loved me, and that he was praying for me. That meant so much. It still does. It always will.

What a blessing brother Curtis A. Cates, Sr. brought into our lives! We are thankful for his friendship and fellowship, and we are grateful to God

for all he has meant to so many for so long. If this world continues, his positive influence for good will ring throughout generations to come--through his writing, his teaching, his preaching, and his Christian life. He was a loving husband and father, a trusted friend, a brilliant student of the Word, and an accomplished, productive preacher (in every aspect of the word), and above all, he was a good and godly man. We have no doubt about his salvation; thus, we rejoice in his victory by faith, and picture him blessed and comforted, resting from his labors. We happily anticipate seeing again his smiling face in the land of fadeless day.

## CURTIS A. CATES, SR.

*Billy Bland*

I first met brother Cates in 1977. Having just graduated from the Memphis School of Preaching, I was interested in taking some courses through Alabama Christian School of Religion (now Amridge University). Back then, students would meet in small cluster groups for a weekend at a predetermined location and teachers from ACSR would come and instruct them. I met with the group who gathered in Trenton, TN. Brother Curtis Cates was the instructor who came from Montgomery, AL, to teach us the Word of God. I immediately was impressed with brother Cates, his knowledge of God's Word, and the confidence he placed in his students. A year later, I moved, and was unable to meet with a cluster group. However, in 1982, I moved to Coldwater, MS, forty miles south of Memphis, and the same year, brother Cates became the new Director of the Memphis School of Preaching. Some time later, I was asked to "fill in" for some of the Instructors, when they would be away. I was honored to do so. In January 1992, I was asked to become a full time Instructor and also to serve as Dean of Students. Again, I was (am) honored. I remember brother Cates telling me that teaching "gets regular" (which was a nice way of saying it can be hard and steady work).

Teaching alongside someone for twenty-one years, each gets to know the other rather well. It was a tremendous joy to work with Curtis Cates! Often times, we would be in one of our offices, discussing some Biblical point, or he would ask me to read an article he had written, and give him my opinion of it. On one such occasion, he gave me an article and asked me to give my thoughts concerning it. I found a rather unusual and large word that I had never seen. When he said, "What do you think?" I replied, "If I knew what this word is, I could tell you." Without missing a beat, he said, "Let's look it up." He opened a huge dictionary and we "looked it up!" He smiled rather big and said, "I just learned that word last week and had to use it." Brother Cates never looked down on anyone. He probably knew the meaning of the word (having learned it recently), but he did not wish to put me down.

When I think of brother Cates, I think of a

man who was very knowledgeable in many different fields of studies. I think of a man who was very enthusiastic! Brother Cates was a man of humility. He was genuine, a great encourager, a man of his word, compassionate, and a man who was in his element when he was teaching and preaching. Those who were privileged to sit at his feet were greatly impressed with his ability to communicate the Word of God. He was always well prepared in the classroom and in the pulpit. My life has been greatly enriched because of my association with my brother and friend, Curtis A. Cates, Sr., a man whom I dearly loved.

## A SPECIAL BROTHER, AND A SPECIAL DIRECTOR

*Keith Mosher, Sr.*

My special brother, Curtis Cates, was one of my teachers at Alabama Christian School of Religion. His enthusiasm as a teacher knew no bounds. He often would kick his foot over his head while instructing because he was so intent and excited about the material being delivered. His writing on the board achieved legendary status and, actually, artistic realms. How often I, as one of his students in graduate school, would stop him and inquire as to what he had written on top of what he had written on top of what he had written.

He was my mentor, friend, and enabler, because he hired me as a full-time teacher at Memphis School of Preaching, and he kept encouraging me (in a not so subtle way) to keep furthering my education. The reason that so many of us preachers were able to receive college degrees, even to the graduate level, had everything to do with the traveling that Curtis did for Alabama School of Religion's cluster program. Often he would fly in from Montgomery, Alabama and teach all day Friday and one-half day on Saturday, week after week for each semester. I attended such classes from 1976 through 1983 and Curtis came for about two-thirds of those sessions. I often would pick him up at the airport in Memphis and would travel with him to Trenton, Tennessee for the classes. He would be exhausted, but kept up a schedule of classes in several cities during that era. The men who came out of that program, who were graduates of the Memphis School of Preaching, all recommended Curtis to be the Director of the school when Roy J. Hearn retired. Curtis' doctorate was in the administration of junior colleges, which he received from the University of Alabama, and what better background could one have to direct a two-year school?

Curtis was so busy that I often would ask

him if he could form his lips in a circle and he would always go along with the joke and ask why. I would then remind him that that was the shape made by one's mouth when one says no! I wanted him to say no sometimes to all the requests he received to go places for preaching appointments and just relax a little. He never did learn to say no, but the cabin at Pickwick became a haven for the Cates' family from the rigors and heartaches of directing the school of preaching. Curtis enjoyed fishing, the outdoors, and nature, and all were great respites from his busy life.

Curtis loved to tell the story of the first time we met. I had picked him up at the airport very early on a Friday morning around 5:30 a.m. and we had a two-hour trip to Trenton ahead of us. We had to be there about 9:00 a.m., so we had time for breakfast and Curtis said he was hungry. At the restaurant the waitress took our orders and part of mine was eggs. Remember that Curtis did not know me, so when she asked me how I "liked my eggs," I responded in typical Mosher fashion, "Oh, I really like them." All the time I was watching Curtis to get his reaction, when the waitress interjected and asked, "No, how do you like them cooked?" Well, I had to say, "I like them that way best of all." I think that about that time Curtis was wondering who in the world he was with on that first trip to class! I learned later that Curtis could tell a story like no other ever could and sometimes, when trying to repeat one that he told in class that caused the students to howl with laughter, the reaction from my telling it would never be the same. Curtis was a "born" storyteller, which



ability made him a wonderful teacher of God's Word.

I have in my office a picture of Curtis shaking hands with Roy Hearn when the "mantle" was passed from the first director of Memphis School of Preaching to the second director who served admirably for well over two decades in that position. Curtis' style of administration was to give his faculty or staff a work and then to go away in trust that such would be done. I always appreciated that quality in him and felt honored that he would do such. I did know, however, that when he would come into my office with that certain smile on his face that I was going to be given something new to do! It is seemingly impossible to say, but in the thirty years we worked together dealing with some "unruly" students, I never saw him lose his "cool" nor resort to harsh methods. He was stern, but at the same time compassionate with all with whom he had to deal. I loved him much and know that "my director" will be missed by me every day for the rest of my life. May our Father bless Annette, Andy, Dan, their wives and children in the days ahead.

# MY FRIEND AND BROTHER

*Garland Elkins*

When a giant tree falls, the whole forest mourns. When Abner died, David wept and said, "Know ye not that there is a prince and a great man fallen this day in Israel" (2 Sam. 3:38)? Brother Cates was born into an illustrious (outstanding) family. He had a great name; he kept it good, and he added luster to it. The church has suffered a great loss with his passing. My family and I have suffered a tremendous loss also. He was a faithful, loving, and caring son, husband, father, and grandfather. He was blessed indeed when he met and married Annette Bingham. They were blessed in turn with two wonderful sons, Andy and Dan, both of them are faithful and able gospel preachers. They have wonderful wives and children.

Brother Cates attained the highest degree in education and was an excellent teacher. Perhaps one of my greatest contributions to the Memphis School of Preaching was to recommend brother Curtis Cates as the second Director. He served in that capacity with honor. He had previously served as Dean for two colleges. Brother Cates saw opportunities wherever he was. He was a builder. He was a man of character, compassion, and conviction. One never had to wonder where he stood on any subject. He never gave up, but held on to his vision. The School is so blessed due to his great work and those who follow his example. He prayed for the School everyday. He and sister Cates were an effective team. They were devoted to the Lord's cause, family, and friends.

Brother Cates excelled as a friend, "A friend, when true, is one of life's greatest blessings; when false, one of life's sharpest thorns." He followed in the steps of Jonathan: "And Jonathan Saul's son arose, and went to David in the wood, and strengthened his hand in God" (1 Sam. 23:16). Jonathan was loyal to his father King Saul and he was a devoted friend to David. I prized brother Cates' friendship. Like Enoch, brother Cates walked with God (Gen. 5:22-24). Like Abraham, he was a man of faith and obeyed God. (Heb. 11:8-10). He commanded his children after him (Gen. 18:19). He was a friend of God (Jam. 2:23). Like Job, he was willing to suffer for the Lord, and had complete trust in Him (Job. 13:15). Like Daniel, he purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself (Dan. 1:8). Like John, he loved and obeyed God (1 John 2:3; 1 John 5:3). Like Barnabas, he was a good man (Acts 11:22). Like Barnabas, he was an encourager (Acts 4:36). He was an exhorter and generous. He was generous in his finances, forgiveness, long suffering and good judgment. Like Paul, he preached the word without compromise (2 Tim. 4:1-5). Like Paul, he was set for the defence of the gospel (Phi. 1:17). Like Paul, he fought a good fight, finished his course and kept the faith (2 Tim. 4:6-8). Like the Inspiration's hall of fame in Hebrews 11:13-16, he looked forward to a heavenly country. Like David, he prepared abundantly before his death (1 Chr. 11:13-16).

# THE LIGHTER SIDE OF CURTIS A. CATES

*J. K. Gossett*

Most, if not all, who read of brother Curtis will remember him as a faithful and able gospel preacher, a scholar, a teacher, a trainer of young preachers, an effective school administrator, and an encourager of every good work. He was indeed all of these things and more. There truly was a lighter side to this man of God. He had a great sense of humor and delighted in both hearing and telling good stories.

The favorite of his close friends was the story of the blue plate special with brother Garland Elkins at his side, prompting with the details. It was always a hilarious story to hear, while he laughed as heartily as anyone as he told it.

Another story that Curtis liked to tell was a true one which occurred between his dad and Rex Turner, Sr. He told the story many times and embellished it with his own animation. Brother Turner had a preaching appointment that he had forgotten, and instead had gone to a ball game. As was so often the case, he was eating peanuts. As he took the peanuts from one pocket and deposited the hulls in another, brother Turner commented to brother Cates' father that he did not see many from the town of the opposing team. He was told that they had a meeting going on at the church of Christ, at which Turner was supposed to preach that very night. He rushed over to his appointment and found the congregation already singing. When brother Rex was introduced, he was described as a very busy man, the reason for his tardiness. Rex Turner petitioned Curtis' dad not to tell anyone what happened on the night in question. An agreement was reached on brother Cates' terms. Turner would not be exposed for his forgetfulness if he would agree that he would never again introduce or refer to Curtis' dad as "old brother Cates." How brother Curtis loved to tell this true story about his dad and his close friend, Rex A. Turner, Sr.

Our families traveled thousands of miles together, and often found interesting places and events. Once while traveling in the Ozarks, near Jasper, AR, we saw an elderly man plowing his garden with a double shovel. The horsepower was being supplied by a mule. Since I grew up with these animals, we discussed the matter and decided to go back and engage the man in conversation about his mule. I asked the man if

of his mule. He agreed, but kept on plowing. After going a round or two, we asked the man how old his mule was. He said he was old enough to sleep by himself, and kept on plowing. At this point, we decided we were being a nuisance to the man and his mule and moved on. Brother Curtis never forgot this mule and his master. We laughed about it often.

Our mule encounter was not limited to Jasper, AR. In April 2001, we went to Columbia, TN, to their annual mule festival, and saw more of these creatures than I imagined were in existence. I grew up with mules; Curtis was more city-oriented. Needless to say, there were a lot of questions as this country boy and an Ed.D. college professor studied one of God's most unusual creations.

These outings lasted two or three days and always ended on Saturday. Curtis had to be back to preach on Sunday, teach a class, or start a gospel meeting.

Finally, let it be said that brother Curtis was a great and good man. I came to this estimate of him many years ago. It was always a pleasure to be on one of our outings with him and Annette. Occasional rest and relaxation are good for the soul as well as the body. She quoted one of their sons as saying, "Dad can have more fun than anyone without sinning." I certainly concur with this observation. The last trip we made together was June 1-2, 2012, to Mountain View, AR. We stayed at the Ozark Folk Center and enjoyed a tribute to Johnny Cash. I, like many of his friends, have yet to come to terms with his passing, feeling a sense of great personal loss with the passing of this trusted friend and brother.

### **CURTIS ANTHONY CATES, SR.**

*(Continued from Page 3)*

Brother Cates dedicated his life at an early age to gospel preaching. His greatest love was in training men to preach. He was Dean of Alabama Christian School of Religion where he worked alongside his friend and mentor, Rex A. Turner, Sr. After a stint as Dean of Columbia Christian College in Portland, Oregon, brother Cates returned south in 1982, to become director of the Memphis School of Preaching. He served in such capacity for 25 years, positively impacting the lives of hundreds of men, including this preacher. Brother Cates taught us perhaps the most challenging courses of all, such as Christian Evidences, Wisdom Literature, and Revelation. It would be hard to find a man more knowledgeable of the Book of Job than brother Cates. Some surmised even Job would have a hard time passing brother Cates' test on that particular book.

However, one had to know him to fully appreciate his life. I first met him in 1990 while vacationing in Florida. I was giving much thought to entering full time ministry and so I visited the Bellview Church of Christ in Pensacola. I heard the congregation had a good school for training preachers and I desired more information. I learned that evening from their local preacher, Bobby Liddell, that the school was no longer in operation. However, he suggested that I speak with brother Cates about MSOP, since he just happened to be there to kick off the annual Bellview lectures. It was already my plan to visit the school in Memphis; however, after speaking with brother Cates, he had me enrolled before I left him that night. He was so persuasive and filled with passion for his work, I left exhilarated after meeting him and I was ready to get started. Little did I realize the next 23 years would draw me as close as it did to brother Cates.

I studied under him, worked alongside him, attended Alabama football games with him, was in his home and he in mine multiple times, and we were back and forth between each other's offices more times than I can count. We planned together, fought the good fight together, and laughed and cried together. I appreciated his confidence in me, especially in 2005, when he urged me to take the editorship of The Gospel Journal. That was something I did not relish but took upon myself because of his insistence. During those times there was a lot of mud slinging that came our way from some, but brother Cates stood beside me and behind me and encouraged me to never give up the Cause and to always strive to keep a Christian attitude. When you share such experiences with those of like precious faith, a bond is formed that is inseparable.

Finally, I was with brother Cates in his hospital room the day that he died. No other place would I have chosen to be. As I walked out of his room with the family, following his passing, I looked back once more at his worn out, lifeless body and with much gratitude I thanked the Lord for allowing me the privilege to have been associated with such a man as Curtis A. Cates, Sr., and I shall look forward to a renewed association with him in glory in the by and by.





**Bobby Liddell, Editor**

**FOREST HILL CHURCH OF CHRIST**  
*Under the Oversight of the Elders*

NEWSLETTER FROM MEMPHIS SCHOOL OF PREACHING

## A UNIQUE AND SPECIAL SERVANT AND FRIEND

*Paul Sain*

Special images flash before my mind's eye of treasured memories with a dear co-worker and friend - Curtis A. Cates, Sr. So many have spoken words of appreciation and praise (as was well deserved), which I likewise am tempted to do, but allow me to share a few "unique" and "special" memories with this faithful friend.

**Author Of Valuable Volumes.** LaDon and I have been blessed to work with Cates Publications on various projects (books, tracts, etc.). Never a cross word - always gentle and kind - considerate of others - fervent interest in teaching boldly the truth of God - ability to delve deeply into a subject but likewise able to present the truth where all can understand - not sinless but blameless (from every perspective we have).

**Editor Of The Gospel Journal.** From January, 2009 to June, 2012 our friend served as the editor of this monthly journal. I was privileged to be the publisher and business manager during that time. Countless phone calls and emails were exchanged. Throughout this work, it was evident of brother Curtis's passion for excellence, soundness in the faith, love for brethren and most of all, love for his Saviour. The development of a "Theme" for each issue and assigning topics to faithful brethren was a monthly labor of love. His attention to details, including from correcting manuscripts to punctuation, produced an excellent, professional product. Thousands were spiritually fed and were inspired by sitting at the feet of this author and writer.

**Our Trip To Texas.** To attend a Board of Directors meeting in Texarkana, Texas brother Curtis and I traveled together - in a Mini Cooper. It was a most enjoyable, fun-filled trip. At times we laughed and almost reverted to our childhood days. Most of the trip was filled with discussion of our works and involvements, love for the Scripture, and seeking ways to further serve our Lord and Master.

**His Love For Sports.** I am a native Tennessean - brother Curtis an Alabamian. Can you guess where we stood during college football season? He loved the "Crimson Tide." He followed and supported his team with passion. His collection of autographs, footballs, and other memorabilia was astonishing. Though on opposite sides of the field, we sincerely enjoyed talking football.

**Dear Friends.** Each time our (LaDon and I) paths have crossed with Annette and Curtis it has been a wonderful joy. Whether on the campus of Memphis School Of Preaching, at various brotherhood lectures, in Pulaski, meeting at Pickwick State Park, or eating together in a restaurant - our sharing information regarding our families, joking and laughing, talking "shop" about projects, praying together, exploring a spiritual question, etc. - we were blessed and edified to be associated with these two outstanding servants of our Lord. Through the decades they have been the epitome of true Christianity. May their tribe increase.

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