



# YOKEFELLOW

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Co-Editor's Column  
**WHICH CHURCH?**  
 Garland Elkins



In June of 2000, Billy Graham preached in a "Crusade" in Nashville, TN. Brother James McGill and I wrote three tracts exposing Billy Graham's error, and we had approximately 100,000 printed. The entire student body of the Memphis School of Preaching went to Nashville, and during the first two nights of his "Crusade," we distributed the tracts to the thousands of people who came to hear him.

In addition to brother McGill and me, and the MSOP students, some other brethren helped us. We were not there the third night to distribute the tract; however, all three of the tracts were published in the *Tennessean*. The following is the text of the tract which was distributed on the second night.

Through the years, Billy Graham's *My Answer* newspaper column has provided interesting and often helpful reading. But his answer to one inquiry was not at all helpful.

**QUESTION: In our city there are 35 different denominations. From my reading of the Bible, I cannot believe that Christ founded all these different religions. How can I tell which one of the 35 is the one founded by Christ?**

Billy Graham's reply appeared to be influenced by a desire to try to defend the existing denominational system. He made statements that have no Bible basis, such as:

*We speak of the church visible and the church invisible.... But within every denomination there are committed Christians. These comprise the church invisible.... If you are trying to find the true church, don't look to anyone in particular - look in all of them.*

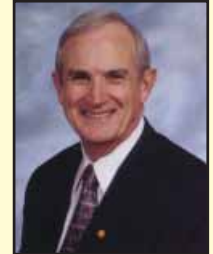
**COMMENTS:** Graham speaks of "the church visible and the church invisible" but the Bible does not. The New Testament speaks of but one church and it was certainly visible.

Billy Graham tells the questioner that if he is trying to find the one true church, he should "not look to anyone in particular." But if the inquirer finds the true church, it will be "one in particular." Jesus established only one! Jesus said, "I will build my church" (Mat. 16:18).

**Finding The Church Founded By Jesus**

There is just one way to answer the question: Go to the New Testament. Disregard the many conflicting claims of men. Conduct your own investigation.

Jesus said: "The seed is the word of God" (Luke 8:11). Whenever and wherever the Word of God is proclaimed and obeyed in its original purity, it will bear the same fruit. Seed produces after its kind. This assures that when the Bible is followed in every matter of faith in our



**From The Director**

**THE THIRTY-EIGHTH ANNUAL MSOP LECTURESHIP: SCRIPTURALLY BALANCED**

We deeply appreciate the following review of the 2004 MSOP Lectureship by brother Robert R. Taylor, Jr., evangelist, Ripley, TN. Curtis A. Cates

**INTRODUCTION**

Beginning in 1967 this annual lectureship has grown in tremendous fashion for thirty-eight consecutive years. It has been my esteemed pleasure and privilege to speak on thirty-five of these--1970 to 2004. I have heard in person most of the oral lectures given and have read each printed one through 2003. I am currently reading the printed ones for 2004. Toward each one I feel like the precious little boy about to take out his third helping of his very favorite chocolate pudding. Gratefully, he exclaimed, "Mommy, it just gets gooder and gooder and gooder!" These spring lectureships just get "gooder and gooder and gooder" or better and better and better with age. Each one builds on the previous ones and becomes more finely tuned in tone and tenor. Roy J. Hearn, Curtis A. Cates and Bobby Liddell have been the talented and versatile directors, and superb has been the job this trio has done. Many dedicated hearts and talented hands have worked in unique unison with each of them. Like Jerusalem wall builders in Nehemiah these selfless people have had "a mind to work," and work well and wonderfully they have done (Neh. 4:6).

**SCRIPTURAL BALANCE IN SUBJECT MATERIAL**

These lectures have never been all-positive or all-negative. Had they been they would have been like Ephraim, "a cake not turned" or half-baked (Hos. 7:8). The theme this year was "Sin And Salvation." No stone was left unturned in portraying Satan and sin in all odious ugliness. Sin was covered in three tenses--past, present and future. Paul did this with sin in Romans 6:21. Sin's tragedy was traced from Eden to Eternal Gehenna. Sin is man's greatest problem; salvation is man's greatest need. This was the fundamental focus of this whole series of lectures. The riches of redemption in Christ--never out of Him--were presented eloquently, excellently and earnestly. No lectureship among us has dealt as comprehensively with sin and salvation as did the one just concluded March 28 - April 1.

Grace and faith were balanced. Faith and works were balanced. Deity's part and humanity's part were balanced. We heard absolutely no commendation of "faith only," "grace only" or that we do "not contribute a whit to our salvation" in Shelly-Harris fallacy. We heard a great big nothing in commendation of "the direct operation of the Holy Spirit upon the hearts of saints" which is delayed Calvinism--an egregious system of error totally unworthy of any preacher, elder, deacon or member of Christ's church among us. No one used "informational" toward the Bible or this novel "supra-literary" currently popular with some among us.

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Attend The Annual  
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|--|--|--|---|---|
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SCRIPTURAL BALANCE OF SPEAKERS AND WRITERS

A total of sixty speakers participated with both men and women presenting lessons orally and for the printed volumes. Christian ladies taught women's classes each morning and afternoon from Monday through Thursday. These were for women and girls only. They dealt with topics especially applicable for our lovely Christian women and Christian girls. These classes were well-attended.

There was a beautiful balance touching age and experience. Veterans of the faith most holy who have preached the gospel for fifty, sixty or seventy years participated. These have borne the burden and heat of the day nearly all their lives. Their lessons enriched all of us. They were able to speak from the overflow.

Younger men who have preached the gospel ten, twenty, thirty, forty or nearly fifty years, our new veterans of the faith, contributed immensely to the overall success of the lectureship. Those of us who are older view with appreciation and admiration these younger soldiers of Calvary who are and will carry the torch of truth the remnant of their days on earth. They have not allowed this torch of truth to touch ground in their sincere, earnest reception of it. This is what the peerless Paul had in mind in 2 Timothy 2:2. These younger men are faithful and able—the two necessary qualifications set out by the apostle Paul to his son in the gospel Timothy.

SCRIPTURAL BALANCE BETWEEN FIRST PRINCIPLES AND CHRISTIAN LIVING PRINCIPLES

Luke wrote one book on conversions—Acts; five New Testament penmen wrote twenty-one epistles and Revelation on sanctification or Christian living. The gospel plan of salvation was emphasized; it was not demeaned, downgraded or ignored. God's second law of pardon was emphasized. We heard what we should put off and what we should put on as Paul stated in Colossians 3 and Titus 2. Emphasized were inward living, outward living and upward living or living soberly, righteously and godly (Tit. 2:11-12).

We learned about the wealth of the church, the walk of the church and the warfare of the church much like Paul set forth in his eloquent Ephesian epistle. There was an exposure of error, and the inculcation of truth. These were Scripturally balanced all the way through.

LECTURESHIP HIGHLIGHTS

The MSOP and the Forest Hill congregation hosted this great effort. They rolled out to all who came the red carpet of gracious hospitality. They made us feel warmly welcome. Delicious meals were served each day at noon with neighbouring congregations helping in providing and serving the food. Keith and Dorothy Mosher were honoured with a dinner on Monday. Close to 600 attended this festive occasion. The Alumni and Friends' Dinner was held Tuesday evening with Toney Smith as speaker. The Gospel Journal Dinner was held Wednesday with B. J. Clarke as speaker.

Present Monday night were 1159. The attendance remained good through Thursday night when I spoke. The singing was outstanding; the prayers were sincere; the fellowship was a foretaste of what heaven will surely be like in full fruition.

The material was so immense this year that two volumes were printed with a total of 1292 pages. They were printed by Sain Publications. Paul Sain and his company are experts in book productions. Both books are hard bound, clothed in beautiful green and with title stamped in gold. These may be ordered for \$25.00 plus postage of \$5.00. The address is: MSOP, 3950 Forest Hill Irene Road, Memphis, Tennessee 38125-2589.

Both audio and video tapes were made and are available. Jim Green did the video taping.

The lectures were carried by OABS and thus by this marvellous means could be heard throughout the world. Brother Elkins always handles the Open Forum with consummate skill. He is a "walking Bible" among us. Many questions came to him by viewers on the Internet.

All in all it was a good, great and grand lectureship, and we commend MSOP and Forest Hill for making it possible. The 2005 lectureship will be held March 27-31. Please mark it on your 2005 calendar and plan to attend this premier lectureship, this pace-setting lectureship.

Robert R. Taylor, Jr.

ALUMNI NEWS

MSOP has a more active Alumni Association, with the participation of more alumni, than any other school with which I have ever been associated. Each year, during the Annual Lectureship, the Alumni (and friends) meet on Tuesday for a meal, and to hear a report on the year's work, events, awards, and news.

Alumnus Of The Year, determined by the Alumni Association of MSOP, and announced at the Alumni and Friends Banquet at the 2004 Lectureship, is Bob Spurlin, 1971 graduate, faithful preacher of the Gospel, author of several books, and inspiration to all because of his unceasing labors in spite of great difficulty.

Honorary Alumni this year are Paul Brantley, an elder serving the Bellview congregation, Pensacola, FL, and Tony Lawrence, preacher for the Bybee Branch church, McMinnville, TN. All previously selected Honorary Alumni were given honorary diplomas from MSOP.

Clifford Newell (1976) was selected as President of the Alumni Association, and will serve for the next two years. Jerry Murrell (1993) will serve as Vice President. Treasurer is Keith Mosher (1975), and Secretary is Dan Cates (1994). Rick Lawson (1999) is Chairman of the Awards and Recognition Committee.

The Alumni Association has undertaken numerous projects designed to benefit the School. Projects this year include the production of a CD (compatible with PC or Mac) containing the MSOP Lectures (1995-2004), Expositions of the Expositor, Vol. 1 & 2 (Winfred Clark), Timeless Sermons (Paul Murphy), Funeral Sermons (Wayne Coats), and Why The Church Is Not Growing (Wayne Coats). The CD is available for \$25.00.

All alumni should remember to submit their annual alumni dues (\$25.00--send to Keith Mosher), and make plans, now, to be present at the MSOP Lectures, March 27-31, 2005, and to attend the Alumni and Friends Dinner on Tuesday afternoon.

Bobby Liddell

ENROLL NOW FOR SUMMER QUARTER--JUNE 28, 2004 FALL QUARTER--AUGUST 23, 2004 Write, call, or email today to receive an application packet. Visit msop.org for more information.

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time, it will produce a church identical to the New Testament church of the first century. It will be the same church. It will be the Lord's church.

So, in conducting your own investigation, go to the New Testament. Jesus' church was referred to most often simply as the church. Individual congregations were just called "churches of Christ" (Romans 16:16).

Members of the Lord's church were just Christians, not a particular kind of Christian. "And the disciples were called Christians..." (Acts 11:26).

The worship of the Lord's church consisted of singing (Ephesians 5:19), praying and teaching (Acts 2:42), and, upon the first day of every week, the Lord's Supper (Acts 20:7), and giving of their means (1 Corinthians 16:1-2).

The plan of salvation the church proclaimed was that the gospel must be heard (Romans 10:17), and believed (Mark 16:16). Believers must repent (Acts 2:38), confess their faith in Jesus Christ as the Son of God (Romans 10:10), and then be baptized into Christ (Galatians 3:27) to have their sins "washed away" (Acts 22:16).

Then the Lord added the saved each day to His church (Acts 2:47). They did not join any denomination.

Jesus promises an eternal home in heaven to all who obey the gospel and then live the pure, faithful life of a Christian (Rev. 2:7, 10).

These are just some of the things an investigation will reveal. Time and effort will be needed, but it can be done. The Bible was written so that every responsible person can understand it well enough to believe it, obey it, and be saved.

Garland Elkins



MSOP BOOK ORDER FORM

Please send \_\_\_\_\_ Copies of the 2004 MSOP Lectureship books (2 Volumes--1,292 pages total): SIN AND SALVATION @\$25.00 per set. Add \$5.00 shipping for the first set and \$1.00 shipping for each additional set. Make checks payable to Memphis School of Preaching Bookstore. Clip this coupon and mail to: MSOP Bookstore, 3950 Forest Hill Irene Road, Memphis, TN 38125, or call (901) 751-9964.

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