

Preaching the Gospel

A monthly magazine for preachers and those who want to preach.

Paul K. Williams, editor

P.O. Box 324, Eshowe 3815, South Africa, 035-474-2656

E-mail: bible@netactive.co.za. Web page: www.knowyourbible.co.za

Vol. 2, No. 10—April 2007

SUPPORTING NATIVE PREACHERS

My grandson, Joel, and I returned from a six-week preaching and teaching trip to Nigeria February 24. While in Nigeria we taught classes to hundreds of gospel preachers. It was a wonderful experience.

We saw the financial needs of some of the preachers and came face-to-face with the problem of whether to recommend a man for American support, and if so, for how much. This is a continuing problem in all third-world countries. It is an especially difficult problem because there are many unqualified men who seek support. Knowing which ones are capable and worthy and which ones are chancers who are preaching only for the money is a difficult task. It is inevitable that different American preachers have different approaches to recommending native preachers for support.

I ask you, and especially American brethren, to read the following articles on my webpage: *Preacher Support in Zimbabwe* by David Beckley; *Stop Sending Money* from *Christianity Today* written by a denominational missionary, Robertson McQuilken; and *Support for Foreign Evangelists* by Bro. Jim Everett. The article by Bro. Everett has excellent, specific advice. Bro. Beckley has lived and preached in South Africa for a long time and has done a lot of preaching and teaching in Zimbabwe.

To find these articles, go to www.knowyourbible.co.za, then click on “Articles” at the top.

You may also want to read three long articles by Allan Turner called *How the Game Is Played*. Go to <http://www.allanturner.com/magazine/index.html> and click on “Magazine Archive” on the left of the page. The articles are the editorials for October, November and December 2006. Bro. Turner preached for several years in Kenya.

(For the less computer literate among us, the easy way to reach those addresses is to copy the address, then paste it into Internet Explorer.)

May God bless us to use wisdom in this matter.

No Magazine in February or March

Due to our six-week preaching trip to Nigeria, there were no issues sent in February or March. I hope you missed them.

PREACHER TRAINING

In Nigeria Joel saw a letter attached to a bulletin board of a church of Christ. It was from a church of Christ needing a preacher, and it included the requirement that the applicant must have a certificate from a recognized theological seminary or preacher training school.

I suppose this was their way of making sure that the preacher had a certain minimum amount of biblical knowledge and training in preaching. But it is a serious error to make such training a requirement, and it is certainly unscriptural.

When the church began, the whole world was evangelized in a little over 30 years. Paul wrote, *“the gospel that you have heard, which was proclaimed in all creation under heaven.”* (Colossians 1:23) And this was done when there was not a single “theological seminary” or “preacher training school.”

The Responsibility of the Experienced Evangelist

Yet preachers were trained. Paul put the training of teachers squarely on the shoulders of evangelists when he wrote, *“The things which you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, entrust these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.”* (2 Timothy 2:2.)

Timothy had a great teacher. What better schooling could he have had than that of being with Paul while Paul preached and suffered for Christ! And every experienced preacher should be doing what Paul did and commanded Timothy to do—teaching faithful Christians so that they can teach others also.

This can be done one-on-one and in special classes where faithful and earnest men and women are taught in a very thorough way. It is done when we take younger preachers with us when we preach, teach and do personal work. It is done when we counsel with younger preachers and point out how they can improve their knowledge and their teaching. We older preachers have a great opportunity and responsibility. This must be an important part of our work.

The Responsibility of the Young Preacher

And Paul put the responsibility of learning and growing on the evangelist himself: *“Let no one look down on your youthfulness, but rather in speech, conduct, love, faith and purity, show yourself an example of those who believe. Until I come, give attention to the public reading of Scripture, to exhortation and teaching. Do not neglect the spiritual gift within you, which was bestowed on you through prophetic utterance with the laying on of hands by the presbytery. Take pains with these things; be absorbed in them, so that your progress will be evident to all. Pay close attention to yourself and to your teaching; persevere in these things, for as you do this you will ensure salvation both for yourself and for those who hear you.”* (1 Timothy 4:12-16) *“Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the word of truth.”* (2 Timothy 2:15).

There may be a tendency of the young preacher to feel that he is qualified to preach because he has spent two or three years at a preacher training school and has a certificate. He may look at preaching as a “job” to guarantee him a wage, and since he has a certificate the “church” owes him a place to preach. He may feel that since he is “trained” that he needs little or no more biblical knowledge. After all, the certificate is proof of his knowledge!

All of those attitudes are very wrong, and it is tragic when a congregation has such a preacher!

The evangelist, whether just beginning to preach or experienced, must seek to learn more and to be more like Christ. This should be his aim every day.

He starts with much prayer and bible study. He has a daily bible reading program so that he becomes familiar with the whole book. He memorizes favorite scriptures. He writes down questions which come to him as he reads.

He takes every opportunity to hear other preachers preach. He learns much by observing how they present their lessons. When he finds a preacher whom he respects for his bible knowledge and teaching ability, he tries to make opportunities to be with him and study the bible with him.

Perhaps he finds other young preachers who want to study together. They decide on the book or the subject and one is appointed to teach. They get together at regular intervals to study in depth.

If possible, he begins to build a library of good books. He starts by deciding which books he wants, and buys one at a time as he has the money. Also, if he uses the internet, he finds websites of brethren where there are good study aids and sermon outlines. He listens to tapes or CD's of sermons and debates.

And always he is working to improve his life and his teaching because he wants to save others and himself as well (1 Timothy 4:16).

May God bless us all as we strive to be what God wants evangelists to be!

[This Response Is A Big Reason Why I Keep Publishing](#)

Dear Paul,

I want to thank you for the monthly magazine you have put out. I have just read your January issue which was sent by my father and have also started reading the past articles. Your magazine has helped inspire me to become a better servant for the Lord as well as a gospel preacher. I am thankful someone has put out a magazine such as this which can help guide people who want to be preachers.

If you would please add me to the mailing list I would appreciate it, and if possible previous issues that you made so I can save them on my computer.

Thank you,

**[You make me very happy. All back issues are on my webpage—
www.knowyourbible.co.za. – PKW](#)**

Some Thoughts From Colossians 4

As Paul was closing his letter to the brethren at Colossae, he asked them to pray for him. Consider what he wanted them to pray for:

“Devote yourselves to prayer, keeping alert in it with *an attitude of thanksgiving*; praying at the same time for us as well, that God will open up to us a door for the word, so that we may speak forth the mystery of Christ, for which I have also been imprisoned; that I may make it clear in the way I ought to speak.” (1:2-4)

Paul was a prisoner while awaiting trial before Caesar’s court in Rome. He did not ask the brethren to pray that his life might be made easier. He did not ask them to pray for vengeance on the wicked Jews who had caused his imprisonment. He asked them to pray “*that God will open to us a door for the word.*”

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This file is formatted for printing on both sides of the paper, with room to punch holes on the left for inserting in a notebook.

You will find back copies on www.knowyourbible.co.za.

Paul looked for the opportunities to preach the word wherever he was. He asked the Colossian Christians to pray that those opportunities would open up for him in Rome. His circumstances were not an important consideration. As he wrote to the Philippians, “*I have learned to be content in whatever circumstances I am. . . . I have learned the secret of being filled and going hungry, both of having abundance and suffering need.*” (Phil. 4:11-12) The matter of greatest importance was how he could preach the gospel to the lost!

Paul also urged the brethren to “**Say to Archippus, ‘Take heed to the ministry which you have received in the Lord, that you may fulfill it.’**” (Colossians 4:17)

Archippus was evidently an evangelist. He had a “ministry” which must be “fulfilled”. The Greek word translated “ministry” is “*diakonos*” which is defined to mean, “*one who executes the commands of another, esp., of a master; a servant, attendance, minister.*” (Thayer)

Whose servant is the evangelist? Primarily, he is the servant of Jesus Christ. He takes his orders from Him. His job description even includes rebuking elders when necessary (1 Timothy 5:20-21).

In 1956 when I first tried to go to South Africa to preach, the elders of a church which had given me some money wrote that they believed a preacher should not preach what the elders do not believe. I wrote them that the preacher must preach the truth whether the elders believe it or not. They wrote back, “Send us our money back!” (Which I did.) But they were very wrong. The evangelist is first and foremost the servant of Jesus Christ. His duties are clearly given in the New Testament.

Brethren, let us be busy fulfilling our ministry! Let us pray that we may be content with our circumstances. Let us rejoice at every opportunity to spread the precious gospel of Jesus.