

September 2024

I hope everyone has had a wonderful month and that the Light of Christ shines bright in your neighborhood and in the congregation where you attend. The Brown Trail School of Preaching had a wonderful month, and I am grateful not only for those who unite with us to train men but also for the beautiful work of our students and graduates.

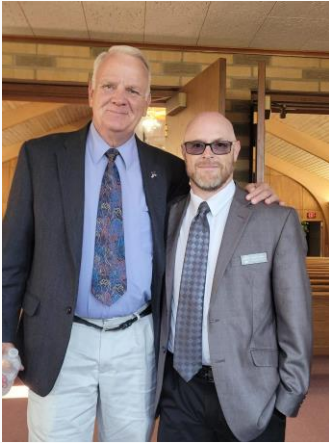
We completed our Summer Quarter in early September. I was blessed to teach the book of *Galatians*, and all of the students did great, making high marks on their work and final. Then they had a week and a half off to serve the Lord in Michigan and relax a bit, visit family, and supporting congregations. Yesterday, the 17th of September, we began our Fall Quarter. I am blessed to teach *Jeremiah and Lamentations* this quarter. I teach the books chronologically, which helps with the historical flow, and I have always enjoyed this class. The students will also take courses like *Job, Ezekiel and Daniel, Greek IV, Bible Archeology, Godhead, Romans, and The Christian Home*. Please pray for these future preachers as they embark on this new quarter.



Benton Harbor - Campaign

Benton Harbor, Michigan Campaign

The school has always had an emphasis on not only teaching evangelism and missions classes, but also practicing what they are learning. Over the years, our student body has traveled all over the South in Texas, Oklahoma, Arkansas, and Louisiana, helping congregations spread the gospel. From time to time, they have taken longer trips into Delaware, Virginia, and now Michigan to spread the Good Tidings. On a few occasions, we have had groups of students travel overseas during breaks to work in Jamaica, South Africa, the Philippines, and Chimala, Tanzania. During this break, our students were blessed to travel to Benton Harbor, Michigan, to preach at a Gospel meeting and knock on doors.



L-R - Gregg Knight (Graduated 1977),
Robert Orren (Second Year Student)

Benton Harbor is considered one of the most dangerous places for crime in the United States, with a crime rate of about 175% above the national average. But, like all cities, there are parts where you can sit on your front porch and never see or hear anything unsafe, but there is a particular part of town where gangs run drugs and will do almost anything to protect their "territory."

This campaign stands out because of the number of the BTSOP family that traveled there to help spread God's Word. All of our English Student body attended, along with several graduates and some of their families currently serving in Texas, New Hampshire, Tennessee, and Indiana. I was very grateful to see graduates from as far back as the 1970s uniting with this student body and many church members at Benton Harbor to reach the lost. Also, the congregation was prepared, the gospel meeting was well attended, hundreds of doors were knocked, and dozens of great contacts were made. The congregation and her leaders now stand ready to reach out to these contacts to try and bring them to Christ.



Eric Tipton - Senior
Preaching Devotional

As with all campaigns, we look back and glorify God, celebrate the good, hope for an increase, and consider what we need to learn and do better for the future. Generally speaking, I would never mention deficiencies we faced and dealt with because no one wants to read about something negative with such events, but I feel it beneficial to mention a couple of issues we faced because everyone will start facing these issues soon, and should prepare.

First, I have been on Gospel campaigns in several nations and all over the United States during my time. This campaign is the first time we knocked on a street or two and found people "triggered" by seeing a Bible. I have knocked on doors in Islamic neighborhoods and have never seen this before. But certain agendas are growing all across America. Twice in one morning, we walked down streets and started conversing with young ladies. The conversations went great until they saw one of us carrying a Bible, and then they just flipped out. I don't know what the solution to this is. We would never hide God's Word, but I find it hard to believe that we live in a world where I can walk streets by some of the most hardline mosques in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, carrying a Bible and getting greeted with love and respect. But, here in America, a segment shuts down, throws a fit, and runs when they see God's Word. Sad!



Robert Orren (Senior)
From Hope, Arkansas

A second issue where we clearly can find the right solution is due to migrant work and the border crises; first-generation Spanish-speaking people have now been spread all over the United States. I never thought we would find a Spanish-speaking community on the east coast of Lake Michigan, but we did. Three young Spanish-speaking souls attended Bible Class and worship on Sunday; unfortunately, we were unprepared. In the South, we are accustomed to preparing for such a situation, but now, this is a nationwide issue we must all face. We didn't have a translator prepared and ready. But one of our graduates went over to the three and tried translating for them, and then, all of a sudden, while teaching, I heard a cell phone talking; one of the young women had some app on her phone that was translating what I said. I don't know if the translation was any good or not, nor would I promote this as a solution, but I hope this challenge we faced will serve as a reminder for others who may be having such campaigns in the future. This problem is no longer just a southern problem.



Tanner Smith (Senior)
From Spokane, Washington

The Benton Harbor congregation is a beautiful group of Christians. They have many men and women who are willing to step up at any time to serve the cause of Christ. They are sound in their faith and love the Lord and His truths. They have been searching for a pulpit minister for some time now, and their ad is on our websites. If you love the truth and would love to work with a congregation that keeps to the Word and is willing to work, Benton Harbor is a place for you!

Conclusion

Please keep the school in your prayers as we begin the next quarter. And please keep the church in Benton Harbor in your prayers as they start to work these contacts.

Also, I am scheduled to show the presentation or speak somewhere every Sunday. I have

only missed a few Sundays in a little over seven years. If the congregation you attend would like to learn more about the work, don't hesitate to contact me. I would love to visit. Also, I have a busier three weeks than average in the first three weeks of October. I will be at the Southside Lectures in Lubbock, Texas, on the 6-9th of October, and I will be speaking on Hebrews 10:24, "Provoke Unto Love and Good Works." From October 12-16th, I will be at the Hope congregation in Hope, Arkansas, where I have been given almost twenty questions to answer. Then, from October 19th-23rd, I will be at the Village Creek congregation, north of Beaumont, Texas, for a Gospel Meeting. From there, I will travel north to Sedalia, Missouri, for their lectureship from the 24th to the 27th, and I will speak on "Preacher Training." If you are from these areas, I would love to see you there and meet you in person.

Brotherly,
heath w stapleton

