

Fulfilling the Ministry

Brown Trail School of Preaching

New Challenges, New Possibilities

Kevin W. Rhodes, Director



The new year at Brown Trail brings a new challenge as we welcome several new students into the fold and add a few new wrinkles into the work. Whether entering the Spanish department, the

Moving Toward Spiritual Maturity Program, the English Department, or just auditing classes, our students have a privilege too rare—to devote themselves to full-time study in preparing to serve in the kingdom of the Lord. This opportunity exists only through the hard work, dedication, sacrifice, and support of Christians throughout the brotherhood, for whom we are eternally grateful.

One change we are excited to announce is that, beginning with the graduating class of 2019, we will begin offering a **Bachelor of Biblical Studies** to those students who fulfill the academic requirements of the two-year program. The *Texas Higher Education Commission* has agreed that we can do so, though we remain an unaccredited institution dedicated specifically to the training of gospel preachers. Furthermore, those who complete the MTSM program will receive an **Associate of Biblical Studies** degree. The courseload of each degree is more than equivalent in class hours for each, and the workload is comparable as well, though compressed into half the time. The singular focus of the school allows the classes—and therefore the assignments—to be integrated as well as related in such a way to facilitate this compacted approach.

While schools of preaching are classified as technical schools (and while our emphasis most certainly centers on a singular vocation), we are committed to being an academic

institution as well. In the culture of the participation trophy, this can be a difficult undertaking. Grade inflation is a real problem throughout society, and this has led some to hold unreasonable expectations. All A's are rare and reserved for those who do the work at the highest quality. A lower grade, earned with diligence and a good work ethic, is no reason for shame. The work of preaching, properly conceived, requires both practical and academic aspects, and students usually excel at one or the other. Both can be capable gospel preachers. So please keep this in mind when the grade reports come in.

On a separate note, we also begin this year with a new partnership. Beginning in 2019, Brown Trail School of Preaching is partnering with **Cape Bible School** in Cape Town, South Africa, to train teachers and preachers. At least once a year, a teacher from Brown Trail will travel to Cape Town to teach at Cape Bible School where Rohan Jones, a Brown Trail graduate, serves as the Director supported by a board and faculty of capable Christian men. We are now making plans for that first trip and first class, which I have agreed to teach, so I solicit your prayers, and your financial support, as we labor together in this work.

These are, no doubt, challenging times. We have come a long way in securing support for the school, and our brethren have responded with real Christian generosity. If we can find others like them by the end of this year, with the Lord's help, we will overcome a deficit, regain the footing necessary to provide additional ministry tools for our students, and allow us to concentrate on mentoring men to preach the gospel without distraction. Toward this end, we covet your prayers. It is a privilege to be here and to serve here. May God richly bless our efforts, and may the gospel ring forth through our efforts to the saving of souls and to the glory of God.

Elders

Stephen Alexander
Kevin Carroll
Russ Floyd
David Hamrick
Bobby Watts

Director

Kevin W. Rhodes

Director Spanish Department

Willia Alvarenga

Academic Dean

Pat McIntosh

Dean of Students

Roy Gafford

Director for Development

Heath Stapleton

Field Representative Spanish Department

Salvador Del Fierro



A New Year, a New Schedule, A New Curriculum

The new year brings a new group of students to Brown Trail to join the men who now have a year under their belts and a greater understanding of both the workload required in preaching school and a greater appreciation for the stewardship of gospel preaching. However, even these veteran students will find it necessary to adjust to some changes as we transition to a more extensive curriculum, a more rigorous schedule, and a more intensive approach to spiritual education.

In the coming year we will begin adding new classes into the curriculum to complement the existing regimen. We will still teach the entire text of scripture, of course—something that has been a mainstay of the program since its inception. However, we are transitioning to a more specific and uniform approach designed to insure that students understand the historical background, purpose, structure, and argumentation of each book rather than an oral commentary on the text. Students need to become familiar with the challenges in interpreting various books or portions thereof and learn the skills necessary to evaluate them contextually and consistently. To this end we are doubling the amount of time given to General Hermeneutics, adding a specific course in Special Hermeneutics, and adding three distinct classes in exegesis that use various books of the Bible as case studies to learn to study the Bible methodically, rhetorically, and linguistically. These will prepare students to address some of the error that confronts the church today from the strength of critical thinking and the context of scripture, honoring the example of the Bereans (Acts 17:11).

We are also introducing two classes on teaching Bible class to the curriculum—the first an introduction and the second a practicum—so that students will gain important experience in teaching the scriptures as well as in preaching the gospel. We are doubling the specific courses taught in homiletics so that students may learn

a variety of styles in preaching, but with an emphasis on textual and expository preaching, in an environment that not only critiques them but also mentors them through the process.

There are other changes as well, including more than doubling the time students spend learning Greek and adding an Introduction to Hebrew as well. However, past students would probably first notice the change in the bell schedule and how breaks are much more limited. This has enabled us to add an entire class hour each day into the schedule and expand the curriculum by more than a dozen classes.

In some cases we have combined classes where there was repetition to insure that we can teach as much variety and as many skills as possible during the compact two years allowed. For example, we have combined the book of Nehemiah with a class on leadership since Nehemiah's work embodies so many leadership principles. Ezra and Esther have become the foundation by which we teach Rhetorical Exegesis, using the historical background and story arc of those books to help students learn to see the development of the book as a whole as instrumental in its interpretation. The book of Jude, with all of its interpretive problems provides the perfect laboratory by which to teach exegesis, and the books of 1, 2, and 3 John will soon be taught using the Greek Text to help students appreciate the purpose of their language studies and learn how to make the most of them.

These are just a few examples of some of the changes we are making. Most of these are fairly subtle, but they all serve the purpose of teaching skills as well as information. All of this, and more, can be examined in the *Curriculum* section of the school's website, including this quarter's schedule. If you have any questions, or if you are interested in the program, please contact us. We look forward to hearing from you.

Notes and Needs

In Honor * In Memorium

The following have recently made a donation to Brown Trail School of Preaching as a memorial or honorarium.

LORENE ATOR

Lila Reed

MAXIE BOREN

Fran Boren

JULIA BRIDGES

Patsy Ainsworth

Larry and Pat Benedict

John and Ann Drago

Nancy Hart

Steve and Terry Malone & Jesse

Joyce Rushing

Marcia Stapleton

Mary Lea Stephens

MATIN EUDALY

Benbrook Senior Citizen Center

MATTHEW FLEEMAN

Patsy Ainsworth

Bobby and June Watts

WINNOLEE GOODRUM

Judith Hatfield

JAMES W. HENDRIX

Donnie and Lois Curtis

VICKIE KINSER

James and Carol Daugherty

Heath and Becky Stapleton

Marcia Stapleton

Orange County Cattle Association

HARRY AND KAY SHAW (Honorarium)

Sandra Atchison

WALTER WOODARD

Patsy Ainsworth

Judith Hatfield

Bobby and June Watts

Your financial contributions to Brown Trail School of Preaching, such as this, help immensely in the training of gospel preachers. Thank you so much for being part of our work

in this way.

Please note...

- **We Need You!** The work of training gospel preachers can be a daunting task. It requires a vision for the future, an experienced faculty, and students willing to grow. But none of this is possible without brethren believing in the work and committing their time, energy, and resources to insure that it receives the funding necessary to not only survive but also thrive. This is no small undertaking. It takes the cooperation and support of many individual Christians and various congregations who have a determined interest in preparing the next generation of gospel preachers for the benefit and growth of the kingdom.

We are indebted to you who have supported us so diligently. We are thankful for those who have supplied housing, books, and other material support for our students. We are grateful for those who have included Brown Trail School of Preaching in their wills. And we are thankful for all who see this need and are willing to provide steady support that makes ongoing operations possible. Your support has lifted our spirits and refreshed our hearts.

- **They're Here!** New students have arrived and are ready to begin the most intense two years of their lives. This is always an exciting time for everyone as incoming students bring a fresh look and eagerness to their studies to reinvigorate the second year group who in turn is prepared to provide guidance after a year's experience in the program. We look forward to what this new class will bring to the program and to the future.
- **Expositions**, Kevin Rhodes' television program, airs on GBN Monday nights at 7:30 pm, Thursday mornings at 10:30 am, Thursday evenings at 6:00 pm, and Saturday afternoons at 12:30 pm.

Financial Needs

Circle One	Amount
Robert Stapleton Endowment _____	
Student Books and Software _____	
PTP Student Expenses _____	
Willie Alvarenga Support _____	
Jesse Martinez Support _____	
Pat McIntosh Support _____	
Kevin W. Rhodes Support _____	
Heath Stapleton Support _____	
General Fund _____	
Student (English or Spanish) _____	
(Underline which)	
Tomorrow's Men Today _____	
(Future Leaders Camp)	
Where Needed _____	

Speaking Schedule

Jan 11-13	Transformed
Jan 13	Farmersville, TX
Jan 27	Brown Trail Welcome
Mar 1-2	Arise!
Apr 6-7	Marriage & Parenting Seminar Rice Lake, WI
May 12	Briar Lectures
May 26-June 2	Show Me State Lectures
June 7	Back to the Bible Lectures
Aug 15-22	Polishing the Pulpit
Sept 22	Jacksonville, AL

Calendar of Events

Jan 7	Winter Quarter Begins
Jan 11-13	Transformed - BT Workshop
Feb 10	New Student Introductions
March 11-15	Finals Week
March 18-22	Spring Break
March 25	Spring Quarter Begins
Apr 6-10	Itasca Campaign
Apr 29-May 1	Tecumseh Campaign
June 10-14	Finals Week
June 17-28	Summer Break
July 1-3	New Year Orientation
July 4	Director's Cookout
July 5	Mike Vestal Preaching Seminar

English Faculty

Willie Alvarenga
 Dewayne Bryant
 Bill Burk
 Will Cammack
 Robert Dodson
 Roy Gafford
 Ken Gardner
 J.J. Hendrix
 Bryan Hodge
 Ken Hope
 Richard Massey
 Pat McIntosh
 Randall Morris
 Eddie Parrish
 Rick Popejoy
 Kevin W. Rhodes
 Drew Robison
 Jason Sparks
 Jeremy Sprouse
 Heath Stapleton
 Jon Warnes

Spanish Faculty

Willie Alvarenga
 Marco Arroyo
 Salvador del Fierro, Jr.
 Jaime Luna
 Juan Luna
 Jesse Martinez
 Rogelio Medina
 Obed Rodriguez
 Osbaldo Rodriguez

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