

The 2010 Bellview Church of Christ Lectures

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The annual Bellview lectures were held June 12-16, 2010, and what a marvelous lectureship series it was! If you were there, or viewed the lectures online, you participated in a great spiritual feast. Seven things necessary for a successful lectureship came together for a very important five-day span of time: Dedication, hard work, hospitality, a vital theme, an important and unique lectureship book, well-prepared and powerfully delivered lessons, and enjoyable fellowship.

The commitment of the Bellview elders, brother Fred Stancliff and brother Paul Brantley, to present the Bellview lectures cannot go without notice. They understand the need for and the good accomplished by such efforts. These men exemplify the instructions Paul gave the Ephesian elders to feed the flock over which the Holy Spirit had made them overseers (Acts 20:28). We appreciated very much the public announcement of the commitment to continue this very important lectureship series.

The amount of work that is involved in planning and hosting a lectureship such as the one at Bellview is large. The many hours spent by Bellview's faithful evangelist, Michael Hatcher, is noted and appreciated by all. The selection of speakers, choosing the topics, planning the book, and doing the scheduling, along with the many other tasks involved takes a lot of time. Our thanks to brother Hatcher for his tireless work is happily extended. His efforts were done heartily as unto the Lord (Col. 3:23).

The hospitality of the members at Bellview to prepare the daily meals and provide places for the speakers to stay is also appreciated. The friendliness and gracious comments by all of the members were always welcomed. A special "thank you" needs to be extended to Bellview's helpful secretary, Denise Mowery. She does so many private tasks, some of which are done personally (as she did for this writer) for the speakers. Thanks, Denise! The brethren at Bellview were, as they surely always are, given to hospitality (Rom. 3:23).

The theme of this year's lectureship was *Back to the Bible*. What a timely topic that is. The world in which we live includes many people who have determined to be their own authority in religious matters, but it was pointed out numerous times by a number of speakers that man cannot direct his own steps (Jer. 10:23). There are ways that appear right unto men, but they will ultimately lead to death (Pro. 14:12). The Bellview lectureship series included sermons on the fundamentals of obedience to the Gospel and others that covered essential things for the child of God to be faithful in doctrine and conduct. A number of the lessons covered moral issues that are very much needed both in the world in general and in the church of the Lord as well. Every specific topic was both crucially relevant to the theme of *Back to the Bible* and needed by today's society.

In this writer's opinion, the most impressive thing about the entire 2010 Bellview lectureship was and is the lectureship book. The uniqueness of the book is immediately seen in that it is a paperback book. Each chapter of the book (15 in total) was written in story form. From the opening chapter, "Back to the Bible" by brother Tim Cozad, to the closing chapter, "Back To The Biblical Work Of The Church" by brother Skip Francis, and all of the chapters in between the material is presented in such a way that the book can be handed out to non-Christians for their reading and study. The material is written to hold the reader's attention and yet impart very important Biblical teaching for the welfare of men's souls. In other words, this book is designed to be an evangelistic tool, and in our judgment will prove to be a very successful one. The Bellview brethren are also to be commended for working diligently to keep the price of the book low enough that an individual or a congregation can purchase multiple copies for distribution. The price is only \$3.00 each. [Notice the updated shipping charges on page 3.] While the interest of many in spiritual things is dwindling, there are people in the world who are searching for the Truth and the church one reads about in the New Testament. This lectureship book can be a key to helping them find them.

Not all of the lessons that were delivered orally are included in the lectureship book, but those are available for viewing on the congregation's website, <http://bellviewcoc.com/lectures.php>. We would encourage everyone to view those. Whether reference is to the topics discussed in the book or those that were delivered orally only, all of the speakers demonstrated careful study and preparation of their material, and all of the sermons were powerfully delivered. It is just one person's impression, but the 2010 Bellview lectureship had the atmosphere of a Gospel meeting with multiple speakers. It is often the case that lectureships have a significant number of topics in which much of the material, by its very nature, is approached primarily in a forensic way; the great selection of topics in this year's Bellview lectures was more conducive to heralding the truths needed by men and women. For that, we are grateful to brethren for the selection of topics, and we are also grateful to each speaker who made the most of the theme and each assignment to "Preach the word" (2 Tim. 4:2).

One other vital component of the 2010 Bellview lectures was the fellowship. The fellowship enjoyed with brethren from different areas around the country was not unique to this particular lectureship, but it was most enjoyable and precious. As we witness congregation after congregation and brother after brother depart from the faith in one or more ways, the fellowship with those who are determined to remain faithful to the Word of God is more precious than gold! "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren dwell together in Unity" (Psa. 133:1). The encouragement we receive from one another helps to increase our commitments to carry on with teaching and practicing only that which God authorizes in His Word. The need for that encouragement was particularly evident at the 2010 Bellview lectures. The time we spent together there certainly supplied it! While it may be the case that the numbers at the faithful lectureships are not what they were a few years ago, the closeness among

those who seek to remain faithful to all of God's commands was visible to all. A great big thank you goes out to all who were present, or in any other way, involved in the 2010 Bellview lectureship.

“All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect thoroughly unto all good works” (2 Tim. 3:16-17). Those familiar words by the apostle Paul sum up the theme, the book, and the sermons delivered from the pulpit at the 2010 Bellview lectureship. They remind us of the great work God has given us to do and the challenges that are involved in accomplishing it. All that we heard at Bellview was consistent with the two verses from the letter to Timothy. Knowing the love the Bellview brethren have for God and the Bible, no one would expect anything different.

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