

Jeff Osborn was a true pastor

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By Dave Havir

BIG SANDY, Texas—On Saturday, Feb. 26, 2011, Jeff Osborn of Fillmore, Ind., died in a hospital in Indianapolis due to complications from liver failure. His funeral was on Wednesday, March 2.

Jeff will be missed tremendously by his wife (Joan), his children (daughter Terri and son Jake), his parents (Jim and Sarah) and the rest of the family. And he will also be missed by many friends in the community and in the Church of God.

Jeff was the unpaid pastor of a congregation in Terre Haute, Ind. On Saturday, March 5, I had the opportunity to visit the congregation that Jeff pastored, and we had a section of the church service devoted to hearing recollections about him. During the session, I heard many heartfelt comments about what his friends thought of him.

After members of the congregation were finished, I also made some comments. I would like to share a few of those with you.

■ Jeff Osborn believed what Jesus Christ said in Matthew 20:25-27.

Most members of the "clergy" I know (even among the Churches of God) exercise dominion and authority over individuals (verse 25).

Few people (even among the Churches of God) believe Jesus when He said: "But it shall not be so among you" (verse 26).

Jeff was a church leader who sought to follow those words.

■ Jeff Osborn believed what Paul said in 2 Corinthians 1:24.

Most members of the "clergy" I know (even among the Churches of God) act like they have dominion over the faith of other individuals.

Some overtly admit it and are proud of it.

Some will claim that they don't have dominion over the faith of others, but they will subtly practice it.

Still others really can't comprehend what Paul was saying.

Jeff was a church leader who sought to be a helper of joy towards members in the congregation.

■ Jeff Osborn avoided the wrong approach described in 2 Corinthians 11:20.

He did not seek to take people into bondage—he helped them recognize their freedom.

He did not seek to devour people—he helped people to find a better way of life.

He did not seek to take from people—he gave to them.

He did not seek to exalt himself—he empowered the people.

He did not seek to hit people in the face (with wrong actions or words)—he sought to be a peacemaker.

Don't misunderstand. Jeff stood strong behind his convictions, but he often didn't bother to retaliate when someone wronged him.

■ Jeff Osborn appreciated the blessings of obedience in this life (Mark 10:29-30).

Although his parents are in the faith, he enjoyed the many elderly people who were like parents to him. He enjoyed the many people who were like his brothers and sisters. He enjoyed the many young people who were like his children and grandchildren.

And he looked forward to eternal life.

■ Jeff Osborn believed the promise that greater blessings awaited him at the resurrection of the just.

Luke 14:12-14: "Then He also said to him who invited Him, 'When you give a dinner or a supper, do not ask your friends, your brothers, your relatives, nor rich neighbors, lest they also invite you back, and you be repaid. But when you give a feast, invite the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind. And you will be blessed, because they cannot repay you; for you shall be repaid at the resurrection of the just.'"

■ Jeff Osborn will receive a crown of righteousness.

2 Timothy 4:6-8: "For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing."