

The OKLAHOMA BAPTIST

Serving Churches of the Baptist Missionary Association of Oklahoma

Volume LVIII

APRIL 2023

Number 4

“Is There Not a Cause?”

By Chris Gonthier
BMAO Moral Action

The best way to start this article is with a very simple question, Why? Why do we do the things that we do? And why do we not do the things that we do not do? What is the force that really motivates us?

1 Timothy 6:10 is a verse that explains much about our current society.

“For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.”

It is very important that we note that money is not the root of all evil as is commonly misquoted, but the “love of money”.

While money is necessary in the society that we live in, I believe that most people are more focused on the accumulation of wealth for status or security, rather than for survival.

2 Thessalonians 3:10 tells us, “For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat.” It is important that a man works, it builds character. I know some are incapable of work due to illness or injury.

As I continue with this article, I am not referring to those situations, but rather generalities.

Many parents focus on education for their children, striving to give them the best opportunities that they can. The thought is, “We must have a college education to succeed, therefore I want that for my children.”

The concept of education is not a bad one, but what is available in most secular institutions is a far cry from the education the parents experienced. We are in a society of “woke” individuals who flaunt “wokeism” as the new religion of the day.

As society gets further and further away from biblical principles, we see a direct correlation to a degraded and weakened society. We have people who think that there are more than two genders teaching our children biology.

Gender confusion is proliferating with people not knowing what sports to play or which bathroom to use. The thought of calling children purple elephants really blew my mind.

Conditioning children to be entitled is to set them up to be controlled by the government or other non-Christian entities. Yet here we are where the very suggestion of someone expressing independent thoughts subjects them to ridicule and makes them a target.

So what do we do? I have noticed churches that were once faithful pillars beginning to falter and crumble. The reason why, one may ask, is that people quit taking a stand.

I currently serve on city council where I live, and I have a reputation for speaking up. I am vocal about who I support for mayor and other council positions. To be honest sometimes people get upset and wonder why I say what I do.

They ask, “why is a councilman doing

that?” My question is why am I the only one doing it? If I know something is wrong and I do not speak up then I am guilty also.

“Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin.” James 4:17.

Is there not a cause? How can we sit idly by while destruction takes place? Since when is it ok to let evil take over.

Now let us look at some specifics that we have allowed to permeate our society. Perhaps one of my least favorite expressions is that “Christians should not be involved in politics.” This is perhaps one of the most absurd statements that can be made in a free society.

My question is do we really want a bunch of unregenerate people making all the decisions about how we are going to live our lives?

When we do not have a power higher than ourselves from which we gain or display a moral compass, then we become such a higher power.

We have noticed in the sports world and in the entertainment industry that ego has become commonplace. Let me be quite clear, I do not care what others think, I only care about what God thinks.

The moral compass of a lost person is of little value because it will change depending upon circumstance and the desires of the individual.

Sports personalities and entertainers have become demigods who feel they are more qualified to direct society. They are put up on pedestals while missionaries, pastors and youth workers are mocked and ridiculed.

Christians are not taking a stand to keep churches pure, and by the way it is hard to stand against something wrong at church if you never go to church.

Revelation 2:20 says, “Notwithstanding I have a few things against thee, because thou sufferest that woman Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols.”

The question is, why are we allowing wrong things happen in church? Is there not a cause? Are we not called to be watchmen? Is it not our job to stand true for the cause of Christ? Why is church so unimportant that we just roll over and let evil abound?

I can only guess we have become cowards with no backbone.

In the political realm we have become so

(“Is There Not a Cause?” cont on pg 8)

“Satan thrives in confusion and that is where he excels. When we don’t stand against evil, we are in effect throwing the enemy our supply of grenades with un-pulled pins.”

"From the Pastor's Pen"

By Wearthly Shank

"What a Testimony!"

"I rejoice greatly that I found of thy children walking in truth..."

2 John 4

"I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth."

3 John 4

What a testimony! John is rejoicing that people he has ministered to are faithful to walk in the truth.

In the second letter, he is addressing the "elect lady and her children." Some believe the elect lady was a personal acquaintance of John.

Others believe the elect lady was a metaphor of some particular local church. In this case John would be representing one local fellowship [v.13] as he writes to another. Either position could be interpreted.

In the third letter, he speaks of "my children." Here, children refers to those whom John has in some way helped lead

to Christ.

From a pastor's position, I can relish in what John speaks of in these two passages. In my 47 years of Pastoral Ministry plus a couple years in the Bus Ministry before pastoring, I have experienced the same joy as Apostle John.

As I assumed the pastorate of each church, I was welcomed with godly people who were already spiritually

mature. These folks helped me grow in the wisdom of the Lord.

As I left one church to move to another, I could look back and see the spiritual growth, first in me, then in those I left behind.

I also believe that many of the mature Christians in each of those churches could rejoice just as I or the Apostle John could in seeing their students of the Bible grow in nurture and admonition of the Lord. Over the years, we have reached many souls with the truth of God's Word.

There is a Crown of Rejoicing for the soul-winner and a Crown of Glory for the minister. I believe a godly teacher is a soul-winner and a minister of the Word.

The OKLAHOMA BAPTIST

Published by the
Baptist Missionary Association of Oklahoma

Direct all correspondence, publication material
and news items to the office of the editor

Direct all subscription payments to:
Carl Barnes
P.O. Box 5171
Ardmore, OK 73403

E-mail: Michael.mobly@yahoo.com

Subscription rates are, any church may pay
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"I Was Just Thinkin' "

By Narita Roady

"This is Good!"

In Africa there lived a king who remained very close to a childhood friend, all his life. This friend was an optimist to the extreme. No matter what happened in his life, good or bad, he would always say, "This is good!"

Once, the king and his buddy went on a grand hunting expedition. The comrade would load the king's guns and prepare them for shooting. One day, it seems that he made a mistake in getting one of the guns ready, for when the king fired the gun, it blew his finger off!

Shocked, but staying true to his optimistic character, upon examining the royal hand minus one digit, he said as usual, "This is good!"

The king who was obviously in great pain had reached his limit with this African Pollyanna and exploded, "NO, this is NOT good!" And promptly had his friend thrown into prison!

It had been a year since the incident and the king was out hunting. Unfortunately he wasn't using very good judgment as he knew it was a region known to be inhabited by cannibals. Sure enough, he was captured and taken prisoner to their village.

They wasted no time about getting "dinner" started, to which he was of course to be the "guest of honor." Securely tying him to a stake they began to stack wood around him.

Just as they were about to light the fire, one of the natives noticed the king was missing a finger. The tribe had a grave superstition that to eat anyone that was not completely whole spelled disaster. . They quickly released him and sent him on his way.

Upon arriving home, and somewhat shaken by his near death experience, he

began to think about the accident that cost him his finger. The more he thought about it the more ashamed he felt about how he had dealt with his best friend.

Quickly, the king rushed to jail to see his old friend.

Humbly he admitted, "You were right, it WAS good that my finger was blown off." In great detail he proceeded to share his close call with his life long companion.

"I was wrong to put you in prison for so long, he admitted. I am sorry, please forgive me".

After listening in silence the whole time, his friend exclaimed, "No, no! This is GOOD!"

Exasperated the king shouted, "How can you say that!? What do you mean this is good?! How can it be good I have sent my best friend to jail for so long!?"

Grinning widely the positive friend replied, "If I had not been in prison, then I would have been hunting with you, and I would have been EATEN!"

Don't you just love this little guy? Don't you wish you could be more like him? I know I do! As corny as it may sound, every time I watch the old Disney movie, Pollyanna, I become inspired afresh to have a more optimistic attitude.

After all, a positive attitude rewards is with many benefits: peace, joy, hope, to name a few. It just makes life more enjoyable.

Yet a positive attitude is much more than just saying or thinking everything is good. True optimism must be grounded in an unquestioning, unwavering trust and faith in the Lord.

It is very much a spiritual exercise and condition, not mind over matter, but

spirit over flesh. If one is in the habit of being negative and pessimistic it can be difficult to overcome.

But do not despair there is good news. God has already equipped us with everything we need to be able to say, "This is good!", when life is something less than perfect.

One of the first pits we fall into when tragedy strikes is fearing our situation. The "goblins" of maybe or what if fill our minds and our focus on Christ is gone. Not only is this fear not coming from the Lord, but we have three things readily available to stabilize us when problems arise.

They are found in 2 Timothy 1:7, "For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind."

I especially like the last one as it is easy to think you are losing yours when your life goes on overload.

I don't know about you but adversity can leave me weak in the knees when left to myself. In surveying our state of affairs we can easily wonder how we will ever get through what is ahead. Before we can ever ask our heavenly Father already has what is required for our next step.

Isaiah 41:10 "Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness."

Right away He commands us not to fear or be worried or troubled. He promises He will give us strength, something we so desperately must have to carry the burden of a trial. He even goes a step further, giving us His guarantee to help and support us!

In addition to this, He also says He will protect us!

"The Lord is my strength and my shield; my heart trusted in him, and I am helped therefore my heart greatly rejoiceth; and with my song will I praise him." Psalm 28:7

("This is Good!" cont on pg 7)

CBC Honor & Memorial Gifts

The following are honor and memorial contributions received since the last report by Central Baptist College.

Some of the contributions are recurring gifts but are only listed once.

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by Bro. Gary D. Gipson.

"Planting Seeds on Difficult Soil" **New Generation Norman**

Greetings again, from the town of Norman, OK. We are continuing our ministry to the people of Norman and surrounding communities. We are intensifying our effort in the town of Noble with a combination of Chris' evangelism training and door-to-door visitation. Our goal is to knock on every door in the town of Noble and to share the gospel with those who are open.

We have knocked on a lot of doors in Norman in the past but the soil seems to be very hard and not very receptive to the seed. I know from personal experience in farming that one field can have different areas of fertility within close proximity to each other.

We have witnessed the fowls devour some seed. We have noticed shallow professions of faith with no vigor in the plant and those seem to die in short order. There have been those who have been choked out by the weeds of life and were not productive. But there are some (few) that are productive. We have seen the different types of soil in our one field. This not only is a parable in the Bible, but is in fact the reality of ministry here in Norman, OK.

We appreciate your continued support in our ministry. Thanks!

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Norman, OK 73069
405 570-8325

Luis & Melissa Santos
832 513-3505

74th Annual

Baptist Missionary Association of America National Meeting

April 25-27, 2023

Conway, Arkansas

BMA Global Missions Center opens at 9:00am for tours Tuesday - Thursday

Tuesday, April 25

6:00 pm Session One

Clif Johnson
Antioch Worship Band

7:30 pm Fellowship Time

Wednesday Morning, April 26

7:30 am Breakfast provided by Central Baptist College

8:00 am New BMA Pastors Orientation

Watkins Building 212 CBC

9:00 am Department Committees

Seminary Board

Watkins Building 211 CBC

Moral Action Board

Watkins Building 210 CBC

Baptist Publishing House Board

Watkins Building 309 CBC

Missions Advisory Committee

Watkins Building 310 CBC

9:00 am WMA Meeting

Brotherhood

Central Baptist College

Antioch Baptist Church

9:30 am Pastors Conference

General Session - The Leadership Imperative

Antioch Baptist Church

Dr. Steven Crawley

10:00 am Breakout Sessions

Preventing Abuse and Protecting Your Church

Helping and Resources for Mental Health

Leading for Growth

Spanish speakers Breakout

Brotherhood Mutual

Lee Poe

Pastor Bill Elliff

Elvis Garcia

12:00 State and Local BMA Leaders Lunch

Global Missions Center

Wednesday Afternoon, April 26

1:30 pm Worship Service

Pastor David McMurray

Antioch Baptist Church

3:00 pm Legacy Missionary Service

Antioch Baptist Church

Wednesday Night, April 26

6:00 pm BMA Global "Dinner On The Ground"

Conway Expo Center

Thursday Morning, April 27

8:30 am BMA Department Reports

12:00 pm Close of National Meeting

Antioch Baptist Church

LOCATIONS: BMA Global Missions Center - 611 Locust Street
Antioch Baptist Church - 150 Amity Road
Central Baptist College - 1501 College Avenue

"That Reminds Me"

By Jesse Spurlock

"An Insignificant Event"



I've been told I inherited my artistic ability from my Grandma Spurlock. I don't remember the first time I drew something someone thought looked like it was supposed to be, but I liked to draw. However, my art work didn't always reflect reality.

I recall the time my third grade teacher, whom I greatly respected, told us about Alaskan Eskimos who lived in ice houses called igloos. She told us to draw a picture about Eskimos. I drew an Eskimo standing in snow up to his knees.

Then I drew his igloo with a sled and a bunch of dogs beside it. Since the dogs were Huskies they were black and white. I looked at the picture. And since I didn't have flesh colored crayons I colored the Eskimo's face and hands orange.

The only color other than black and white in the whole picture was the Eskimo's face and hands. The artist in me said, "That won't do. There's not enough color in my picture. So I drew a tree with a green leafy top and a brown trunk beside the igloo.

Still not enough color, so I drew some flowers at the base of the tree.

When I turned my masterpiece in, I expected praise, but instead, my teacher laughed out loud. Still laughing she held the picture up and said, "Class, tell Jesse what is wrong with this picture."

The whole class laughed and sid in unison, "Trees and flowers don't grow at the North Pole." A couple of the kids added, "Stupid."

I was mortified. Although I didn't know what the word meant, I certainly knew how it felt!

The teacher continued to laugh as she resumed the class. I despised her for that and never drew anything else for her again.

Unfortunately, although I still loved to

draw, I didn't draw anything else for anyone to see for a long time.

Later Lola Sargent, one of my classmates, was trying to draw a picture of a train. I don't remember why, but she asked me to help her.

I drew a train and let her use it as a pattern. She told me how good it was. When I took my train picture home my parents both were really impressed by it.

Encouraged, I started drawing a lot of other pictures, but never for our teacher. If we had an assignment requiring any art I had Lola do the drawing for me and turned it in as mine. While she was drawing mine I drew one for her and she turned it in as hers.

I've thought a lot about this incident

over the years. I don't know what went on in the mind of the thoughtless teacher who would laugh at the sincere efforts of a nine year old boy and then compound the error by holding him up for ridicule by his peers.

In Galatians 6:7 the Bible clearly tells us we reap what we sow, so I can hardly imagine the embarrassment that teacher faced somewhere later in life.

However, I'm just as certain the teacher probably considered the incident so insignificant she probably gave it no thought when the payback came upon her.

Of course, in James 3:1 the primary teaching is about Bible teachers and leaders, the lesson there is for all teachers. They have an awesome responsibility in teaching others.

There are tremendous rewards for dedicated and wise teachers, but great accountability for those who abuse and misuse their position.

Summer 2023



June 5 - 8 Stand Firm Camp in West Texas**

June 14 - 17 GMA National Camp

June 18 - 21 Combo Student Camp

June 18 - 21 Combo PreTeen Camp

July 9 - 12 Pre-Teen Camp

July 16 - 19 Ark-La-Tex Camp

July 23 - 26 Student Camp

Camp prices for camps held at Daniel Springs in Gary have increased this year.

Regular registration is \$165 per attendee. Late registration is \$200 per attendee.

WWW.DANIELSPRINGSCAMP.COM

“This is Good!” cont from pg 3

With just what we have seen, how can we not be able to face life's difficulties with saying “This is good!”

Okay, we have His power, His love, a sound mind, strength, help and protection . . . that ought to do it, right? Well God goes even further in aiding us.

“Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.” John 14:27

He promises us His peace! Inner contentment; serenity, a state of tranquility, and freedom from strife without and within us. Not a fleeting peace as the world offers that is dependent on outward conditions, but His peace.

God's peace has no rhyme or reason as to why we have it, it just is! Even when it makes no sense at all for us to be at peace!

“Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus”. Philippians 4:6-7

You might have noticed that our part in obtaining this state of serenity is to worry

about nothing, taking every concern and burden to the Lord in prayer.

God makes it clear we will have trouble as long as we live on this earth, but He encourages us that He is already the victor over whatever we may face, assuring us of His peace.

“These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world”. John 16:33

Again in 1 John 5:4, He continues to reassure us. “For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith”.

After all these promises and reassurance from the Lord Himself, I think one scripture in particular can finalize in doubts or hesitations we might have about any event in our life, and that is Romans 8:28.

“And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose”.

It is just the Lord's way of saying, “THIS IS GOOD!”

For every grief, for every trial,
for every weary, lonely mile,
there is a reason.

For every pain that we must bear,
for every sorrow, every care,
there is a reason.

But if we trust God as we should,
all will work out yet for our good,
God knows the reason.

Author Unknown

Gracious News From Grace Harbor

We had a really exciting month in March. Two weeks ago, we had our first covenant membership class for 2023 and had 19 attend who wanted to hear more about Grace Harbor.

We anticipate most of those to take the next step of formally joining. We will have personal meetings with many of them over the next couple of weeks to hear about their desire to join, their testimony of coming to faith, and their baptism.

From there, we will bring those who join in front of our church body to welcome them, followed by a time of worship and lunch together on a Family Sunday.

That evening, Grace Harbor was the host location for a local “Nowruz” celebration. Nowruz is the Persian New Year, and many of our Afghan Refugee neighbors celebrate this.

We have a Christian Afghan family in our community who decided that a good way to minister to these Muslim neighbors would be to invite them to this celebration. There were about 40 Muslim neighbors with us that night: men, women, and children. There was a great, authentic, Afghan meal.

More importantly, our Christian Afghan Brother preached a message from Psalm 19 to a captive audience. The end of Psalm 19 speaks of the great redeemer, and our brother shared clearly a Gospel message about this redeemer- that salvation is only through him.

Evangelizing and Ministering to Muslims who have never heard this Gospel message is much different than many of the methods that are utilized in a culture where there is at least slight awareness, so it was very much a seed-planting evening.

We are confident in the Gospel's power to save, and are praying for the Lord to save!

SOAR 2023
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DEVOTED
DEVOTED
DEVOTED

JULY 3-5, 2023
GAYLORD TEXAN, GRAPEVINE TEXAS

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NATHAN BREWER

SOAR COLLECTIVE

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DONNY PARRISH

“Is There Not a Cause?” cont from pg 1

lazy and apathetic that we have allowed evil to not just take root, but to take control. We have become blinded both by choice and by ignorance. Sometimes our lack of involvement puts us at a distinct disadvantage for doing right. Ignorance is not bliss; it is sinful behavior.

We must be good stewards of the blessings that God has given to us. When we are not involved and do not stand up for God, we fail Him. Is there not a cause? Are we not supposed to stand up for God.

As we see families continue to struggle because mom and dad do not do the right thing, Is there not a cause? When we have to

choose between band camp/football camp and church camp, Is there not a cause.

We would rather sacrifice our children to the gods of convenience and allow them to be educated and indoctrinated contrary to the word of God. Is there not a cause?

When we have to choose between pleasure and comfort or church, Is there not a cause? When we allow our city and state to fall apart and our nation to turn away from God, Is there not a cause?

Why is it ok to just let things go?

The simple answer is that it is not. Satan thrives in confusion and that is where he excels. When we don't stand against evil,

we are in effect throwing the enemy our supply of grenades with unpulled pins.

There will be no surprise when he tosses them back, minus the pins. We are giving our children over to evil because our actions show we do not believe it is important to stand against it. Is there not a cause?

There is a cause, and that is the cause of Christ. We need to stop letting evil win and start standing for God.

I am reminded of the story in the bible where prayer was made so eyes could be open. When the eyes were opened God's mighty force became apparent.

Our children do not see the might of God because we do not stand and we do not ask God to open their eyes.

Our children engage in wicked behavior because we do not stand against wickedness.

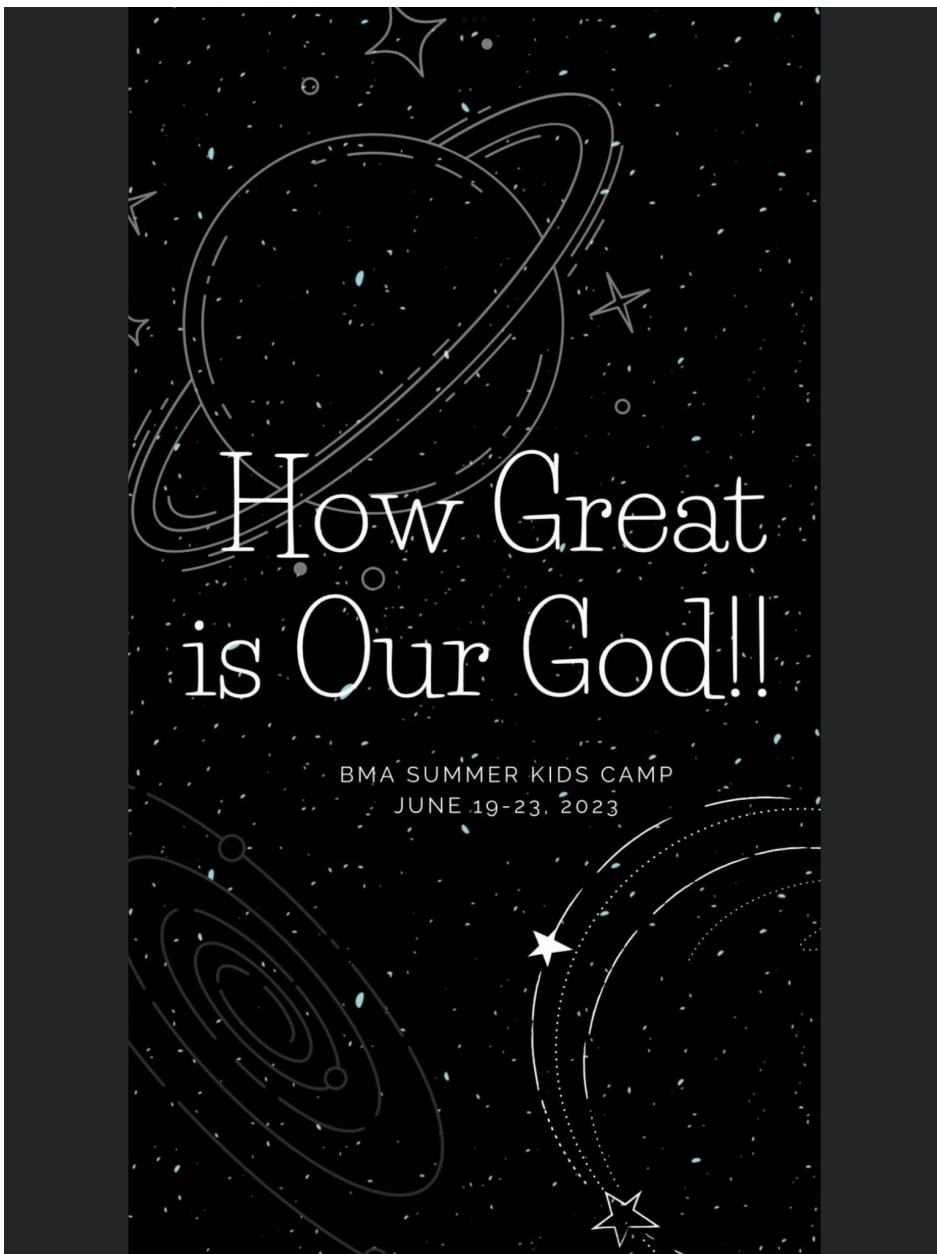
Our children do what we allow to become societal norms.

We know that Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life. People do not know the value of truth when society hinges upon lies and deceit.

We need to make truth important in the eyes of others. Then, and only then, will the TRUTH become visible to them and one to be desired.

Is there not a cause?

Yes, it is the cause of Christ!



UPCOMING EVENTS

BMAO Midyear Meeting
April 15, Pleasant Hill, Blanchard

BMAA National Meeting
April 25-27
Antioch Baptist, Conway, AR

State Youth Camp
June 5-9, Binger, OK

Summer Kids Camp
June 19-23, Binger, OK

re:Charge Leader's Oasis
October 4-6, Oklahoma City
See pg 2