

The OKLAHOMA BAPTIST

Serving Churches of the Baptist Missionary Association of Oklahoma

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Number 6

“O Preacher, O Preacher, Where For Art Thou Preacher?”

By Chris Gonthier
BMAO Moral Action

In writing this, please note that I am not referring to specific churches, or anyone in particular. In fact, I will be using generalities that are prevalent most everywhere.

I want it to be clear that we are facing a true dilemma, one that without resolution will result in a decline in the effectiveness of Christianity. Our churches are in trouble, and with that, God's message to the world is becoming very limited. It is very easy to throw blame around, but what we need to do is to identify the problem and work to resolve it.

The issue at hand for this article is the lack of solid pastors and preaching.

Hebrews 13:7 tells us, “Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God: whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation.”

Have no misunderstanding about that which I am going to say, we are to follow a pastor's faith, as they follow God. So, “whose faith follow” is absolutely appropriate, but never does it say, “whose faith exploit.”

There are many who are called who are not in the ministry because of what they have seen, and/or experienced.

I am thinking about one young man who confessed that God had placed a call upon his life. He absolutely refused to answer such a call because, as he testified, he did not want to put his family

through what mine had to go through.

The sad thing is he was referring to how my family had been mistreated by churches. To be clear, this happened prior to me coming to Oklahoma.

When we look at the struggles that face ministers today, we cannot help but be in shock. We expect the world to be at war with biblical Christianity, but what many do not see is how much preachers and their families are attacked by those who are supposedly Christians.

Matthew 7:21 tells us, “Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven: but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.”

This tells me that just because someone is in church, claiming to be a Christian, does not mean it is so. Men do not answer the call because of the mean-spirited people in churches today.

Others have left the ministry because of the damage inflicted by those who were supposed to be allies. Many people ask, “Why don't we have enough preachers? I sit by surprised that there are as many left that have not given up.

What are some battles that face preachers today? Well, there are many,

but I will deal with some areas that I've noticed.

The common denominator in all of these scenarios is that the minister is so overwhelmed that his ministry loses its effectiveness.

I understand that some churches are small, and that they are limited in the support that they can offer a pastor. The question is, are they doing their best?

The more a pastor has to work means less time in the ministry, less time with family and less energy.

Pastors are susceptible to burnout and fatigue. Pastors are expected to make sacrifices that affect him and his family.

The million-dollar question is, how many of the church members are willing to make the same sacrifices, or any sacrifices at all? Would you be comfortable and content with what you expect the pastor to live on?

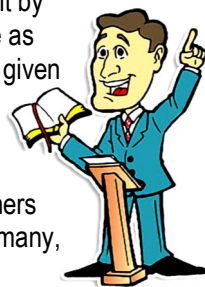
Another important question is how much help does the church give to the pastor?

Exodus 17:11-12 tells us, “And it came to pass, when Moses held up his hand, that Israel prevailed: and when he let down his hand, Amalek prevailed. But Moses hands were heavy, and they took a stone, and put it under him, and he sat thereon; and Aaron and Hur stayed up his hands, the one on the one side, and the other on the other side; and his hands were steady until the going down of the sun.”

Moses could not do it alone, he needed help. Why do we expect the pastor to be able to do everything alone and without assistance? Successful pastors have Aarons and Hurs that help them. Without rest and assistance God's man will experience fatigue, and battles will be lost.

Sadly, instead of helping pastors on the battlefield, many betray him and actually fight against the pastor. Many times the pastor becomes a referee, making sure supposedly mature Christians can peacefully coexist.

With no one to watch his back the pastor has to stay ever alert and never



(“Where Art Thou?,” cont on pg 8)

"From the Pastor's Pen"

By Wearthly Shank

"Watch Thou in All Things" part 1

"But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry."
II Timothy 4:5

I will focus on some things to keep your eyes on for the next few weeks. I bring our thoughts today to focus on Watch Your Will.

In Psalm 40:8, David said, "I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart."

In the N.T. the writer of Hebrews quoted this verse in Psalms Then said I Lo, I come...to do thy will O God."
Hebrews 10:7

There is an abundance of Scripture verses that speak of "thy will" referring to

the will of God. It is imperative that we, as Christians, know God's will for us and yield to His will. Briefly, God's will is for all to be saved; then to follow Him in our daily lives; be soul-winners and carry the Great Commission to all the world. He has many methods and skills to fit each of His followers to get the task done, and they are not all the same.

For now, I want us to focus on watching our will. Many people persist in exerting their own will. They fail to surrender wholeheartedly to God.

I believe, even we mature Christians sometimes persist on doing things our own way rather than yielding to the leadership of the Holy Spirit in our

decision process.

It is rather easy to "yield to the flesh" when it involves a physical pleasure of some sort. The apostle Paul said there's a constant battle between the flesh and the Spirit within us over what we are to do. [read Rom. 7:13-20]

When Jesus was praying in the garden of Gethsemane, He prayed, ...O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt. .Matt. 26:39.

Then again in verse 42, He Prayed, "O Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, thy will be done."

Jesus was totally surrendered to the will of His Father, even unto death. Jesus is our example for all of life and here He is our example to be fully surrendered to His Father's will.

When we get to that level of commitment in our lives, even unto our death, as Jesus did, we will experience our Father's richest of blessings.

Think about it!!



SOAR 2023
DEVOTED
DEVOTED
DEVOTED
DEVOTED

JULY 3-5, 2023
GAYLORD TEXAN, GRAPEVINE TEXAS

REGISTRATION
\$135.00 PER PERSON
DEADLINE IS JUNE 4, 2023
\$150.00 PER PERSON
AFTER JUNE 4, 2023 DEADLINE

GAYLORD TEXAN
\$139.00 PER ROOM
UNTIL JUNE 10, 2023

CHRIS VINES
NATHAN BREWER
SOAR COLLECTIVE
STEPHEN CASTLEBERRY
DONNY PARRISH

"I Was Just Thinkin'"

By Narita Roady

"What I Really Meant to Say Was..."

The ad that follows actually appeared in a city newspaper. The last three were run, desperately trying to correct the first one.

MONDAY

For sale: R.D. Jones has one sewing machine for sale.

Phone 948-0707 after 7 PM and ask for Mrs. Kelly who lives with him cheap.

TUESDAY

Notice: We regret having erred in R.D. Jones' ad yesterday. It should have read "One sewing machine for sale cheap. Phone 948-0707 and ask for Mrs. Kelly, who lives with him after 7 PM."

WEDNESDAY

Notice: R.D. Jones has informed us that he has received several annoying telephone calls because of the error we made in the classified ad yesterday.

The ad stands correct as follows: "For sale: R.D. Jones has one sewing machine for sale. Cheap.

Phone 948-0707 after 7 PM and ask for Mrs. Kelly who lives with him."

THURSDAY

Notice: I, R.D. Jones, have no sewing machine for sale. I smashed it. Don't call 948-0707 as I have had the phone disconnected. I have not been carrying on with Mrs. Kelly. Until yesterday she was my housekeeper but she quit!

As Christian it is of the ultimate importance that we choose very carefully what we say BEFORE we even open our

mouths.

Words are God's gift and tool to communicate, His message to the world. With our words we will either glorify God or shame Him.

Our words will either draw others to Him or drive them away.

Our words will make us a vessel to represent God's love, patience, compassion and kindness or be Satan's weapon to misrepresent Him so others think God is mean, unloving, impatient, selfish, and cruel.

Our words can heal or sicken. They can build up and encourage or tear down and destroy.

When we were saved God not only took possession of our lives but also our bodies and that means our mouth and tongue also!

Look at Romans 12:1, I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies (mouth, tongue, words) a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.

There seems to be an unconscious belief that our words are our own and we may speak freely what we want. Wake up Call.

"A living sacrifice"; we will sacrifice our freedom to say what we'd like when we are upset at another. Before we speak in any situation we should make sure our words and the attitude they are spoken with are "holy, acceptable unto God". After all He has done for us and given us that is our, "reasonable service." I agree, don't you?

This is not a small matter to be taken lightly! It is very serious to the Lord and should be to us too! Then why are so many believers destroying the Lord's work, reputation, church, other Christians and the lost with their words?

Because it is an area many children of God have not turned over to Him. As mentioned above they fail to see that what they speak and how they speak it is no longer their choice.

If every member could only visit with the preacher, they would be sickened at how often he witnesses to a lost person that refuses Christ because many years ago a hot-headed, loose tongued Christian left them with a terrible impression of God.

("What I Meant," cont on pg 7)



Opportunities For Barnabas Touch Teams

Pastors, Come Be A Part of a Barnabas Touch Team Today

And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.

2 Timothy 2:2 (KJV)

What is Barnabas Touch? Barnabas Touch is the teaching and training ministry of Evangelistic International Ministries.

It began over 20 years ago and was led by the late Larry Markum. Bro. Larry, who had served as a BMAA interstate missionary, had a heart to help international church planters and pastors have a better understanding of Baptist doctrine, sermon preparation and study, and church policy, as well.

After Bro. Larry's passing, Barnabas Touch was then led by Bro. Danny Bullock.

Beginning in 2014, and under the leadership of Bro. Danny, EIM focused on the country of Tanzania. EIM began leading three teams a year to Tabora, Tanzania and partnered with the BMAA Seminary in Jacksonville, Texas to train and teach 22 Tanzanian pastors.

As President of the BMAA Seminary, Dr. Charley Holmes traveled several times to help in teaching Baptist doctrine, evangelism, and what it means to be associational in practice.

Bro. Phil Knott, who was serving at the time as the Africa Coordinator for BMAA Global Missions, as well as 17 other BMAA pastors, taught with us in teaching classes such as church planting, Old and New Testament survey, a study of the Pauline Epistles, the BMAA Doctrinal Statement, sermon prep and how to study the Bible.

In the Spring of 2018, we completed our training with each student having received 150 hours of Biblical study. At the end of our 3½ years of teaching and training, the BMAA Seminary gave each pastor a certificate of completion.

This certificate has been recognized by the Tanzanian Government as a certification of a higher education.

EIM has been asked by BMAA Global Missions to replicate in Ghana, Africa what we had done in Tanzania. Our Barnabas Touch team to Ghana will be led by Jason Goodwin. We want to begin in September of 2023.

Pastors, we need you to join us and help in teaching other men. The cost of each trip will range from \$2,750 – \$3,000 based on airfare at the time. The cost will cover airfare, lodging, food, and transportation.

If you are unable to travel, would you consider giving \$50.00 monthly to help

with the cost of feeding and travel for the international pastors and church planters attending the Barnabas Touch training and teaching?

If you would like additional information, you may contact us at:

Mike Goodwin - 870-904-2091

or

Jason Goodwin - 601-323-6185.

You can email us at:

mgoodwin@eimworldwide.org

or

goodhouse19@gmail.com.

Visit our website at www.eimworldwide.org for more details concerning our Barnabas Touch ministry, as well as other ministries that EIM is currently doing.

In Christ,

Michael Goodwin, President

Greetings from New Generation Baptist Church

We are continuing in our outreach both in this community and around the world. We recently had a graduation celebration here at our building for a family that we had ministered to for several years. The husband graduated as a Doctor in Native American Studies and is now teaching at Northern Arizona University. I think that he and his family will have many opportunities to minister on behalf of the Lord.

We originally met them by knocking on their apartment door, years ago. They were very gracious and opened their home for a Bible study.

We had several visitors attend the Bible study over the years in their apartment. One of my fondest memories of the visitors who came was Bro. Harold Hodges. He came to support and encourage us and he certainly did that.

Please pray for Bro. Chris! He's been sick for several weeks, but is on the mend now. This is an excerpt from his monthly newsletter:

...we are very thankful to the women of the WMA for their efforts to deep clean and decorate the church building. I believe Lynn and Melissa led the charge of updating and redecorating the interior of the building which has given the church a much-needed revitalization.

It's sure been a great encouragement to me to see the church building "freshened up" and that there are people that still care for the work of our little church, are still praying for us and supporting us and still trying to help the work of the Lord continue here in Norman. God bless you!

Recently we have been able to extend our ministry with a Bible study in Kenya. Please pray for this effort and the Bible study in Noble, that God will be glorified. We appreciate your continued support in our ministry. Thanks!

Steve & Lynn Puckett
405 570-8325

Chris Lorenz
405 226-4111

Luis & Melissa Santos
832 513-3505



CENTRAL BAPTIST COLLEGE

Traditional Enrollment

For traditional high school students and college transfer students, now is the time to apply for Fall 2023. Scholarships are still available.

To schedule an on campus personal campus visit, go to cbc.edu/visit. Students can also take a virtual campus visit or get more information about the value of Central Baptist College.

Once new students complete the easy application process each student will receive a scholarship award package to review and accept.

Once students have been accepted, they will be invited to register for CBC Connect Day (Orientation). Dates for Connect Days are June 13, July 25 and August 1.

At Connect Day students get to meet new and returning students and pick up their Fall 2023 schedule.

Visit cbc.edu/apply to apply or contact Admissions at admissions@cbc.edu or 501.329.6873.

PACE Enrollment

PACE is accepting applications for the upcoming Fall 2023 semester. Block 1 starts on Monday, August 10. The deadlines for Block 1 are listed below:

Registration Deadline:
Monday, July 3

Financial Aid & Payment:
Wednesday, July 5

Block 1 Grades Due:
Monday, August 14 at 3:00pm

If you have any questions about PACE, please contact Lisa Padgett at lpadgett@cbc.edu or 501.205.8839

Summer Classes

Central Baptist College offers online courses for two five-week sessions and one ten-week session for summer 2023.

The deadline for the first and third

summer sessions are completed. Classes began Monday, May 22.

Registration and payment deadline for the second summer session is June 19 with classes beginning June 26 - July 27.

Summer courses are available for both current and non-current CBC students.

A schedule of courses, tuition and fees, and payment information can be found at:

cbc.edu/calendar

or start the application process at cbc.edu/apply.

CONNECT DAY
JUNE 13
JULY 25
AUGUST 1
CBC.EDU/VISIT

Church Announcements

Bethel in Fulton, MS are seeking a full-time minister of youth. Resumes may be sent to bethelbaptist445@gmail.com.

Sunray Baptist Church, 2223 N. 9th in Purcell, will be hosting its annual **SummerSing** gospel singing service on Saturday, June 24, beginning at 6:00pm. Singers are Sound Street from Waynesboro, MS, and Lauren Talley, from Calhoun, GA.

A love offering will be taken to help with expenses. For more information call 405-426-2844.

We at the **Lindsay Missionary Baptist Church** welcome our new pastor, Bro. Edward Wise and family, wife RaeAnn and children, Malia, Blake, Adelin, and Westin. Bro. Wise has to come to us from the RexRoat Baptist Church of Wilson, OK. We are very happy to have them in our fellowship.

Psalm 29:2 "Give unto the Lord the glory due unto His name; worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness."

"That Reminds Me"

By Jesse Spurlock

"Be Careful What You Say"

Oklahoma has had more than our share of bad weather in recent years. One person said he thought Moore was the safest city in the world to live, because they had had three previous tornados in 1999, in 2003, and again in 2011, each of which destroyed much of their city. Because of that, he felt they would be exempt from further tornados.

However, he was taken off-guard on May 20, 2013, when a very destructive tornado hit their city once more.

Obviously, this man had not heard what Will Rogers had said about Oklahoma weather: "If you don't like the present weather, just wait awhile." The unpredictability of Oklahoma's weather is well-known.

One weatherman made a statement about the tornado that took place the night of May 31, 2013. He said something to the effect that apparently "it" decided to get back at us for the relief from bad storms we've had in the past several years and hit us hard this year.

He was ignoring the fact that we haven't had real relief from bad storms because we've had tornados every year, just not as bad. But he was also wrong by saying that "it" decided to get back at us. God is in charge of the weather, and is certainly not an "it".

One young lady stated that when the tornado was upon her that she "had a conversation with God" and told Him that she wasn't going to go, because she had things left to do.

Although I'm thankful she didn't lose her life in the tornado, it was very presumptuous on her part that she thought God didn't take her because she told Him she wasn't ready to go. It sounded to me like she had watched too many "Twilight Zone" shows, where the main character talks Death out of taking

them when their time is up.

ECCL. 8:8 is pretty clear about that, "There is no man that hath power over the spirit; neither hath he power in the day of death: and there is no discharge in that war;.."

It isn't up to any of us to decide when God can take us. II KINGS 20:1-7 gives the only time in the Bible when God postponed the death of an individual.

That was when He told King Hezekiah to "set his house in order, for thou shalt die and not live." Hezekiah cried and begged for more time.

For some undisclosed reason, God

gave him an additional fifteen years. He should have gone when God told him to set his house in order, because Hezekiah made a real mess of those additional fifteen years.

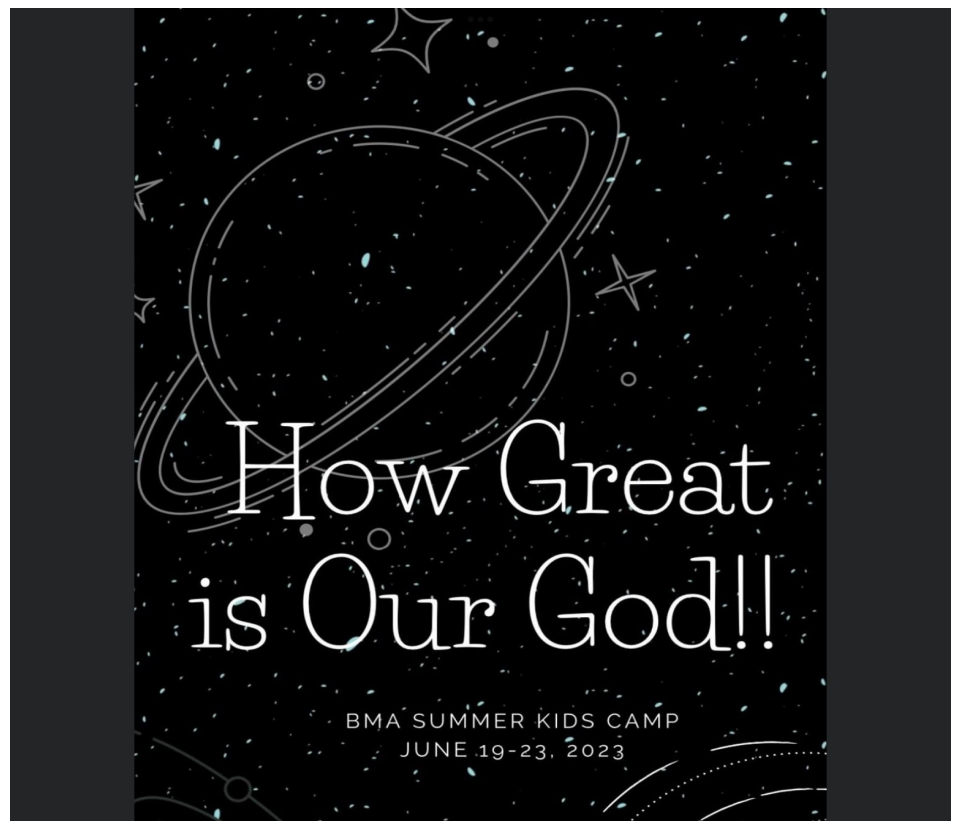


Whoever we are, God knows far better than we, as to when is the proper time for us to leave this world. Personally, I wouldn't want to

leave this world by tornado, but since God controls tornados as well as everything else, if that's how He wants to take me, I think I'll try to relax and enjoy the trip.

After all, the Bible tells us that Elijah was taken up in a whirlwind when he left this world (II KINGS 2:11). Come to think of it, departing the world the same way Elijah did wouldn't be so bad.

However, should I go that way, for the sake of my family, I would hope they would find my body. Fifty men hunted three days, but didn't find Elijah.



“What I Meant,” cont from pg 3

Or the person who has no church home but knows for sure they don't want to attend his church because of the rude and angry conduct of a member. What can he say? He has no defense, what they saw was true.

Not only does the Lord's work suffer, but the church, the pastor and most of all, the person who was injured by another not letting God guide their words

When we speak, God is listening and making note of every word we say, and we will be held accountable.

Matthew 12:36-37 “But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment. For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned.”

We are so focused on Christ watching all we do and being required to give an answer, we forget this applies to what we say also.

We should always let the Holy Spirit guide it each and every word and tone that flows from our mouth, but there are certain times we need to be especially

mindful and yielded to God when we speak.

When We Are Angry/Offended

I grouped these 2 together because most people show anger when another person offends them. This is a good time to shut down the P.A. System of your mouth! Satan and our flesh are quick to grab the microphone of our lips and cut loose!

When we speak with anger in our heart we are guaranteed to make foolish mistakes, not only concerning us but those who hear our fiery words. Proverbs 24:17, “He that is soon angry dealeth foolishly.”

When We Are Tired

Everyone responds to fatigue differently. Some become quite and withdrawn, some find difficulty thinking and concentrating, but many become easily aggravated and irritated. If you are especially of the latter two, recognize when you are fatigued and use caution when responding to others on sensitive or important matters.

Colossians 4: 6 “Let your speech be

always with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man.”

When We Are Speaking About Others

This is one of the most dangerous times we must be very careful what we speak. Our potential to damage and hurt many are at an all time high.

What we say to about to people is much like a dandelion seed on a windy day. It has the possibility of going far and spreading many bad seeds in the process.

How easy it is to get comfortable in casual conversation, lay aside all caution, and without thinking give a bad report or share injurious opinion of another. Each time you are in a group chatting, picture in your mind of those whom you speak as a heart raw and beating with each word you speak having the possibility to be a scalding branding that painfully sears and scars.

Remember the old admonition, “If you can't say anything nice don't say anything at all!”? That is Ephesians 4:29, and certainly applies when you find yourself chatting about others.

“Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers.”

Latest News from Grace Harbor

June is upon us and it may be our busiest Summer yet. As we experience more and more of the Lord's grace and blessing in becoming more established as a church, that is accompanied by more opportunities to renege in intentional ministry in our community and with our people.

This week, we will begin a Summer Transportation Program where our folks will be providing rides for 15 of our Afghan neighbor's kids to a Summer School program in the district. We will provide rides to and from school each day through June, and every Wednesday we will bring the kids back to the church building for games, fellowship, and an intentional time of Bible stories that are evangelistic in nature.

This Summer Program will lead right into our second GH Summer Club in July (our version of VBS).

This month, we will also be attending BMAO Kids Camp. We also have our sixth annual **Party in the Park** coming up on June 11. This is always a great space for us to meet new neighbors.

We are looking forward to a great Summer and the opportunities God will provide for us to engage our community with the Gospel!

Yes, it would be a lot easier if each time we started to say words that are not of the Lord that one of our feet would fly up into our mouths and stop us. I dare say some would be tasting a lot of shoe leather!

How wonderful if He would protect others as He did Daniel by just shutting our mouths as He did the lions. He could, but He doesn't.

As with all our love and commitment to Him He leaves us with the choice of who we allow to control our words.

Psalms 141:3, needs to be on the hinges of our mouth. When our mouth opens it should pop into our minds!

“Set a watch, O LORD, before my mouth; keep the door of my lips.”

“Where for Art Thou?” cont from pg 1

has downtime.

Many times church members tear down the pastor in front of their family, friends, and the community.

Now what I am about to say next may sound harsh, but carefully consider it. We have heard the saying, “Whom God calls he qualifies.” God gives a pastor the wisdom to lead because he has been called to that position.

Too often people attack the pastor because they do not understand what he is doing. The reason people may not understand is because they are not called. Before I get called onto the carpet, I am not saying give the pastor free reign to violate scriptures and run the church into the ground. I am saying that if you are not called as a pastor, then you are not qualified to control the pastor.

The pastor is God’s man and not the puppet of the head deacon or the richest man in the church. We are to follow the pastor as the pastor follows God.

Ministers are mistreated by the world and they, and their families suffer hardships. Truthfully, we can expect that from the world and have no control over the world.

Now when a pastor, or his family is wounded by a church that is a hard pill to swallow. There are times that preachers have been so mistreated that they have to take a break from the ministry just to heal.

Shame on a Christian, or a church, that so injures the man of God or his family unjustly that he needs a break or potentially leaves the ministry altogether. Remember what a pastor and his family gives up when they come to your (God’s) church.

Extended family and friends and oftentimes a comfortable and seemingly secure life are left behind. A pastor doesn’t have time to build up equity in a home, so he never gets to retire.

Truth be told, most church members

would never live a life for God under the conditions churches expect pastors to live under. How much do you appreciate your pastor and his family. Do you ever recognize them for the sacrifices they make?

Now let me be clear, pastors do not work for the glory of men. Pastors are, however, human and do need encouragement from time to time.

I guess what I really hope to accomplish with this article is for everyone to answer an important question. Are you following your pastor, or are you exploiting him?

The world hears what we say about our pastors and sees how we treat them.

If you bring a pastor into your church and you force him to take all the risks and make all the sacrifices, then he is vested in the church and the members are not.

Many times it isn’t the pastor who is hindering church growth, it is the members of the church. If you are not faithful to God’s church nor to God’s man, then why should God bless the church?

Make no mistake, the pastor has a job to do, and he has his share of responsibilities. The members of the church also share in the responsibility of ministering to the community.

It is easy to put the blame on someone else, but the truth be told is it is often the short comings of the church and the mistreatment of the pastor that hinders the blessings of God. I mean, just think about it.

Some churches are so messed up that to send someone there would be harmful. Don’t let your church be a place that God doesn’t want to send people to.

UPCOMING EVENTS

State Youth Camp
June 5-9, 2023
Binger, OK

Summer Kids Camp
June 19-23, 2023
Binger, OK

re:Charge Leader's Oasis
October 4-6, 2023
Oklahoma City

BMAO Annual Meeting
New Heights, OKC
October 13-14
Note the change in dates

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