# The OKLAHOMA BAPTIST

Serving Churches of the Baptist Missionary Association of Oklahoma

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### **Shoeboxes Provide Hope to Ukraine**

By Angela Rice, Short-term Missions Coordinator

He is able!

Now all glory to God, who is able, through his mighty power at work within

us to accomplish infinitely more than we might ask or think. (Ephesians 3:20)

I met some people recently who so motivated my heart and inspired me to be a better person. I had a hard time figuring out how to process the thought of living and serving during a war and how to describe these precious people. I

finally came up with the word hero. These guys are heroes to me.

Webster defines a hero as "a person of distinguished courage or ability, admired for his or her brave deeds and noble qualities."

Yes! That was good, but even greater is a hero of the faith . . . an everyday person who says yes to God and opens his or her heart and life to God, allowing God to do his work in and through them.

Let me introduce you to heroes of the faith that I met recently! I want you to pray for these guys. They desperately need your prayers.

We went on a mission trip in January to Poland to work with Ukrainian refugees. We asked if our Ukrainian pastors could come and spend time with our team.

These pastors and their families are heroes.

When the war started in Ukraine, no one really expected it. People began to panic and scatter. Many were crossing the borders. Several of our pastors started serving the long lines of hungry

and cold people that were waiting to cross into other countries. For months they served in this way.

Each of these families had the option to leave Ukraine. They all are young and very smart. Most of them have young children, but they choose to stay.

I listened to a 13 year old tell me about the bomb shelter at their school and what they do in the shelters at home, as if it were so normal . . . I have no experience with this. She was the sweetest young lady with the biggest smile. It is really cold in Ukraine during the winter.

It never got above freezing when we were there. They talked about only having electricity for a few hours a day, and it is so cold!

As we returned from our trip, shoeboxes and supplies were sent into Ukraine and the pastors that we met began to spread them out. They went to four siblings that had watched as a Russian soldier killed their dad in their front yard. They were given to a group of children orphaned from the war, children at the pediatric hospital and the

cancer hospital, children abandoned because parents couldn't take care of them.

Shoeboxes were given in churches, schools, hospitals and even to the soldiers at the front lines. And every time a shoebox was given, they received food and supplies, but the best part is that Jesus was shared.

Right now in Ukraine, the church is where you go to get supplies. Churches are full. Many are coming to Christ during this tragedy. Praise God for that.

For more than a year, these families have served the poor, heartbroken, cold, and hungry people of Ukraine.

I asked why they stayed and the reply was this: "God's plan for our lives has not changed just because war broke out. If anything, we are doing much more ministry than ever before. God gives us everything we need to minister.

Many people are coming to Christ right now. The church is full every service."

And it is not at all because of these guys themselves—they are everyday people, just like you and me who said yes to God, and they opened their hearts and lives to God, allowing HIM to do his work in and through them. These friends are heroes of the faith.

They know that they have what they need because of God.

- -He is able to give them comfort.
- -He is able to give them rest.
- -He is able to supply their needs.
- -And he is able to supply your needs also.

You can be a hero of the faith . . . have you ever considered that? Open your heart and your life to God and let him be in control.

Now all glory to God, who is able, through his mighty power at work within us to accomplish infinitely more than we might ask or think. Ephesians 3:20

## "From the Pastor's Pen"

By Wearthy Shank

"Watch Thou In All Things" [part 2 of 3]

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

II Timothy 4:5

Last month, we spoke of watching your will. In today's article, I bring our attention to Watch Your Ways!

Recently, I coined the phrase, "If you don't walk the walk, you have no business trying to talk the talk." I was speaking primarily to the Hollywood elites who want to quote Scripture to President Trump, but the phrase can certainly apply to anybody, and especially us Christians.

In watching our ways, it includes our actions, our deeds, our conversation and general conduct, and our choices of activities. Proverbs 16:7 says, "When a man's ways please the Lord, he maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him."

I would suggest you also read Luke 21:33-36.

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It is imperative that we, as Christians, conduct ourselves in a manner that glorifies God. This is not something we do by nature.

We are by nature, sinners. We must "seed, feed, and weed" our way of life. That is, first we plant the seed which is the Word of God, in our hearts and minds.

Then we need to feed it [fertilize it] by a daily routine of reading and studying God's Word. And we must cultivate to weed out the undesirable habits and practices in our lives.

Many today have let their lives

become overrun with worldly habits, following in the ways of sin and Satan. These fleshly habits are the weeds that have grown up and are choking us down from our service to God.

God's way produces love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, meekness, and temperance. [Gal. 5:22-23].

We become effective witnesses when we follow God's way.

Proverbs 5:21 says, "For the ways of man are before the eyes of the Lord, and he pondereth all his goings."

Thus, God is closely watching you and weighs carefully, everything you do.

One short passage speaks directly to us. I Corinthians 16:13 says, "Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you[act] like a man, be strong."

Think about it!!

## BMAO Website Gets Update

#### New features include:

A clear presentation of the gospel

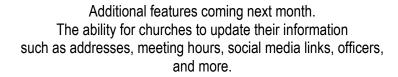
Cleaner look and feel

Responsive website that works well on any size screen

Better access to Oklahoma Baptist Paper

Better access to Blogs, Events, and Announcements

History for the Paper and Blogs



Check it out at bmao.org



## "I Was Just Thinkin"

By Narita Roady

"Designated Driver"

A Dallas police officer was driving his usual patrol to make sure all was well. He turned into a residential area. He had driven these streets so many times he could do it in his sleep.

Mechanically he turned his head from side to side; not really expecting to see anything out of the ordinary for this area was very quite.

Suddenly he saw a car turn down the street ahead of him. It was speeding somewhat and driving erratically. Quickly he turned his siren on and went in pursuit of the careless driver.

Down street after street he followed them, siren screaming as they weaved from side to side, bumping into curbs and narrowly missing mailboxes.

Finally they came to a stop. The officer jumped out of his car and ran to the driver's window. Never in a millions years would he have expected to find what he did. There in the seat sat a small boy no older that seven or eight. In the floor board under his feet sat a lad about the same age.

The two adventurers had found a car complete with keys and gone for a joy ride. One sat in the seat on his knees and steered while the other sat in the floorboard and worked the gas and break pedals!

Neither had any idea what in the world they were doing, they just knew they were having fun. Luckily they were caught before anyone was hurt.

We can laugh at these two silly kids and their escapade and can stand amazed that they were able to get as far as they did with out seriously harming themselves or someone else.

As mature adults we know for a car to be guided and operated properly only one person can do it.

The one driving is the one who knows when it is best to move ahead or stop.

As mature Christians we should realize the same things about our lives. If God is not the one in the driver's seat, it just won't work. We might get along the road of life, but not as far as we should, with great difficulty, and with lots of accidents along the way.

Why is it we have so much trouble giving God complete control of our lives? There are several reasons, probably very similar to the thinking of the pint size drivers.

### We think we are big enough to do it ourselves.

It is shocking how seldom Christians turn to God for help. They've hardened themselves spiritually into self-reliant children of God. Unconsciously and from habit, they think God can handle the big stuff and they'll handle the little stuff.

John 15:5 makes it very clear that we cannot even handle the small things, we need God in EVERYTHING.

"I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing."

We are afraid He will not do things our way, work things out the way we want,

or give us our desired answer.

How foolish can we be?! Since the garden, Satan has deceived us into thinking we have some sort of control over our lives. The only control we have is the choice to obey and follow God or rebel.

That fact Satan conveniently leaves out just as he did when he tempted Eve in the

garden.

There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.

Proverbs 4:12

#### We are afraid of the things He may take us through, that we do not want to experience.

Our flesh recoils at the mere thought of any kind of suffering. So we grab the steering wheel of our life out of God's hands and try to avoid any trials and difficulties that might bring us distress.

It seems as if we long to recreate that perfect life we would have had in the Garden before Adam sinned.

By avoiding the road God chooses for us to travel, what we go thru will be even worse than what He would have allowed. The pain will be greater because we have chosen to strike off on our own.

We will also miss out on many other things He wants to give us; blessings, a closer relationship with the Lord, spiritual growth, and being a part of His plan for our lives.

Responsibilities belong to us, and events belong to God. Our job is to make sure we do the things we KNOW He would have us do, and that we are pleasing to Him.

That's pretty easy isn't it? Why then

("Designated Driver" cont on pg 7)

"If the real truth were known, we are throwing a temper fit like a small child, saying that God doesn't know what is best for us."

## Scheduling a CBC Day

When a farmer or an experienced gardener harvests their crops, fruits, or vegetables, they do not delay in gathering their produce.

We share that same type of urgent message regarding scheduling a CBC Day for September 10.

Your church will personally hear the recent exciting news of the intentional emphasis Central Baptist College is doing in allowing BMA students an unprecedented opportunity to attend CBC through the implementation of the 'BMA Promise' Scholarship beginning in Fall 2023.

Vice President for Enrollment Management, Brooks Walthall, shared "What this means is that anyone who has been a member of a BMA church for one year or more can attend Central Baptist College with no out-of-pocket tuition expense."

"The student's federal and state aid will come to the college, but CBC will fill the gap between that and tuition costs for BMA students. Students will pay fees, room and board, and simply need to provide a pastor signature indicating their membership to get the scholarship."

"This is an unprecedented move for CBC, and a true commitment to the BMA and our faith in God that He will bring us the right students that we can impact in a positive way for the kingdom."

"We are not aware of any other Christian college that has a program like this, and we hope that students who previously could not afford to attend a Christian college can now do so; we would love for them to consider CBC!"

"The BMA Promise applies to students in our traditional program and is limited to the first 50 new students for this first year so we can gauge response. Our hope is to increase it to an unlimited number of scholarships in the future."

Please allow us an opportunity to personally share with your church congregation, ministry group, leadership, and/or small group on CBC

Day, Sunday September 10, regarding this God-honoring opportunity.

In addition, this day can consist of a special called time of prayer for CBC, taking a one-time offering and/or make a pledge to give additional offerings over the twelve months to follow.

We are encouraging churches to set aside this Sunday, or another day which best fits your church calendar.

For more information or for any questions you may have, please do not hesitate to personally contact Duffy Guyton, Director of Church Relations, via email at

dguyton@cbc.edu or at (501) 269-6784.

If you have not registered for a CBC Day 2023, please go to the link, <a href="www.cbc.edu/cbcdav">www.cbc.edu/cbcdav</a>.

#### **CBC Launches Legacy Leaders**

The college alumni office is pleased to announce a new sustainable giving program entitled "Legacy Leaders." A monthly sustainable giving program, Legacy Leaders is geared to Sustain, Restore and Connect Alumni and friends of Central Baptist College.

In 1981, a similar organization was formed by former President Hoshaw to help meet the needs as they came. It was named "Minutemen" because they were held in readiness for instant service.

In the early years of my presidency, I wrote several letters to over 300 of these faithful donors.

Some of these funded projects included seed money for a new Student Counseling Center, new science lab equipment, website redesign, and establishment of the International Student Scholarship fund just to name a few.

Looking back in the old Minutemen files, I read appeal letters from previous

presidents for funds to fix roof leaks and replace HVAC units. God used the faithful Minutemen to get CBC through some really challenging times.

Over the years, the needs of the college have changed. Many of the College's expenses are now ongoing needs as opposed to emergency, one-time needs.

I guess I could say, the one-time needs have become everyday expenses that are now a part of the annual operating budget. We have a monthly service contract to cover all HVAC units. As the campus has grown, the repairs and maintenance have increased substantially.

We have also acquired more than 50 properties adjacent to the campus, many with existing houses on them. What a blessing it will be to have them as we plan for the future expansion of CBC.

However, it is also a huge task to maintain them. In addition, we can all relate to the ever -increasing cost of supplies and labor.

Legacy Leaders was created to help alumni and friends of CBC give back. The purpose is to recognize individuals that believe in the mission and future of Central Baptist College. Your contribution, whatever the amount, will have a big impact on the future of the college and in the lives of our students. We have several giving options available.

I'm encouraging you to consider carefully and prayerfully becoming a Legacy Leader. We have countless ways in which we can improve how we integrate Christian faith and academic excellence for God's glory!

Lives are changed on this campus each and every day and you can play a part in that change. Your gift will allow us to build a better platform for God's work to be on display in the lives of young men and women each day.

I can't be more excited to see how Legacy Leaders can help pave the way for the future of Central Baptist College.

Mallory Guyton, Digital Communications Coordinator, is taking the lead in the Legacy Leaders program. She and a team of volunteers will be reaching out to alumni and friends to challenge them to become a Legacy Leader.

Our goal is to have 300 Legacy Leaders enrolled by this time next year.

Contact Mallory at <a href="mguyton@cbc.edu">mguyton@cbc.edu</a> or 501-205-8875. Join by credit card or bank draft. For more information or to sign up, visit our website at cbc.edu/legacyleaders.



## "Serving the Servants"

#### 2023 Global Care Conference



By Margaret Anderson BMA Global

At the end of April, a decades-old dream came to fruition: our BMA missionaries and church planters came together in the same location at the same time for the same purpose.

The 2023 Global Care Conference in Hot Springs, Arkansas, was a time of spiritual renewal and fellowship for all who attended.

Stan Scroggins, who retired from missionary status in April, but still serves as regional coordinator for Asia Pacific, described the conference as "masterful in every way! It was obviously spirit-led by the entire missionary care team, especially Jonathan Montgomery and Drew Cline."

Jonathan Montgomery, Director of Missionary Care, planned and executed the event, and South City Church of Little Rock provided the sessions, worship, and kids' ministry each day.

Jonathan says, "The focus of our Missionary Care ministry is to come alongside our missionaries with the aid, encouragement, and support they need to better allow them to carry out the Great Commission.

The Global Care Conference was a special blessing for our care team to encourage our missionaries, church

planters, and their families while allowing them to meet and encourage each other as well."

Our overall goal for the conference was to encourage our people who are so faithfully serving on the mission field, but we also wanted to give our missionaries an opportunity for mutual encouragement

as they fellowshipped with one another.

Most of them had never met in person, so it was an excellent opportunity for them to make connections that will continue to grow as they return to the field.

Landon Risner is a high school senior, and he and his family serve in Romania. He says, "In my opinion it was very uplifting and a really good way to connect with other missionaries I have never met."

Creative Access Missionary AJ describes the conference as "such an encouraging and relaxing time."

She says, "It was so special to spend time with and meet other missionaries all across the globe. It was special to spend time in prayer, worship, and fellowship with them.

One of my favorite parts was getting to play mini golf with missionaries serving in four different countries!"

The dream for a global conference is one that has long been on the hearts of Bro. Jerry and Mrs. Sue Kidd.

Bro. Jerry says, "For many years, God has placed a desire in my heart to set a time when those called of God to minister globally could come together for worship, prayer, and relaxation. I could envision missionaries sitting around the table sharing their burdens and aspirations for ministry while praying for one another."

"I could also see the missionary wives in a similar setting sharing their burdens and blessings. At the same time, the missionary children would be loved on and well attended, learning both socially and spiritually."

"This dream came true in Hot Springs, AR, when South City Church of Little Rock led 100 missionaries and church planters from 17 countries and 10 states on April 27-30 at our first Global Care Conference. To God be the glory!"

Mrs. Sue was equally gratified by the conference: "The recent Global Care Conference was a tremendous blessing to me and, according to their testimonies, to all who attended. We are immensely grateful to the Lord and to Jonathan Montgomery and his host of helpers for making it happen."

"What a joy it was to meet with missionaries from around the world and to observe their interaction with fellow missionaries. No one can understand a missionary's struggles and triumphs better than another missionary."

"I'm confident the missionaries would each join me in voicing a most heartfelt thank you to all churches and individuals who contributed to the success of the conference. God bless you all!"



## "That Reminds Me"

By Jesse Spurlock

"Little Known Facts"

In my journey through life, I've learned a few things that have been helpful, and a few that are just interesting to know.

The strange thing is sometimes those things switch places without warning. Suddenly, something I thought was unimportant becomes important. But more often, what I thought important became just a bunch of interest, but unimportant, facts. The jury is still out on some of this information.

I've been waiting for more than 40 years for someone to ask me how to know, at night, where the fire alarm boxes are located in Los Angeles. So far that subject hasn't come up, and it's very difficult to work that into a conversation.

In the 1960's the street lights in Los Angeles were mercury vapor which puts off a white light.

At the location of the fire alarm boxes they installed a sodium vapor light which puts off a yellow color. That was so people could immediately locate the nearest fire alarm box.

However, I don't think most people knew that. About the only ones who knew that were police officers and firemen. The ones needing that information didn't know it. Frankly, I'm not sure it is even true after all this time.

I'm still waiting for someone to ask me about a lot of other things. Some time back I found out the numbers on the state government license plates indicate what agency the vehicle belongs to.

The "1" at the front means it is owned by the state. A "2" at the front means county. A "3" means city, and a "4" means it is owned by the schools.

I was just "dying" to share that information, but no one ever asked me. Finally, I just blatantly asked, "Do you know how to tell who owns a tax exempt

license plate?"

Since that wasn't the s u b j e c t u n d e r discussion at the time, some thought me a little strange for just bringing it up. However, be aware that so far everyone I've told didn't know that, so I provided a needed service. They now know it.

How they are going to work that into a conversation I don't know, but just in case the subject ever comes up, they'll be prepared.

I also know how the

another matter.)

term "cop" came into being, with reference to "copping out." (I also know the term "cop" when applied to a police officer actually means "Constable on Patrol." but that's

The term "copped out," which has come to mean someone who gives up

and quits, originally was an abbreviated legal term for a "Change of Plea."

When a defendant in a criminal case changed his plea from innocent to guilty. Now that I've told you that, what are you going to do with it?

Suppose, instead of trivia, I told you something very important very few people will ask about, but all need to know. Would you want to share it with others? Wouldn't you want to work it into the conversation?

Well, the Bible says everyone is a sinner (Romans 3:23).

All sinners without Christ are on the road to Hell (Romans 6:23).

Jesus is the Way, the Truth and the Life, and no one

goes to the except through Him (John 6:14).

People could live their whole life without knowing about tax exempt license plates without harm, but not so with the information about Jesus.





## Drawing Closer to God (Part 1) CLOSER

#### By Judy Wallace

Our purpose in life is to pursue a closer, more intimate relationship with Christ under the leadership and power of the Holy Spirit through the development of spiritual disciplines set forth in the acronym CLOSER.

It was a long engagement — one year and two months to be exact. Tommy was

in Bald Knob farming, and I was finishing my senior year of college by student teaching in Fort Smith.

It was hard to stay connected, but we certainly made the effort.

There were no cell phones, and to call long distance cost extra. So instead, we wrote letters. The letters were not just occasional, they were daily!

We "talked" on paper and shared our

## "Designated Driver" continued from pg 3

can't we learn to do it the easy way, His way?

A.W. Tozer once said that the reason men are still troubled, still seeking, and still making little progress is simply because they haven't yet come to the end of themselves.

Far too often we are still trying to give the orders and interfering with His work in us.

How can we know when we are stepping out of bounds?

One warning is when we find ourselves facing disappointments and limits; we become infuriated, frustrated, and impatient.

Another sign is how we react when God gives others the blessings we feel belong to us. If we find ourselves filled with

anger, resentment, and envy, it is a sure mark we are trying to be God in our lives.

If the real truth were known, we are throwing a temper fit like a small child, saying that God doesn't know what is best for us.

It reminds me of an old show called Dinosaurs. Whenever someone tried to take his mother's place, the baby dinosaur would give them a good smack and say, "NOT THE MAMA, NOT THE MAMA."

A valuable lesson could be learned from this little fellow. The next time you find yourself trying to take control of your life, just give yourself a good swat mentally and say, "NOT THE FATHER, NOT THE FATHER!"

"Since the garden, Satan has deceived us into thinking we have some sort of control over our lives. The only control we have is the choice to obey and follow God or rebel." "How is it that
we would dare refuse
Your invitation to draw closer;
to take time
to study Your word,
hide it in our hearts and minds
and seek Your face
as a daily True North
to follow?"

daily activities. I would often beat the mailman to the mailbox to receive the precious writing straight into my hand.

Immediately, I opened each letter, knowing it was from the one who loved me deeply and wanted me to spend the rest of my life with him. It was how we stayed "CLOSER" while apart.

This year, the Inspirational Resource Committee wants to share this series of articles for the purpose of helping you draw CLOSER to our God.

Our responsibility, as a group, is to recommend godly resources that help you grow, mature and continue to pursue a more intimate relationship with Jesus Christ.

What better resource for this than the Bible! It is God's precious letter to us. It is from the One who loves us deeply and wants us to spend the rest of our lives with Him! It is the source and foundation of many disciplines we need to pursue.

This year, we will be using the acronym CLOSER to guide our writings and more importantly, to encourage you in incorporating these spiritual endeavors into your daily lives. This is what the acronym reminds us to do:

Communicate with God through prayer Learn to study and understand God's Word

Obev

**S**tore God's Word in your heart through memorization and meditation

Evangelize

Renew daily

("CLOSER" cont on pg 8)

## "Closer," continued from pg 7

The writers for this series will be the Inspirational Resource Committee members — Valarie Fish, Susie Edgar, Jackie Ricks and myself.

Join us weekly. Pray for us daily. Incorporate these disciplines regularly. It is what He has called us to do!

Here are some scriptures to read to get started.

James 4:8, Isaiah 26:3, Psalm 119:10 and Matthew 5:6.

#### **Prayer**

Father, You are our Rock, our Shield, our Redeemer, Savior and Friend. You are Lord of all, our Creator, our Shepherd and Your presence is always with us. Even Your names bring peace into our lives. Plus, there is the wonder that You loved us enough to send Your Son to die for us, as unworthy as we are.

How is it that You invite us into Your presence?

That You long to fellowship with us?
That You want us close to Your heart

## UPCOMING EVENTS

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

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

and partakers of Your Spirit's power?

How is it that we would dare refuse Your invitation to draw closer; to take time to study Your word, hide it in our hearts and minds and seek Your face as a daily True North to follow?

We cannot follow Your words unless we know them, so help us on this

journey to draw CLOSER each day to You and Your path for our lives.

Help us love You more so that we may obey You fully. In Christ's precious name, Amen.

Respond to God with your own prayer from what you have read today.

**Note:** CLOSER was developed by Rob Gallaty in his discipleship series Growing Up, Firmly Planted, Bearing Fruit.

#### **Latest News From New Generation**

Praise God, Brother Chris got over his sickness and below is an excerpt from his monthly newsletter:

Greetings to you from New Generation! We may not be a big church, a tiny one actually, but mighty because the power of God sustains us and empowers us to persevere.

We may not have grown into a large Oak Tree yet, but we might be like a tough little perennial plant like a Nandina that withstands harsh conditions and finds a way to endure through all of the seasons.

Lately I'm encouraged by the efforts of a longtime member of our church, the husband of a lady who I have known for 10 years all the way back to Mission Norman. He is a huge man standing at 6'8", but he's like big teddy bear with a tender heart.

Back in 2020 he was hospitalized with COVID for over three months and nearly died! But by God's grace he made it through and as a result of God saving His life, He vowed to serve God with the rest of his life! Since then he has attempted to lead several Bible studies, including homeless outreach efforts.

I've seen some growth over the years since then and he has been faithfully attending an early morning men's bible study on Wednesdays through the book of Matthew at New Generation. Not only is he participating, he has been

bringing his brother and a friend that he has been mentoring for a few years now.

How important it is for men to come together to encourage one another and fellowship together! We have enjoyed studying the scripture and sharing insights with one another each Wednesday morning at the church building.

We very much appreciate your support both prayerfully and financially as we continue to endeavor to fulfill the great commission in Norman and beyond, by proclaiming the gospel and making disciples!

We are in the process of some big changes and hope to be able to announce those soon. We appreciate your continued support in our ministry. Thanks!

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