

The OKLAHOMA BAPTIST

Serving Churches of the Baptist Missionary Association of Oklahoma

Volume LVIII

AUGUST 2023

Number 8

“To Save a City” _____ *By Chris Gonthier, BMAO Moral Action*

What do we do when there is so much chaos all around us? Everywhere that we turn we see one problem after another.

“In those days there was no king in Israel: every man did that which was right in his own eyes.” Judges 21:25

People are of the mindset that they are the authority and that they make the best decisions. This is especially true for the true Bible believer. I’ve tried hard to apply Biblical principals of doing things honestly and ethically the entire time I have been serving on the city council.

No matter what is done it is always wrong and offensive to some people.

Ephesians 6:13 tells us, “Wherefore take unto you the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.”

Christians today seem to be “eat up” with apathy. Either we are oblivious to what is going on around us, or people just no longer care. Christians need to be taking stands for righteousness to show to world the way of the Lord.

The idea of what a Christian should be is very warped and inaccurate. Let us look to see how Jesus acted and how he stood against evil, hopefully learning what he expects from us.

Matthew 12:34-37 tells us, “O generation of vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak good things? For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things: and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things...”

Jesus did not stand idly by as evil took place around him. Jesus stood against the evil of his day. He was not apathetic, but he was both proactive and reactive to those things around him.

Matthew 23:27 says, “Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men’s bones, and of all uncleanness.”

He was speaking to the religious leaders of the day and was pointing out their hypocrisy and wickedness. He called them a bunch of graves.

Too often we do not take a stand when we should because we do not want confrontation, or we are concerned about the fallout of our actions. As believers we are ambassadors for Christ, and we have a message to bring to the world. We do not share the Lord’s message when we hide in shadows or ignore the evil that is going on around us.

Most people, when they think of Jesus today, picture a mild-mannered wimp with no backbone. They get hung up on the idea that God is love, and they forget he has other qualities as well.

Jesus was a man that did not put up with nonsense. The saying “what would Jesus do?” would be better stated as, “What did Jesus do?” or “What would Jesus really do?”

For example in John 2:15-16 we see the following, “And when he had made a scourge of small cords, he drove them all out of the temple, and the sheep, and the oxen; and poured out the changer’s money, and overthrew the tables; And said unto them that sold doves, Take these things hence; make not my Father’s house an house of merchandise.”

Jesus was not a spineless wimp, but rather he was a man of conviction who stood against the evils of his day. So if the Lord stood so strongly against evil, then why do we think it is ok to not take a stand?

There are many areas of our lives today that are full of opportunities to take stands for the Lord. We have family, work, church, school, government, and our own personal centers of influence that are specific to us. The old saying that we are the only Bible some will ever read does have an element of truth.

If our lives were the only thing influencing someone, would we point them toward Christ? Or would we be driving them away from Christ?

I am not looking forward to the day I will have to answer for what I have done, or what I have failed to do regarding pointing others to Christ. Before we go and do battle for the Lord we must spiritually prepare ourselves.

In Ephesians 6:10-20 we see the following, “Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.”

“For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore take unto you the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.”

“Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God: Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints.”

“And for me, that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known the mystery of the gospel, For which I am an ambassador in bonds: that therein I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak.”

Notice that we are told that we are in for a battle, or a fight. We are to “wrestle” and we need armor. The battle is real, and we need to be prepared. A good study of these verses would be prudent, and I may discuss them in the near future.

I wish to now focus on an example of how we can take a stand. One area where the Christians have neglected is in government. We hear all about separation of church and state and are scared away from becoming involved in political matters. This leaves the direction of political decision to be made by unbelievers. It is no wonder that governmental trends are rapidly falling away from God.

Let me be clear on one thing, NOWHERE in the constitution will you find the words or the concept of separation of church and state. Our forefathers intended for Christians to be involved in government. Not only do we have the right, but we have the duty to make our world a better place.

I currently serve on the city council and frequently have to try and steer policy based on biblical/constitutional principles. Please

(“To Save a City”, cont on pg 4)

"From the Pastor's Pen"

By Wearthly Shank

"Watch Thou In All Things [part 3 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

Today's "pen" takes us to the subject, Watch Your Words. The book of James speaks abundantly concerning the tongue. In one place he said, "If any man among you seem to be religious and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain".

James 1:26. James went on in verses 27-28 to say that pure religion includes "and to keep himself unspotted from the world."

I would venture to say that we get in more trouble with our mouth than any other part of our anatomy.

I mentioned last month about the phrase, "If you don't walk the walk, you have no business trying to talk the talk."

Too often, we think we can talk the talk when in reality, we speak when we ought to be listening. James takes up this thought in chapter 3, verse 2, "...if any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect [complete] man and able also to bridle the whole body."

I confess that I have offended people a whole lot more than I ever intended to. Sometimes words just don't seem to come out of our mouths in the same manner they are in our hearts.

The old adage, "Be sure brain is in gear before putting mouth in motion" is a good thing to remember. We can avoid a lot of heartaches and hurt feelings if we will just stop and think before we speak.

Some people are careless with talk. They discourage, depress, and destroy with critical, cynical, cutting words. It is a wise person who can avoid this kind of people as much as possible.

We must watch our words. Kind words glorify God and brings blessings, confidence and healing to others.

A word spoken is implanted in the mind of the hearer for ever. It's like squeezing toothpaste from a tube. Once it's out, it ain't gonna go back in.

Think about it!!

UPCOMING EVENTS

State WMA Officer's Meeting

August 19, 2023

See pg 5

Grandparent's Day

September 10, 2023

Re-Charge Leader's Oasis

October 4-6, 2023

BMAO Annual Meeting

October 13-14

New Heights, OKC

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 ten dollars a month, or one hundred twenty dollars a year, to receive a digital copy of the paper emailed to one email address in your church.



RE:CHARGE
LEADER'S OASIS

CONFERENCE REGISTRATION:
\$90 PER PERSON
\$170 PER COUPLE
*UNTIL SEPTEMBER 29, 2023

LOCATION:
SOUTHGATE BAPTIST CHURCH
740 SW 4TH ST, MOORE OK 73160

FEATURING:



BILL ELLIFF
GENERAL SPEAKER



DREW CLINE
WORSHIP



BUDDY MULLINS
CONCERT

FOR MORE INFO AND TO REGISTER GO TO WWW.BMAAMERICA.ORG/RECHARGE

"I Was Just Thinkin'"

By Narita Roady

"Gimme, Gimme, Gimme"

Many years back, I recall a man that came by a church in our town. He was ragged, dirty, destitute, owning nothing but the clothes on his back. The story he shared was much the same as most drifters passing through. His destination was California, and he was trying to make his way to relatives there.

We actually came in contact with him before he turned up on the church's doorstep. He had been in the police station earlier where we were making a ministry call.

The man was angrily railing the dispatcher. "I called you over an hour ago!" he raged. "There is snow on the ground, and it's freezing! I waited for an officer to give me a ride. I walked two miles into town!"

"Sir," the dispatcher explained through tight lips, "I'm very sorry, but we had several emergency calls in which all our officers were needed."

The transient huffed, "Well you are servants of the people and should have put my call first."

The female officer shaking her head in disbelief answered, "I'm sorry sir, as soon as an officer is available he will help you."

The police department contacted a local Samaritan group that rented the man a motel room. A local minister was called to give him a ride, but first took him by the church in hopes of leading him to the Lord.

Sitting in the minister's office the traveler made it clear he wasn't in need of salvation. "What are you going to do for me? You're a Christian, you have to help me!" he snarled at the preacher.

Patently the pastor asked, "What is it exactly you need, sir?"

"I'm hungry; I need something to eat!" he snapped.

Kindly, the minister offered to see what he could find as he nor his church had any money. As the preacher left the man

yelled, "And I don't want no bologna, I'm sick of it."

Glancing back, the pastor simply nodded his head. Shortly He returned with sliced lunchmeat (not bologna), bread, chips and a package of cookies.

After grabbing it out of his hands, the vagabond surveyed his meal and growled, "Do you expect me to eat it with no mayonnaise!"

The weary minister left and returned with a small jar of mayonnaise. Upon handing it to him, the rambler indignantly bellowed, "Well how do you think I'm going to spread it, I don't have a knife?!?"

The tired preacher said, "Use your hand, I have done all I am going to do." As he turned to leave, his ears met with cursing and the slamming of the motel room door.

As Christians we would never dream of being so self-centered and ungrateful. Or would we? As saved people, Christ is to replace the, I, in our lives. But has He?

We must ask ourselves, Do the majority of our sentences begin with I?

I want. . . I think. . . I need. . . I feel. . .

When the word "you" is spoken, it is too often in the form of railing and accusations.

***You hurt me. . . You upset me...
You did this wrong. . .***

More often we stand with our arms outstretched and hands open, waiting to receive, instead of hands clasp together in prayers of thanksgiving.

We forget God promises to take care of all our needs not all our "greeds." Christians fall into the snare of coveting position, power, control, attention,

possessions and wealth, even within the church.

When God does not give them what they feel they deserve, some even try to extort from others and life through manipulation and crafty planning.

Our lives are a lot like a dot-to-dot puzzle. When all the dots connect in to the right places; the final picture should be one of Christ in our life. In this case, all the dots connected to this drifter, therefore no picture was formed, just a confusing mess of lines.

Acts 20:35b tells us "...to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, it is more blessed to give than to receive."

Have you ever wondered why it is more blessed to give than receive? Simply because when we give with a whole and unselfish heart, we are being like God.

God gave all, expecting nothing in return. Time and again, He gives all and receives nothing.

Unfortunately, too many Christians expect all without giving anything in return!

How do we protect ourselves from such an ungodly attitude and spirit?

John 12:24 gives us the answer we need. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit.

We must die to self. Die to everything that involves fulfilling any of our fleshly desires.

Without this death we can never be used of God nor accomplish His purpose in our lives. We will never be fruit bearers, but simply useless thorn bushes inflicting pain on others by our insensitive, self-centered actions.

What a miserable existence! A self-absorbed life is a lonely one. Others don't want to be around them, and neither does the Lord! Instead of asking "What can others do for me?" Let's make it a habit to ask, "What can I do for others?"

And that's no bologna!

The True Source of Freedom

Submitted by Bro. David Langley

According to God's Word in John 8:32, "And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." My friend, there is only one true Giver of Freedom; that Source is Christ alone.

Do you have the assurance of eternal freedom from the bonds of sin? Please take a few moments to read from Scripture how you can know for sure that this eternal freedom given by Christ belongs to you.

Sin Brings Us Into Bondage & Slavery...

Break the Chains of Bondage

According to Romans 3:23, "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God."

Sin is the wrong we do—lying, stealing, murdering, hating, cheating, etc. Romans 5:12 tells us where sin came from, and according to Romans 3:10, no one is innocent: "As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one."

In Romans 6:23, God says death is the penalty or consequence for our sin: "For the wages of sin is death."

Wages means a payment, just like we receive wages for work we do. This word

death refers not only to physical death, but also to spiritual death, meaning our eternal soul is forever separated from God in a place the Bible describes as a lake of fire, a place of fire and brimstone and eternal punishment. See Rev. 20:14–15; 19:20; 20:10

Christ Paid That Punishment for You According to God's Word...

We find this in Romans 5:8. "But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."

Just as our American forefathers fought on the battlefields of our nation to give us freedom from the bonds of slavery, Christ won the victory for your soul at Calvary.

Romans 6:23 promises, "For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."

Salvation Is Freely Given to All Who Believe

There's Victory in the Lord

Romans 10:13 assures, "For whosoever shall call upon the name of

the Lord shall be saved."

We also see in Romans 10:9–10, "That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth, the Lord Jesus and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved, for with the heart man believeth unto righteousness and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation."

My friend, Christ has already won the victory for you. Because He is always just, He determined that if one man (Adam) could make all men sinners, then one Man (Jesus) could pay sin's penalty for all mankind. See Romans 5:19

Romans 10:13 uses the word whosoever. That means anyone...that means you.

God's gift to us is eternal life in Heaven—paid for by the death of His Son, Jesus. But a gift, no matter how valuable, is of no benefit if we don't accept it.

Won't you accept His eternal gift of salvation today?

Ephesians 2:8–9 is clear that we cannot earn salvation; it is not obtained by our works—not good deeds, not giving money to the church, not anything. Only God's free gift can save us from punishment and eternal separation from God.

Our motivation for this ongoing fight for religious freedom is our Savior: the true Source of freedom—freedom from sin.

Won't you trust Him today and know the joy of eternal victory so you too may have the blessing of eternity with Christ?

If you would like to be saved, please pray this prayer: Jesus, I know I am a sinner and in bondage by sin. I repent of my Sin, and believe that Your death on the Cross paid for my eternal freedom.

I now accept Your gift of eternal life through You alone.

"To Save a City" continued from pg 1

understand that the constitution is based on the Bible as is our governmental structure. Therefore the knowledgeable Christian is better equipped than a non-believer in representing the needs of the people.

Mixing non-Christian ideas with a form of government that is totally based on scripture leads to chaos, henceforth our current political environment.

Removing the Bible from the government would be akin to removing air from our daily lives; very unwise and quickly has negative consequences. We must stand for God and resist wickedness. Remember above all that we are to stand.

2 Corinthians 5:20 tells us, "Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God."

We need to represent Christ, but we need to

represent Him, and not our idea of Him. Ambassadors serve the one they represent, not themselves. Ambassadors go to foreign places so that an understanding can be reached and there will be a meeting of the minds. Our duty is to show our godless society the perfect ways of Christ.

I want to leave a legacy for my children and my grandchildren. The freedom to worship God as we choose is a fundamental and basic right. The forefathers made sure that our rights were preserved so we can serve God. By serving on the city council, my local government, I regularly fight to preserve the rights of my constituents.

As rights are eroded our guarantee to serve God becomes threatened, and so does our ability to evangelize those who are lost around us. Either we will take a stand, or we will fall, and our rights will fall with us.

Master's Builders Work at Jacksonville College

Reporter, Nelda Malone

School was out and Memorial Day was behind us, so it was time for the Master's Builders to head to Jacksonville College for our annual visit starting work on June 5.

This would be our eighth time to work at JBC since 2012, and job #183 for the Master's Builders.

During our stay, we had six campers parked in the Collins Dorm parking lot and six men and one couple staying in the SBTC Girl's Dorm. This made it very convenient for the Builders as some of the folks came and went at different times during the two-week job.

We so appreciate having the flexibility for some to use the dorms while we work, as it allows for several to come who do not have campers.

The Master's Builders were asked to come and help with constructing additional boys dorm spaces.

In 2021, the Builders helped by converting a few classrooms and offices into rooms for living, showering, and laundry rooms.

This year, the Builders were asked to help convert six large open classrooms into four to six single bedrooms each totaling 25 new living spaces for young men. We also constructed 20 wardrobes to make sure each student would have closet space.

Randy Decker was the Alumni representative on this project and coordinated all the materials and plans

for us. Randy also worked right alongside us each day and it was such a blessing! Materials and supplies were provided with funds raised by the Alumni Association of Jacksonville College.

The love they showed for the college during this work was both amazing and inspiring!

The Builders were also asked to build an office inside the Golf Facility for the golf coach. It was certainly hard to keep the men on track with all that golf equipment calling their names though!

The Master's Builders were blessed to have extra help on these campus projects with three additional men coming in at different times during our two week stay. We were so glad they gave of their time, talents, backs, and knees to help us.

Roger Adams from Waxahachie, TX, Farrell Pollard of Jacksonville, TX, and Ed Shelby of Mansfield, TX.

Ed came to help and then decided he'd like to join our Master's Builders "family"!

Thank you and Praise the Lord for him and his wife Cindy!

We are thanking God for these men who are willing to serve the Lord and help with this ministry.

Additional thanks to: George Baker, head of maintenance for Jacksonville College, who is always ready to see that we have all we need and lend a

hand to help when he can.

Chef Kevin, and the cafeteria staff, who cooked and served our lunch and evening meal every workday. What a blessing it was not to have to worry about cooking!

First Baptist Jacksonville for providing a wonderful meal one Friday evening along with some sweet fellowship. Also, many thanks to the FBC Jacksonville "M&Ms" ladies' group, who always invite us to join them for their June meeting.

This meeting always includes games, a wonderful devotional, lots of delicious flavors of M&Ms, and a delicious meal! They always make our ladies feel so welcome!

And finally, a big shout out to the city of Jacksonville who always seem to provide a festival for us to enjoy while we are there!

We always look forward to our time at Jacksonville College each year. We ask you to join us in praying for them as they search for a new President to lead them in the way God would have the school to go.

This college needs our prayers and support more than ever.

We also ask you to pray for God to send workers for our Master's Builders group to come along side us as we continue to work for His Glory!

I encourage each of you to "Follow" and "Like" us on Facebook. You can see what we do each day and pray for us. Just type in "The Master's Builders" on FB (the one with the arbor logo) and follow us.

If you have questions about this ministry, please contact:

Mike Green
(972) 935-3877

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(479) 462-1675

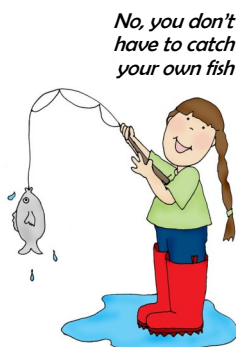
State WMA Officer's Meeting

Saturday, August 19, 2023, 11:00 AM

Catfish Roundup

11278 OK-99

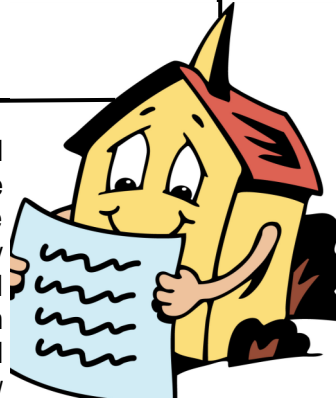
Seminole, OK



"That Reminds Me"

By Jesse Spurlock

"Conspiracy or Coincidence"



I recall one church that I went to as a new pastor. I had prepared my sermon from Acts 17:22-34 about Paul's sermon on Mars Hill. I had titled the sermon "The Unknown God."

Saturday night the song leader called me at home and asked what my sermon was going to be on the next morning. He told me he wanted to select songs that would support the sermon text.

That sounded good although I had only had one other song lead ever ask about my sermon beforehand. I gave him the title and Scripture text.

The next day each of his songs were about the different aspects and the greatness of God.

At the conclusion of the service, the song leader stopped beside me at the back door where I was shaking hands with the membership. A sweet elderly lady shook hands with me and said, "That was an excellent message, but isn't it amazing how God brought the song service and the sermon together in such a marvelous way?"

Before I could say thank you, or anything else, this song leader snorted and said, "There wasn't anything amazing about that! I called him up last night and found out what he was going to preach on and chose the songs that went along with the sermon!"

I will never forget the stunned look on the lady's face as she turned to walk away.

I gave the song leader a look that he correctly understood and took the opportunity to depart also. I can only speculate on why he told the lady that. Although it was the truth, there was no point for him to make it sound as it was some sort of conspiracy.

How unlike the times there has been no conference or discussion between the

song leader and myself as to the songs or the message, yet they are inexplicably tied together, as if such a consultation had taken place. How blessed it is!

Recently, in my message to emphasize the need for true repentance in salvation, I read the words to the song, "Just As I Am."

When the song leader led the invitational song, "Just As I Am," I was a little surprised and felt it truly emphasized what I was trying to get across in the message.

After the service, the song leader handed me a slip of paper with the song numbers for the services. There was number 307 as the invitation number.

I smiled and asked, "What is this?" He

said, "I wrote those numbers down last night at home. Look at the invitation, 307. That's "Just As I Am!" I wrote that down last night!"

He smiled, pointed to the sky and said, "Our Boss did that!" I agreed. It is truly a blessing to be a part of His working.

Sometimes though the opposite is true. I recall one occasion where the church had two revivals each year. One I the Spring and one I the Fall. These were set so it didn't matter what the spiritual condition of the church was, we were going to have revival!

This revival came in the midst of a fuss. From some of the conduct, it seemed apparent to me we probably had several unsaved church members. That later proved to be exactly the case.

The song leader had already selected his songs without consulting me. He chose songs that emphasized Christian service. My sermons were all on salvation.

It was pretty apparent we hadn't consulted each other in that revival. But I'm afraid it may have also indicated neither of us had consulted God either.

Central Baptist College, Conway Reports Great Opts @SOAR 2023

What a year it was for SOAR 2023 at the Gaylord Texan Resort in Grapevine, TX!

This year, a record 14 employees/student ambassadors traveled to SOAR to represent CBC, and they did not disappoint! Over 1,000 free t-shirts were given away, multiple CBC sweatshirts were sold, and a number of prizes were won by attendees as well. Students won everything from wireless alarm clocks and JBL speakers, to a mini fridge and a \$100 Amazon Card. Stanley water bottles with the CBC logo, chargers, and Beats Ear-buds were also awarded to lucky students. Youth ministry workers also won Stanley cups with a \$50 Amazon card inside.

One of the most exciting parts of this year's SOAR event for CBC was all the inquiries and questions from students and parents regarding the BMA Promise.

There was constant chatter around SOAR regarding CBC this year, and students have already been reaching out since the conference ended.

We cannot wait for SOAR 2024 in Arlington!

Dear churches of the BMA,

We greet you in the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. We pray that God is blessing you and using you to exalt his Son. It is our prayer that God is using you mightily in his mission to make disciples of all nations.

We are writing this letter to inform you of an issue that has come to our attention. Several pastors from Africa, some connected to the BMA and others with no connection at all to the BMA, have been contacting churches, pastors, and individuals directly asking for financial help.

We would like to ask you to please refrain from supporting any of these individuals directly. We are asking this so we may be good stewards of God's money. For instance, one of these individuals asked for money for Bibles, but \$10,000.00 has already been given for Bibles in this region.

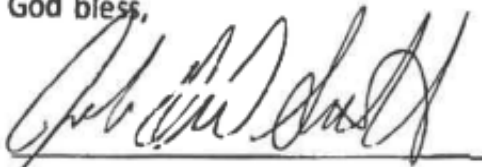
Others are asking for money for building projects. We have a program in place to help with these projects: it is called the principle of the thirds. We ask the church to raise one-third of the project, and then we will loan them one-third interest free. Afterward we will gift them one-third from donations from generous church members like yourselves. If funds are given directly to individuals, the program of the thirds will fall apart.

The motivation of the principle of the thirds is twofold. First, we want the churches to take ownership of their own building projects. Second, we hope they will learn that we want to work with them and not for them.

There have been many other requests for funds, ranging from help with medical bills to buying vehicles. Some of these requests may be legitimate, but there is no way to know when they do not come through the proper channels. We already have channels in place for these countries to make their needs known in the United States.

If you have any questions, please contact John Michael Poulin, BMA Global Regional Coordinator for Africa and South America, at johnmichael@bmaam.com. If you have any questions about other regions, please contact Dr. John David Smith at 501-455 4977.

God bless,



John David Smith
President of BMA Global



John Michael Poulin
Regional Coordinator for Africa and South America



Michael Goodwin
President of EIM



Tim Tyler
Founder of Water for Christ

Norman New Generation News

Below are some excerpts from Bro. Chris's monthly report:

We need your prayers! Lynn's sister, Donni, who has been faithfully attending our church services online all the way from Nevada has had complications with a recent surgery and has been in ICU for several weeks.

We say that our church is "tiny but mighty", because the Lord answers all of our prayers. We need them more than ever!

Lynn has traveled to the Mayo Clinic in Arizona to be with her and has only recently returned.

I just want to say I'm thankful for Steve and Lynn's influence in my life and in the church for many years.

Steve has been my example and mentor in evangelism and ministry in general, and there have been countless stories of lives that have been touched, especially among some of the most needy and underserved people in Norman.

I'm thankful that through their leadership we have had the opportunity to love and serve so many of these people in Norman and the surrounding region that no other churches have been reaching.

And I think it's a powerful testimony of the Lord's love and faithfulness working through our church, that we have been consistently serving the homeless and needy population of Norman for many years.

For one, by partnering with the ministries of Mission Norman, Church in the Park, and Food and Shelter for Friends, as well as practicing our own evangelism, follow up and discipleship efforts within our own church.

In terms of the number of weekly attendees and in the eyes of the world, it would seem that our church has not been very successful. I don't think I have seen the number fluctuate much from the 15

people on average that gather on any given Sunday online and in person to hear the preaching of God's word.

But I believe in my heart, that in God's eyes, the mission that God has called Steve and Lynn to, here at New Generation, has been an overwhelming success!

Since the beginning, Steve has consistently pounded the drum of evangelism and discipleship and we have always focused these efforts on people that need it the most.

Steve and Lynn have been unwavering in their faithfulness to God's word and God's Great Commission here in Norman and have always done this with God's wisdom and discernment and love.

The fruit of their labor is too much to be counted as we consider all of the fond memories and precious souls that have gathered in our fellowship and have come and gone over the years.

And I count it a great success that through their ministry, that not one, but two ministers of the gospel have been raised up in our church! (Luis and myself)

So it has become obvious that through Steve's wise leadership, God intends to serve the homeless and needy with the gospel.

And not just English speakers in our church, but also the Spanish speaking residents of Norman, as the Lord has brought Melissa and Luis who have been ministering faithfully for many years now.

I'm not sure what the Lord has in store for the future of New Generation Baptist Church, but I am convinced that through the faithful obedience of Steve and Lynn here in Norman, Christ has fulfilled, and will fulfill His promise that He will "build His church and the gates of hell will not prevail against it!"

I, for one, am a living a testimony of that fact, that through Steve and Lynn and the ministry of New Generation, Christ has laid the foundation of His church in my heart, helping to lead me, like Peter, to a true and genuine profession of faith, that I will (literally) be eternally grateful!

Indeed, Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the Living God!

(Matthew 16:15-18)

What kind words from Bro. Chris.

Lynn and I appreciate those that have supported us through the years in this ministry and else where as we endeavor to see God's kingdom grow.

As I mentioned in the last newsletter, we are making some big changes to the ministry here and I would ask for your continued prayers.

I announced to our leadership team that I would be retiring soon and that just as parent birds push their babies from the nest that I wanted them to step up and take the reins of New Generation Baptist Church.

This will no doubt take them outside of their comfort zone, but I believe this is a necessary step for the growth of the individuals as well as the Church.

If you have any questions pertaining to our transition, please feel free to give me a call. My number is below.

Again, we appreciate your continued support in the ministry. Thanks!

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