

# The OKLAHOMA BAPTIST

Serving Churches of the Baptist Missionary Association of Oklahoma

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Number 1

## “Are Resolutions Really Solutions?”

By Chris Gonthier  
BMAO Moral Action

This is the season when people decide they want to do better and so they want to bring in the New Year with change. It is a good thing to recognize shortcomings and have a desire to make improvements in our lives.

Often though, we are just setting ourselves up for failure. Understand that I am in no way trying to discourage anyone from trying to make commitments to better themselves. I just hope to point out some things that we often fail to realize prior to making a commitment, sometimes publicly, and then holding our heads in shame when we fail.

The first thing we must determine should be clear, is it the Lord's will for us to do this. If we bind ourselves to do something that is not God's will, we will not have his help to succeed.

Furthermore, all our efforts that may be well intentioned will actually be active disobedience. It is easy to become emotionally motivated.

Think to the times a missionary would come and present his or her burden for a particular field. Everyone was ready to go to help.

We must remember that we are all individuals and God has specific plans for all of us. My calling and your calling will almost certainly have some differences.

“If ye love me, keep my commandments. And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever;”

John 14:15-16.

We need to determine if what we wish to do is obedience to God's Word.



Romans 12:1 tells us, “I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.”

Some things are simply just being obedient to God and should not require a special decision on our part, other than deciding to be obedient to God's Word.

Another thing to consider is who will get the glory from what you are resolving to do? Are we trying to look better? Or are we trying to be better?

Romans 11:36, “For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen.”

Yes, a Christian needs to look good so to speak, having a good testimony. This is so that we can better portray Christ and be a better witness. Remember what the

mission is, and that is to ultimately reach a lost and dying world for Christ.

Matthew 23:5, “But all their works they do to be seen of men: they make broad their phylacteries, and enlarge the borders of their garments.”

Don't do just to be seen of men.

Don't feel like you are letting God down because you are not involved in every ministry or are not able to be involved in a particular ministry fulltime.

I know a lady who spends much time working with and trying to shelter the homeless. I also care about these people, but God has not called me into this fulltime ministry.

(“Resolutions,” cont on pg 8)

**“Today becomes yesterday and tomorrow isn't here yet, so we need to focus day by day. Exist in the here and now and don't let the past destroy your future nor your relationship with God.”**

# "From the Pastor's Pen"

By Wearthly Shank

"...Press Toward the Mark"

**"Now therefore, I pray thee, if I have found grace in thy sight, shew me now thy way, that I may know thee, that I may find grace in thy sight: and consider that this nation is thy people."**

**Exodus 33:13**

Notice in this text that Moses asks God to "show me now thy way..."

If we are to successfully accomplish our goals for enlarging our coasts [1 Chronicles 4:10], our first responsibility is to be sure we ask God to "show me now thy way."

Any idea that we can do this without God's direction and guidance will only lead to doom and failure.

I do believe that we sincerely seek God's direction and guidance but I also believe that we fail to make that strong commitment to follow through. We have good intentions, but lack motivation.

It's one thing to get excited in the pew;

it's quite another to go out into the highways and hedges seeking souls for the Kingdom of God.

Again, I draw our attention to the little three letter word, "NOW" in that prayer

of Moses to God. To me, that is an ever pressing desire to act immediately.

Not in the Spring when the weather is warmer. Not next month, or next week, but today.

Right now!

Don't count on God doing for us what He has commanded us to do. If we go in His name, for His will, and by His power, He will bless us and reward us for our labors.

Think about it!!

## CBC Faculty Member Contributes to Book

Here at CBC, we take great pride in our faculty and in the impact that they have both on campus and outside the classroom. Recently one of our professors got the opportunity to contribute to a book from Teachers College Press. We are very excited to congratulate and commend Melissa Starkey for her work on this and provide a snapshot of the work she has done at CBC and throughout her entire career.



Starkey is CBC's Associate Professor of Education. Before this she was Program Advisor for Social Studies at the Arkansas Department of Education, Division of Elementary and Secondary Education. She received her B.S.E. in Social Science from Henderson State University and her M.S.E. in Teacher Leadership and EdS in Educational Leadership (History) from the University of Central Arkansas, and she is currently studying for her PhD at UCA.

Starkey has experience teaching history at the middle school and high school level, and she has taught AP and concurrent credit history courses. This has all helped prepare her for her current position at CBC which she has held since August 2021.

Starkey has a passion for social studies and education and her role at CBC allows her to share this enthusiasm by preparing education students for their future teaching careers. Through her position she advocates for social studies education, prepares and supports teachers, and provides professional development opportunities for teachers throughout the state.

Her recent contribution to the Teachers College Press came in a chapter that she wrote for a book titled *The Educator's Handbook for Teaching with Primary Sources*. Her chapter is titled, "More Than Words: Strategies for Close Reading with Primary Sources."

This chapter is a culmination of her work and experience in the K-12, state, and college levels of education. The chapter is written to help guide teachers in engaging methods of document analysis using art, objects, photos, documents, and more.

### The OKLAHOMA BAPTIST

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# *"I Was Just Thinkin' "*

By Narita Roady

*"Got a Minute?"*

***"Just one minute  
to change a life,  
to make a day,  
or give another  
the strength to go on."***

Working to earn his way through college, a young man spent one summer at a logging camp. Planning to be gone for a few days, the supervisor chose the college student to be in charge.

Concerned his youthfulness might cause some to refuse to follow his orders; he inquired what to do if this occurred. Actually he had in mind one particular immigrant worker named Marco who was known for his non-stop griping, complaining, and making everyone miserable.

The supervisor was quick with his advice, "Fire them!"

Then, the wise manager said, "I imagine you'd like to fire Marco if you get an opportunity. I'll be honest" he added, "that would really bother me. I've been in this business almost 40 years and he is the most dependable worker I've ever had."

"Yes, I'll admit he's quite a grump and acts like he hates the world. What you may not know is that he's the first worker on the site each day and the last one to quit. He also has had a perfect safety record for the past eight years. Not one of the men working with him has been injured."

Early the next day the student became the logging boss. Immediately he went to Marco, and said, "You realize I am the person in charge today, don't you?"

All he received was a glare. "You

know, the first time I had trouble with you I had planned to fire you, but I'm not going to."

Then he proceeded to tell him why and all the good things the supervisor had shared with him.

As he finished speaking, Marco dropped his tools and the shovelful of sand he had held and tears flowed down his cheeks.

"Why boss man no say to me this for eight years?"

Beginning that day there was a new Marco. He worked even harder and even smiled!

Later he told his student boss, "I tell my wife you the first boss in U.S.A. to ever tell me I do good work. It make her feel so good!"

Summer ended and the young man went back to college to finish his degree. Twelve years passed before he saw Marco once again.

Through his hard work the immigrant was employed by one of the largest logging companies as a superintendent. The once student/boss asked him how he had become so successful.

With a broad grin, Marco answered, "It all go back to that one minute when you was in charge for the day, when you tell Marco he is good worker, he worth something. You change my whole life."

One minute, just one minute. Few of us realize how long a minute really is. Do an experiment with me. Watch the

second hand of your clock or watch and sit completely still, do not speak for one minute. A bit longer than what you thought right?

Now have someone sit with you. Sit facing each other, for exactly one minute, looking into each other's eyes, doing and saying nothing.

That seemed even longer didn't it?

Now consider, this coming year you will be allotted 525,600 minutes. A large

majority of those minutes will be spent in the presence of others – friends, family, strangers, and people with all kinds of personalities and attitudes.

What will you give them in those minutes you spend with them? As you have already seen by our experiment, a lot of blessing or damage can be done in just one minute.

Of course, it is easy to turn those minutes into blessings when it is someone we love or is kind to us. But what about those that aren't so nice? Most of the time we give those folks a "piece of our mind" or a helping of their own rotten behavior right back!

All we have accomplished is grieving the Lord and delighting Satan. It definitely is not God's way!

"Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man." Colossians 4:6

How can we make these minutes count? This all begins with watching what we say, and we all know we can't do that without depending on the Lord.

"But the tongue can no man tame; it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison." James 3:8

We must be very sensitive and alert to

***"Got a Minute," cont on pg 7***

# CBC Fifth Annual Scholarship Gala

Central Baptist College's *5th Annual Scholarship Gala* will take place on Friday, March 1, at 6:00pm at Antioch Baptist Church in Conway.

The black-tie optional event will be catered by Central Baptist College Dining Services under the direction of Chef Billie Rodriguez.

The night will be a celebration *Enduring Faith* and will feature keynote speaker, Dr. Jack Graham.

The proceeds from the event will benefit the Central Baptist College Scholarship Fund which supports institutionally funded scholarships.

Dr. Jack Graham is the senior pastor of Prestonwood Baptist Church in Plano, TX.

He is known for being the leader of one of the nation's largest, most dynamic congregations.

Dr. Graham began preaching at Prestonwood in 1989 to a congregation of around 8,000 people. In the years since, the congregation has grown to 57,000 and continues to flourish in the North Texas region.

Dr. Graham also served as president of the Southern Baptist Convention for two terms.

He is married to Deb Graham and has three children and eight grandchildren.

Dr. Graham has written many books including *A Man of God: Essential Priorities for Every Man's Life*; *Unseen: Angles, Satan, Heaven, Hell, and Winning the Battle for Eternity*; *Angels: Who They Are, What They Do and Why It Matters*; *Powering Up: The Fulfillment and Fruit of a God-Fueled Life*; and *Courageous Parenting*, written with his wife, Deb.

His most recent book is *Reignite: Fresh Focus for an Enduring Faith* in which he talks about how to keep Christ in focus during dark days.

The teaching of Dr. Graham is available

to people across the country through PowerPoint Ministries (his radio, TV, and internet ministry).

On this platform, Dr. Graham teaches culturally relevant lessons meant to make an impact on the lives of his audience.

Dr. Graham is known for straightforward messages and powerful preaching styles.

Tickets are now available for an incredible evening of *Enduring Faith*. Event sponsorships begin at \$2,000. Single tickets are on sale for \$100 each.

For more information or to purchase tickets, visit:

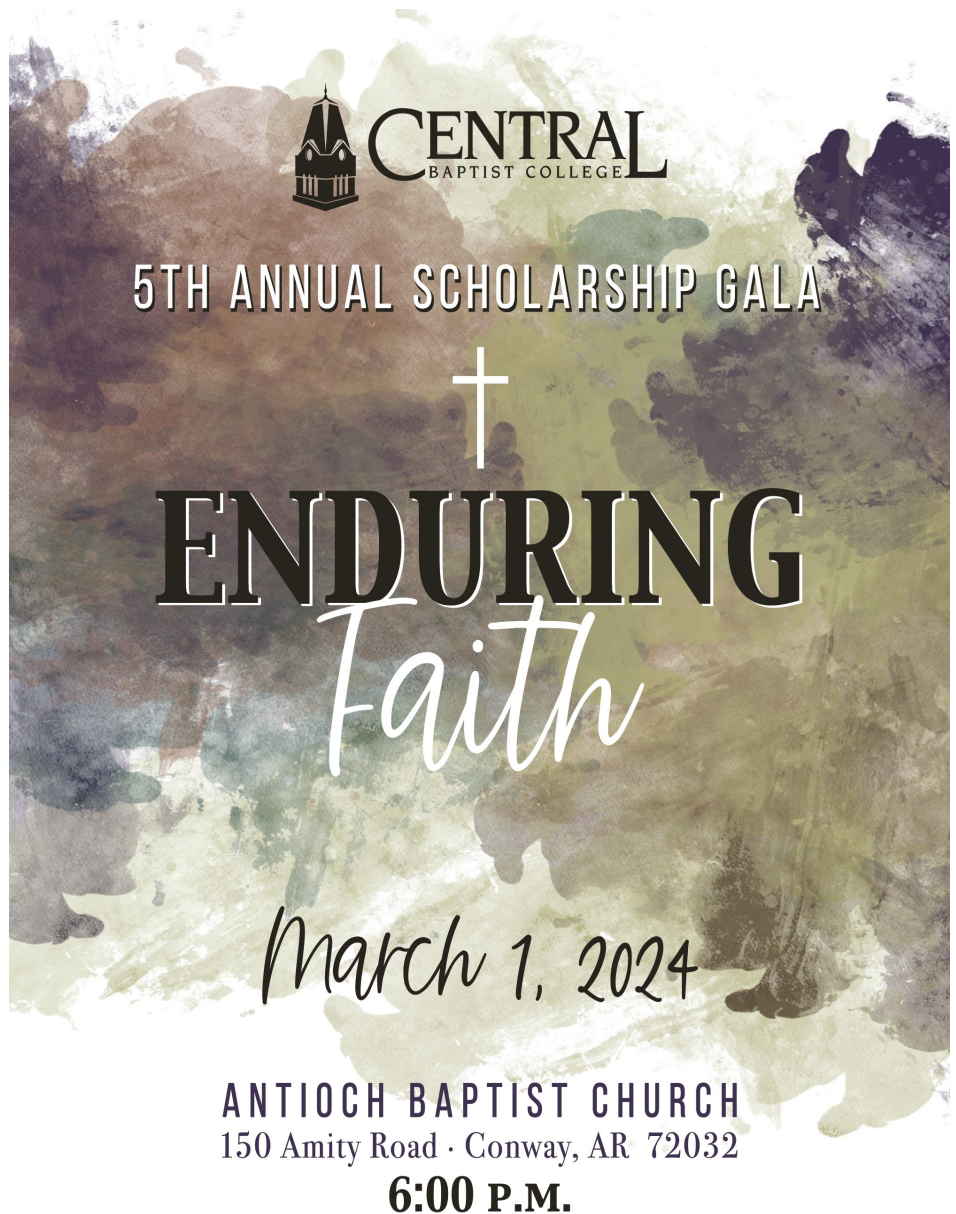
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 **CENTRAL**  
BAPTIST COLLEGE

5TH ANNUAL SCHOLARSHIP GALA

+

**ENDURING**  
*Faith*

March 1, 2024

**ANTIOCH BAPTIST CHURCH**  
150 Amity Road · Conway, AR 72032  
**6:00 P.M.**

# “Mistakes”

Dr. John M. Adams  
Moral Action Executive Director

chapters 13-17. The impulsive, honest voice of Thomas rings out in chapter 14. They did not know the destination, so how could they know the way.

## **John 20:24-28**

The man who made the highest profession of faith in the Bible is mainly remembered as “Doubting Thomas”. He was a doubter to be sure, but he defeated his doubts. His faith won out!

Why is it that most people are so quick to overlook the good things about a man, but recall in vivid, Technicolor detail his mistakes?

Shakespeare had Marc Antony to say “The evil that men do lives after them; the good is often interred with their bones.”

How we all have made Technicolor mistakes! Let’s look at these pictures:

God would say to us, through the experience of Thomas, that doubts can be overcome, that faith, when assailed, can win; that it is possible for the same man who said “I will not believe” (vs. 25) to come to the point of saying “My Lord and my God!”

## **Thomas, A Daring Realist**

### **John 11:7-16**

Lazarus was critically ill and died. Christ had narrowly escaped mobs who demanded his death by stoning. Now Jesus was to return to Judea and the disciples spoke of fear for his life.

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**“When Thomas was alone,  
he was doubly alone.  
Nowhere is one more likely  
to find Christ than in the company  
of those who love Christ.”**

---

Thomas said “Let us also go!” He showed himself to be an unswerving loyalist. He had made his decision to follow Jesus.

## **Another picture Thomas, Absolutely Honest**

### **John 14:4-5**

We find Jesus giving his friends those wonderful instructions in

If Thomas had not asked the question, we may never have had these clarifying and comforting words of Jesus.

## **Next picture**

### **Thomas, Absent From His Place**

Everything was changed now. The shadow of the cross had ceased to be a shadow. Jesus was dead and in the grave. By that death, the disciples had been scattered. But by the news of the resurrection they had been regathered.

We do criticize him for being absent from the meeting, but we look carefully and absolutely honest, for Thomas declined to profess a faith he did not have.

He was an honest doubter. He was not playing mental gymnastics, he was a serious seeker of the truth. He was more than doubting Thomas he was Seeking Thomas. This man wanted to know.

We admire Thomas for he was with the believers the next Sunday evening and there he cried out “My Lord and my God!”

## **Another picture**

### **Thomas, Present With the Saints**

He missed the first blessing because he was not with the saints, but received certainty in his own faith because he was present with them the second time. When Thomas was alone, he was doubly alone.

Nowhere is one more likely to find Christ than in the company of those who love Christ.

You don’t have to doubt!



# "That Reminds Me"

By Jesse Spurlock

## "Crime Doesn't Pay"

When I joined the Los Angeles Police Department in 1958, there were at least two unsolved crimes in Los Angeles I recall were subjects in our academy training.

One was a murder of a prostitute known as the Black Dahlia, that occurred in 1948. The body had been dissected with the skill of a surgeon and then dumped in a vacant lot.

The police didn't seal off the crime scene and let the news media stomp all over the place. That virtually destroyed all evidence, resulting in the crime going unsolved.

Although the sharpest investigative minds have been applied to the case that crime has never been solved. The case was used to illustrate the need to secure the crime scene and preserve evidence.

The second case was used to emphasize officer safety. In El Segundo, a suburb of Los Angeles, two officers had been murdered the year before in 1957. The case was still unsolved.

They had made a routine traffic stop and both were shot and killed. One officer had been shot in the back as he apparently was walking away from the suspect. The other officer was still seated in the patrol car. The crime scene told the story of two officers who hadn't considered the danger of a traffic stop. It cost them their lives.

It was a very graphic illustration of the dangers of police work, but also the need for being alert at all times.

I hadn't even thought of those cases until the night of July 5, 2005 when CBS broadcast a "48 Hours Mystery" program featuring the murders of the officers after fifty years.

They gave the names of the officers as Richard Phillips and Milton Curtis. They were killed in July 1957. They had

stopped the suspect for a traffic violation just after he had committed a rape and stolen a car. Neither the rape nor the stolen car had been reported, but the suspect apparently didn't know that.

I was fascinated by the program because I was somewhat personally involved in the on-going search for the cop killer during my service with the police department.

However, I was also amazed with the capture of the killer. He had only been arrested one time for burglary in South Carolina the year before the murders.

Burglary is considered a non-violent crime, so there had been nothing to connect it to the cold blooded killing of the two police officers. He had left



California after the murders, moved back east, settled down, stayed out of trouble, and lived a law abiding life for nearly 50 years.

He was 34 when he committed the crime and was 71 when captured. That was highly untypical of such a crime, but also an awfully long time to escape justice.

However, the Bible tells us in Numbers 32:23, "Be sure your sins will find you out!" That's the truth, although it often seems questionable when we see people "get away with murder" in this life.

However, often if someone escapes accountability in this life for the sins Hebrews 9:27 reminds us, "And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment." No one is exempt from that.

It's a blessing to know after almost 50 years, Gerald Mason was captured in the murder of two young police officers. It's also comforting to know had he finished out his life without capture, he still was going to answer for it.

## BMAO Central District WMA

January 27, 2024, 10:00am

Sunray, Baptist Purcell

Guest Speaker, Rhonda Wylie

Election of Officers

*We hope you can join us for lunch at Jo's Pizza following the meeting*



# **“Got a Minute,” cont from pg 3**

the promptings of the Holy Spirit, especially when we are stressed, fatigued, or down right grumpy.

At those times it is easy to care only about ourselves and what we are going through. We easily forget about the needs of others and what they may be facing.

Two scriptures are perfect prayers for us to pray daily, moment by moment prayers, and particularly before talking to someone. They are:

“Set a watch, O LORD, before my mouth; keep the door of my lips.”  
Psalm 141:3

“Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O LORD, my strength, and my redeemer.”  
Psalms 19:14

With the help of the Holy Spirit we will always be able to FIND something nice, kind or positive to say to even the most difficult person.

Let’s start with the first one minute gift we can give those around us, “Encouragement”.

Just like those few uplifting words the young man gave Marco that changed his life, you never know whose life you might change. Stop and think, will it be for the better or for the worse?

Most of us can remember things said to us in our life that discouraged us even into our adulthood.

Is someone going through trying times? You might be able to share of a similar situation of how God cared for you or another person and the hope and joy experienced now.

Offer to pray for them and then DO IT! Keep a notepad to write down such requests.

A sincerely shared scripture that has strengthened you during bleak periods can give hope to their hearts.

The key word here is SINCERELY! A self-righteous quoting of a verse is offensive and hurtful. Choose your words carefully; you can never underestimate the difference it will make.

“A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver.”  
Proverbs 25:11

Be sure to give your undivided attention. Look the person in the eye, truly listen. When others pay attention to what we are saying, we feel they really care about us.

Do not be distracted, interrupt, or change the subject to something totally unrelated to what they are discussing.

If it is appropriate, give the person a hug or warmly clasp their hand. Never underestimate the power of touch. Such a gesture can really give a person a boost.

Smile while they speak to you. Yes smile! Even if you are having the most

rotten day of your life. You can give another one minute and you are free to get back to brooding and murmuring over what is happening.

Smile even if they are grumpy and rude. We are to be a mirror of Christ, not the other person!

Find something to genuinely praise or compliment about others. Not false flattery, mind you, these words may puff them up but it will not lift them up. Use your minute to tell another what you sincerely like or appreciate about them.

What about that young mom that works so hard at raising her kids for the Lord, or the Sunday school teacher that is so faithful, or the elderly lady that despite her aches and pains is always at church with a smile?

Diligently look for nice things to say instead of focusing on faults, irritations and being critical. Make a list!

We should set a goal to find a minimum of five people to praise and encourage each day. There will be an added bonus; we will feel great pleasure and happiness in doing so.

What about an attitude of gratitude? It takes even less than a minute to thank someone! Don’t just be thankful for those “blow you away deeds of kindness”, look for the teeny tiny ones. They have the most impact!

Make it a habit to thank anyone for any act of service to you. Checking you out at the grocery store (Yes, even that hateful clerk! She needs it most of all!), holding the door open for you, refilling your drink at a restaurant, just to name a few.

Don’t just grunt or mumble a few words, go into detail! There are a multitude of mundane tasks the people perform each day that are never noticed or appreciated.

Just one minute to change a life, to make a day, or give another the strength to go on. Those minutes belong to God not us. We are to use them to reveal Christ to others not the Devil. Who’s got your minutes this year?

**It may be just one minute,  
but it could hold a lifetime in it.**

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***“At those times it is easy to care  
only about ourselves  
and what we are going through.  
We easily forget about the needs of others  
and what they may be facing.”***

# **“Resolutions,”** cont from pg 1

It does not mean that I cannot bring food from time to time. Also, I can send other donations, including time, when special needs arise. I can still care and do something as the Lord may lead WITHOUT feeling that I must do everything.

We are all gifted differently and are designed to meet the challenges that the Lord has in store for us. Sometimes our monetary support is what is needed from us.

Some have time, some have talent, some have money, and God uses all of these components to make things happen.

Be especially careful of the “all or none” mentality. We never truly fail until we quit trying. So you stumble and fail to meet your goal for the day. Pick yourself up and try to do better the next day by continuing forward.

Don't expect sinless perfection...You are not Jesus. The reason repentance is in the Bible is because God knows we are not perfect. Pick yourself up, with the help of the Lord, and keep going.

Perhaps one of the biggest reasons people cannot keep their resolutions, apart from making a wrong commitment, is setting unrealistic expectations.

Just because God wants you to read your Bible more, does not mean he wants you to militantly read your Bible for two hours a day. Maybe you feel led to read for 15 minutes a day each morning.

So you start off well and the alarm clock fails one day, and you rush to work

without reading the Bible. Now you feel you have failed God, and you just feel like quitting. Read your Bible some other time that day.

My wife was ill and passed away some time back. Partially due to illness and partially because she was not a morning person, she did her study time and alone time with God at night. She was no less a person because she functioned better at night.

Me, on the other hand, I get tired in the evening. I would have liked to work on this article last night and gone hunting this morning. However, I know the end result would not have produced a coherent article.

Also, every month I determine to complete my article earlier, yet it never happens. So am I a failure for not starting early? It gets done, just not when I want to finish it.

Remember our relationship with God and our growth is progressive. We won't always get it right the first time, and sometimes we will stumble. So one day you completely miss your goal and don't follow through with your commitment.

Today becomes yesterday and tomorrow isn't here yet, so we need to focus day by day. Exist in the here and now and don't let the past destroy your future nor your relationship with God.

How many times does a toddler fall before he or she can walk, much less run. God desires for you to succeed and Satan wants you to fail. Never give

## **UPCOMING EVENTS**

### **BMAO**

#### **Central District WMA**

**January 27, 2024**

**Sunray, Baptist Purcell**

**See pg 6**

### **Central Oklahoma**

#### **District Meeting**

**Johnnies**

**Moore, OK**

**March 2, 2024**

### **BMA of OK**

#### **Midyear Meeting**

**April 6, 2024**

### **BMA of America**

#### **Annual Meeting**

**April 16-18, 2024**

**Branson, MO**

### **BMAO Southeast District**

#### **Annual Student Camp**

**Camp Goddard**

**Sulphur, OK**

**June 3-7, 2024**

## **Pulpit Announcement**

**Moorewood Missionary Baptist Church** is seeking a Pastor. We are a Rural Church in Western Oklahoma.

For information, please call

John Britton

@ 580-515-6309

or Gerald Pennington

@ 580-339-1945,

or mail to 8789 N. 2043 Road,  
Leedey, Oklahoma 73654

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***“The first thing we must determine should be clear.  
Is it the Lord's will for us to do this?  
If we bind ourselves to do something  
that is not God's will,  
we will not have his help to succeed.”***