

# The OKLAHOMA BAPTIST

Serving Churches of the Baptist Missionary Association of Oklahoma

Volume LXI

FEBRUARY 2026

Number 2

## *“The Gospel That Changes Everything”*

By John Meriweather

### **A Story of Transformation from the Middle East**

For many Christians around the world, baptism is a public celebration. Family fills the pews, cameras flash, and applause echoes across the sanctuary.

But in other parts of the world, following Jesus comes at a cost far greater than discomfort or reputation. Sometimes, it requires secrecy and courage.

I witnessed this reality up close during a visit to the Middle East. It was my first visit to the region, and on our final night we attended a church service celebrating the baptism of fifteen new believers.

People lined up to testify, and it was one of the most powerful services I've ever experienced.

But what happened next left the deepest impression.

Before the service began, a few visitors were quietly asked to remain after the

final baptism, after the congregation had left. When the time came, the sanctuary emptied, the doors were locked, and the lights switched off. Then suddenly, the baptistry lights came on.

Standing there was the pastor and a woman dressed in a baptismal robe. The pastor introduced her by a simple name: Esther.

Esther, her husband, and their three teenage sons were devout Muslims. Her first contact with the church came through a community medical clinic: free care offered with no strings attached, simply out of love.

That kindness sparked curiosity. Why would anyone do this for free?

In Jordan, it is illegal to proselytize. But when someone asks of their own accord, Christians are permitted to answer. Esther kept asking. She kept listening. In time, she embraced the gospel for herself.

But unlike the fifteen baptized earlier that evening, Esther understood the risk of making her faith public. If her husband or sons discovered her conversion, she expected to be rejected and possibly removed from her home and family.

So, on that quiet night in a darkened sanctuary, she stepped into the water with only a handful of witnesses.

Her prayer was simple: that through her obedience, her family would one day see Christ in her, and that God would make a way for the gospel to reach them too.

Stories like Esther's are a reminder that the message of Christ is not bound by geography, culture, or risk.

Around the world, men and women are exchanging fear for faith, tradition for truth, and isolation for hope.

For them, the gospel is not merely an idea; it is a transforming reality.

That is why churches across the BMA will unite on World Missions Day, February 22, under the theme “The Gospel Changes Everything.”

The day is dedicated to celebrating what God is doing among the nations and supporting missionaries, ChangeMakers, and local believers who carry the gospel into places where access is limited and faith can be costly.

Not everyone will witness a baptism like Esther's. Not everyone will travel overseas or learn another language. But through prayer, giving, and support, every church can help ensure the gospel continues to reach “the next Esther”—wherever she may be.

On February 22, your church is invited to join the effort: to pray for those risking much for Christ, and to give so the life-changing message of Jesus can continue crossing borders and transforming lives. To get involved, visit [bmaglobal.org/worldmissionsday](http://bmaglobal.org/worldmissionsday).

Because as Esther's story shows, the gospel truly does change everything.

(“The Gospel Changes Everything,” cont on pg 8)

THE GOSPEL  
CHANGES EVERYTHING

WORLD MISSIONS DAY  
2.22.26



# 500 Churches for World Missions Day

Spain. Germany. South Sudan, Uganda. These are just a few of the places where new works are beginning – missionaries sent, disciples made, and churches planted.

This is why we do what we do. And as God opens new doors, our budget grows with the mission. This is why we are asking:

*Will your church join us for World Missions Day on February 22?*

This year, we are asking 500 churches to join us. We currently have almost 100 committed, and we are praying for more partners.

Every church that participates helps expand training, strengthen national leaders, and open new fields of ministry around the world. The need is great, but so is the opportunity.

BMA Global functions through the generous partnership of supporting



churches like yours. The World Missions Day offering strengthens our global work and directly benefits ChangeMakers like Mario, Morteza, Lewi, and Shaddi – faithful leaders serving in some of the most strategic places in the world.

It also supports our American missionaries. While they raise their personal support through partnering churches, the

World Missions Day offering funds the systems that serve them all, such as

missionary mobilization, missionary care, and all that we do to keep you informed and connected to the global work you support.

We are asking you to join us on February 22 to celebrate all that God is doing among the nations.

Register your church today, and we will send free resources for your church and a free pullover for pastors.

Visit [bmaglobal.org/worldmissionsday](http://bmaglobal.org/worldmissionsday) to register and to review and download any of the materials that will help you promote our partnership in global missions.

Thank you for your faithful partnership in God's global mission. We are grateful for you.

## 2026 BMAO

### Celebrating 75 Years of Faith and Fellowship Wynnewood, OK

This October, the community of Wynnewood and our surrounding sister congregations will gather for a monumental milestone: the 75th Anniversary Celebration of our 33 churches.

This two-day event, held on October 2–3, 2026, serves as a powerful testament to seven and a half decades of unwavering witness, service, and spiritual growth in Oklahoma.

The festivities will be hosted at Eastern Gate Missionary Baptist Church, located at 40463 Highway 29 in Wynnewood, OK. For 75 years the churches of the BMA of Oklahoma have stood as pillars of the community, and this anniversary is an opportunity to honor that rich heritage while looking forward to obeying Matthew 28:19–20 "The Great Commission".

#### What to Expect:

**Worship & Reflection:** Special services dedicated to praising God for the legacy of these congregations and the impact of the Gospel in Oklahoma and the World.

**Fellowship:** A time for members from all BMAO churches to reconnect, share testimonies, and strengthen the bonds of our shared mission.

**Heritage Highlights:** Recognition of the families and leaders who have served through the years, carrying on the traditions of faith that began in 1951.

Whether you are a lifelong member or a neighbor seeking a welcoming spiritual home, we invite you to join us for this historic weekend. As we celebrate "75 years of witness and service," we do so with confidence that the God who has been our help in the past will remain our wisdom and strength for the years to come.

Eastern Gate Missionary Baptist Church - (405) 665-5398.

Pastor – Bro Lloyd Christensen - (405) 227-1683

Email - [egbewyannewood@yahoo.com](mailto:egbewyannewood@yahoo.com)

## 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](mailto: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.

# "I Was Just Thinkin' "

By Narita Roady

## "What the World Needs Now"

In Mexico there were two orphanages. One was a new, modern state-of-the-art, enormous facility. Babies sent there had every advantage technology and money could offer.

Only the most highly trained nurses, the brightest doctors and the most skilled technicians were hired. The building was new and attractive.

There was no shortage of beds, rooms, or workers. The food was of the finest quality and prepared by the highest nutritional standards. The guidelines for hygiene and house keeping were nothing short of immaculate.

Yet in this perfect environment, the institution had a very high death rate among its babies.

Not far away stood another orphanage, the total opposite of the one just described. The building was old and badly in need of repair. It was amazing it stood at all.

But if one thought the outside looked bad, they had only to step inside to see it was far worse. The floors were cracked and peeling, covered with dirt and filth. Pigs, chickens, dogs and cats roamed freely in and out, not to mention bugs of every description.

The rooms were small and dark, with walls that had not been cleaned in years. No specialists or nurses here, only volunteers care for the babies.

Their infant death rate was almost non-existent.

Perplexed, the modern orphanage

called in specialists to uncover the cause.

Their babies had everything they needed to be healthy and vigorous.

It was the ramshackled orphanage who should be the one losing infants, not them!

The experts came and carefully investigated and gathered facts about both institutions. After much research and analysis they came up with one glaring difference, and not one anyone would have ever imagined.

While the children in the privileged orphanage had no need unmet, they received very little attention or affection. Their needs were met and that was it.

On the other hand, the babies in the dilapidated, poverty-stricken orphanage received a great deal of love and attention.

They were cuddled, held, kissed, tenderly talked and sang to at every waking moment.

There was the difference! One money, skill, knowledge and technology could never provide – LOVE.

Do you find that amazing? We really shouldn't. We all need love to thrive and survive, whether we are eight

weeks old or 80 years old. Why is this?

This is exactly the question I asked myself. As I began to search the scriptures I began to see why love is such an essential part of our existence.

First of all we were created in love. God could have created the world without

man, but like the loving Father He is, He created this beautiful world for us to enjoy and live in. He created us for Himself to have fellowship and closeness.

*All things were created by Him and for Him. Colossians 1:16*

We were made for His pleasure. *Thou hast created all things, and for Thy pleasure they are and were created. Revelation 4:11*

It is obvious in Genesis 3:8-9 that He spent time with Adam and Eve. The Almighty Creator of Heaven and Earth took time to walk and visit with man! And from what the scripture says one would assume it was a regular occurrence each day. How very much He loves us!

That love is so great that even after all our failures, rebellion, and rejection of us, He continues to care and provide for us. He loves us so very much that He gave His ONLY Son to die for our sins, to give us eternity with Him.

*For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.*

*For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. John 3:16-17*

("What the World Needs Now," cont on pg 7)

***"Too often we dole out our love to others based on our mood, circumstances in our lives, how it might benefit us, or how they treat us. God says we OWE them unconditional love."***

# CBC Slates Homecoming Activities

## 2026 Homecoming Court

Central Baptist College will celebrate Homecoming on Friday, January 16, and Saturday, January 17, inviting alumni, students, families, and friends to return to campus.

A highlight of the weekend will be the announcement of the 2026 Homecoming Queen between the Lady Mustangs and Mustangs basketball games at approximately 3:30pm on Saturday, January 17, in the A. R. Reddin Fieldhouse.

The twelve women selected for the 2026 Homecoming Court were chosen by their peers to represent Central Baptist College and exemplify leadership, involvement, and school spirit.

This year's court includes Sophia Bush, Daisy Cline, Elyse Ortega, Ruthie Qualls, Lauren Duncan, Ava Eakin, Faith Grantham, Shaylee Carver, Caroline Reams, Lily Brister, Audrey Krisell, and Emma Vest.

Sophia Bush is a freshman Elementary Education major from Greenbrier, Arkansas. She is a Pillar Student and a member of Tri Ziva and Tower Media.

Sophia is the daughter of Ryan and Amanda Bush and attends Grace Bible Church.

Daisy Cline is a freshman Worship Arts major from Little Rock, Arkansas. She is a member of the CBC Singers, Chamber Choir, Worship Choir, and Chapel Band.

Daisy is the daughter of Drew and Lori Cline and attends South City Church.

Elyse Ortega is a sophomore English major from Conway, Arkansas. She is a member of Tri Ziva.

Elyse is the daughter of Luis and Lisa Ortega and attends Antioch Baptist Church and Camino De Vida Baptist Church.

Lauren Duncan is a sophomore Elementary Education major from Greenbrier, Arkansas. She is a member of the Student Orientation Staff and the Student Activities Board and serves as vice president of Tri Ziva.

Lauren is the daughter of Keith and Melissa Duncan and attends Immanuel

Baptist Church in Greenbrier.

Ava Eakin is a sophomore Communication major from Sheridan, Arkansas. She is involved in Tower Media.

Ava is the daughter of Crystal and Ryan Eakin and attends Lost Creek Missionary Baptist Church.

Ruthie Qualls is a sophomore Elementary Education major from Ozark, Arkansas. She serves as a Resident Assistant, Tower Media co-editor, Tri Ziva recruiting chair, and is a member of the Student Orientation Staff.

Ruthie is the daughter of Randall and Sadie Qualls and attends West Park Baptist Church.

Shaylee Carver is a junior Communications major from Bryant, Arkansas. She is a member of the Student Orientation Staff and Tri Ziva.

Shaylee is the daughter of Michael and

Tori Carver and attends Antioch Baptist Church.

Faith Grantham is a junior Marketing major from Conway, Arkansas. She is a member of the Student Orientation Staff and Student Activities Board and plays in the CBC band.

Faith is the daughter of Tim and Amanda Grantham and attends Needs Creek Baptist Church.

Caroline Reams is a junior Health Science major from Dover, Arkansas. She is a member of the Student Orientation Staff and Tri Ziva and plays volleyball for the Mustangs.

Caroline is the daughter of Billy and Christie Reams and attends Summit Church.

Lily Brister is a senior Communications major from Conway, Arkansas. She is a member of the Student Orientation Staff, Chapel Worship Band, Rotaract Club, Tower Media, and Tri Ziva.

**("CBC Activities," cont on pg 5)**



# “CBC Activities,” continued

Lily is the daughter of Dr. Aaron and Billie Jean Brister and attends Four Winds Church.

Audrey Krisell is a senior Elementary Education major from Conway, Arkansas. She is a leadership scholar and a member of the Student Orientation Staff and Tower Media and serves as treasurer of Tri Ziva.

Audrey is the daughter of Eric and Kelly Johnson and attends Immanuel Baptist Church in Greenbrier.

Emma Vest is a senior Elementary Education major from Greenbrier,

Arkansas. She is a leadership scholar, a member of the Student Orientation Staff, and serves as president of Tri Ziva.

Emma is the daughter of Scott and Courtney Love and attends Central Baptist Church.

## Homecoming Weekend Schedule

Central Baptist College is looking forward to a strong turnout for Homecoming 2026.

The weekend offers something for everyone, from long-time alumni to current students and families.

## 2025-2026 WMA National Project

The WMA of the BMAA has partnered up with Just the Crumbs Ministry in an effort to raise needed financial support. Our project goal is \$90,000. That is a high amount but we feel confident that God will bless this effort!

We pray that you will see how both of these organizations minister to others not just in the United States after a natural disaster but to people around the world.

As an example, here is a breakdown of what your contribution can do.

**\$30.00 contribution** = funds to help JTC feed an entire family in crisis plus provides funds to honor minister wives/widows at the annual BMAA meeting, plus provides funds to enable the National WMA to support other BMAA ministries, plus enables the National GMA to minister to young girls at their annual camp and/or go on mission trips.

**\$120.00 contribution** = funds to JTC to equip a volunteer team for a full day of service plus, provides funds to honor minister wives/widows at the annual BMAA meeting, plus provides funds to enable the National WMA to support other BMAA ministries, plus enables the National GMA to minister to young girls at their annual camp and/or go on

mission trips.

**\$300.00 contribution** = funds to JTC to

provide fuel and maintenance for the mobile kitchen, keeping them on the road and ready to serve, plus provides funds to honor minister wives/widows at the annual BMAA meeting, plus provides funds to enable the National WMA to support other BMAA ministries, plus enables the National GMA to minister to young

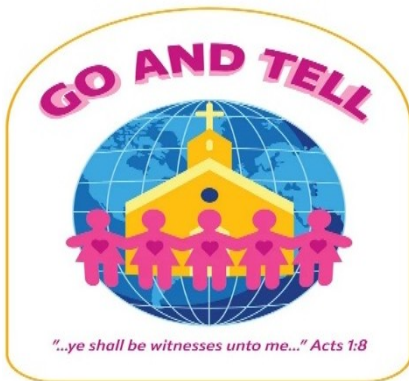
girls at their annual camp and/or go on mission trips.

So, you see, whatever amount you give to the National WMA project, 80% will go to Just the Crumbs and the remaining 20% is stretched to do much more in an effort to minister to ladies and girls as well as support several other BMAA ministries. We thank you for your support!

Send contributions by **February 28, 2026** to:

WMA of BMAA  
PO Box 23  
Salem, MO 65560

Current Donations:  
**\$26,869.59 of \$90,000 Goal**



## Friday, January 16 Annual Chili Cook-Off 11:00am to 1:00pm Childers Dining Hall

The annual Chili Cook-Off will take place during lunch. Students, alumni, faculty and staff are encouraged to attend and sample a variety of homemade chili entries.

CBC Dining Services will provide hot dogs to accompany the chili, and prizes will be awarded for best chili and overall presentation.

## Student and Alumni Hangout 6:00pm to 8:00pm A.R. Reddin Fieldhouse

Alumni and families are invited to enjoy a carnival-style evening featuring funnel cakes, games, face painting, and inflatables. This event is designed for all ages and is a great opportunity to reconnect and make new memories on campus.

## Saturday, January 17, 9:00am Homecoming Generational Family Breakfast, Community Room

Homecoming Day begins with the Generational Family Breakfast, honoring families who have shared the CBC experience for more than 50 years.

The morning will feature fellowship, storytelling, and a celebration of CBC's rich legacy.

## Alumni Luncheon, 11:00am Childers Dining Hall

The annual Alumni Luncheon will recognize alumni award recipients and include door prizes and time to reconnect with classmates and friends.

## Lady Mustangs vs. Columbia College 1:00pm, A. R. Reddin Fieldhouse

**Homecoming Crowning**  
Join us between the women's and men's basketball games for the announcement of the 2026 Central Baptist College Homecoming Queen, one of the highlights of the weekend.

## Mustangs vs. Columbia College 3:00pm, A. R. Reddin Fieldhouse

To register for any Homecoming events or to learn more, visit [www.cbc.edu/homecoming](http://www.cbc.edu/homecoming). We invite all Mustangs, past and present, to come home and celebrate together.

# *"That Reminds Me"*

By Jesse Spurlock

## *"A Prayer Answered"*

A while back I was clearing out some of the old files, reports, etc on my computer hard drive. I ran across an article I had written about prayers.

I had intended to include it in the weekly bulletin articles, but it hadn't made it. Apparently, like the "Lost Episodes of Bonanza," it was hidden away awaiting my discovery.

It was dated January 5, 1997, which would have been my first Sunday as pastor of Highland Park. That was a long time ago, but the message is still very appropriate and worth sharing.

It was Christmas day 1996 and I was driving south on I-35. The speed limit was 70mph. That's as fast as I wanted to drive so I had my cruise control set.

Most cars passed me at several miles above the speed limit. That's not unusual for a holiday, and is one of the main reasons there are more traffic fatalities on holidays. My slower speed made me feel like Maude Frickett on a Los Angeles freeway from the old.

Suddenly, I saw an old Pontiac coming up very fast behind me. He was in the fast lane and I was in the slow lane, but I estimated his speed to be well over 100mph.

As the car sailed by, I saw there was a woman beside the male driver and two young children in the back seat. The driver had his left hand draped casually over the top of the steering wheel. With his right hand he held a beer tilted up to his mouth.

I shuttered to realize the jeopardy he was placing his family, as well as everyone else on the road. Unbelievably, the woman, obviously the mother of the children appeared unconcerned. The children were too young to realize their danger and were playing and bouncing in the back.

As the car disappeared over the next hill, I whispered a prayer, "Lord, please protect those children."

I crested the hill and was startled to see a large splash area in the fast lane. The trail of water led to the rear of the old Pontiac in the distance. Steam was pouring from under the hood of the car.

The old Pontiac was slowing and coasting to the shoulder. A radiator hose had obviously broken, disabling the car.

Due to his speed when the hose broke, it took a distance to get stopped. The car was coming to a stop as I passed. I didn't stop. The walk or wait for help would do the driver good.

I was glad his hose had broken and disabled the car. Now he couldn't kill or injure those children with his drinking and driving. My first thought was, "It serves you right!"

However, as I thought more about it, I was startled to realize it was exact and almost immediate answer to my whispered prayer when the car passed me. "Lord, please protect those children."

Undoubtedly, some would discount this incident as being a coincidence. They might say the fast driving put extra pressure on an old rotten water hose causing it to break. They might be right.

However, isn't it strange that it just happened to break only seconds after I uttered the prayer?

What a great God we serve! He answers small, as well as large prayers.

Philippians 4:6, "Be careful for nothing; but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving let your request be made known to God."

## **Healthy Church Solutions Plans Pastor's Conference**

Healthy Church Solutions is honored to sponsor the BMA Pastors Conference at the National Meeting on April 22, from 9:00–11:30am at Antioch Baptist Church, Conway, AR. We invite you to make plans to attend this gathering designed to intentionally invest in pastors and church ministry leaders.

The conference will focus on three critical areas of leadership health, equipping you to lead your teams and congregations toward deeper spiritual growth and long-term vitality.

The first session, Healthy Souls, will feature a panel discussion centered on soul care, addressing spiritual, physical, emotional, intellectual, and relational health. Larry Barker, Vice President of Church Strategy and Training at BMA Global, will moderate a conversation with experts in each area, offering practical insight on how to assess your current health and identify simple, obedient next steps the Lord may be calling you to take.

The second session, Healthy Men, will explore the biblical calling for men to serve as spiritual leaders and how the local church can more effectively equip and support men in fulfilling this God-given responsibility.

Finally, Healthy Rhythms will highlight the importance of rest, Sabbath, and intentional planning for sustained ministry. This session will include a personal testimony underscoring the value of sabbaticals and healthy pacing for long-term faithfulness and effectiveness.

We look forward to this meaningful time of encouragement, reflection, and challenge, and hope you'll join us!

## ***“What the World Needs Now,” continued***

***“God could have created the world without man,  
but like the loving Father He is, He created this beautiful world  
for us to enjoy and live in. He created us for Himself  
to have fellowship and closeness.”***

As Christians I fear we read that verse so much that we have become desensitized to the enormity of His gift.

It has become so common place to many of us who have possessed this amazing display of love that we cease to see and appreciate the extent of His sacrifice!

*He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love. 1 John 4:8*

We were created in love, are sustained by love, how on earth then can we survive without love?

Now God has made it clear He will love us no matter what we do; his affections are unconditional. Yet in His wisdom He took this a step further.

Having been separated from Him physically, He knew we would need something extra to sustain us during our pilgrimage here on earth. That is the love of other believers, and since His Spirit lives in us, then so does His love and the ability to share that love with others.

Love is the oil that greases the frictions of life, so that we aren't worn down and destroyed.

In **1 Thessalonians 4:9**, He tells us, *But as touching brotherly love ye need not that I write unto you: for ye yourselves are taught of God to love one another.*

How and when did He teach us to love each other? He taught us by giving His only Son to save us and when we accepted Him as our Savior. It can't get any clearer than that!

*This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you.*  
**John 15:12**

In fact He commands us to love one another 13 times in Scripture. I think He means it, don't you?

Too often we dole out our love to others based on our mood, circumstances in our lives, how it might benefit us, or how they treat us. God says we OWE them unconditional love.

*Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another.*  
1 John 4:11

To truly love one another, means to love as God has loved us. To love we must give of ourselves, not always an easy task when we are so wound up in our own lives, struggles and problems.

To give of ourselves, means we must sacrifice our lives, comfort, possessions, rest, etc. To sacrifice means we must die to self. Do you see the picture of God's love for us?

So in loving we become more like His Son, which is precisely what He wants us to do every moment we live.

Someone right now in your life, your church, your town, maybe even your home, needs your love. Not just spoken but shown sacrificially and by dying to yourself.

They might not be lovable; they may have hurt or wronged you; they may seem just fine, but they need you to share the love of God that lives in you.

Like the babies in the spotless orphanage, they mean appear to have it all together, and have been abundantly blessed, but we cannot see on the inside.

Like those very same babies they may be slowly dying inside, giving up

on the Lord, so weary they do not know how much longer they can hang on.

Do you truly want to show that kind of love to others? The only place to learn is from God's Word, where He has taught us.

The following is taken from **1 Corinthians. 13:1-7**. I challenge you to read this aloud daily, personalizing it and putting your name in each blank space. God will do a mighty work in your life and by the end of the year you will have a new understanding of God's love.

*Though \_\_\_\_\_ speak with the  
tongues of men and of angels, and  
have not charity, \_\_\_\_\_ am become  
as sounding brass, or a tinkling  
cymbal.*

*And though \_\_\_\_\_ have the gift of  
prophecy, and understand all  
mysteries, and all knowledge; and  
though \_\_\_\_\_ have all faith, so that  
\_\_\_\_\_ could remove mountains, and  
have not charity, \_\_\_\_\_ (is) am  
nothing.*

*And though \_\_\_\_\_ bestow all my  
goods to feed the poor, and though  
\_\_\_\_\_ give my body to be burned,  
and have not charity, it profiteth  
\_\_\_\_\_ nothing.*

*\_\_\_\_\_ suffereth long, and is kind;  
\_\_\_\_\_ envieth not;  
\_\_\_\_\_ vaunteth not (himself/  
herself) itself.*

*\_\_\_\_\_ is not puffed up,  
\_\_\_\_\_ Doth not behave (himself/  
herself) itself unseemly  
\_\_\_\_\_ seeketh not (his) her own,  
\_\_\_\_\_ is not easily provoked,  
\_\_\_\_\_ thinketh no evil;*

*\_\_\_\_\_ Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but  
\_\_\_\_\_ rejoiceth in the truth;*

*\_\_\_\_\_ Beareth all things,  
\_\_\_\_\_ believeth all things,  
\_\_\_\_\_ hopeth all things,  
\_\_\_\_\_ endureth all things.*

## ***“The Gospel Changes Everything” continued***

### **A Story from Nicaragua**

Around the world, Christians often say, “The gospel changes everything.” For some, that phrase represents a belief.

For others, it is an observable reality, especially in places where hearts and communities have been transformed in ways no one expected.

In Nicaragua, Oscar and Tamy Gaitán have devoted their lives to sharing that message. As ChangeMakers, they have seen firsthand what happens when the good news of Jesus takes root.

Perhaps the most striking picture of transformation in their ministry is found in the story of Herman González, a man whose name once inspired fear across the region. Herman lived in a village called El Griego.

Everyone knew to avoid him... especially when he had been drinking. He was violent, unpredictable, and territorial.

“People said he had killed at least seven men with a machete,” Tamy recalled. “No one went onto his land. No one visited without an invitation, and most people didn’t want one.”

One day, to everyone’s surprise, the local pastor of a nearby BMA church received a message: Herman wanted to talk.

Fearing what might happen, the pastor asked the church to pray. He also asked another pastor to accompany him.



Together, and with great caution, they climbed the hill to Herman’s house.

When they arrived, Herman said, “I want you to share what you’ve been preaching.” So they did. They shared the gospel of Jesus Christ.

“I want to know more,” Herman said. “Come back later.”

They did.

Week after week, they returned, sharing Scripture with the man many believed was beyond hope. And then, one day, Herman surrendered his life to Jesus.

What happened next astonished the community.

The man once feared for his violence became a man marked by peace. The man known for keeping everyone away opened his home to worship.

The land others would not step foot on became a gathering place for believers. A church began meeting in Herman’s house, then later built a small church building that stands to this day.

“The gospel changed everything for him and his family,” Tamy said. “That’s how the gospel can change a man’s life.”

Stories like Herman’s are not stories of human improvement...they are stories of transformation through Christ.

They are also a reminder that the mission of God is still active, still advancing, and still changing lives through people willing to go, preach, and disciple.

On February 22, churches across the BMA family will participate in World Missions Day, a day dedicated to

## **UPCOMING EVENTS**

### **CBC Stampede Preview**

March 4, 2026

### **CBC 7th Annual Gala**

March 6, 2026

### **BMAO Central District Midyear Meeting**

March 7, 2026

### **BMAO State Midyear Meeting**

April 4, 2026

praying for the nations and supporting missionaries and national leaders like Oscar and Tamy as they carry the gospel into new places.

Every church that participates helps fuel ministry among families, college students, unreached communities, rural villages, and people like Herman, people whose stories testify that no one is beyond the reach of God’s grace.

As World Missions Day approaches, readers are invited to pray for missionaries, consider how their church might get involved, and remember that the same message that transformed a feared man in Nicaragua is the same message that continues to transform lives around the world today.

Because truly, the gospel changes everything.