# The OKLAHOMA BAPTIST

Serving Churches of the Baptist Missionary Association of Oklahoma

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## "How Government Decisions Are Affecting Believers Lives"

This is a copy of Bro. Gonthier's report presented at the 2023 BMA of Oklahoma State Annual Meeting.

## **Chris Gonthier, BMAO Moral Action**

Currently there are many state and local issues which are affecting the lives of all Christians in Oklahoma. These, coupled with the issues on the national and the international scenes, can only but make us consider the timeline of biblical prophecy.

As we face life's challenges, we need to put current events in proper perspective. We must look at events which will and are currently impacting us.

Our state superintendent of education is currently under fire. Whether we like him or disagree with him, he is trying to make a difference.

Our public libraries, including those in public schools have materials which are quite offensive to Christians.

Our children are being exposed to leftist indoctrination and the nuclear family is under attack.

Satan knows that weak families are easy prey. The public school system often is in direct opposition to Christianity and patriotism.

We are facing challenges as the federal government continually tries to take away our freedoms. One way is to take our lands.

By the year 2030 the government



hopes to own and/or control 30 percent of the nation's land. The move to make tribal land a reservation would put the land under federal control.

I personally do not believe that the government has the best interests of the tribes at heart. They plan to restrict the rights, ownership, and usage of water sources such as creeks on people's personal property.

No water for livestock means an interruption in our food supply.

We are being tracked by cell phones and other forms of electronics. Now the government wants to track us with the use of license plate readers.

People's personal information will be retained and or given away. People say

well they are already being tracked, but the constitution is designed to protect us from such government overreach.

If we choose to let a private entity track us, that is our choice. Under no circumstances should government be monitoring us without due process. There is a move by many to put up such cameras, but some are fighting the intrusion.

The government is working toward smart cities and social scores as another way to control the population. These cameras will aid in the control of citizens.

The move towards electric vehicles is another way to control the people. Turn of power and people cannot go anywhere. If you are only allowed to charge your vehicle near your home and have rations, then you are easily controlled.

The goal is to limit where people can live so that they will be forced to comply with government mandates.

The move to a cashless society is another way to control. If every transaction is digital, then the government can approve or disprove every action.

Our currency, the dollar, used to be the world's standard. Now the dollar is so devalued that we are almost ready for a reset. Everyone stands to lose their wealth as the government is preparing for a new revenue system.

Even with the new unrest in the Middle East the world is on the brink of disaster. With church attendance on the decline and society on the brink of collapse we must recognize that time is short.

We need to pay attention to current events as they indicate how urgent and necessary it is to preach the gospel.

Only Jesus can solve the world's current problems. We, as God's children, must offer the world the solution to their needs.

"As we face life's challenges, we need to put current events in proper perspective. We must look at events which will and are currently impacting us."

## "From the Pastor's Pen'

## By Wearthy Shank

"5 Things To Tell Yourself Daily

I came across this plaque on the internet and it caught my attention. I have it posted in my office along with other similar plaques to help keep me focused. Here it is:

- 1 Keep Praying: The Bible speaks abundantly about prayer and reminds us to "pray without ceasing." [I Thess. 5:17]. I have another plaque to remind me to "Pray First" Too often I find myself being so involved in a task that I forget to pray about it before I begin.
- 2 Keep Trying: Paul told the Church at Galatia, "And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not." I love that verse. It's a great motivator. It tells us don't give up, don't give in. all great people achieved their goals by not giving up. Keep pressing toward the mark
- 3 Stay Positive: Again, I think of Paul's testimony in Philippians 3:13, I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth

me." Any challenge that God gives us, He will provide the strength, the zeal, and the wisdom to accomplish that which He sets before us.

4 Be Awesome: in my thinking, it may be difficult to "be awesome" and remain humble before God. I think, to be awesome is to do or say something spectacular. So, when we are able to impress someone with words or deeds that glorify God, that would be

awesome. In order to accomplish that, we must "be instant in season and out" with words of admonition and praise, lifting up others with the joy in our hearts about the marvelous grace of God.

5 Become Better: not better than anyone else, but better than the person you were yesterday. We should be in a mode of constant improvement in our spiritual life as well as our physical life. What better testimony is there than to grow in nurture and admonition in the Lord. When we improve in our spiritual lives, we will naturally improve in our social/physical lives.

[the bold letters are from the plaque. The comments are mine]

Think about it!!

## The OKLAHOMA BAPTIST

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## Central Baptist College Day Update and Invitation to Appreciation Breakfast

Your faithfulness and commitment to your college is extremely humbling through your constant trust, love, and support that is inspirational and encouraging to all. We are thankful to all the churches who participated in our special emphasis, CBC Day, which launched on September 10, 2023.

CBC Day contributions go to the CBC Annual Fund that supports, among other things, the ministry grant, academic and performance scholarships, spiritual life programs, and the development of new academic majors.

If that day did not accommodate the church's schedule, please set aside any Sunday or mid-week service to dedicate to a time of prayer for the students, future students, alumni, faculty, staff, and administration.

CBC is honored again to host the BMA of Arkansas Annual Session, which will take place November 2-3. It is our great pleasure to welcome the pastors and messengers of the BMA of Arkansas to the CBC campus. To demonstrate our gratefulness for you and your family, we are hosting a free appreciation breakfast on Friday, November 3, starting at 7:30am located in the Community Room in the Mabee Student Services Complex.

If you would like to attend the appreciation breakfast, please RSVP by contacting Duffy Guyton, Director of Church Relations at (501) 269-6784 or at dguyton@cbc.edu.

We are indebted to our great churches of the BMA of AR, and our heart's cry is indicative of the Apostle Paul's encouragement to the church in Philippi regarding

their love and care that they demonstrated to him, and "for your fellowship in the gospel from the first day until now."



## "I Was Just Thinkin"

By Narita Roady

"Burdens"

I read about a missionary who was living in Africa. He was troubled over something he was seeing. The women carried heavy loads of wood piled on their backs.

While their husbands, carried nothing but a walking stick and walked several feet in front of them. The women considered it an honor to carry these hefty loads for their husbands.

Feeling pity for them, this missionary sent a telegram back to the United States, ordering 200 wheelbarrows asking them to be shipped immediately.

Once they arrived, he showed the women how to fill the wheelbarrows with their wood.

After few week, he visited the village only to find the wheelbarrows all parked in a orderly row – never used. He asked the women, "Why aren't you using the wheelbarrows I brought you?" One woman explained, "Well, you see, once we got the them loaded and up on our backs, they were just too heavy!"

We look at them and can't even begin to understand how foolish they were. Here they were given a gift to make their work so much easier, less painful. But they didn't accept it. So they were left to suffer as they did before.

Even so, when we think about it, we do the exact same thing with God. The weight of our burdens is not a load of wood. Ours are varied from emotional to physical to mental.

We were never meant to carry these loads to take upon ourselves. Just as the Lord made a way for us to be forgiven of our sins and live eternally with Him, He

also made a way for Him to bear the burden of our lives troubles and pain.

But for some reason we too load our "wheelbarrows" with multiple suffering and sorrow and cast them upon our backs to carry when all the while a God has made a way to ease this load.

Over and over in scripture He pleads with us to let Him help.

Cast thy burden upon the LORD, and he shall sustain thee: he shall never suffer the righteous to be moved. Psalms 55:22

I am the first to admit I struggle with this. Especially since my husband passed away.

I want to share with you five signs you aren't trusting God and giving your burdens to Him. I promise I won't leave you hanging, I will give you the solution He provides us in His Word.

So what are we to do? Ultimately, only we can end the cycle. In most cases, a stronghold has been established. Therefore, turning to God and ending this will require a great deal of effort.

This has become a norm even in our misery; you might even say it is our "uncomfortable" comfort zone. It is likely that your flesh will resist to the point that you may feel it physically.

As you face this battle though, remember the Holy Spirit is with you to assist you. It is God's will that you overcome these things since they are not from Him; and if they are not from God that leaves only one other source - Satan. We CAN be free, and that's the

good news!

So what are these signs?

## 1. You worry

Worry translates into other unpleasant side effects – anxiety, fear. This is a huge indicator.

Your mind is constantly ruminating on your problem or problems. It rolls over and over in your mind..

The creativeness of your mind springs into action with every possible negative, horrific outcome. I know the movie industry would love some of mine as scripts for action movies!

As you continue this path of thinking the loop grows faster and smaller and your anxiety increases until it consumes you. You grow more and more concerned that the worst will happen.

#### God's solution:

Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.

And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

Philippians 4:6-7

Be careful or anxious for nothing. And in EVERYTHING –There is not one situation that is not covered – NOT ONE.

In prayer, supplication (detailed, distinct) and with thanksgiving. Bro. Eric speaks of this often – not thankful for the problem but for the opportunity to grow, for His wisdom and His purpose in using it, for the blessings and answers that will come from it

And His promise – His peace from which is beyond our understand. He will keep your heart and your mind with this peace through Jesus. Isn't that what we want in a trial? Peace in our hearts and minds?

## 2. You are depressed

We all know what depression is. Your problem has robbed you of your joy in even the smallest things. You struggle to get through each day, even to eat, and you are exhausted all the time. The burden your are carrying has become like a giant wall that

("Burdens," cont on pg 7)

"We trust Him with our souls for eternity but we don't trust Him to take care of are our trials in life? It doesn't make sense does it?"

# "When National Leaders and State Leaders Are Weak and Sinful"

Dr. John M. Adams Executive Director BMAA Moral Action

I Kings 16:29-33

Years ago, God placed a tremendous revival message on Dr. E. Harold Henderson of Dallas, TX before God's people. I was one of those along with many others. The points were so fitting for so many...

Point #1) God uses people from insignificant locations,

Point #2) God can use people who have no fame

Point #3) God uses men and women who have no awesome abilities. So was Elijah.

Why was Elijah a prophet? How was he called? When did he begin his work? What were his credentials? We do not know.

It is not necessary that we know. It is enough that God called and used him. We can ask no more for ourselves; and yet, "Elias was a man subject to like passions as we are" (James 5:16).

He was not a super man. He was an ordinary person who believed God and was not afraid to speak and act in God's name. If God could so use him, He can use us.

Servants are needed when national leaders are weak and wicked. Elijah lived at the time Ahab was king of Israel and Jezebel was queen. Jezebel was the daughter of Ethbaal, king of the Zidonians.

The daughter was a pagan who worshiped Baalim as her father did. Baal worship was accompanied by lascivious rites which included the grossest

immorality and sexual perversion, the sacrifice of children in the fire by their parents, and kissing Baal's image.

Jezebel was so devoted to that worship that the religion of Baal almost stamped out the worship of Jehovah in northern Israel.

Where was King Ahab while that was happening? He was so controlled by his wife, with such a weak personal devotion to God, that he permitted idolatry to grow unchecked. God needed a man to stand up for right. That man was Elijah. Who is God's person who will stand up today?

Servants are needed in times of religious apostasy. Many years before Elijah's ministry, King Jeroboam had built two golden images in Israel. He set one in Bethel to the south and one in Dan to the north.

Worship of those golden calves came to be known as "the sins of Jeroboam" (I Kings 14:16). It degraded Israel for generations following Jeroboam's reign.

King Ahab worshiped those golden calves and the Baalim of his wicked wife. The nation so followed after those apostate religions that at one time there were only seven thousand people in the entire nation who had not bowed before an idol.

God needed people to stand up for right when religion was perverted. Elijah was God's man then. Who will be God's person to stand up for doctrinal and moral purity today?

Servants are needed to encourage the faithful remnant. Jezebel launched a crusade to kill all the prophets of God. She was so successful that only one hundred prophets were spared, and then only because a governmental officer named Obadiah hid them in a cave and fed them bread and water.

When Elijah stood on Mount Carmel to challenge the prophets of Baal, he stood alone. Not one of the one hundred prophets dared stand with him, but the remnant was there. Someone needed to take a stand to encourage a stand. Elijah was God's man then. Who will be God's people today?

Does God need servants today who will stand against weak and wicked political rulers and religious error in order to encourage the faithful saints? Indeed, He does! Then you and I should follow the example of Elijah and take a stand for God.



## Master's Builders Still About the Master's Business

The Master's Builders loaded up and headed to Little Rock, AR to work with Pastor Drew Cline and South City Church starting on September 11. This was job #184 for the Master's Builders. South City was formally known as Temple Baptist.

In July of 2023, South City Church closed on a vacant 8,000 sq. ft. PF Chang's restaurant space that had been empty for four years. The Builders were called to build office and classroom spaces as well as helping with the repurposing of some of the restaurant areas.

God had other plans though!

Two weeks before TMB arrival, the building was vandalized and all the electrical was torn out, so The Builders helped the church by pulling out cut wires and cleaning up the wiring and the building for other contractors to come in.

In one area of the building The Builders were thankful to be able to frame up four office spaces. Since the building had no electricity for the campers, The Master's Builders were blessed to find the six camp sites they needed at Maumelle Park, Corps of Engineering campgrounds right in Little Rock!

What thieves intended for harm turned into so many unexpected blessings for The Master's Builders and the South City Church family!

About six years ago, Pastor Cline, and

the South City family, began praying about a renewed vision for a family of disciple makers and a strategy to reach the Little Rock community for Christ.

They were reminded that the church is not the building they meet in, but a family of believers committed to loving each other and being on mission together. This vision included selling their current large building, with so much underutilized space, and buying a smaller building that would not sit empty most of the

week. God answered so many prayers with the purchase of the new building that was smaller and more affordable for South City.

They will have space for worship gatherings, offices, student ministry, meetings, training, and children's ministry.

They are also praying for an incomegenerating business opportunity so all of South City's tithes and offerings can go to the local church on mission, not building-related expenses.

The vision is to possibly have a coffee and sandwich shop open each day during the week serving the local community.

The Master's Builders enjoyed meeting Pastor Drew, wife Lori, daughters Daisy and Jovie, along with many of the South City families. Several meals, and a few of the gatherings, were held out at the pavilions in the campground.

What a beautiful setting for praising and worshiping our Risen Savior!

During the two weeks, the Master's Builders ladies were able to pack 55 shoe boxes for the Everlasting Smiles Ministry and several had the added blessing of being able to deliver them to Conway in person! So thankful for the loan of the church van to get this done!

The Builders would like to thank the South City Church family for all the

good food, sweet fellowship, help at the building, and for the opportunity to serve them as they begin this new chapter.

A special thank you to Mindi Stewart, the church executive assistant, for all of her communication and coordination efforts for The Master's Builders during their stay in Little Rock.

The Builders saw the church really live out their mission statement during their stay... "South City exists to love God and ALL people by becoming authentic disciples who make disciples for the glory of God and the good of the city."

Please pray for this church family, and all churches, as they endeavor to make disciples and spread the gospel.

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 David Axe (903)918-0729 or Eddie Sikes (479)462-1675

Reporter- Rose Bittner



## "That Reminds Me"

By Jesse Spurlock

"Cutting to the Chase"

To confess, I really don't know where the term, "Cutting to the Chase" originated, nor what it actually originally referred to. However, I know that it is used today to mean to get directly to the point of the issue.

Jack Webb used to put it, "Just the facts, Ma'am." I have to confess that too often I'm one that someone is likely to say, "Will you cut to the chase?" I tend to give people a lot more information than they want or need.

Not long ago, as clerk of the Association, I had received some new replacement forms for the standard statistical form we had used for years.

Someone wanted to have all the clerks of the various associations use identical forms for all levels of our work. It sounded like a good idea, but I had looked them over and determined they called for far more information than was needed on the local level. I also didn't really want to change from what we had.

I told the moderator about the forms and asked if he thought I ought to let the messengers know about the new forms so they could decide if that was what they wanted.

He "cut to the chase" with a smile and said, "I don't think I would bother the messengers with that. They don't care what form you use and besides, the less choices, the less discussion, and as moderator, I appreciate that."

At another association meeting years ago, one pastor who was very concerned about numbers and statistics, asked the question about how to record the statistics on a church member who made a new profession of faith.

They were already on the rolls, but upon being saved and were baptized, there didn't seem to be any place on our form to account for those new professions of faith.

He asked an older pastor, Bro. Pat Murphy, how they did it. Bro. Murphy got to his feet, smiled

and "cut to the chase" with, "Well, down at Highland Baptist Church, when that happens we just sort of rub them out and write them back in."

That didn't answer the question, but it did put a proper perspective on the question. When an unsaved church member is actually truly saved, what difference does it make HOW it is recorded on man's records?

Unfortunately, I'm afraid many churches today have a lot of unsaved church members. How does one get on the church rolls although they have never been saved?

For many years, the evangelistic type of messages have emphasized simple belief in Jesus without anything said about repentance.

The Bible tells us in many places that all men everywhere needs to repent, that there is none righteous, no not one!

Jesus said, "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish." The first message preached by John the Baptist, Paul, or any of the other disciples was one of repentance.

While salvation comes through belief and faith in Jesus, there is a need for repentance before we will be accepted in salvation. Without repentance, there is no salvation.

Modern evangelistic messages usually consists of such questions and responses as: "Jesus loves you! Do you believe that?" "Yes." "Repeat this prayer: 'Jesus, come into my heart!' Did you pray that prayer?" "Yes", "Praise the Lord, you're saved because the Bible says, 'whoever calls upon the Name of the Lord will be sayed'!"

The Bible DOES say that, but it also says repentance is needed.

## **CBC Expresses Appreciation for Trustees Service**



Pictured above with Central Baptist College President Dr. Terry Kimbrough, are two of the four outgoing CBC Trustess, David Pickard and Jennifer Weaver. CBC trustees serve for five years.

## "Burdens," cont from pg 3

casts a shadow over your life.

Other words that might describe this are discouragement, despair, hopelessness. There are many words to describe these feelings; discouragement, despair, hopelessness

This is the results of not trusting God to take care of you and your problem.

#### God's solution:

Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee.

Isaiah 26:3

There it is again what we crave – Peace, not just peace but perfect peace. But our minds most be focused on Him and we do that because we trust in Him, not our circumstances or feelings.

#### 3. You are very negative

You keep telling yourself that it will never get any better, that nothing will work for you and that getting your hopes up will only lead to disappointment.

Sound familiar? Are toxic thoughts controlling your attitude and emotions?

This mindset will only lead you on to a downward spiral and rob you of your hope.

#### God's solution:

(For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;)

Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ:

2 Corinthians 10:4-5

It is important to pay attention to what we are thinking about! Be careful not to let any thought just jump into your head and run willy nilly. Stop it in the first frame! This is a wonderful scripture to pray.

### 4. You are struggling to rest

We've all had those times when we have too much on our plate, and maybe even have had to switch to a platter, but this is different. It is a restlessness not only in our

mind and spirit but also in our body as. And a restless body manifests in not being able to sleep.

You have an internal war that makes it impossible for you to be calm and relaxed. When your mind and body cannot rest or restore, worries, fears and anxieties escalate.

You are beaten down and the enemy has robbed you of your peace. Committing all your worries to God and letting Him lift your burdens is the only way to be free from this torment.

#### God's solution:

Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. Matthew 11:28-30

It is vain for you to rise up early, to sit up late, to eat the bread of sorrows: for so he giveth his beloved sleep. Psalm 127:2

### 5. You are trying to control everything

Often time's people are able to see they are trying to control their situations or people in their life; manipulating to guarantee what they perceive to be the ideal outcome.

There is a much more subtle form of controlling that is often overlooked: mental control. There is no outward sign of it. It takes place in our heads and its results are just as damaging and extremely exhausting on all levels.

We create scenarios, "scripts" as I call them and unrealistically expect others and God to follow them. Then we become discouraged and disappointed when it all doesn't play out as we imagined.

We don't have control over anything but ourselves and our choices. It is God Who is in control of all and for that. I am thankful. He is the ONLY one that knows everything and what is truly needed.

#### God's solution:

Trust in the LORD with all thine heart;

and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.

Proverbs 3:5-6

I don't know if you have noticed but each of these scriptures begins with a verb. When a sentence begins with a verb it is a command. So God is giving us a command to obey these things.

Have you ever read these verses and looked at them as a command? Well they are from our God and creator.

We are all familiar with these scriptures perhaps too much so that they don't resonate with us. They're like driving down the same road each day and seeing the same tree or bird bath or physical point of interest that we know it but don't see it.

How many of these signs do you recognize in your life?

All of it all boils down to not trusting God. When we don't trust Him we are saying He isn't capable of taking care of us. We trust Him with our souls for eternity but we don't trust Him to take care of are our trials in life? It doesn't make sense does it?

He offers. He promises, and He will keep His promises.

So why don't we accept this gift He offers? The simple fact is that, we don't trust Him. And a lack of trust equals a lack of faith

He offers, He promises, and He will keep His promises. So why don't we accept this gift He offers? we do not trust Him. And a lack of trust equals a lack of faith

These mindsets and choices may have become so ingrained in your that life you aren't even aware of them. Although you feel the discomfort and suffering they cause but you don't see them for what they are.

There is hope, there is rest, and there is relief. The only thing you need to do is choose.

Pour your heart out to God. Ask His forgiveness for not trusting Him and ask for His help.

Then take His promises, pray them, memorize them, and recite them as many times as you need minute to minute day in and day out. Expect to make an effort and continue until you have victory.

He will help you, strengthen you and change you.

## BMA of Oklahoma Report On 72nd Annual Meeting

The BMA of Oklahoma held their 72nd Annual Meeting, October 13-14 at New Heights Baptist Church in Oklahoma City. Churches from around the state were represented.

It is always encouraging to join together with other churches from around the state, and especially for the Friday evening worship service.

We were ministered to again by the Central Baptist College Singers on Friday evening followed by an inspirational message from Pastor Kevin Bowen.

Bro. Larry Barker attended our meeting this year and spoke to us about Healthy Church Solutions, as well as reporting on other of our national works.

At the Saturday meeting we were fortunate to hear from Bro. Charles Costa who informed us of current ministry being done in the Middle East.

The decision was also made to suspend any plans for future State Youth Camps for next summer. This was due to a lack of interest from enough churches in our work to make the camp cost effective.

The subject of camps for teens may be revisited in the future, but for now there will be no camp for youth scheduled for summer 2024.

Bro. Wayne Edgar invited churches to attend the Southeast District Camp held the first week of June at Camp Goddard.

Kids Camp for first through sixth grade is still planned to happen. Dates will be released soon.

Oklahoma Outbreak, the BMAO Youth Winter Conference, will take place this December 28-30 at the retreat center near Sulphur. For more information on this annual conference please contact Bro. Jordan Goforth at Southgate Baptist Church in Moore.

Bro. David Langley was elected to serve as President for the state work in the coming year, and Bro. Kevin Bowen was elected to serve as Vice President.

Bro. Doug Brewer was elected to continue serving as our State Clerk with Bro. Dennis Clark as the Assistant

Clerk.

Bro. Gene Hankins of Mcalester will continue serving as our State Missions Director with Bro. Carl Barnes of Ardmore serving as State Treasurer.

The 2024 annual meeting will be held at Grace Harbor in Oklahoma City and is scheduled for October 4-5. The Mid-Year meeting is scheduled for April 6 and is to be held at Bethany Church in Tulsa.

Bro. Nathan Brewer was elected to bring next year's annual message.

