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PREACHING?



PRIORITY OF PREACHING CONFERENCE
TO EXAMINE PREACHING ACCORDING TO SCRIPTURE,
FEB. 27



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Preaching? Priority of Preaching Conference to examine preaching according to Scripture, Feb. 27

>> by Chris Doyle
MANAGING EDITOR

EDMOND—A favorite annual event among Oklahoma Baptist pastors will happen again at Edmond, Henderson Hills, 10 a.m.-3:50 p.m., Feb. 27.

The Priority of Preaching Conference has as its theme this year, “Preaching?” based on the book “Preaching?: Simple Teaching on Simply Preaching” by Alec Motyer, which will be offered to those attending the conference.

“We are going to try to define, according to Scripture, ‘what is preaching?’” said Brett Selby, regional ministry partner for Oklahoma Baptists, who is an overseer of Priority of Preaching. “What we believe about preaching will invariably shape and impact our practice of it. That’s the direction we will be going.”

Selby said the conference will be done in partnership with Oklahoma Baptist University (OBU) and with Southeastern Seminary, as two Southeastern professors will be the conference speakers.

Jim Shaddix has been a Priority of Preaching speaker for previous conferences. He serves as professor of preaching at Southeastern and as a senior fellow for the Center for Preaching and Pastoral Leadership, which exists to resource pastors in local churches. Author of

many books, his most recent publications are “Decisional Preaching” and a commentary on “Psalms 51-100.”

Dwayne Milioni serves as assistant professor of preaching at Southeastern and is coordinator of the Ph.D. in Preaching program. He has been pastor of Raleigh, N.C., Open Door since 1999.

This will be the 13th meeting of Priority of Preaching, and Selby said the conference continues to grow in attendance, as well as remaining consistent in having faithful attendees return.

“We continue to get traction as far as attendance,” he said. “While we do have new attendees each year, there is a core group that comes back year after year. I think that’s a tribute to the commitment of Oklahoma Baptist pastors to make progress in their preaching, which is the mandate that Paul gives to Timothy in 1 Tim. 4:15.”

Priority of Preaching will feature a panel discussion that will be moderated by Todd Fisher, executive director-treasurer of Oklahoma Baptists. Both Shaddix and Milioni will



Jim Shaddix




Dwayne Milioni

be on the panel, as well as Stephen Rummage, pastor of Oklahoma City, Quail Springs, who is an adjunct professor at Southeastern.

Along with hearing lectures from Shaddix and Milioni, conference attendees will be provided take-home videos that feature Shaddix and Milioni, as well as lectures by Fisher, Rummage, Selby and Scott Pace, another Southeastern professor who previously taught Bible at OBU.

Fisher also plans to meet with young preachers, as part of the Oklahoma Baptists ministry pipeline program, during the conference. Though Priority of Preaching originated as a two-day conference, Selby said the one-day schedule is a better fit for pastors to attend.

“We’ve heard from our pastors, and they affirmed a one-day meeting works better for their week-to-week schedules,” Selby said.

Cost to attend Priority of Preaching Conference is \$40. Those interested in registering can visit oklahomabaptists.org/pop23. 

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Rite of passage: Steak and Shake



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I can remember the day—August 4—but not the year. All I know is that my sons were in elementary school. Somehow, the older I get, the more those years get confused.

I will say to Jeremiah or Caleb, “Do you remember when you hit a home run in the third grade?” and he will say, “No, Dad, it was a double, and I was in the seventh grade.” I have learned just to start out with “Remember when...?” and let my boys fill in the details.

I’m sure I remember the exact day because it was my oldest son Jeremiah’s birthday. I felt bad for him. We were driving the eight hours from Grandma’s house in Hannibal, Mo., all the way home to Tulsa. No child should spend his birthday in the back seat of a car. How could I make this day special?

As we approached Springfield, Mo., I remembered a “Steak and Shake” restaurant there. If I know anything about Jeremiah, I know that he loves meat. As a boy, I saw an episode of Mutual of Omaha’s Wild Kingdom that featured footage of a cow wading into a river. Within 10 seconds, a school of piranhas ate the poor animal clear to the bone. Watching Jeremiah eat meat brings back that episode—in living color.

I said to him, “Do you know what a man should have on his birthday?”

His eyes got big. “No, Daddy, what?”

“A man needs a steak. A big, juicy steak—that is what a man should have on his birthday.”

I could sense the wheels spinning inside his little head. “It’s my birthday.



I am a man. That means I should have steak today.”

My next words made the wheels move even faster. “That’s not all, Jeremiah. Do you know what else a man should have?”

“What’s that, Daddy?”

“A shake. A thick chocolate shake to wash down that steak. That is what a man needs on his birthday: a steak and a shake.”

By now, his little wheels were turning double-time. The only thing that Jeremiah consumes faster than meat is chocolate. I could see his thoughts: “Today is my birthday. I am a man. I should celebrate with a steak and a shake.”

I spoke once again. “Jeremiah, would you do me a favor? I need to keep my eyes on the road. Could you watch for a place that serves steaks and shakes?”

At this point, Jeremiah was leaning over the back seat, straining to find... that place. I knew that in a mile or so, we would reach a sign with directions to the “Steak and Shake” restaurant.

Every 15 seconds I would ask, “Have you found anything yet?” and he would shake his head, “No.”

It’s a good thing I anticipated the sign. When Jeremiah caught sight of it, he screamed at the top of his lungs, “Look, Dad—a place that sells STEAKS AND SHAKES!”

“Good! Let’s go there and celebrate your birthday!”

Jeremiah is now in his 40s. Recently, he asked me, “Dad, you remember when we ate at “Steak and Shake” for my birthday?”

Of course, I did—although I’m glad he didn’t press me about the year.


“Dad, what you did, that was pretty cool.”

I just smiled.

Isn’t that what our heavenly Father does? He plants dreams, desires and hopes into His children’s minds and hearts. He knows that if we keep looking ahead, we will soon discover the place where He brings... fulfillment. [m](#)

Coming events

MARCH 19. Enid, Your Family Church, 1301 N. Independence Street, will celebrate its 100th anniversary. Service begins at 10:30 a.m., followed by lunch. "We will be celebrating 100 years of sharing the Gospel and making a positive impact in the Enid community," Pastor Erik Edgar said. Contact 580/279-4335 or erikeedgar@yahoo.com for more information. 

MARCH 26. Oklahoma City, Southern Hills, 8601 South Pennsylvania, will be hosting Singing and Praising Sunday Celebration, from 7-8:30 p.m. This will be a free intergenerational worship event led by legendary Oklahoma Baptist worship leader Bill Green and the Singing and Praising Choir. Feranado Ortega, Dove Award-winning singer and songwriter, will be a special guest. 

Red Oak, First hosts third-annual Marriage and Singles Conference


RED OAK—Red Oak, First hosted its third annual Marriage and Singles Conference. The conference was designed to help attendees connect with their spouses and build a strong foundation for their relationships. Everyone—whether single, dating, engaged or married—was invited to learn secrets to a healthy, thriving relationship.



>> PHOTO: LINDA MORGAN
Nick Garland shares God's will for marriage at the 2023 Marriage and Singles Conference at Red Oak, First.

Nick Garland, retired pastor of Broken Arrow, First, opened the conference. More than 50 people attended the two-hour session. Garland provided insight into God's will for marriage and intimacy with God and with marriage partners.

Joe Ligon, senior associate executive director for Oklahoma Baptists, closed the conference, sharing from Song of Solomon with more than 60 people attending.

"This was our third year to host the conference," Pastor Johnny Montgomery said. "Each year has brought different speakers with wonderful insights to how God wants couples to be. Our church realizes the importance of investing in the lives of singles, those engaged, newlyweds, and couples married for years. We had several in attendance married more than 40 years. There is always something to learn. God always wants marriages to be their best, serving Him and loving each other." 

VOLUNTEER MISSIONS OPPORTUNITIES

OKLAHOMA

On-going opportunities for volunteers:

Camp Gibson, Hardesty—Tom Freeman, 580/338-6259 or pbaok221@gmail.com

Families Feeding Families Meal Center, Durant—580/230-9142 or familiesfeedingfamilies.org

Hope Pregnancy Centers - South OKC 405/688-8700, North OKC 405/755-5433, Edmond 405/330-0200, Ardmore 580/223-7232, Tulsa 918/622-3325

Oklahoma Baptist Homes for Children Campuses
Oklahoma City – 405/691-7781
Edmond – 405/341-3606
Madill – 580/564-2218
Owasso – 918/272-2233

DISASTER RELIEF

Training:

March 16-18—Chaplain Manual and Operational Stress First Aid—Cost \$60, Baptist Building, 3800 N. May Ave., OKC
To register, please email pjones@oklahomabaptists.org

March 25—Disaster Relief Orientation & Credentialing—8:30 a.m. – 12 p.m., Pryor, First, 601 E. Graham Ave.

April 1—First Aid/CPR Class—9 a.m.-3 p.m.—Cost \$20
DR Team Center, 7180 NW Expressway, Okarche, OK
To register, please email Darrell Knapp, dknapp711@gmail.com

For more information on upcoming DR training, visit okdisasterhelp.org

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Sword & Trowel: Will you show up to vote on March 7?



Brian Hobbs
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There once was a TV comedy that had an episode about two candidates running for office. In a humorous situation, one of the candidates spent all of his time and energy planning the victory party, so much so that he forgot to show up to vote on Election Day and actually lost the election by a single vote.

On Tuesday, March 7, Oklahoma voters face a state question that is not humorous in any way.

We will have the opportunity to go to the polls and reject State Question 820, which would legalize recreational marijuana leading to further disastrous consequences for our state.

This election could come down to who shows up and be decided by only a few votes. As I have stated in previous columns, SQ 820 is unwise and unnecessary. Oklahoma already has more marijuana dispensaries than any other state in the nation. In fact, we have more marijuana dispensaries than we do Baptist churches; more than there are even gas stations.

SQ 820 would expand marijuana's reach in our state, making Oklahoma "go to pot" even further. Oklahomans should reject the goal of making our state a "pot-smokers paradise" and, instead, focus on keeping it a pleasant place to raise a family.

Recreational marijuana creates easy access to a mind-altering, addictive substance that has proven adverse effects on the user, their families and communities. Recreational marijuana has been linked to addiction and proven to be a gateway to other risky behaviors. Legalization has led to an increase in casual use among Americans and an even greater surge among those who use cannabis heavily.

RECREATIONAL MARIJUANA IS NOT

VOTE NO ON SQ820 ON MARCH 7

This state measure comes with empty promises and disguised consequences. Proponents of the state question have used phrases to advance their drugs' cause, phrases like "sensible laws," "the tax revenue will help education." Socially liberal proposals promise good end results, but they often end up being empty promises that invite further social harm and breakdown.

Approving recreational marijuana means removing important legal barriers for trafficking these addictive, mind-altering drugs. Recreational marijuana leaves neighborhoods and schools vulnerable for exploitation.

Last November, messengers to the Oklahoma Baptists' Annual Meeting approved a resolution against recreational marijuana. The resolution expressed alarm "at the rapid advance of acceptance of marijuana in our state..."

We pray that Oklahoma will put legal barriers between addiction and the communities it devastates, and that the church will work with Christ-centered ministries to reach people who are addicted to substances." For more information from Oklahoma Baptists, go to oklahomabaptists.org/sq820.

It's not only Baptists who are stepping forward to say "NO" on this. A growing coalition, including the Oklahoma Farm Bureau, Oklahoma Association Chiefs of Police, the State Chamber and others are opposing this measure. To see others opposing SQ 820, go to facebook.com/nosq820.

In the end, the result of this vote will come down to who actually shows up to vote. On March 7, please remember to vote. And please remember to vote NO on SQ 820!