



# Emmanuel

BAPTIST CHURCH

719 N Kansas Weatherford, OK 73096

[www.ebcweatherford.com](http://www.ebcweatherford.com)

February 15, 2022

EBC Family,

Here is a story about grace at work in a marriage that from a human perspective seems irredeemable. I hope it will encourage and challenge you to see God's greater purpose for marriage than merely human fulfillment. This is from the book "When Sinners Say I Do" by Dave Harvey:

Gordon and Emma met at a church function. She was an admirable young woman, and he was a fairly new pastor. Their wedding day seemed to be the launch of a godly couple into the promise of fruitful ministry in the decades ahead. But just a few days into their honeymoon, all of Emma's dreams for her life were crushed. Gordon made it clear that he didn't love Emma, and that he had married her simply because there were more opportunities for married pastors than single ones. For forty years, through the birth of six children, and all the while functioning as a pastor, Gordon made no meaningful attempt to kindle love for his wife. Freely admitting to an adulterous affair that began after the birth of their fourth child, Gordon insisted he must remain married—divorce would derail his pastoral career. Marriage for Emma became a life of secret shame. She was relegated to sharing a room with their two daughters, while her husband stayed in a separate room, and their four sons in another.

Gordon's disregard for Emma permeated almost every facet of their marriage. While she continued to live under the same roof, she never experienced life under his care. Seemingly normal on the outside, Gordon's disdain for his marriage created a home ruled by his hypocrisy and indifference to his wife's well-being. His children grew up with a clear sense of the difference in their family and others, but little grasp on the fundamental wrong being done to their mother on a daily basis.

But Emma loved the Savior who was merciful to her and clung to him through the trials and years. Bereft of human love from the man she had wed, she threw herself on the mercy of God. The gospel reminded her that she needed a Savior—and that her principal need was not to be saved from a cruel twist of fate, or the evil of the man who shared her home, but from her own profound sinfulness before God. Emma understood the mercy and forgiveness of God for her sin, and accepted the Father's call to extend mercy toward her husband.

Emma never allowed bitterness to take root in her heart. Instead, she learned how to stand with dignity by entrusting her welfare to Christ. For four decades, mercy defined her actions, thoughts, and words toward the man whose very purpose in life seemed to be to crush her spirit. Knowing that her response to her husband would testify to her children about the God she served, Emma was resolutely determined to draw on Christ for grace and to honor Christ in her actions.

Continued on back

The marriage ended sadly and painfully after forty years—an apparent ministry call squandered, a financially destitute family shattered by the unrepentant sin of one man. In the years following their divorce, Emma sent Gordon birthday cards and periodic letters, calling the lonely and rebellious man to God. She was tasting the sweet joy of a deep relationship with the Father, and increasingly longed for Gordon to know that for himself. Somewhere in that time, the mercy of God broke in on Gordon and he responded to the gospel call in saving faith. The children, now adult Christians, lovingly confronted him on his past sins, and for the first time Gordon took responsibility for the destruction of his family. Gordon wrote a letter to Emma confessing his sin against God and against her. Emma was faced with a test that we'll talk about in the next chapter—the test of forgiveness. Can it be that easy? Can mercy cover forty years of wrong? We have Emma's choice preserved in the note she wrote back to her former husband:

*It is with mixed emotions that I read your letter. Sad, as I was reminded of many difficult years, but also glad for the work the Spirit of God is doing in your life. Glad to hear you share your failures so frankly and ask for my forgiveness. And glad to hear you share them with your children. Gordon, I forgive you. I forgive you for not loving me as Christ loved the church and for your disregard of our marriage vows. Though I am saddened by many marriage memories, I have released them to the Lord and have guarded my heart from the ravages of bitterness. I rejoice in the mercy of God, that in spite of our failed marriage, our children all serve the Lord faithfully . . . God uses confession and forgiveness to bring healing. I'm trusting God that will be true for both of us.*

For Emma, mercy had triumphed over judgment decades before Gordon repented. Mercy triumphed with every prayer cast heavenward, every sin covered in love, every refusal to grow bitter. For Gordon, mercy meant getting what he didn't deserve—the forgiveness of his sins, the love of his family, a home with the Savior, six God-honoring children, Emma's life-long love of Christ. Each of these remarkable outcomes point to the triumphant sweetening effect of mercy—the remarkable mercy Emma received from God and lavished on her family.

## High School Students

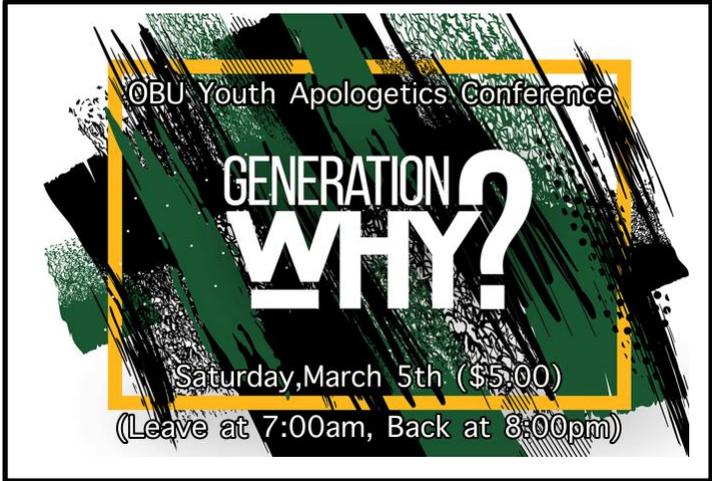
Sunday, February 20 following morning worship service.

All high school students and their families are invited to eat lunch with Oklahoma Baptist University President Heath Thomas and learn about OBU admissions.

Lunch will be provided.

**Must RSVP with the church office by February 18**





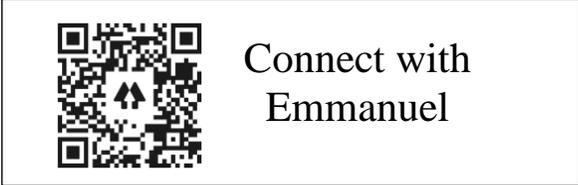
- ### Coming Events
- 3/6 Children's Dessert Auction
  - Building and Grounds Meeting
  - 3/9 Women on Mission Meeting
  - 3/10 Singing Church Women of Oklahoma

**Committee Meeting's**  
**Sunday February 20**  
 Committee Meeting at 5pm  
 Finance Committee Meeting at 7pm

**The Grove Road Trip**  
 Sunday, February 20  
 1pm-5pm  
 Clinton Water Zoo  
 The church shuttle will leave the west parking lot by 1pm.

**Building Fund**  
 Original amount of project: \$4.2 million  
  
 Total gifts received to date: \$88,892.84  
  
 New Loan balance: \$993,900.66

**2 Corinthians 9:11**  
**"You will always be enriched in every way for all generosity, which produce thanksgiving to God through us."**



**Last Week at a Glance**  
**Sunday, February 13, 2022**

**Budget Offering**

Last Sunday .....	\$	5,288.26
YTD Budget Needed .....	\$	71,360.17
YTD Budget Received .....	\$	89,205.66

**This Month New Building**

Receipts this month .....	\$	12,090.00
Received this week .....	\$	670.00

**Attendance**

Grow Group Attendance: 118  
 Family Worship: 146      Online Households: 25

**Wednesday Dinner: Beef Enchilada Casserole, Corn, Black Beans, Chips/Salsa, and Sopapilla Cheesecake**

**Sunday Servants**

**Preschool Care**

2/20	Steve and Carol Wichert
2/27	Steve and Karen Antwine

**Welcome Desk**

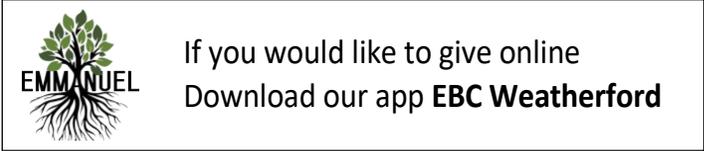
2/20	Katie Ramirez & Yimabel Cevallos
2/27	Meridith Jackson

**Lead Usher**

2/20	Richard Metscher
2/27	Chuck Marquis

**Deacon of The Week**  
 Tim Snider

*Our deacons are available to share in prayer concerns and praises.*



**Emmanuel Baptist Church Office 580-772-3413**  
 office@ebcweatherford.com

**Ministry Staff**  
 Clint Carter                      Stephenie Bunce  
 Roger Howell                     Dana Nickels  
 Craig Jackson