



# SBAOC Weekly Update

## NEWS & PRAYER REQUESTS

*If you have any news, prayer requests, or events that you would like to have included in this update, please email the information to [spurgeonassociation@gmail.com](mailto:spurgeonassociation@gmail.com) or call us at 785-456-8513.*

## PHYSICAL CARE FOR A PASTOR

*Sleep* by Brian Croft

(From *The Pastor's Soul: The Call and Care of an Undershepherd* By Brian Croft & Jim Savastio; pp. 113-117; Evangelical Press; [www.epbooks.org](http://www.epbooks.org))

There is an incredible irony that exists in the lives of most busy people. The very thing we need to be highly productive and excel in the different aspects of our busy life is the first thing we sacrifice in the busyness—sleep. When you add a divine calling from God where God's people need care and God's kingdom is being built in the midst of the work of a pastor, sleep always seems less important. Before long, this mentality leads many pastors to see sleep as a hindrance to the work. The fact is, sleep is a gift from God. It reminds us we are not God, but humans who are frail, weak, and limited. When we neglect sleep, there is a physical price to pay, as David Murray writes:

Just one week of sleeping fewer than six hours a night results in damaging changes to more than seven hundred genes, coronary narrowing, and signs of brain tissue loss. The latter is partly because sleep activates the brain's garbage disposal system, cleaning out toxins and waste products. Chronic sleep deprivation is associated with increased risk of infection, stroke, cancer, high blood pressure, heart disease, and infertility. Sleep loss increases hunger, desire for larger portion sizes, and preference for high-calorie, high-carb foods, with the resulting risk of obesity. In short, sleeping is not a useless waste of time, but an essential biological need that prevents infection and helps us maintain healthy body weight.<sup>10</sup>

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### PURPOSE STATEMENT:

We unite as an association of Southern Baptist churches in order to manifest the glory of God above all. We purpose to do this by seeking spiritual awakening and revival by intense prayer and earnest obedience to Scripture. We covenant to strengthen and support one another, motivated and guided by the authority and sufficiency of Scripture, by facilitating faithful preaching of the Word of God, proclaiming the gospel of the risen Lord Jesus Christ to all, making and gathering disciples, planting churches and coordinating unified missions efforts.

*"If there is no church... should you not commence one?" C. H. Spurgeon*

## COMMENTS ON OUR PURPOSE STATEMENT

We unite as an association of Southern Baptist churches in order to manifest the glory of God above all. We purpose to do this by seeking spiritual awakening and revival by intense prayer and earnest obedience to Scripture. We covenant to strengthen and support one another, motivated and guided by the authority and sufficiency of Scripture, by facilitating faithful preaching of the Word of God, proclaiming the gospel of the risen Lord Jesus Christ to all, making and gathering disciples, planting churches and coordinating unified missions efforts.

*“The Old Testament prophets were screaming about the promised Messiah who would come and rescue his people, and the life of Christ for us on the pages of the gospel, the letters talking about the supremacy and the glory that belongs only to Jesus. Nothing is going to move our hearts forward except for the way that God talks about His Son.”*

*Anthony Mathenia*

*(Continued from page 1)*

This cost doesn't stop at the physical, but infiltrates the mental, emotional, and the spiritual aspects of our lives. In other words, a lack of sleep harms our souls. This chapter aims to prove how essential it is that proper care for our souls as pastors involves getting a proper amount of sleep regularly each night. Let's first consider some reasons pastors in particular do not get the amount of sleep they need each night, then conclude with a few suggestions on how to pursue proper sleep as an effort to care for one's soul.

### REASONS PASTORS DON'T SLEEP

One reason pastors don't get the proper amount of sleep is because of pride. Pastors look at others around them who appear to be highly productive and do so on little sleep, and feel pressure to do the same. The reason I know this is because I felt it for many years. I fell into the trap so many do of hearing the stories of celebrated Christian leaders like Al Mohler or Joel Beeke reading twenty books a week on four to five hours of sleep a night. I knew I couldn't do that, but I didn't want to acknowledge that to anyone. I might look weak and incompetent. Pride makes us try to be someone we are not and God never intended us to be. The reality is I need eight hours of sleep a night. I won't just embrace that, but I will celebrate it now. I learned the world looks darker when we view it in a sleep-deprived state. Ministry is harder. My patience is thinner. I am not at my best on six hours and I know that. Pride causes pastors to do unwise things and not sleeping when we should is one of them.

Another reason pastors don't sleep is we deceive ourselves that doing something else is more spiritual. We could be studying, writing sermons, or praying throughout the night. Those sound so much more like spiritual tasks for a pastor, right? One of the most respected theologians in the world, Don Carson, has a different view:

Sometimes the godliest thing you can do in the universe is get a good night's sleep—not pray all night, but sleep. I'm certainly not denying that there may be a place for praying all night; I'm merely insisting that in the normal course of things, spiritual discipline obligates you get the sleep your body needs.<sup>11</sup>

Sleep is a gift from God. It is not just one of the godliest things a pastor can do, but it is one of the wisest things we can do if we want to be at our best in our labors as a pastor each day.

The final reason pastors don't sleep is because we have no sense of control when we sleep. The control freak pastor has trouble sleeping and it isn't because he hasn't done enough spiritual tasks for the day, but he has trouble releasing control to the One who never sleeps or slumbers (Psalm 121:4). Pastors need to embrace that the gift of sleep each night is a call to faith that God is going to continue to be on the throne and rule while we sleep and will meet us with new mercies every morning when we awake.

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## UPCOMING CONFERENCES & EVENTS

### **Deep South Regional Founders Conference—**

January 24-26. Bethlehem Baptist Church in Laurel, MS. Theme: *The Doctrine of Sanctification*. Main Speaker: Conrad Mbewe. Go to [founders.org/events/](http://founders.org/events/) for information.

### **True Church Conference—**

February 14-17. Grace Life Church of the Shoals, Muscle Shoals, AL. Theme: *Honoring the Excellency of Jesus Christ*. [truechurchconference.com](http://truechurchconference.com)

### **Southern Baptist Founders Conference Midwest—**

February 26 & 27, 2019. First Baptist Church of Fenton in Fenton, MO. Theme: *Reformation in Today's Churches*. Speakers include Dr. Thomas Nettles & Dr. Owen Strachan. <https://sbfcmw.wordpress.com>

### **Saved By Faith Youth**

**Camp—**June 17-21, 2019. Webster Conference Center, Salina, Kansas. Speaker: Dr. Jim Orrick. For more info go to [www.sbfyckansas.com](http://www.sbfyckansas.com) or email [trinitybaptistwamego@gmail.com](mailto:trinitybaptistwamego@gmail.com).

### **Encouraged to Endure**

**Conference—**July 25-27, 2019. Second Baptist Church, West Frankfort, IL. Speakers: Joseph Mahlaola, Larry McCall, & John Snyder. Worship Leader: Tom Clay.

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## CARING FOR THE SOUL

It is inaccurate to determine that sleep is simply a physical discipline that we submit to when we reach exhaustion. When pride, control, and confusion on what is truly godly behavior are in play, there is but one conclusion—this is a matter of the soul. How does a pastor care well for his soul in regard to the discipline of sleep?

We must first embrace our humanity. Just be honest about how much sleep you need. I need eight hours. You may need nine hours when another pastor only needs seven. Until you embrace that God has uniquely made you as a human being who is weak and needy for sleep, you will not be honest about how much you really need. One of the great differences between us and God is that we need sleep and he doesn't. There is freedom in embracing this truth and ministers to the weak and needy soul of a pastor in a special way.

Secondly, we must acknowledge the gift of sleep. Sleep should not be seen as something we just need to do when we are too exhausted to do anything else. Sleep is a gift from God as a way to recharge, to reset, so that we can be at our best to serve him tomorrow. Sleep is not a burden but a gift, and the pastor who acknowledges this will have a more peaceful soul.

Lastly, we must let go and trust Jesus. When we desire to control our lives, it is hard to let go of that. All sleep does for the Christian is remind us we are truly not in control. When we lie down to sleep we cannot escape that truth, even though we may have deceived ourselves all day about it. Pastors carry a tremendous amount of burden throughout the day. What a gift sleep can especially be for the pastor and his soul to relinquish those burdens to Jesus as we drift off to sleep.

I try to use my final moments before drifting off to sleep to say in my clear awareness of exhaustion this prayer to God:

God, I am reminded at this moment I am not God. I am only human. I need sleep. I can't do anymore right now. But you are God. You don't need sleep. You are all-powerful and everywhere. This moment is a gift as I get to sleep and let go of all these burdens I have carried for my people today. Help me to let go and give them over to you. Watch over me and my family tonight for you are a God that doesn't sleep or slumber. May your mercies be new tomorrow. Thank you.

Pastors, sleep is a gift. Embrace it. Use it each night to unburden your soul and bring you some temporary relief. I assure you, there will be plenty for your soul to bear in the morning.

<sup>10</sup> David Murray, *Reset: Living a Grace-paced Life in a Burnout Culture* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2017), 56.

<sup>11</sup> Don Carson, *Scandalous: The Cross and Resurrection of Jesus* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2010), 147.

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## PRAYER MEETINGS FOR SPIRITUAL AWAKENING AND REVIVAL

- Fellowship Baptist Church in Onaga, Kansas—5:00 pm on Sundays
- Trinity Baptist Church in Wamego, Kansas—8:00 pm on Saturdays

*The Spurgeon Baptist Association of Churches is an association of Southern Baptist Churches that are united to manifest the glory of God above all. We set out to do this by seeking spiritual awakening and revival by intense prayer and earnest obedience to Scripture. As an association of churches we are bound in mutual covenant to strengthen and support one another - motivated and guided by the authority and sufficiency of Scripture - by facilitating faithful preaching of the Word of God, proclaiming the gospel of the risen Lord Jesus Christ to all, making and gathering disciples, planting churches and coordinating unified missions efforts.*

*We are a non-geographic association seeking to include any like-minded body of believers so that together we might better fulfill the great commission of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Our intent is to lean on His instruction and not our imaginations so that He is honored in all that we do. We welcome churches who adhere to the confessions of faith accepted by Southern Baptists throughout their history, including, but not limited to, the Second London Confession (1689) and the Baptist Faith and Message.*



Baptist Association of Churches