



FBC SALINA // OCTOBER 2026

FBC NEWSLETTER

Let It Go

PASTOR JOEL ODONDI

Some of the heaviest burdens we carry are not placed on us by others, but by the bitterness we refuse to release. Most people do not set out to become bitter. A hurtful comment, a broken promise, a betrayal, or an unfair accusation wound us deeply. At first, the pain feels justified. We replay the situation in our minds, revisit the conversation, and imagine what we should have said. Over time, however, what began as a wound becomes a weight. The offense may be in the past, but the resentment continues to occupy our hearts.

The Australian film *Rams* illustrates this reality through the story of two brothers who live side by side yet refuse to speak to one another for forty years. Though they share the same profession and live as neighbors, bitterness creates a barrier that neither is willing to cross. Only when a crisis threatens their flocks do they begin to communicate again. Forty years is a staggering price to pay for a grudge. Yet many people quietly sacrifice years of peace, joy, and meaningful relationships because they cannot let go of old hurts.

The problem with resentment is that it never stays confined to one area of our lives. It follows us into our

homes, workplaces, churches, friendships, and prayers. Today, bitterness may appear in subtle ways: avoiding someone, refusing to return a call, speaking negatively about a person when they are not present, or secretly feeling satisfied when misfortune comes their way. Outwardly, we may appear composed, while inwardly we continue fighting battles that ended long ago.

The apostle Paul gives believers a clear instruction:

"Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you." Ephesians 4:31-32

For many, forgiveness is easier to talk about than practice. We may ask, "What if they never apologize?" or "Does forgiveness mean their actions were acceptable?" Others wonder how they can forgive when the pain remains fresh and real.

Biblical forgiveness does not excuse wrongdoing or ignore justice. It does not eliminate appropriate consequences, remove healthy boundaries, or require someone to remain in a harmful situation. Rather, forgiveness is the decision to surrender personal vengeance and trust God with judgment. It is choosing not to allow another person's sin to dictate the condition of our heart.

Holding a grudge may feel like protection, but it actually keeps us attached to the very injury from which we need healing. Bitterness promises strength while quietly draining our spiritual vitality. Instead of freeing us, it binds us to the past.

As followers of Christ, we have a compelling reason to forgive: we ourselves have been forgiven. Through Jesus Christ, God extended mercy to us when we could never earn it. The grace we have received is meant to flow outward toward others. The gospel continually reminds us that forgiven people are called to be forgiving people.

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Artistry ideas by Joel Odondi, generated by Gemini

The Stones Cry Out

PASTOR KEVIN HAZELTON

When Joshua led the Hebrews into the Promised Land, he instructed twelve men—one from each of the twelve tribes—to carry a large stone from the riverbed to build a monument in the Promised Land. These stones, known as ebenezer stones, served as a reminder for future generations that God had delivered His people from slavery in Egypt into the Promised Land. The ebenezer stones declared, “Our God is faithful!”

Last week I celebrated my 30-year anniversary serving Christ at FBC Salina. This has led me to reflect about my ministry as youth, associate, and now senior pastor. As I reflect, several “ebenezer stones” come to my mind that remind me, “Our God is faithful.”

The Stone of Baptism

Both of our daughters were baptized as believers in Christ at FBC Salina. What joyous days those were for Cynthia and me. I’ve also been privileged to baptize dozens of new believers in my years as pastor. While every baptism is exciting, my most memorable baptisms took place in the Pacific Ocean while on a mission trip in Alaska. They were also my fastest baptisms. You don’t waste time talking in 45-degree water! Whether warm or cold, fast or slow, inside or outside, every baptism has reminded me, “Our God is faithful.”

The Stone of Relationship

I come from a large extended family. I have 40 first cousins, and I can’t begin to name all the children,

grandchildren, and even great grandchildren that my cousins have. Though our relationships have changed drastically over the years, we are still family.

The same is true at First Baptist Church. What an honor to have taught, counseled, comforted, baptized, married, and even buried up to four generations of some families. We haven’t simply “done church”

together, we have done life together. Whether serving, celebrating, learning, growing, or mourning together, we have been family through and through. In those relationships, together we have been reminded, “Our God is faithful.”

The Stone of Gospel Proclamation

I’ve served alongside several godly pastors during my ministry in Salina. The first (Pastor Jim Bridges) and current (Pastor Joel Odondi) have impacted me most through their faithful service to Christ and FBC. Yet each of the pastors has faithfully declared the Good News of Christ in worship services, youth groups, retreats, children’s ministries, outreach events, at funerals—you name it, the Gospel has been proclaimed. And not only by pastors. Sunday School teachers, Bible study leaders, ministry volunteers, members sharing their faith at school and work—all because FBC Salina is committed to proclaiming the Gospel of Christ.



The Stones Cry Out

I have shared just a glimpse of my memories from 30 years at FBC. What matters most isn’t all my memories. What matters most is what the stones declare: “Our God is Faithful!”

That’s God’s promise to Abraham. That’s God’s promise to Israel. That’s God’s promise to FBC Salina.



Giving Back to the Community



Abigail Wamser
Shaan Galvez & Lilly Burkenbine counting golf balls.



Jamison Show volunteered at a horse ranch during the summer where he learned groundwork, how to care for horses and how to ride. He competed in August at his first horse show where he won several awards, one being Reserve Grand Champion.

On Wednesday, September 16, the Gibbous Youth (grades 6-12) met at the Love, Chloe Foundation office in downtown Salina. Their mission; Tag 300 plush monkeys to prepare them for the 2026 Love, Chloe Gala. Monkeys were the favorite animal of Chloe, the little girl who inspired her mother, Heidi Feyerherm-Smith, to start a foundation to support families of children facing cancer. The Love, Chloe Foundation provides these families with financial support as well as encouraging gifts and connections to other families in the same situation. Their infamous “warrior wagons” are filled with hundreds of dollars worth of gifts- for the child with cancer as well as every member of their family. Additionally, Love, Chloe’s “Monkey in My Chair” program provides a fun way for children around the world to stay connected with a classmate who is receiving cancer treatment.

Love, Chloe was also preparing for their annual golf tournament, which included their “Golf Balls from Heaven” raffle event, where golf balls are purchased raffle-ticket style, then suspended inside of a giant net hung from a fire truck ladder. The ball that lands closest to a designated spot on the ground wins the ticket-holder \$1000! Our youth made sure that all 600 golf balls were numbered and accounted for.

Over 20 FBC youth were able to learn a little about how this Salina-based foundation serves families across the state of Kansas and to help Love, Chloe check off a few of the many tasks needed to prepare for their important fundraisers. It was fun to

watch how quickly the youth formed a system to complete their jobs, working together and having a fun time doing it. The Gibbous leaders hope to continue to teach the youth that as followers of Christ we are called to serve others.

“You, my brothers and sisters, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the flesh, rather, serve one another humbly in love.” Galatians 5:13



Abigail Wamser
Ethan Schroller and Eliza Billinger tagging monkeys.

One Step

JORDAN WAMSER

In May of 2025, I was laid off from my software engineering job. After working remotely for a software agency out of Utah, I'd spent almost 11 years in the industry, 15 if you count college. It was one of the hardest trials of my working life. Even now, I still struggle a little with the feeling that I failed. But when I look back through the peace that God has given me, I don't see failure anymore, but rather, the moment God began to grow me.

The night I was laid off, I made a deal with myself: I had that one evening to feel everything; the anger, the hurt, the frustration, the bitterness. I let myself experience all of it. Then for the next three days, I wanted to be nothing but a vessel and a servant of the Holy Spirit, while attending a men's conference that weekend.

I had no idea I was about to hear God's voice more clearly than I ever had. During one of the morning worship times, I was broken down, surrendered, already in tears, asking the Lord for clarity, I heard Him say one word: "ministry".

After I took some time to process it, I texted my wife, Jessica, and told her exactly what had happened. Her response was simple: "Are you sure?"



It was a fair question. Going from software engineering into ministry, financially, it's not the same. And what did "ministry" even mean? Was it leading on Wednesday nights? Leading a men's Bible study? Using my programming skills for the church? Mowing the lawn and cleaning the building? Being a prayer warrior, spending two hours a day praying over our church? I honestly had no idea.

So, I brought it to the men who were with me that weekend and asked them to pray with me for discernment and for wisdom about what to do next.

I prayed: "God, I'm a vessel for You. Help me surrender everything. My house, my vehicles, my money. None of it is mine. It's all Yours, and You've blessed me to have it." The only thing I asked of Him was this: "Be clear when You answer me."

Not long after, I learned the office manager position at Webster Conference Center was opening up. I'm now about a year and a half into that role. I'm going through CrossTalk Global, a school for learning how to preach biblically and how to aggressively depend on Holy Spirit. In my course work with CrossTalk Global I am working on a Master of Biblical Communication, through Providence Seminary, a CrossTalk partner.

I can't begin to tell you how thankful I am for this church family supporting me through school. It took a lot of hard work, catching up on a year's worth of coursework in seven months, including a trip to California.

I'm still discerning what the Lord meant by "ministry". But recently I preached on 1 Samuel 13 and 14, and God gave me some clarity through it. I want to share it, because some of you might be in your own season of discernment.

In those chapters, we meet Saul and his son Jonathan. Jonathan is the one who actually attacks the Philistine outpost, but Saul is the one who blows the trumpet and takes the credit. We also learn that due to the Philistines Israel didn't have any weapons, only Jonathan and Saul. And while Saul sits resting under a pomegranate tree, Jonathan decides to move.

Jonathan turns to the young man carrying his armor and says:

"Jonathan said to the attendant who carried his weapons, 'Come on, let's cross over to the garrison of these uncircumcised men. Perhaps the Lord will help us. Nothing can keep the Lord from saving, whether by many or by few.'"



His armor-bearer responded, "Do what is in your heart. Go ahead! I'm completely with you." -- 1 Samuel 14:6-7 (CSB)

Then Jonathan sets a sign:

"All right," Jonathan replied, "we'll cross over to the men and then let them see us. If they say, 'Wait until we reach you,' then we will stay where we are and not go up to them. But if they say, 'Come on up,' then we'll go up, because the Lord has handed them over to us — that will be our sign." -- 1 Samuel 14:8-10 (CSB)

Think about that. Jonathan knew the odds. Climbing that cliff toward an enemy garrison could easily cost him his life. But he believed God was in it, so he took the step first and asked God to make Himself clear in it. He didn't wait for the whole plan. And the answer came:

"The men of the garrison called to Jonathan and his armor-bearer. 'Come on up, and we'll teach you a lesson!' " they said." -- 1 Samuel 14:12 (CSB)

And God showed up and turned the battle for Israel.

But what jumped out at me most was this: take the step, don't expect God to hand you the full plan first. Trust that He's in every movement, in every waking moment of your life. He does have a plan, and more often than not, He won't reveal it until you take that first step.

That's what I've been learning. I now preach twice a month in Barnard, Kansas, and once a month in Herington, Kansas. When I started, I didn't know where it would lead. I didn't know if I'd be any good at it. I didn't know if it was really what God was calling me to. But more and more, I'm finding comfort in the Lord that this first step was one He was in and the direction He is calling me.

I don't know what the next step is yet. But I'm praying God helps me learn it, and I'm praying that through all of you, our church family, we can share that discernment together.

So if you're trying to figure out what's next, in your life or in your walk with God, take your one step. Ask the Lord to be clear. Ask Him if He's in it. I'd love to hear what next step each of you is trying to understand.

Thank you for being my family. Thank you for being here.

"take the step, don't expect God to hand you the full plan"

Sharing God's Love Around the World

Across the world, God is using missionaries and ministry partners to invite people to follow Jesus and experience His justice, peace, and abundant life. Through International Ministries, global servants share the gospel in both word and deed by making disciples, educating communities, promoting peace and justice, supporting economic development, and caring for people affected by poverty, human trafficking, and exploitation. For more than two centuries, this mission has brought the transforming love of Christ to people and communities across cultures.



During October, the FBC Family has an opportunity to join this mission through the World Mission Offering. Every gift helps sustain missionaries and local partners who are faithfully sharing the gospel and equipping the global Church.

Whether your contribution is large or small, it can help introduce someone to Jesus and bring hope to a community. Please prayerfully consider giving throughout October and help FBC share God's love, make disciples, and advance His mission around the world.

LOVE GOD | LOVE OTHERS | MAKE DISCIPLES

October Sermons

Do sermons matter?

Obviously, the answer to whether sermons matter is a resounding, "Yes!" But why? Why do sermons matter, and why do we preach?

There are a variety of reasons we seek to preach biblical sermons. Here are five theological reasons why we preach:

We preach because God exists: It is impossible to live as you are created to live without understanding God exist.

We preach because God is not silent: Since God speaks, we desperately need to hear what He says.

We preach because of the nature of God's written Word: The Bible is not what others say about God, it is what God says about Himself, about us, about what is true.

We preach because of the value of God's Word: We cannot go astray if we follow what God says. His Word always accomplishes His purposes.

We preach because of the power of God's Word: The most powerful force in all creation is the voice of God. His voice has the power to create life. His voice has the power to create new life in you.

That's why we preach at FBC Salina—because sermons matter. Invite God to use these sermons to do whatever He desires to do in you.

October 4th: Jeremiah 1
Pastor Joel

October 11th: Philemon
Pastor Kevin

October 18th: Genesis 3
Pastor Joel

October 25th: Psalm 85
Pastor Kevin



Let It Go

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Perhaps as you read these words, someone comes to mind: a family member, friend, church member, coworker, or former acquaintance. You may not be able to restore that relationship immediately, and reconciliation may not be entirely within your control. Yet you can begin the process of releasing resentment. Bring the hurt honestly before God. Ask the Holy Spirit to soften your heart. Seek wise counsel where needed, maintain appropriate boundaries, and replace thoughts of revenge with prayers for God's wisdom and grace.

We are on mission with Christ. It is difficult to move forward in faith while dragging the chains of yesterday's bitterness behind us. God desires something better for His children: freedom, healing, and peace.

So today, open your hands. Release the offense. Trust God with the outcome. And receive anew the grace that has been freely given to you.

It is time to let it go.

**"forgiven people
are called to be
forgiving people"**

FBC Fall Clean-Up

October 31

8:30 a.m.

**Join FBC Salina as we come together
to tackle projects around the church.**

**Please bring gloves, rakes & garden
tools if you have them. Thank you!**



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Upcoming Events

Thursday October 1st

In Touch - Martha Suttle
Out of Touch - John Show

Sunday, October 4th

World Communion

Saturday, October 24th

Fall Fest

Saturday, November 7th

Service Ministry Workday

Find the calendar online at : www.fbcsalina.org

Join Us in Person

Sundays

Worship at 9 a.m. & 10:30 a.m.
Sunday School at 10:30 a.m.
Praise & Growth Groups at 6 p.m.



Mondays

Men's Ministry at 6 p.m.

Thursdays

Timely Thursday at 10 a.m.

Wednesdays

Prayer Group at 9 a.m.
FBC Kids, Youth & Food 5:30 p.m.
Adult Bible Study 6:30 p.m.

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