

**Building a Financial Legacy for Your Church**

**Nathan McCarthy, Speaker**

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Chris Reinolds: Welcome to the Columbia Metro Connection. A podcast where you can go to get valuable, relevant and quality resources for you and your congregation. The Columbia Metro Connection is sponsored and supported by the Columbia Metro Baptist Association and the almost 100 partner churches that support the ministry of the CMBA. This week we have a special sponsor in the South Carolina Baptist Ministries of Aging. Let's take a moment to hear from Tom with the South Carolina Baptist Ministries of Aging.

Tom Turner: Thank you so much. It's great to be able to tell you all about the South Carolina Baptist Ministry of Aging, SCBMA. We are your ministry partner, dedicated to helping senior adults live abundantly by providing Christian retirement communities here in South Carolina. Our two campuses are Martha Frank's Retirement Community in Laurens and Bethea Retirement Community in Darlington. We have some exciting news. The SCBMA Board of Trustees have voted to begin to move forward with a third community here in South Carolina and that is in the Midlands. You'll be hearing more in the future about this community and about our starting but we're excited about extending our ministry and serving those in the Columbia area.

We have over a 60 year heritage and our legacy is that of caring. On any given day we can care for up to 350 residents that live on our two campuses that we provide compassionate care to. Many times there are plenty of senior living services provided in the local areas in South Carolina and I'm asked regularly, "What makes the Ministry of Aging different," and I would tell you and your congregations that that our difference is all about family. It's our Christian heritage and our faith is rooted and we remain in God and in his love. We want to say thanks for support of our ministry for the last 60 years both through our Mother's Day offering and also through the cooperative program. We could not do what we do and serve our congregations without the assistance of each and every Baptist congregation here in Columbia and throughout the state. Thank you.

Chris Reinolds: Thank you so much Tom for taking the time to come out and share with us about the South Carolina Baptist Ministries of Aging and what it is that you guys are doing. You can tell that you have a passion about this ministry and making sure to help those members, those more mature members as they continue to this next stage in life. Host for this week's episode are George Bullard, the Director of Missions at the Columbia Metro Baptist Association, Strategic Leadership Coach, Lead Missiologist and virtuoso of all things church-related and I'm Chris Reinolds, Lead Pastor at Killian Baptist Church and founder of [chrisreinolds.com](http://www.chrisreinolds.com).

Joining us this week is Nathan McCarthy, President and CEO of the Baptist Foundation of South Carolina. Nathan and his team at the Baptist Foundation are passionate about seeing churches reach their communities with the gospel. The Baptist Foundation seeks to support these gospel-centered ministries by promoting and encouraging legacy planning, helping with investment management services and equipping churches with the tools necessary to promote wise financial stewardship from the top down.

George Bullard: Nathan I'm so glad you're with us today. It was my desire to have you because we know that every church needs a small “f” foundation and a big “F” Foundation that can come alongside them and help them think long term and not just short term about finances. But to start us off, would you tell us just a little about yourself and basically about the Baptist Foundation?

Nathan McCarthy: Yeah, I'd be glad to. Let's just start with some of the basics. I’m married to an amazing woman and have four young kids. I have been here in South Carolina for nine months now and every day is a new adventure meeting great people. I moved from Alabama and prior to that was living in Georgia, so a little bit of southern flair all across the way which means I love sweet tea and good country cooking.

Chris Reinolds: Amen.

George Bullard: All right. That'll work. Absolutely. Well, one of the things that I found encouraging is that the Baptist Foundation isn't just looking at the macro level of the church but you're also examining the micro level. You're explicitly seeking out ways to help individuals leave a lasting legacy. What are some of the consequences that families are facing from a lack of planning?

Nathan McCarthy: There's lots of consequences. We at the foundation believe that God owns it all and so we want to holistically teach generosity. And it's not going to be the foundation that does it. We firmly believe that the church is going to be the vehicle that's going to change culture. And so when the church begins to teach some basic things, not just about tithing but from a holistic point of view that generosity effects all things, time, talents and treasure, then people open their eyes and they begin to prayerfully look for ways to worship God through their money, through their generosity, through their giving and that changes everything for the church. The church is able to do something new. People are able to give in a totally new way where they've not before.

Chris Reinolds: Well, one of the interesting things that I saw, I don't know if it was on your website or somewhere else was that there's actually a surprising number of people that are not planning for the future. They're not planning for their financial future but they're also not planning for the timeframe where they're leaving this earth and they're going into eternity. I see that the Baptist Foundation's really seeking to help resolve this and encourage and change this sort of mentality. What are some of the things that you guys are doing to sort of transition to a healthier mindset whenever it comes to planning and the financial future for individuals?

Nathan McCarthy: Well, one of the things that's most startling here in South Carolina is that seven out of ten people pass away with no formal planning at all. They don't have a will, they don't really have anything in place. And so if God owns it all, which is what we teach from the pulpit, then that means 70% of your church-going, God-loving people sitting in the pews, 70% of them are letting Uncle Sam determine where God's money goes.

Chris Reinolds: Bad news.

Nathan McCarthy: Yeah. Once again like I said, we tie it back to we think the church is going to be that catalyst that's going to be able to change the culture. That God's going to use it to teach and so the Foundation wants to come alongside you as a pastor, you as a congregation, as a layperson that could be interested in something like this and begin to change culture through your church. It's not about the Foundation, it's not about the convention, even though that all plays a huge part. Ultimately it's going to come down to honestly that sheep, that follower of Christ that's sitting in the pew when God begins to pluck their heart and they begin to see their money in a bigger picture. That God owns it all. We want to connect in that way with the church and help them begin to teach that.

Chris Reinolds: What I hear you saying is you're essentially, you're seeking to come alongside of the pastor, seeking to come alongside the church and kind of begin walking through this process with them. Earlier you talked about the pastor's vision or the church's vision and kind of leveraging that. Could you talk a little bit more about that and share how you guys are connecting those two whenever it comes to the financial planning aspect of things?

Nathan McCarthy: Yeah. All right. People give to vision. They do. The Holy Spirit speaks to people and people begin to move for that. And so when you as a church begin to form a vision of the future that the Holy Spirit is pushing you towards, even if ... Whatever situation your church is in. And I'm talking about if your church is, and we don't want to talk about churches passing away, but even if your church is passing away, they can put together a plan of where the money that is left with those consistent givers that are there can go on and honor God in some way.

But if your church is growing and it's moving in a direction, it's gaining people, the more you lay out as leaders in the church you begin to lay out the vision that God has given you. And some aren't local ministries, some are big on international missions, some are big on scholarships. There are all different areas. That's what fun about us as a Baptist community is that there are so many areas that God speaks to different churches to do and that becomes important. As leaders you begin to form that and as people go through, prayerfully go through planning you see the Holy Spirit being to speak to their hearts and they begin to give in new ways. And obviously we're talking about people passing away here and you don't want anybody to pass away but-

George Bullard: It happens.

Chris Reinolds: It's inevitable.

Nathan McCarthy: It does. It does. And it happens across the board. For young couples it's a matter of beginning to change your thinking. It's kind of getting an emergency plan in case worse case scenario happens and God pulls you away. So you have a plan in place that if something happens, you at least have the comfort of knowing where that money's going. That it's going to further God's kingdom. But if you're up in age it's a way for you to write your legacy in a different way. And we're seeing families be completely changed because they're not only writing a plan but the plan is coming out and they're asking their children to come sit around the table with them and they're expressing that to their kids.

This is what we're going to do. 90% of our money we're giving to you guys and we're dividing it this way. But 10% we felt we needed to tithe our estate. Or if there's three kids, they act like they have four. Instead of the three kids getting a third, a third, a third, they get 25, 25, 25, 25 and how the money's divided matters because Uncle Sam, when done properly, Uncle Sam doesn't get his cut. The money gets to go to God's kingdom, which furthers the ministries that we have here in South Carolina.

George Bullard: You know, I see both sides of this. I see if it's done well a church can benefit greatly. I see if it's done badly, a church is negatively impacted by the lack of planning. What are some of the ways or examples you see of churches that maybe are affected one or both ways?

Nathan McCarthy: Well, you've got negatively effected planning is I think culturally, we don't do it on purpose but we've grown up in this culture where we are to save up as much as we can and just give it all to our kids. That thinking is self-centered. And we may do it with the greatest of intentions. We really might. We don't know any different in most cases because honestly we're not taught this. This is counter cultural. This is a different thought about money. Negatively effecting is not, what we're seeing is people are not being taught this. And you've got pillars of a Biblical community that are passing away that if they had just ever though about or been told, "Hey, what's an easy way to do this," financially they could have been giving gifts that would have been the kickoff to funding the Great Commission.

And so there's not talking about it is leading to negative effects of how we think about money, how we act about money, how we operate and obviously how we plan. Positive effects we've seen, we can give you hard data right now, lots of stories of churches in this state that are already seeing positive effects from this. People who have been faithful attenders to their church who were not giving to the church, never thought about, their church formed what we call a legacy ministry. And it's not the Baptist Foundation's legacy ministry, it's your church's. You may be First Baptist Church of Whatever Legacy Ministry and your church begins to offer simple and free estate planning for your people and we're talking churches that are gaining millions of dollars in future money that's coming to fund kingdom vision impacts that they want to make.

George Bullard: I know it's, we're talking right now about dollars, we're talking great about how the foundation can come alongside a church with this kind of planning for its people and the result is a lot of money. But if you were speaking subjectively as I'm asking you to speak, what are some of the best ways you think people can benefit the fulfillment of the Great Commission through their church and through legacy planning?

Nathan McCarthy: Places that we see people give that are exciting for us as South Carolina Baptists are obviously the Cooperative Program and what's involved in it. We see people give into our three state universities. We see people giving to Connie Maxwell and Ministries of the Aging, the Baptist Courier. Those entities that have been monumental in their life but most people, most people give to their church and that's what's exciting because that's been the pillar, that foundation you talked about that's been in their life since the beginning that has changed their life in some way, shape or form.

People are giving to those first ministries that I talked about as kind of a second tier thing. They're first is always their, is really their go-to, is usually the church that they've attended for many years, or the church that God has them at now and they see new vision in what's going on. And some people give in an endowment form, some money stays endowed forever and pays out until Jesus returns. But we're seeing an increase in people who say, "Hey, I want the money paid out for 10 years and then at the end of 10 years, whatever it has massed itself to, then you get one big chunk that goes to this ministry."

What makes me sad sometimes though, and I'm not a graduate of Carolina or Clemson, but when I see, those are great universities so don't get me wrong, but when I see money that's not going to Baptist colleges. That's not going to our church, that's not going to our association, that's not going to the ministries that are local around us but they're giving huge chunks to certain ministries, well ministry is a hard word, certain nonprofits that are out there. One example was we had someone give a check to a place that houses elephants that are retiring from the circus.

George Bullard: Wonderful. Elephants need some place to retire.

Chris Reinolds: Well, all right then.

Nathan McCarthy: They do. They do. They do but, and like I said, the point is that people haven't taken the time to pray about it. But when they do, I don't have any say-so in where the money goes. And the church doesn't have any say-so and they don't need to have a say-so. But what the church needs to stress and teach is, "Hey, you need to pray about this because this is God's money and it was given to you and you are a steward and where does God want it to go."

George Bullard: Well I think it's so important that you talk about the whole idea of prayer. Prayerfully, how does God desire to use my money. And like I've heard you say, God owns it all and so it's great to hear when a person says, "I'm not leaving my money, I'm leaving God's money for God's work."

Chris Reinolds: I guess my question would be, I see this as necessary but as a pastor, finances in general are one of the things that are most difficult to talk about. But then you talk about financial planning for the future and what happens after somebody dies and this can be a little bit of a sticky subject. And so sort of strategically speaking, what would you say the ideal way for pastors to have this conversation with their congregations? How can they start that?

Nathan McCarthy: Well, every church is different.

Chris Reinolds: Right.

Nathan McCarthy: And so it kind of takes a little bit of tailoring for each church. There's no just, "You go get the project off the shelf and it just works." We have a process that we walk through where we'll come and spend some time with you and it starts from that leadership first. We believe the shepherd is the one that God has called and they're going to be the key to kind of opening the door into their congregation.

But it goes that leadership and then staff and usually deacons and then you roll it out to the congregation. And it's a little different at every church. The main themes are there. What you're going to see in the future from us, and we don't offer it right now, but there's a lot of discussion and need for not only with end of life help but also obviously dealing with debt today and how do you teach that and how do you do it properly? In the future you'll see us as a foundation. We're just now beginning to discuss that as a board and seek advisors in that to come alongside and help because as we talk to more pastors about this, that's the question that comes up is ... In fairness you're not taught this in seminary. This is a topic that, and I mean I've sat through those classes with you, we can write Greek papers and Hebrew papers but we don't discuss the well-being and the financial backing, unless you just have a weird bent towards it.

We want to be able to help not only with end of life stuff and that planning for the young couple so they can begin to change their mindset but we're looking at ways that we can help so that it eases that discussion for today's dollars as well. Because money's a hard topic.

George Bullard: It is. Very much so. Well, for churches who don't have the means to start let's say an investment fund of their own, in what ways are you helping them advance the kingdom in their context?

Nathan McCarthy: Well, we come alongside in a couple of different ways. If you're not going to do investments, obviously we're going to do exactly what we talked about before just right now with legacy planning. We want to come alongside and help teach that. But there's other things that the foundation does. One of those is “Reveal God's Plan” is what it's called and for a church that is needing to, that needs help to raise money to build a building. It's for a campaign, we help with that. We can help in that arena.

Obviously your question was, "What do you do besides investments?" One of the main things we do is investments and so we do that differently. We do that through a Biblical lens. We screen out certain things but it is an academically sound institutional investment process. You can compare us to Merrill Lynch or Morgan Stanley or any of those groups that are out there and we're here to help serve the church in that way for as cheap as possible.

You get the best access to the smartest people on Wall Street for the cheapest fee possible. Because collectively we pool our money together as Baptists and we can go and get bigger bargaining chips at the table because collectively you're a part of a hundred and fifty million dollar portfolio. You get access to that. We help with investments. Our main focus that's not investments is obviously legacy because we get excited about that. We see the future of the church and honestly the chance to change the culture in it in a really big way.

One of the other ways that we also help is through grants. We're focused on helping churches do evangelical projects that they need help in funding with. I'm talking about we've helped different churches do church plants in particular or other ministries do school lunches or backpack ministries or block parties. We want to help and come alongside with that and you can get access to that by going to our website. And look up how to get a grant and there's a form that you fill out and you can send it in and we have a whole group of board members that sort through those and look through the criteria and we give out somewhere between seventy and eighty thousand dollars a year in grant money.

George Bullard: That's great.

Chris Reinolds: That is great. Now one of the shifts that the Columbia Metro Baptist Association is making is over into the church starting, start emphasizing that. Now you mentioned this grant funding. How does that work in conjunction with church planting because you just mentioned church planting. What is entailed in that? Because a lot of church planter's ears just went up as they were listening to his.

Nathan McCarthy: Yeah, well it's a great question. We, once again I use the same term, we want to come alongside you and help you. And we want to understand what you're doing in your church plant. We're not going to help fund salaries and we're not going to help build a building but we want to come alongside that church planter. Sometimes finances get hard in year three and that's what we've, the advice that we've gotten from consultants is that that year three is that hard year and so we want to come alongside then and step in and say, "Hey, let us help you fund some of these things so that you can keep what money you have to keep the lights on and the building paid for and the salaries in place so you guys are there and let us help with the other things."

George Bullard: Well Nathan, we appreciate you very much you being with us but it would be very important for people to know how to connect with you. Would you share that with us?

Nathan McCarthy: Yeah, we would love to connect with anybody out there that's interested. The easy way to do it obviously is to get on the internet. You can go to [www.bapstistfoundationsc.org](http://www.bapstistfoundationsc.org). But, we take phone calls any time and we would love to have them. That phone number is 803-227-6193. And you can talk to me, I'm Nathan. You can talk to Jackie or Christie. We're all here, we're open and we would love to connect.

Chris Reinolds: That's great.

George Bullard: Well Nathan, thank you once again and to our listeners, thank you for joining us and please be sure to check out the show notes for more detailed information about today's show. Also, if you found this podcast helpful to you or your ministry, share it with others so we can get the word out about what God is doing through the Baptist Foundation of South Carolina.

Chris Reinolds: Until next time from all of us at the Columbia Metro Connection we thank you for listening and urge you to share this podcast with everyone you know. It's the good news about the Good News in the Columbia Metro Baptist Association.