

iGO²

STEPS TO
MOBILIZING YOUR CHURCH
FOR MISSIONS



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SECTION ONE:
PHILOSOPHY OF MISSIONS

A Biblical Theology of Missions

WHAT IS MISSIONS? *by Doug Williams*

Missions is on the rise in the Southern Baptist Convention and Kentucky Baptist Convention. While we are not where we want to be regarding gospel advancement, we are making strides in mobilizing more Jesus followers to be on mission for Him.¹

By missions, I mean the advancement of the gospel by those who are reached among those who are unreached, often involving the crossing of cultures and languages and geographical boundaries. More and more, churches are regaining the vision of being the primary vehicle by which believers are mobilized for missions.

Mobilization is a process. The simple definition of *mobilize* (mo / bi / lize) from Merriam-Webster's online dictionary states, "to bring (people) together for action, to come together for action, or to make (soldiers, an army, etc.) ready for war."² According to this definition the point of mobilization is action. We do not simply want to talk about missions; we want to bring people together and make them ready to do missions - to deliver the good news of Jesus to those who are unreached. However, missions is not done just any way we choose. We mobilize people for action in missions to be *biblically faithful* and *effective*.

Biblically faithful missions is not missions, regardless of the good we may do, if the gospel is not central in what we do. Essential to biblically faithful missions is a clear presentation of the person and work of Jesus. People must know who He is and what He did for sinners through His life, death, and resurrection.

Being biblically effective in missions is tied closely to being faithful in missions. If the gospel is unclear in our attempt at missions, then we can be sure our effectiveness in missions will be no greater than the work of the Salvation Army. While we are called to acts of mercy, we are no different than any other humanitarian organization if all we do is clothe, feed, shelter, or medicate. Effectiveness in missions is inseparable from faithfulness in missions - faithfulness to the gospel message.

¹ Though David Horner laments the downward mission giving trends of even five years ago, new resolve is evident as many state conventions are moving to a 50/50 split for Cooperative Program giving (for Horner's concerns, see *When Missions Shapes the Mission: You and Your Church Can Reach the World*, [Nashville: B&H, 2011], 18-23). The Kentucky Baptist Convention is one of the first state conventions to make such a move (<http://www.bpnews.net/39206/ky-baptists-fasttrack-5050-cp-allocation>). I do not suggest that missions giving is the only factor related to an increase in missions, but it is an essential component.

² <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/mobilize>.

Mobilizing believers to be faithful and effective in missions is ultimately the responsibility of the local church. Whether sending long-term, mid-term, or short-term personnel on mission, churches must equip their people to be faithful and effective in the Great Commission. We can boil the Great Commission down to making disciples locally and globally for the glory of God. Each church is called to make disciples in their neighborhoods and in the nations (Matt 28:16-20; Acts 1:8). In other words, churches are tasked with mobilizing their people for global gospel impact.

As Southern Baptists, we cooperate for the advancement of the gospel among all peoples. While much can be said of our beginning as a denomination that is both good and bad, missions was at the heart of our desire to link arms in extending the good news of Jesus around the world.³ Our formation as a denomination was, in essence, “to bring (people) together for action, to come together for action, or to make (soldiers, an army, etc.) ready for war.”

We come together as Jesus followers for action, to not only prepare for war, but to march into the battlefield. We do so knowing that as we extend the gospel to all peoples, one day there will be another gathering for action, not of missions or war, but of worship. Revelation 5:9 tells us that one day men from every tribe and tongue and people and nation will gather before the Lamb in worship. For this purpose, we will assemble; for this purpose, we go to the nations.

³ In fact, the Southern Baptist Convention’s (SBC) founding charter identifies its sole focus: “...for the purpose of eliciting, combining, and directing the energies of the Baptist denomination of Christians, for the propagation of the Gospel...” (see, <http://www.sbc.net/aboutus/>). I also recognize and abhor the tragic link of our denomination to the proslavery movement. While the stain of racism in our denomination’s beginning is undeniable, a greater desire for racial reconciliation and ethnic diversity within the SBC is taking shape (see, Kevin Jones and Jarvis J. Williams, *Removing the Stain of Racism from the Southern Baptist Convention: Diverse African American and White Perspectives* [Nashville: B&H, 2017]).

WHY MISSIONS? by Doug Williams

When it comes to mobilizing for missions, where do we begin? What should ultimately drive us to take the gospel to the ends of the earth? Is it that 4.3 billion people are unreached with the gospel or that nearly 200 million have no one taking the gospel to them? Perhaps it is the reality that more than half of the people in the world live on less than \$2 each per day; and one billion people are engulfed in extreme poverty, living on less than \$1 each per day.⁴

In his book, *A Vision for Missions*, Tom Wells shares of hearing a missionary say, “A need will not keep you on the mission field. People will rebuke and repel you.”⁵ While often a need motivates missionaries to go, need alone will not keep them there or even keep them going back in the case of short-term missions in partnership with long-term strategy. Everywhere we look there are tremendous needs, which regularly overwhelm the missionary. Often adding to the frustration of the enormous amount of needs is a lack of response by the people to the missionary’s work. What then, as Wells asks, is left? The answer: God.

God is and must be the ultimate reason for missions. We begin with God. Wells rightly argues that “God is worthy to be known and proclaimed for who He is, and that fact is an important part of the missionary motive and message.”⁶ For missions to be at the heart of the church, God must be at the heart of the church. Jesus followers gripped by the greatness of God cannot help but speak about the greatness of God among all nations; not simply because *people* need to know about Him, but because *He* is *worthy* to be known.

My intention is not to minimize the need for the salvation of mankind, but to maximize the worthiness of God to be known for who He is. Mankind’s need for the forgiveness of sins is vast, but if we are not careful our primary focus will be upon mankind rather than upon God. As one pastor describes it, you can magnify with a microscope or with a telescope. A microscope magnifies by making tiny things look bigger than they actually are and a telescope magnifies by making gigantic things (like stars and planets), which look tiny to the naked eye, appear more as they really are.⁷ Missions begins with God, so as to function as a telescope that magnifies the greatness of God.

⁴ Wayne Grudem and Barry Asmus, *The Poverty of Nations: A Sustainable Solution* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, forward by Rick Warren).

⁵ Tom Wells, *A Vision for Missions* (Carlisle, PA: Banner of Truth, 1985), 7.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 9.

⁷ John Piper, *The Dangerous Duty of Delight: The Glorified God and the Satisfied Soul* (Sister, Oregon: Multnomah, 2001), 17.

Wells asks passionately, “Where are the missionary candidates who are panting to make Christ known *for Christ’s sake*? Do they exist? They must exist, for these candidates are Christians. And surely a Christian wants his Saviour to be known.”⁸

⁸ Ibid., 110 (italics original). Hymn writer Charles Wesley was gripped by the worthiness of God and the quest to make God known for who He is. In “Ye Servants of God,” Wesley writes in the first verse, “You servants of God, your Master proclaim, and publish abroad his wonderful name; the name all-victorious of Jesus extol; his kingdom is glorious and rules over all.” Similarly, in verses one and two of “O for a thousand Tongues to Sing,” he writes, “O for a thousand tongues to sing my great Redeemer’s praise, the glories of my God and King, the triumphs of his grace! My gracious Master and my God, assist me to proclaim, to spread thro’ all the earth abroad the honors of your name.” Wesley, while recognizing the need of man for the forgiveness of sins, was overcome by the greatness of God and His worthiness to be known worldwide.

Missions Strategy

ON BECOMING A FULLY MOBILIZED CHURCH: 6 CUMULATIVE TRAITS

by John Barnett

The Antioch church in the book of Acts is often pointed to as the church to emulate. Antioch was filled with believers who were fully engaged in God's mission. And while it may be admirable to strive to become an Antioch type of church, how can you know for sure whether your church is fully "on mission?"

To start, Antioch was not a church that just had missions activity, as if missions was just one among many optional things to do in the church. Rather, Antioch had a missions identity. They commissioned the very first missionary journey recorded in the New Testament. Scripture says that the people were well-taught and lived such Christlike lives that "the disciples were first called Christians" there (Acts 11:25–26 ESV). In other words, the mission-focused living, prayer, effort, giving, and sending (Acts 11:29–30) at Antioch were expressions of what the church was at its very core (Acts 13:1–3).

THREE BASIC APPROACHES TO MISSION

Some churches today wait passively for missionaries to rise up or come seeking support. These churches see their involvement in missions as, primarily, financially supporting the missionaries. Other churches take more direct ownership in the sending process and intentionally train up and send out their own people.

A step further, though, is the growing trend in this current era of missions toward embracing the reality that the mission is not only for missionaries who are sent out around the globe but for every follower of Christ in the local church.

The first two approaches focus primarily on the missionary while the third approach focuses on the full development and health of the whole church (i.e., every member). This makes a world of difference.

There is a saying among missiologists that goes something like: "God's church does not have a mission. Rather, God's mission has a church." I could not agree more. Global missions is every local church's reason for existence. Therefore, a truly mature local church engages every believer in God's global mission to some degree, whether by praying, giving, going, or sending.

To that end, here are six traits of mature, mobilized churches to which every church should aspire.

1. Mature churches **inspire** their people

A robust understanding of every Christian's identity and how it affects his or her role in missions begins in the pulpit. Church leaders must inspire their people with biblical teaching as the basis of missions. Teaching must also lead to faith-driven action. As a friend and pastor recently shared with me, "If pastors would take bigger risks in their own faith, the faith of their members would be stretched." So, pastors must inspire their churches by what they teach about missions and by how they live an "on mission" identity.

2. Mature churches **equip** their people

Inspiration alone does not produce good disciples. Intentional equipping is the key to moving from enthusiasm to effectiveness in mission. Missiology is not methodology; it is applied theology. Equipping not only includes basic discipleship but also instruction in missions history, training in sound missiology, and hands-on experience. Ideally, church members are equipped through short-term trips that are planned and carried out in coordination with partners on the field. Furthermore, mature churches focus their equipping simultaneously on four broad commitments: praying, giving, going, and sending. Excellent training resources exist at KBC and IMB to help churches fulfill this essential task of equipping their people.

3. Mature churches **prompt** their people to pray

Jesus tied the provision of laborers in the harvest to whether his followers would "pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest" (Matt. 10:2 ESV). Therefore, mature churches disciple men, women, and children to consistently pray for the nations. This quote from *The Hour That Changes The World* sums it up well: "Every step in the progress of missions is directly traceable to prayer" (Dick Eastman, *The Hour That Changes The World*, p. 74).

If you want a fully engaged church, do not skip, minimize, or assume prayer. Wesley Duewel wrote, "God's cause creeps forward timidly and slowly when there are more organizers than agonizers, more workers than prevailing prayer warriors" (*Mighty Prevailing Prayer*, p. 290). Simply put, we must pray.

4. *Mature churches **challenge** their people to give sacrificially*

Giving is the normal response of a disciple's heart. As Matthew 6:21 reminds us, our hearts reveal what we treasure. As we give sacrificially, we learn the Biblical truth that God wants something for you, and not from you. For the believer, generosity and giving brings a freedom from being owned by one's possessions. Generosity is a mark of a happy Christ follower and a mature disciple.

As pastors and leaders in the church, we must emphasize the importance of having a God sized vision, i.e., total dependency on Christ. As my father used to say, " Part of my heartbeat for missions was that not only we would go, not only that we would pray, but that we would give big. . . . our desire is to leverage our resources for God's global mission." Generosity is a sign of life among disciples. Pastors must challenge people to give generously.

5. *Mature churches **provide** opportunities to go and partner short-term*

Well-planned short-term trips that are tied to long-term partnerships with career missionaries boost mission efforts. They not only encourage missionaries on the field, but they also provide meaningful ministry and training experiences for your people. By "well-planned," we mean that serving on location is entered into with intentionality. In other words, the experienced missionary team serving on the field sets the strategy so that short-term teams help to accomplish that end. This is healthy, intentional partnership.

6. *Mature churches **send** their people mid-term and long-term*

As momentum builds in the five traits above, God may lead some of your members to plant their lives for longer terms cross-culturally. Sending is not just launching people to live internationally. It also includes nurturing, supporting, caring, and partnering with those sent.

Fully mobilizing a church leads to creating a pipeline through which disciples will be sent to their community and to the nations as a normal activity born out of missions identity. Establishing the foundation of inspiration, equipping,

praying, giving, and going results in a culture in which sending is expected and experienced. Lead your church to send well.

TO WHAT END?

The desired end is to accomplish the missionary task. Based on the first missionary journey (Acts 13-14), IMB has carefully defined the missionary task as being comprised of these six components: (1) enter a people group, (2) evangelize, (3) disciple believers, (4) plant healthy churches, and (5) develop leaders from within those churches so that full-time vocational missionaries are then able to (6) exit well. Through our International Team Leader Training, we are finding that partner churches sharing this same understanding of the missionary task are best positioned to form healthy, long-term partnerships with IMB teams because they are in complete agreement about what we are all trying to accomplish together. And that is critical.

So, inspire and equip your church to pray, give, go, and send. As your membership grows in the six traits above, may you know not only the joy of being what God calls you to be, but also the empowerment of being a people who understand their mission identity and who are actively on mission with God as he makes his glory known among the nations.

* Information used with permission from IMB and D. Ray Davis.

CHURCHES AND THE MISSIONARY TASK: ENTRY *by Doug Williams*

The Great Commission was not given to a denomination or mission agency. It was given to the local church. Thus, churches send their own missionaries (Acts 13). I am not saying that denominations and mission agencies have no role to play in the Great Commission. They play a vital role if our understanding is that of partnering for greater gospel impact. After all, as Southern Baptists, we believe we can do more together. Therefore, we champion cooperative missions.

So, while we work with sending agencies such as the North American Mission Board (NAMB) and the International Mission Board (IMB), our churches send missionaries in partnership with these organizations. If churches are the senders, what exactly are we sending missionaries to do? In recent years the IMB has helped us better crystallize the task of the missionary.

Many needs often compete for our attention when it comes to missions. IMB mobilizer D. Ray Davis recognizes, "Let's be honest, there are a lot of overwhelming needs around the world, and it's easy to allow needs to dictate and define the work we do" ("Churches: Essential Partners in the Missionary Task," imb.org).

To keep us focused on our God-given responsibility to make disciples of all nations (Matt 28:19-20), six components detail the missionary task. Whether through the missionary on the field or the partnering church, the mission should focus along these lines (Davis, "Churches," imb.org). So, if you are the missionary on the field or the church partnering with the missionary, the mission is the same. These six components of the missionary task include: entry, evangelism, discipleship, church formation, leadership development, and exit. We begin with the first component - **Entry**.

Finding and engaging a particular people group is the first component. In short, as the IMB has described it, entry involves **finding them, getting to them, and developing an ability to communicate with them**.



First, ***finding them*** involves researching the people group in order to learn culture, levels of evangelization among them, whether any translation of the Bible exists, and if other Great Commission Christians are present.⁹

Second, ***getting to them*** requires exploring the political, economic, and religious environment. Further, exploring access options is critical as most places with unreached people are unreached because they are hard to get to. Most hard to reach places are hard to reach because missionaries are not welcome. Thus, missionaries must acquire the necessary skills and resources to enter among a people group.

Third, ***developing an ability to communicate with them*** involves skills that no doubt requires language and cultural learning. Most hard to reach places will mean missionaries must learn another language besides English!

Churches can play a vital role in the entry level. They assist by praying that missionaries gain legitimate ways to enter. Churches can also be a means of providing legitimacy for the missionary's presence among that people group. To that aim, churches may partner in this phase through specific mercy needs or platforms, such as businesses or services provided.

In order to reach the unreached, missionaries are sent by churches to enter among peoples and places that are unreached. Being intentional about entry and partnering carefully together, we can ensure that the gospel not only enters among the unreached but that it remains there.

⁹ Summarized from IMB Foundations.

CHURCHES AND THE MISSIONARY TASK: EVANGELISM by Doug Williams

In the world of missions people rightly ask, “What really does a missionary do?” In turn, others also ask, “What, then, does a short-term mission team do?” This is where the value of each component in the missionary task becomes apparent. From the first component of the missionary task – entry – we learned that finding unreached people, getting to them, and developing an ability to communicate with them is critical.

To make disciples where disciples do not exist, missionaries must enter among peoples and places. “Entry is important, but simply being there is not enough,” IMB mobilizer D. Ray Davis explains (“Churches Essential Partners in the Missionary Task, IMB.org”). This reality leads us to the second component in the missionary task - evangelism.

Davis states, “I’ve noticed a tendency among Christians to think the work of professional missionaries is somehow different from that of churches and their short-term teams. But it’s important to understand that the missionary task is the same for everyone” (“Churches”). The task of missions is the same for the individual answering the call to the mission field or the local church sending the called to the field.

To make disciples where disciples do not exist, missionaries must enter among peoples and places. “Entry is important, but simply being there is not enough,” Davis explains (“Churches”). This reality leads us to the second component in the missionary task - evangelism.

Every believer is tasked with sharing his or her faith in Jesus. Some are more particularly gifted than others, but all are to share. Missionaries, regardless of their specific jobs, are expected to share Jesus with unbelievers. There is no Great Commission if evangelism is not part of the task. While the end goal of disciple-making is not evangelism, it does begin there.

Davis reminds us that “following the missionary’s evangelism strategy, well-prepared church partners can help spread the gospel in ways that are both winsome and appropriate to the context” (“Churches”). Sharing the full content of the gospel message appropriate to the language and culture of the unbeliever is essential. Churches partnering with missionaries to evangelize should follow the strategy of the missionary, as they have immersed themselves in the language and culture of their host country and people.

In all, missionaries and churches must trust that only the Holy Spirit can change a person’s heart (IMB *Foundations*). The Spirit of God empowers the people of God to bring witness to those who need God. Regardless of the strategy of evangelism, only God can open blind eyes and unstop deaf ears to embrace the gospel message. Thus, missionaries and partnering churches can share Jesus with confidence, knowing that He alone has the ability to bring the dead to life.

CHURCHES AND THE MISSIONARY TASK: DISCIPLESHIP *by Doug Williams*

The aim

Missiologists often say, “*God’s church doesn’t have a mission. Rather, God’s mission has a church.*” The aim of the Great Commission is to make disciples of all nations (Matt 28:16-20). This Great Commission aim is the reason every church exists. Discipleship is third in the missionary task (entry, evangelism, discipleship, healthy church formation, leadership development, and exit). While entry and evangelism are essential components of the missionary mandate, the goal is not simply to be present or even simply to share Jesus. The objective is to make disciples, that is, to help believers mature in the faith.



A disciple is more than a person who has mastered a set of information, or practices a set of spiritual disciplines and shares the gospel. Discipleship involves the intentional transformation of heart, mind, affections, will, relationships, and purpose....The essential tools for discipleship are the Word of God, the Spirit of God, and the people of God



(IMB Foundations)

The plan

Churches who make long-term commitments to partner with missionaries in the missionary task can play a vital role in the process of disciple-making through these essential tools. But like anything in life, a goal without a plan to achieve it results in an unrealized goal. IMB mobilizer D. Ray Davis shares the importance of a healthy plan for these essential tools of discipleship (“The Missionary Task: Making Disciples Who Make Disciples”). When it comes to the Word of God, IMB has found that new believers need to grasp three aspects of the Bible - the big picture of the Bible (creation, fall, redemption, consummation); effective Bible study (method); and major themes (e.g., nature of God, sin, holiness, judgment, salvation, etc.). Thus, making disciples involves the word of God.

As for the Spirit of God, new believers need to know that God’s Spirit alone brings transformation in the believer’s life through the Word of God. Walking in the Spirit is a life-long endeavor for all believers. “Discipleship must be done in conscious dependence on the power and work of the Holy Spirit” (*IMB Foundations*).

Lastly, God uses the people of God collectively through the church to help mature believers. “Scripture makes it clear that discipleship ordinarily happens in the context of the local church” (*IMB Foundations*). As Davis explains, “All missionary teams - and church partners - should have a robust, healthy discipleship plan for new believers that

includes elements such as baptism, local church membership, and basic spiritual disciplines like prayer, Bible study, worship, fasting, and sharing the gospel. Furthermore, new believers need ongoing training in areas like biblical marriage, parenting, family life, a biblical understanding of work, the church, suffering and persecution, integrity, and a new identity in Christ that supersedes any earthly identity" (Davis, "Making Disciples," imb.org).

The end

Every church and every church member is to be engaged in this global disciple-making plan. While not every member will carry out this plan in the same way, every member has a part to play through means such as praying, going, encouraging, giving, and sending. Churches working intentionally with long-term missionaries by following their strategy for disciple-making provide great encouragement and movement in fulfilling the Great Commission. In doing so, the church will be marked not simply by mission activity, but mission identity - disciples who make disciples.

How is your church making disciples both locally and globally so that missions is not an activity of your church but its identity?

CHURCHES AND THE MISSIONARY TASK: HEALTHY CHURCH FORMATION

by Doug Williams

I remember when my first child was born over 21 years ago. It seems like only yesterday. She stole my heart in that sterile delivery room with her red hair and chubby cheeks. As I write this article, my baby is in labor to give birth to our first grandbaby. The birth of a child is unlike any other experience. Giving birth to a child is only the beginning. There is so much we want of our children. So much that we want them to be. Ultimately, the goal is to nurture and raise our kids to live for Jesus.

Church planting in the New Testament is like giving birth. As we look at the book of Acts, the gospel spreads as churches are birthed - that is, planted in new locations. Paul, the main church planter in Acts, enters a location without the gospel, evangelizes unbelievers, disciples those who come to faith in Jesus, gathers those believers into congregations, raises up leaders, and then exits that place to repeat the process all over again.

The strategy for gospel advancement in the book of Acts is church planting. In other words, God uses the formation and multiplication of the local church to spread the gospel of Jesus locally and globally. While the aim of the Great Commission is to make disciples of all nations, how this is accomplished is through the formation of healthy churches. Where churches do not exist, missionaries must enter those locations, share Jesus, and begin making disciples in order to form healthy churches. The task of the missionary is summarized as entry, evangelism, discipleship, healthy church formation, leadership development, and exit.

“A church is a group of baptized believers in Jesus Christ who are committed to each other to be the body of Christ to one another and who meet together regularly to carry out the functions of a biblical church” (*IMB Foundations*). What is it that we want of our churches? What do we want them to be? Though not exhaustive, *IMB Foundations* offers 12 characteristics that describe what a sustainable church should be. Whether the church is new or established, these characteristics are guides for what every church should strive to be.

- 1. Biblical evangelism** - people come into the church because they have heard and responded to the full gospel message.
- 2. Biblical discipleship** - members of the church intentionally invest in one another's lives to grow to maturity in Jesus.
- 3. Biblical membership** - members are only those who give credible evidence of repentance and faith in Jesus, and who have been baptized as believers.

4. Biblical leadership - God gives two offices of the church: pastors/elders/overseers and deacons.

5. Biblical preaching and teaching - weekly teaching of the Word is essential for the church and consists of the exposition and application of Scripture.

6. Biblical ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper - believers are baptized by immersion in water in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The Lord's Supper is observed regularly by the church to remember and celebrate Jesus's death, resurrection and promised return.

7. Biblical worship - a healthy church offers to God worship as prescribed in His word so that the church sings, prays, reads, and hears the word.

8. Biblical fellowship - members of the church love each other, encourage one another, and build each other up.

9. Biblical prayer - the church prays both privately and corporately.

10. Biblical accountability and discipline - members hold one another accountable to the word and leaders of the church watch over the flock entrusted to their care.

11. Biblical giving - members give freely of their resources for the support of the church in the making of disciples.

12. Biblical mission - the church is organized to make disciples locally, but also to do so among the nations.

The birth of a child is unlike any other experience. New parents look forward to the beginning of their child's life, but the goal is not to stay in the hospital after birth or even for one's child to remain an infant. The goal of any parent is to nurture and raise their child to maturity. The New Testament church has the same goal. These 12 characteristics are like a guidebook for new parents on what a church is called to be. May the Lord send out and use your church to multiply many more churches with these characteristics.

CHURCHES AND THE MISSIONARY TASK: LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

by Doug Williams

IMPORTANCE OF LEADERSHIP

Influential speaker John Maxwell says that everything rises and falls on leadership. Whether one agrees with Maxwell or not, no leader would deny the importance of leadership. The Bible speaks about the importance of leadership through many examples. However, what is most striking about biblical leadership is not competence, but character. Much of what is discussed concerning leadership these days seems to revolve around one's competence or ability. While ability is not unimportant, it is certainly not most important. The character of a leader, especially one leading the Lord's church, is of first importance.

As I have discussed the missionary task over the last previous articles, I come to the fifth task of a missionary - leadership development. As missionaries **enter** a new location in need of the gospel, they **evangelize** unbelievers. When unbelievers become believers, the missionary is tasked with **discipling** those believers and then forming new believers into **healthy churches**. From those healthy churches, **leadership development** becomes necessary for that local church to thrive.

"Biblical leadership is essential to the well-being of every local church, and God calls different people to lead in different ways" (*IMB Foundations*). As missiologist D. Ray Davis explains, "In the experience of IMB missionaries, leadership development has proven to be a pivotal element in the survival of new churches. Churches simply need faithful, well-trained pastors in order to thrive and advance Great Commission work" (Davis, "The Missionary Task: Training Faithful Leaders," imb.org).

The qualifications of biblical leadership for pastors/elders/overseers (as these words are used interchangeably in the New Testament) are most clearly seen in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9. Of these verses only one qualification speaks of ability - able to teach (1 Tim 3:2) and able to exhort and refute with sound doctrine (Titus 1:9). The rest of these qualities highlight the character of the pastor. Thus, character matters.

IMB Foundations helpfully breaks down pastoral qualifications into three categories: what the leader must **be**, what the leader must **know**, and what the leader must **do**.



Be

Aptly summarized from both passages, Paul says that the pastor must be "above reproach" as God's leader in the church (1 Tim 3:2; Titus 1:6). Education makes not a pastor. Position in the community makes not a pastor. Popularity makes not a pastor. First and foremost, the requirement for

pastoral leadership is character. Pastors must be men of God who walk daily with Jesus. His life must exemplify an unwavering commitment to God and His Word. Before he can serve as a pastor, he must be a pastor in his character.

Know

Paul tells Titus that a pastor must hold “fast the faithful word which is in accordance with the teaching, so that he will be able both to exhort in sound doctrine and refute those who contradict” (Titus 1:9). In order for pastors to fulfill Paul’s words here, knowing the Word is essential. Pastors are to have a “high level of biblical and theological knowledge” (*IMB Foundations*). “Theological training of church leaders should be geared to the educational levels of those being trained” (*IMB Foundations*). Whether formal or informal, theological training of church leaders helps ensure right doctrine is being taught and wrong doctrine is being refuted.

Do

The task of the pastor can be summarized as feed, lead, and protect. The term “pastor” simply means shepherd. Interestingly, Peter exhorts the elders to “shepherd the flock of God” (1 Peter 5:2). Shepherds have many tasks, not least of which is to feed the flock. Pastors do this through the solid exposition of God’s Word week in and week out.

Pastors are also to lead. As Paul explains to young pastor Timothy, just as a pastor must manage his own house well, he must also manage (lead) the church entrusted to his care (1 Tim 3:4-5). Leadership in the home and in the church is one of example through humility. As the ultimate example of humble leadership, Jesus demonstrated this by serving his disciples (washing their dirty feet) rather than by domineering over them (John 13:1-20). Pastors were never meant to be superstars, but super servants.

Pastors, lastly, protect. Paul’s words to the elders of the church of Ephesus provide clarity on the role of pastors protecting the church (Acts 20:28-31). In a similar way that a father is tasked with protecting his family from danger, pastors protect the flock entrusted to their care. They protect the teaching of the church, the morale of the church, and the unity of the church.

THE MISSIONARY TASK CONTINUES

As missionaries reach new peoples and places with the gospel and churches are planted, biblical leaders are necessary for those churches to thrive. For the missionary task to progress, developing leaders is critical for the multiplying of churches and reaching of unreached peoples.

CHURCHES AND THE MISSIONARY TASK - EXIT (AND PARTNER) *by Doug Williams*

The work of the gospel does not end until Jesus comes again. As churches partner with missionaries across the globe to advance the Kingdom of God, the goal is to complete the missionary task among each people group and place.

Why Exit?

Missionaries sent out by local churches **enter** unreached and underserved places for gospel impact. These missionaries **evangelize** unbelievers and then **disciple** those who come to faith in Jesus. From these new believers, **healthy church formation** occurs along with **leadership development**. Lastly, in the missionary task, the missionary **exits** that people group and place and partners with the new healthy church to repeat this process elsewhere.

In fact, “an IMB missionary team’s goal is to carry out the missionary task among each people group or place and then hand off the job of leading the churches to those national leaders they have trained. . . . Following the example of the apostles, we continue to watch and advise after we have physically moved on to another work. Yet, from the very beginning of our work, our aim is to work ourselves out of a job. We begin the missionary task with exit in mind” (D. Ray Davis, “The Missionary Task: Working Yourself out of a Job,” *imb.org*).

When to Exit

The decision to exit is no small matter. The criteria for exiting the work among a people group and place corresponds with the missionary task (*IMB Foundations*):

- 1) **Evangelism** - Are indigenous believers and churches carrying out faithfully and effectively the work of sharing the gospel within this people group or place?
- 2) **Discipleship** - Are the churches within this place or people group faithfully and effectively discipling the believers whom God has entrusted to them?
- 3) **Church Planting** - Are the churches within this people group or place displaying the twelve characteristics of a healthy church (see *IMB Foundations*)? Are these churches faithfully planting other healthy churches? Are they able to sustain church planting on their own?
- 4) **Leadership training** - Do these churches have trained leaders, and do they have systems in place to continue to train leaders in an effective and biblically faithful way?
- 5) **Missionary involvement** - Is the church effectively training and sending cross-cultural missionaries to other people groups and places?

For further consideration on exiting, missionaries must ask the dependency question: "Would our continued presence foster dependency on the part of local churches who are capable of fulfilling all of the tasks of a healthy church movement but who are reluctant to do so out of habit or out of deference to us" (*IMB Foundations*)? Leaving one location in order to repeat the missionary task in another location boils down to healthy local churches being self-led and self-financed in order to evangelize the lost, disciple new believers, plant new churches, develop their own leaders and send out missionaries cross-culturally.

Until He Comes Again

Just as the Apostle Paul exited certain peoples and places to carry the gospel to new peoples and places, missionaries do the same today. Like Paul, they do so not to abandon those prior peoples and places but to continue a new phase of partnership with them in order for the Great Commission to be completed. After all, the work is not done until Jesus comes again.

MISSIONS ASSESSMENT PROFILE (MAP) *by Doug Williams*

Recently, I was driving in eastern Kentucky to speak at a church about missions. I use my GPS regularly as I travel across the state. On this particular trip in eastern Kentucky, my GPS suddenly went crazy. The road unexpectedly disappeared on the GPS and the car seemingly was floating on air and going in circles. Eventually, the GPS re-calculated and was back on track.

As I thought about my GPS glitch, I realized that many churches are like my GPS at times. We can easily lose track of our direction and continue driving in circles. We lose sight of our mandate to make disciples of all nations (Matt. 28:19-20; Acts 1:8). Sometimes we simply need to re-calculate, to re-adjust where we are going as a church.

The Missions Mobilization Team has adapted an assessment tool to help churches do just that, to re-calculate. The tool is called Missions Assessment Profile (MAP). MAP is designed to help church leaders assess their progress in mobilizing their church for missions involvement. It serves to help churches reflect on where they are in comparison to what a truly missions-mobilized church could look like. No church scores perfectly in all areas. Ideally, all churches are in a growth process. MAP helps churches assess where they are strong and where they are weak, so that they can strengthen their missions faithfulness and effectiveness.

Four broad categories are assessed: inspiring, equipping, supporting, and mobilizing. Each of these areas explores ways that churches can build upon their current missions involvement. Upon taking the assessment, church leaders are encouraged to view the process for missions growth as “baby steps.” Approaching missions with specific goals and action steps allows churches to make manageable progress without becoming overwhelmed at the prospect of making disciples of all nations (all at once).

Here are some next steps for your church’s missions involvement:

1. Schedule a MAP meeting with a KBC Mission Mobilization Team member
2. Schedule a follow-up Acts 1:8 mission strategy meeting (see 5 principles of Great Commission Faithfulness on page 13)
3. Brainstorm goals and action plans
4. Begin implementation of Acts 1:8 strategy

If you feel as if your church is going in circles, maybe taking the MAP is just what you need to help re-calculate where you are going. Let our team know if your church is interested taking the MAP (partnership@kybaptist.org).

MISSIONS ASSESSMENT PROFILE

MAP your church's journey to maximum effectiveness in missions

CHURCH SCORING GRID AND ASSESSMENT

IN OUR CHURCH, MISSIONS IS A...		Possibility	Project	Program	Priority	Purpose	Passion
 INSPIRE	Church Leaders						
	Missions Leaders						
	Church Members						
 EQUIP	Strategy						
	Biblical Foundation						
	Missions Training						
 SUPPORT	Pray						
	Give						
	Encourage						
 MOBILIZE	Go						
	Send						
	Multiply						

ACTS 1:8 *by Doug Williams*

There is no magic pill or silver bullet that churches can use for Great Commission faithfulness. While no cookie-cutter approach to the Great Commission exists, there are some principles that, regardless of the churches size, budget or culture, can be implemented. At least five principles for faithful Great Commission work arise when reading through the book of Acts - empower through prayer; evangelize the unreached; establish churches; encourage leaders, missionaries and churches; and equip pastors and leaders. If plugged into a simple Acts 1:8 grid - Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and the nations, each church can implement these five principles in these areas for gospel impact.¹⁰

1) Empower Through Prayer

When it comes to the Great Commission, the lostness of the world is second to the global glory of God. God's greatest concern is His great glory among the nations. Only when our passion for God's glory blazes will our endeavors to make Him famous among the nations shine bright.

Ironically, instead of blazing a trail for God's glory in Jerusalem and abroad, the early disciples were first told to wait. Wait? The strategy for which the Lord gave the apostles began with waiting. That seems quite odd for a movement that was intended to take the world by storm. But if you think about it, where does this unquenchable passion for God's glory among the nations come from?

Jesus knew that what the early disciples needed most was power from on high, not power from within. Passion for God is ultimately God-given passion. Therefore, Jesus instructs the disciples to wait in Jerusalem for what the Father had promised, namely the gift of the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:4-5). Both the power and passion for accomplishing the Great Commission comes from above; it comes from outside of ourselves. The Holy Spirit would ignite a passion and provide the power to go into all the world preaching the gospel (Acts 1:6-8).

Interestingly, after Jesus' departure, we find the disciples locked up in an upper room . . . waiting. That is, waiting and praying (Acts 1:12-14). Great Commission advancement always involves waiting and praying. A survey through Acts demonstrates that gospel boldness is closely connected and often follows the fervent prayers of God's people (e.g., Acts 2:42; 3:1; 4:23-31; 6:6-7; 10:9; 13:1-3).

As we examine the book of Acts it's no wonder why we see such incredible gospel advancement. The early church bathed the advancement of the gospel in prayer. Yet, prayer seems to be an afterthought in so many churches today when it comes to Great Commission faithfulness. "The gospel must be on the go," we say. "We don't have time

¹⁰ See Acts 1:8 grid on page 38.

to pray when lostness is all around us,” we chide. Yet, the underlying truth that the early church understood, that we would do well to understand, is that the gospel advances supernaturally through the prayers of the people of God. In other words, the battle against lostness is first fought on our knees.

We need churches and associations entering the battlefield on their knees before going to their feet. Yes, “beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news of good things” (Rom 10:15). Yet, as we see from Acts, the beauty of our feet comes from calloused knees. Great Commission faithfulness must begin with empowerment thru prayer. Strategies void of prayer will be strategies void of power. Only when God’s people cry out to Him, who alone can take a message offensive and foolish to the world and turn it into a beautiful embrace of Jesus Christ and Him crucified, will that message advance powerfully. Let us be faithful to advance the Great Commission, but let us wait upon calloused knees for God to give us His power and passion.

2) Evangelize the Unreached

When Great Commission faithfulness begins with fervent prayer, as noted above, it leads to bold gospel proclamation (e.g., Acts 4). The second component of Great Commission faithfulness is evangelizing the unreached. Peter preaches his second sermon at the temple area in Acts 3. Chapter 4 describes Peter and John being arrested for preaching the gospel. Peter and John make it clear to the religious leaders who had arrested them that there is salvation in no one else but Jesus (Acts 4:12). In the midst of hostility, Peter and John demonstrate gospel boldness.

The religious leaders are surprised by the confidence of Peter and John because they were uneducated men. They further recognize that these two men had been with Jesus (Acts 4:13). In order to squelch the boldness of Peter and John, the religious leaders threaten them to speak no more about Jesus (Acts 4:17). You can imagine them being told that if they continue with their message, then they will do to them what was done to Jesus.

Instead of cowering to the threat, Peter and John reply that they cannot help but speak about what they have seen and heard (Acts 4:20). In other words, we cannot keep silent; we must not keep silent. They are threatened again and released.

Peter and John gather back with the church and report all that had happened (Acts 4:23). Peter’s and John’s gospel boldness comes through their confidence in a sovereign God (Acts 4:27-28). Just as God was in sovereign control over the death of Jesus, He is also in charge of their lives. Thus, gospel boldness is rooted not in ourselves, but in someone else.

They pray, not for deliverance per say, but for boldness to proclaim the gospel more (Acts 4:29). While we might think that their prayer would revolve around asking for a way out, they actually pray for boldness in the midst of hostility. The gospel spreads from Jerusalem and beyond as the church prays, the Spirit fills, and the believers are emboldened.

Why such a change from chapter 1 where the disciples are locked up in an upper room? Well, it's really quite simple. Jesus was dead, but now He is alive . . . and they knew it. Jesus left them in order that He might send another comforter who would fill them with power (John 14; Acts 1:8). Still yet, the disciples really believed that Jesus is the only way to be saved. That means any other way besides through Jesus alone is no way at all. They were gripped by this truth! They lived, breathed, slept and ate this truth. Men and women, boys and girls are eternally lost without Jesus. Whether as an individual in a remote tribe in Indonesia who mixes animism with Islam or a cultural Christian in suburban Kentucky, all are lost who do not forsake their sin and trust in Jesus alone for salvation.

Ultimately, to be unreached is to not know Jesus as Savior and Lord. Peter and John were gripped by the truth that Jesus alone saves. They lived their lives seeking to make Him known, even if it cost them theirs. May we, too, be gripped by the truth that Jesus alone saves and pray for gospel boldness to reach the unreached.

3) Establish Churches

Plant New Churches

As the world's population continues to grow, the birthing of new churches is greatly needed. Empowering through prayer and evangelizing the unreached are necessary components of Great Commission faithfulness, as I have previously discussed. The third necessary component of GC faithfulness is establishing churches. As one examines the book of Acts, the strategy of the apostles and early believers is apparent - plant new churches and disciple existing churches. First, let's think about planting new churches.

Since the day when a great persecution began against the church in Jerusalem in Acts 8, the believers were scattered and churches were planted (Acts 11). Interestingly, the ordinary believers who were scattered due to the persecution in Acts 8 planted the church of Antioch (11:19-26), which eventually sent the apostle Paul to plant dozens of churches (13:1-3).

What did Paul do and can we emulate his method of church planting? Paul seemed to target cities with larger populations, knowing that the gospel can and would spread out from that location to the surrounding areas. In short, though Paul's length of stay in each city varied, there seems to be a common strategy he employed, which some refer to as the Pauline cycle.

David J. Hesselgrave notes several reoccurring elements of Paul's church planting strategy.¹¹

¹¹ Summarized from David J. Hesselgrave, *Planting Churches Cross-Culturally: North America and Beyond*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2000), 43-46.

- 1 Missionaries Commissioned-Acts 13:1-4; 15:39, 40
- 2 Audience Contacted-Acts 13:14-16; 14:1; 16:13-15
- 3 Gospel Communicated-Acts 13:17ff; 16:31
- 4 Hearers Converted-Acts 13:48; 16:14, 15
- 5 Believers Congregated-Acts 13:43
- 6 Faith Confirmed-Acts 14:21, 22; 15:41
- 7 Leadership Consecrated-Acts 14:23
- 8 Believers Commended-Acts 14:23; 16:40
- 9 Relationships Continued-Acts 15:36; 18:23
- 10 Sending Churches Convened-Acts 14:26, 27; 15:14

This Pauline cycle does not mean that Paul himself carried out every step. Rather, there were others that Paul disciplined in order to multiply the scope and impact of his church planting ministry (e.g. Titus 1:4-5).

To what extent can we emulate Paul's cycle today? Is this cycle really adaptable to any culture of any time period? Yes. Here is why according to Hasselgrave.

Paul's message is normative. Wherever Paul traveled, his message was the same - the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. However, the starting point at which he shared that message varied.

Paul's life is normative. The life of the Apostle Paul is one to be followed. Paul's life is an example of Christian doctrine put into practice. Paul lived out what he knew. As Hasselgrave rightly notes, "To the Corinthians, who desperately needed an example of what a Christian should be, he could make that remarkable statement, 'Be imitators of me'" (1 Cor. 11:1a). Paul was not perfect and he knew it. Therefore, he qualifies the reason why the Corinthians should follow him with the words, "just as I also am of Christ" (1 Cor. 11:1b). Paul was a man that reproduced himself in others.

Paul's method is normative. Paul's method is not meant to enslave us, but to guide us. Though we may not follow every step slavishly, we find in the epistles ample reason to carry on the pattern that Paul has set before us:

- Go where people are
- Preach the gospel

- Gain converts
- Gather them into churches
- Instruct them in the faith
- Choose leaders
- Commend believers to the grace of God
- Develop meaningful relationships (Acts 2:42)

With a global population over 7 billion people, reaching the unreached with the gospel will only occur as it originally began in the first century. Churches must plant churches in order to reach the unreached with the gospel.

Disciple existing churches

Second, along with planting new churches, establishing churches involves discipling existing churches. Establishing churches is not a decision about whether we need new churches planted or existing churches strengthened. We need both. Discipleship must be intentional, or it will not occur. Followers of Jesus need to be taught scripture reading, doctrine, prayer, evangelism, church membership, fasting, missions, parenting, biblical view of work, ethics and so much more. In other words, each church must have a robust and intentional method of discipling their own people from the youngest to the oldest - from the cradle to the grave - with the word of God.

Churches must ensure that disciples are being formed within their congregations. Paul reminds the church at Colossae that the goal of every church is to proclaim Jesus by “admonishing every man and teaching every man with all wisdom, so that we may present every man complete (mature) in Christ” (Col 1:28). Similarly, Jesus instructed his first-century followers on that Galilean Mountain to “teach [all believers] to *observe* all that [he] commanded [us]” (Matt 28:20). Ultimately, we are after the transformation of lives rather than simply the preservation of information. Jesus and Paul are concerned with disciples living out the teaching of Scripture and not simply knowing the teaching of Scripture.

So, what might a transformed disciple look like? The IMB speaks of 6 marks of a disciple (*Foundations, IMB*). In other words, every church’s goal is to see every Jesus follower mature by the transformation of the word in these areas of their life:

- transformed heart - being born again with a new heart
- transformed mind - being renewed in our minds
- transformed affections - being led with godly desires/affections
- transformed will - being obedient in what we do

- transformed relationships - being reconciled with others because of Jesus
- transformed purpose - being engaged in God's mission

In essence, then, establishing healthy churches involves the holistic transformation of each disciple in every aspect of their life - heart, mind, affections, will, relationships, and purpose.

Further, disciples transformed by the gospel will contribute to overall healthy church formation. But what does a healthy church look like? Helpful in this conversation is the IMB's 12 Characteristics of a Healthy Church (*Foundations, IMB*).



If establishing churches involves the ongoing growth of existing churches and not simply planting new churches, then our desire, as seen in these 12 characteristics, is for healthy church formation. Aiming for church health, thus, involves these characteristics.

What plans does your church have in place to ensure that all believers are taught not simply to know the Bible, but to live [observe] the Bible? How is your church ensuring its ongoing healthy growth by intentionally focusing on these 12 characteristics?

4) Encourage Leaders

The call of the Great Commission (GC) is tremendous indeed. It is a privilege to be an ambassador of our King, and yet it is a daunting responsibility. The Lord never promised that making disciples of all nations would be easy. He did promise, however, that He would be with us. Yet, the nature of such a task can become rather overwhelming without proper encouragement.

I have discussed three components of GC faithfulness: empowering through prayer, evangelizing the unreached, and establishing churches. A fourth necessary component of GC faithfulness is encouraging leaders. Let's face it. Gospel work is people work and when working with people we can easily become weary. We weary for lack of conversions or spiritual growth. We grow weary from internal conflict or even outside conflict. The number of reasons for our weariness is vast.

Every minister of the gospel, every church of the Lord Jesus, every follower of Christ needs to be encouraged that the race they are running is worth the struggle. Paul understood the need to encourage believers in the gospel. We are told in Acts 14 that Paul, upon planting churches, went back to those churches in order to "strengthen the souls of the disciples, encouraging them to continue in the faith, and saying, 'Through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God'" (Acts 14:22).

I find it fascinating and encouraging that these fledging churches needed encouragement so quickly. I find it fascinating and encouraging because I know the same is true in my own life. Life is hard. Trials of life related specifically to the gospel and related generally to a fallen world mean that we are prone to become weary.

In fact, Paul says in Acts 14:22 that we will enter the kingdom of God through many tribulations. We fight until the very end. Now, Paul is not saying that we fight our way to heaven in the sense that we earn it. Rather, he is saying that life is filled with fighting the good fight of faith - taking hold of the eternal life to which we are called (1 Tim 6:12). We continually pursue after Jesus; we persevere (by His grace).

In order to continually pursue after Jesus, we need people in our lives to help us in this pursuit. This is why Paul made an intentional effort to travel back to the churches he had already planted to strengthen them in the faith. They needed it then; we need it now.

Churches seeking to be faithful and effective in the Great Commission will intentionally strategize about ways to not only strengthen and encourage their own people in the faith, but other churches and leaders as well. If these early believers needed it then, surely, we need it now. May we pray for power, evangelize the lost, plant churches, but not neglect to continually build up one another to fight the good fight until the end.

Here are some ways to encourage leaders:

- Send texts letting them know of your prayers
- Send emails sharing passages of Scripture and asking how the family is doing
- Skype during worship service
- Send gift cards or care packages
- Send short-term teams to join in their strategy
- Send short-term teams to provide a retreat or date nights for the leaders

5) Equip Leaders

Everyone remembers the last words of a loved one. In 2 Timothy, Paul gives his last words concerning the gospel to young pastor Timothy. No doubt that these words were lodged in Timothy's mind. As Paul nears the end of his life, chained as a common criminal in a Roman dungeon, he pens his final instructions for this pastor to carry on the legacy of gospel advancement. How would this gospel message advance beyond Asia and Europe? How would Paul ensure that the message would not be broken? Really, it's quite simple. Timothy was charged with multiplying himself in others.

I have discussed key components to Great Commission faithfulness. In short, these components are: empowering through prayer, evangelizing the unreached, establishing churches, and encouraging leaders and congregations. The last aspect for gospel faithfulness is equipping leaders. While Paul traveled across Asia and Europe spreading the gospel, he understood the importance of multiplication for this message to continue long after his death.

Paul, therefore, said, "The things which you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, entrust these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also" (2 Tim 2:2). Paul poured his life into the lives of others (like Timothy) in order that they in turn would pour their lives into the lives of others. This understanding comes from Jesus' own pattern

for disciple-making. Yes, Jesus taught the masses, but he poured his life into a few. Paul did the same.

In fact, Acts describes for us how Paul would plant churches and equip leaders everywhere he went (Acts 14). Equipping leaders in the word is foundational for the message of Christ to be multiplied. However, essential in this equipping is the understanding that “teaching others to observe all that Christ commanded” is not simply for leaders. Leaders are equipped to equip, so that the equipped might also become equippers. This is multiplication, not addition. Addition is leaving all the equipping up to the leaders, but multiplication is equipping every Jesus follower to be an equipper. This understanding is the heart of 2 Timothy 2:2 and the impetus of Paul’s ministry.

Each church must wrestle with the call to equip leaders for Great Commission impact. We are called to make disciples of all nations. Yes, equip our own church members, but also be part of making disciples in places where disciples are needed. Part of each church’s strategy for Great Commission impact should be a plan to equip leaders who can then equip members for gospel impact. The Great Commission will continue to multiply as we equip others to be equippers, both at home and abroad.

MISSIONS ASSESSMENT PROFILE

MAP your church's journey to maximum effectiveness in missions

MISSIONS STRATEGY

5 components of GREAT COMMISSION FAITHFULNESS

	JERUSALEM	JUDEA	SAMARIA	WORLD
EMPOWER through prayer Acts 1:14				
EVANGELIZE unreached Acts 4:12				
ESTABLISH churches Acts 10 & 13				
ENCOURAGE pastors, congregations and missionaries Acts 14:21-22				
EQUIP pastors and leaders Acts 14:23; 2 Timothy 2:2				

Adapted from the Acts 1:8 Grid



PARTNERSHIPS *by Doug Williams*

Cooperative Missions

In 1925, Southern Baptists began the Cooperative Program to unite our resources for the furthering of the gospel. Southern Baptist churches give a portion of their offerings through the Cooperative Program to fund both state, national, and international convention work. Over the years, thousands of missionaries have been deployed all around the world for gospel advancement; and countless churches have been strengthened as well as planted in areas in need of the gospel.

We are a cooperating denomination. We work together for the advancement of Jesus' fame. This cooperation is meant for not only our giving, but also our serving. We do not simply give so that missions will be done for us. We give to partner more strategically and effectively that missions might be done together. Regardless of the size of the church or location of the church, each church that gives through the Cooperative Program can truly say that they help to support over 8,000 missionaries around the world.

Yet, we do not give simply to support missions; we give to strengthen our partnership in missions. We can do more together than we can alone. Hence, we give our dollars, but we also want to give our lives. The Missions Mobilization Team of the Kentucky Baptist Convention desires to help churches reach Kentucky and the world for Christ. To this aim, we want to be a funnel for churches to partner in certain parts of Kentucky, North America, and the World.

We create relationships with missionaries in order to connect our churches to strategic opportunities for gospel partnerships. The partnership is ultimately with the local church, not the KBC. By partnership, the KBC desires simply to connect and allow each local church to develop partnerships for the Great Commission. While the KBC cannot connect churches everywhere, we are connecting churches to strategic places in North America and the nations.

Why the KBC exists

Our mission as a convention is simple: created by churches, for churches, to help churches reach Kentucky and the world for Christ.

Created by churches

We exist as the Kentucky Baptist Convention because Baptist churches throughout Kentucky desire to cooperate for the furthering of the gospel. The KBC owes its existence to Baptist churches.

For churches

Baptist churches created the KBC for churches. In other words, the KBC was created not to be served by the churches, but to serve the churches.

To help churches

Thus, the KBC exists to help churches do what God has called the church to do - the Great Commission. Because the KBC was created by churches, for churches, the convention exists to help churches. Helping mobilize churches for the Great Commission is the mission of the KBC.

Reach Kentucky and the world for Christ

God did not give the Great Commission to a denomination or mission boards; He gave it to the church. Denominations and mission boards are helpful inasmuch as they *help* churches *reach* those across the street and across the sea with the gospel.

Missions and church partnerships

The KBC approaches mission partnerships with the goal of *helping* churches develop gospel partnerships. Partnerships, in the past, were developed between the KBC and certain organizations/denominations. For example, the KBC had a partnership with the Kenya Baptist Convention in Africa or the New England Baptist Convention in the northeast. God used those, and we are grateful for them.

However, in recent years, we have shifted the focus of partnerships away from the KBC and placed the emphasis upon the partnership between the church and the organization/denomination. The KBC exists to help churches form gospel partnerships for Great Commission impact.

Therefore, we desire to connect KBC churches to gospel partnerships in Kentucky, North America, and the nations. We want to resource, train, and introduce KBC churches to missionaries, church planters, established churches, and ministries in order to develop relationships that will further the gospel around the world. To this end, we lead several vision tours each year to connect KBC churches to gospel needs around the world.

When possible, it's always good to participate in a pre-trip or exploration trip (vision trip) in order to learn and plan for potential partnerships. How can you maximize those pre-trips?

Make the Most of It

Make the most of your vision tour in this city/area. How might you do that?

- 1. Be prayerful** - with Paul, pray always. Be in prayer as we travel from point A to point B. Pray as we walk and talk. Pray as you hear from planters and/or missionaries. Pray as you return to your room. The point... pray! Ask the Lord to lead you in how He would have you maximize your impact in this place.

2. Be flexible - the time is short and filled with much to see and hear and experience. Be prepared to spend long days with potentially shifting schedules.

3. Be attentive - take careful notes both on paper and in your head of missionaries, planters, stories, and situations that stand out to you. What might speak to you now might be forgotten if you do not write it down and make note of why it impacted you. Be observant of the area you are in (what is the community like, the people, the needs, etc.). Take whatever notes necessary, so that you can make a prayerfully discerning decision about partnerships later with your leadership team.

4. Be interactive - this partnership is an experience, not a vacation. When able, talk with the planters or your hosts about the city, the needs, ways to be involved. The point is to be engaged in the mission.

5. Be willing - to partner as the Lord leads you. As David Platt suggests, bring a blank check (of your life) to the table and ask the Lord to fill in the amount.

Here are some suggestions for developing meaningful partnerships.

Nuts and Bolts of Partnerships

1. Long-term (3-5 years) - partnership involves relationship and relationship takes time. This can include multiple avenues, such as: financial, prayer, teams, regular communication/encouragement, etc.

2. Multiple teams (per year, if possible) - perhaps instead of sending one large team a year, maybe send a few smaller teams per year. The more contacts with your partner the stronger the relationship.

3. Intentionally gospel-centered - this may seem a given, but sometimes we do good things and unintentionally neglect the most important - the gospel.

4. Indigenous church/missionary/ministry determines the needs - let your partner set the strategy and then your church can come alongside to assist.

5. Be a servant - servant leadership was the mark of our Lord's ministry. Remind your teams that we go to serve, not be served.

WHY SHORT-TERM MISSIONS? *by Doug Williams*

Jesus' commission to make disciples of all nations is clear (Matt. 28:16-20). The early church saw the responsibility of Jesus' command as given to them (e.g., Acts 1:8; 13:1-3). While the list below is by no means exhaustive, I offer eight reasons why the church should include short-term missions as part of their overall missions strategy.

- 1. Jesus commanded us to make disciples locally and globally (Matt 28:16-20; Acts 1:8).** While both seemingly stating the obvious and being repetitive, Jesus intends for the church to reach people with the good news and to teach them all things. The Scriptures do not give us an option of whether we make disciples here or there; it's both/and.
- 2. There is more work than workers (Matt 9:37-38).** Jesus tells us to pray to the Lord of the harvest to send out workers into the harvest. The number of workers needed verses the number of workers who go is directly related to the prayers of God's people. Every country where I am privileged to share in disciple-making, I hear from our NAMB and IMB missionaries that they need more partners, not just the traditional long-term personnel (though that is true), but short-term teams as well.
- 3. Long-term missionaries and churches need encouragement (Acts 14:19-23).** Paul understood the importance of encouragement well. Every minister of the gospel needs someone to come alongside of him as a source of encouragement. Weariness easily sets in and our missionaries and churches need to know that they are not alone.
- 4. We can accomplish more together than we can alone (Matt. 10:5).** Cooperation is more than our dollars; it is our efforts too. As Jesus disciplined his followers, he sent them out together for gospel impact. In short, Jesus planned for multiplication of impact. He knew that this kind of impact required team work.
- 5. To be a farming system for long-term missions (Acts 13:1-3ff).** Paul begins his missionary journeys in Acts 13. Throughout his journeys, he constantly brings others with him. Often those with him are more short-term in nature. Take Mark for example, while his first journey with Paul is short-lived, he later becomes a valuable partner in gospel impact.
- 6. To open our eyes to the need of the gospel world-wide (Matt. 9:36).** In looking over the crowds, Jesus is moved with compassion that leads to action. Staying in our comfortable bubbles at home isolates us from the reality of a world desperately in need of the Savior. Out of sight, out of mind becomes our motto. Going somewhere else besides our home allows us to see a world filled with real faces and names, with real hurts and needs.

7. **To disciple disciples (2 Tim. 2:2).** Paul taught Timothy, who taught faithful men, who taught others. Short-term missions offers a platform for discipleship like no other. Taking people away from their comfort zone and into the vastness of the world is a great crucible for Jesus to work in incredible ways.
8. **Because $98+2=100$.** People often say, "Why should we go over there when people need Jesus here?" Yes, people need Jesus here, but they need Jesus everywhere. As if Jesus' command alone is not enough (Go and make disciples of all nations!), the truth is I live "here". Why can't I make disciples where I live 98% of my year and give 2% of my year making disciples over "there"? You see, it's not hard math, but $98+2=100$ (idea of $98+2=100$ is from David Platt).

SHORT-TERM MISSIONS DONE POORLY AND DONE WELL *by Doug Williams*

While in a hotel overlooking London, England, our vision team recapped the experiences we had over the previous days as we met with various missionaries and visited several European countries. Our goal was to find ways that we could connect our local churches from the state conventions we represented to mission partnerships in Europe. As we listened to one another share, one state convention leader remarked, "Money alone is not the answer. We need boots on the ground."

He's right. While the Cooperative Program is an enormous tool for gospel advancement, money alone is not the answer. Yes, we need long-term missionaries. But we also need local church short-term teams partnering with missionaries for long-term impact. Boots on the ground involves not only our long-term missionaries, but short-term teams doing missions well. Here are ways missions is done poorly and done well expressed with opposite key statements.



1. Go in order to see "new places" / Go in order to see God do a "new work".

If we go in order to see new places, then we go for the wrong reasons. Comparing stamps in our passports is not our goal. Don't misunderstand me, seeing new places is always exciting; but our aim is not simply for the thrill of the adventure or to travel the world. We go believing that God is at work and we desire to see Him do a "new work" in the lives of those we are serving with and among. So go, expecting God to do something new in you, your team, and those who you intend to serve.



2. Go without a plan and be rigid / Go with a plan and then go with the flow.

"Winging it" is not the best approach to maximizing our impact and effectiveness. Sometimes we spiritualize our lack of planning as trying to be sensitive to the Spirit's leading. To further complicate our unpreparedness, teams or individuals are reluctant to bend as schedules change. Or worse, they bemoan how things are different than "back home" and how they wouldn't "do it that way." On the other hand, our preparedness for what we plan to do and where we are going does not minimize the Spirit's leading; it maximizes it. We must prepare our teams well and then be prepared to go with the flow as circumstances change. Being flexible with a spirit of willingness is critical for the Spirit to work in and through short-term teams.



3. Forget that a spiritual battle is underway / Recognize that a spiritual battle is before us.

In the moment of experiencing new places and new people, we can easily forget that the challenges of the mission field - that often are dismissed as

culture shock or personality conflicts, are directly tied to an unseen battle. Paul reminds us that we wrestle not with flesh and blood (cranky short-term team members or unfamiliar cultural customs), but against Satan and his dark forces (Eph. 6:12). Short-term teams need sensitivity to the fact that the spiritual reality that we may not perceive is much greater than the tangible reality around us. A battle wages and we do not fight it with conventional weapons, but with the armor the Lord supplies (Eph 6:10-20).

4. Neglect to prepare your team / Be intentional about team preparation.

Similar to going without a plan, teams that fail to prepare will prepare to fail. On the other hand, teams that are intentional about their preparation will be an asset (see fifth statement below) to the strategy of the field missionaries. Basic preparation is necessary for maximizing the team's impact with the work of the missionaries. Here are some preparation suggestions to cover with short-term teams:

- **Pray without ceasing**
- **Know your purpose for going**
- **Discover your value to the short-term team**
- **Rehearse the gospel**
- **Formulate a plan and work the plan (go with a plan...)**
- **Practice flexibility (in your schedule, eating, sleeping, tasks, etc.) ... and go with the flow**
- **Leave room for the Spirit's leading**

5. Set your own agenda / Develop a strategy with the missionaries.

While many short-term teams mean well, they can often be a burden to missionaries. The burden might stem from a lack of adaptability in their new (short-term) environment or it might involve an unwillingness to listen the counsel of the missionaries on best practices. Often, the burden revolves around short-term teams setting their own agenda over against the desires and/or counsel of the host missionaries. Short-term teams that have the most gospel impact are those which submit to the leadership of the host missionaries in planning the purpose of the team. Think about it. It only makes sense that those who have immersed themselves in the culture by living among the people and learning the language and way of life, are the ones who know best what strategy will be most effective in advancing the gospel in a particular area. Short-term missions done well involves teams that develop strategies with the host

missionaries. This collaboration results in advancing the gospel in ways that could not be done with the long-term missionaries only or at least be done at the concentrated pace that a short-term team provides.

Missions Development

THE IMPORTANCE OF GIVING TO MISSIONS *by Eric Allen*

You may not know it, but there is a struggle between ministry and missions. Sounds crazy, I know. But after serving many years on staff in a local church, I understand the tension that exists between the busyness of daily ministry (prayer, sermon preparation, study, meetings, visits, counseling, administration, etc.) and missions (promotion of missions, missions giving, mission participation and missions partnerships, etc.). It's so easy to get lost in keeping up with the daily activity of ministry and forget the command we've been given to be on mission by going and sending. However, being on mission is not only going and sending, but also giving and supporting those who are going.

How well does your church do when it comes to missions giving? Is there a strategy in place to promote missions giving so that missionaries can go and the gospel is shared with all people? What percentage of your church's offerings go toward missions? Missions giving and missionary support won't happen without intentionality on the part of the pastor and leadership.

Here are several reasons **why** your church should give toward missions offerings. Following that is a list of missions offerings that your church can give through.

1. How else will they hear?

The fact is, many still have not heard the simple gospel message. The apostle Paul says, "How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach unless they are sent?" (Romans 10:14). We must be involved in providing for missionaries as they go and tell.

2. Missionaries depend on churches

We are told in scripture to pray and provide support to those who give of themselves in taking the gospel to various parts of the earth. Paul thanked the Philippian church for their contribution to his care (Philippians 4:10-18). Missionaries depend on prayer, encouragement and financial support to meet spiritual, emotional and physical needs, so that they can give themselves fully to the work of spreading the gospel.

3. We have been blessed

"To whom much is given, much is required" (Luke 12:48). We have been

given so much - freedom to study the Word of God, and many of us have health and enjoy a level of prosperity not seen in other parts of the world. Are we fulfilling our responsibility as good stewards of all that God has given us?

4. Safe investment

It's very easy to become burdened with the cares of this world and worry about money. The remedy for the anxiety caused by uncertain investments, distress and greed, is to seek first God's Kingdom (Matthew 6:33). Giving to missions offerings is a way to store treasures in heaven that will never fade or fail (Matthew 6:20).

5. Reward

There is great reward in investing in the things that have eternal yield. A temporal inheritance can be blown and gone before you know it, but an eternal inheritance is a reward that never goes away. "For God is not unjust so as to overlook your work and the love that you have shown for his name in serving the saints, as you still do" (Hebrews 6:10). God notices our giving to mission efforts that further His kingdom.

6. Loving our neighbor as ourselves

Scripture commands us to not only love the Lord God with all our heart, soul, mind and strength, but also to love our neighbor as ourselves. We take care of ourselves when we're hungry, tired or cold. We are also to take the extra step of covering the basic needs of our brothers and sisters, including those missionaries serving, loving and caring for the lost.

7. Glorify God

By obeying Him and following His commands to love Him and love others we bring glory and honor to God. Our financial giving to the mission of God is an important form of worship and a very important step in practically living out what it means to send and support those who go. Giving to missions strengthens our faith in the Lord and brings glory to God through our lives.

Mission offerings that your church should prayerfully consider supporting:

Cooperative Program (CP): www.sbc.net/cp

Southern Baptists' unified plan of giving through which cooperating Southern Baptist churches give a percentage of their undesignated receipts in support of their respective state convention and the Southern Baptist Convention missions and ministries. CP is the foundational means of supporting missions, church planting, evangelism, church

strengthening and more in each state, nationally, and around the world. Percentage giving allows churches of all sizes to have a part in everything that is done.

Lottie Moon Christmas Offering (LMCO): www.imb.org/generosity

This annual Christmas offering for international missions was named after the woman missionary to China, Lottie Moon, who had urged them to start it. 100% of the gifts to the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering funds 3,700 International Mission Board missionaries (www.IMB.org) who are making disciples and multiplying churches among unreached people and places. This offering helps to reach people all over the world who have little or no access to the gospel.

Annie Armstrong Easter Offering (AAEO): www.anniearmstrong.com

This offering supports the efforts of over 3,000 North American Mission Board (www.namb.net) missionaries and church planters as they push back lostness in the United States and Canada. It was named after missions advocate, Annie Armstrong. Every dollar of the offering goes to missionaries and their work of sharing the life-transforming gospel of Jesus Christ with over 269 million lost people in primarily 32 major cities.

Eliza Broadus State Missions Offering in Kentucky (EBO): www.kywmu.org/ebo

This offering funds KBC Mission Board ministries, local associations, state missionaries, church plants, collegiate ministries, disaster relief and a host of evangelistic initiatives to resource vital Kingdom ministries. Used exclusively in Kentucky, EBO also provides vital support to pregnancy care centers, Appalachian ministry centers, prison ministries and a host of other gospel-centered works in our state.

Individual missionaries and ministries:

Churches may also give to missionaries and ministries with whom they have personal connections. It may be a missionary that grew up in the church or was sent out by the church. Perhaps it's a missionary with whom the church has developed a long-term partnership. Your church may also choose to support local ministries that meet needs in the community or region.

Your church can be an instrument used by God to provide for those He has called to serve as missionaries. I challenge your church to honor God by developing a strategy for giving to missions that includes incremental increases to missions offerings.

PRAYING FOR MISSION EFFORTS AND MISSIONARIES *by Eric Allen*

Giving to missions is needed. Going on mission is important. But praying for mission efforts and missionaries is most critical. Nothing happens without God. Hudson Taylor said it this way, "When we work, we work, but when we pray, God works." God uses the prayers of His people to empower those serving on the mission field (James 5:16).

We must remember that the task at hand is not physical, but spiritual. That means in order to engage lost people and unengaged people well, we must do so with complete dependence upon God to do the work (Ephesians 3:8-10). God, in His sovereignty, has already been orchestrating the movement of people to their current locations so that they might have the opportunity to hear about and seek Him (Acts 17:26-27). Therefore, engaging lost people in our communities and around the world must begin with, be sustained by, and end in prayer. The role of prayer in accomplishing the Great Commission must not be underestimated.

Why should the church pray for mission efforts and missionaries?

Six reasons:

- 1 Develops a sense of ownership in the hearts of God's people for accomplishing the Great Commission.
- 2 Empowers those serving as missionaries (James 5:16).
- 3 Church receives power and empowerment (Acts 1:8).
- 4 Jesus encouraged us to do so (Matthew 9:38).
- 5 We begin to see the world through God's eyes.
- 6 It opens doors through which other missions involvement begins.

Now that we know why the church should be praying for mission efforts and missionaries, I challenge you to lead them in doing so. *Lead your church to pray for missionaries, mission causes, and mission opportunities using the following ideas:*

- Include a church prayer coordinator, a prayer ministry director, or a world missions prayer mobilizer as part of your church's leadership team.

- Encourage your church prayer coordinator to begin planning a comprehensive prayer plan for the church that is biblically based and Great Commission oriented.
- Calendar special church-wide "days of prayer" for unreached people groups, specific lost people, missionaries, mission needs, and upcoming mission trip and church plants.
- Plan a virtual prayer journey using media, internet, and stations that helps your church to understand a specific culture, ministry need, city, or unreached people and how to pray for them.
- Incorporate annual weeks of prayer for state, North American, and international missions as an element in your church's worship.
- Lead your church to adopt missionaries and unreached people groups. Then lead your church to pray for them by sharing information and needs.
- Enlist children, youth and adults to pray for missionaries in public worship. This encourages participation by all generations and instills the practice of on mission praying in the hearts of the congregation.
- Keep the names of missionaries, specific mission needs, mission partnerships and missions projects before your congregation on a regular, ongoing basis by utilizing missionary lists and prayer guides from NAMB, IMB and your state convention. Check out Kentucky's list of missionaries and church planters for whom you can pray: www.kybaptist.org/interseed.
- Have members who are serving through a specific ministry or missions experience presented during the worship service for a corporate commissioning prayer. It is meaningful to have those going on a mission trip to stand while others lay hands on them and pray.

These are only some of the many ways that you can lead your church to make missions praying a greater priority. Remember, praying is critical to the work when it comes to Kingdom advancement and it is our best tool for accomplishing the Great Commission.

CARE TEAMS FOR SENT-ONES *by John Barnett*
Missionary Care Through the Local Church

Care Teams are the most tangible expression of our church's commitment to support our missionaries who are serving in cross-cultural environments. The team is centered around one team leader and can be made up of 3-8 individuals who provide on-going care and support. They serve as a primary link between the church as a whole and the missionary.

Simply put, a care team is a group of people who deeply love and care for their missionary unit. They communicate, pray for and stay connected to their missionary unit on a regular basis. Because of these strong personal relationships, the missionaries can be open and honest, allowing his or her team to see needs and share successes and defeats.

What Is the Vision for a Care Team?

There are two major roles of every Care Team: care and representation. The success of the care team depends on its ability to accomplish these two goals from the time that the missionary unit prepares to leave for the field until his or her return.

Care

Many missionaries minister in physically challenging environments. Some are raising children far from extended family. Others struggle with cultural adjustments and language barriers. Most significantly, all serve on the front lines of spiritual warfare. For survival and spiritual health, every missionary unit needs the assurance that they are not alone, that there are others in the body of Christ who love them and are committed to their welfare and to the success of their work. Missionaries need empathetic listeners and caring friends who are not in a supervisory role. The Care Team can consistently provide that kind of spiritual and emotional care. Caring also involves identifying specific needs which the team can meet or organize others in the church to meet.

Representation

The Care Team also champions the missionary and his or her work to the church body and advocates for ongoing participation in their ministry even when he or she is far away. Thanks to the efforts of the Care Team, the church feels an ongoing sense of connection to our workers.

What Does a Care Team Look Like?

We have intentionally kept the structure of our Care Teams simple. The foundation of each Care Team is the team leader. He/She is the one who has the main connection with the missionary unit and leads the team in all aspects. The team leader either already knows the missionary deeply or commits to build a deep relationship. The rest of the team is built under the leadership of this committed person.

Each Care Team will look different. Some will have a team leader with 6-8 additional people on the team while others will have a leader with just one or two additional people on the team. Both types of teams can serve as great care networks for our missionaries.

Depending on the team members' season of life, people may need to step out of their Care Team. We ask however that team leaders commit to the missionary full term (2-4 years) and/or be willing to replace themselves in this role if needed.

What Does a Care Team Do?

Meet Monthly

Teams can meet at anytime and anywhere; we just ask that each team meet once a month to fulfill their role as advocates. We suggest that you build a team around a missional group that already exist in the church. For example, Sunday School Class members, Prayer group, Life Group, Community group, etc.

Pray

The main role of a Care Team is to pray monthly as a team and on an individual basis. We also ask that you hold your missionaries accountable to regularly update their prayer requests.

Stay Connected

Ask any missionary and they will tell you that they rarely stay connected with their friends and church family back home. Part of providing care to missionaries is the commitment to stay connected. Your missionary unit should hear from you at least once a month. This can happen through emails, Zoom, handwritten letters or any number of creative ways. Make sure this is part of your team meeting.

Send Care Packages

Nothing says I love you to a missionary quite like a box full of ranch dressing mix, chocolate and a few good books! Care Teams will send at least two care packages a year to their missionary unit. Perhaps the church can help with the cost of shipping two packages each year with hopes of your team sending a few more packages using personal funds, if possible.

Help with Departure and Arrival

Some of the hardest times for your missionary unit will be preparing to leave for the field and returning home for a stateside visit. There are a thousand things that need to be done and we ask that your team jump in and help as much as possible.

How Do We Get Started?

Here are three things to do to get your Care Team started:

Email the Team

Once the team leader is in place, he/she can email others on the team or start

recruiting for the team. Get everyone on an email list and start communicating with one another.

Email your Missionary

The team leader needs to email the missionary and let them know their Care Team is forming. Ask for prayer requests and invite the missionary unit to the first meeting via Zoom.

Meet as a Team

Set a date for your first meeting. Pick a home to meet in and share a meal with one another. During this meeting make sure you get to know each other, pray for the missionaries and if possible, talk to your missionary unit on Zoom. Also make sure you set up a regular time and place to meet.

ADOPT A SENT-ONE *by John Barnett*

Missionary Care Through Missional Communities

Taking the gospel to the nations is not an easy task. As missionaries go out to proclaim the good news, they often become discouraged and consider quitting. Why? They feel as if they are entirely on their own, without the active support of sending brothers and sisters who can uphold, encourage, provide, and pray for them. The church's desire should be obedience to the Scriptures as a going AND sending, supporting community. The little letter of 3 John calls the church to both send out and care for its missionaries "in a manner worthy of God." It calls us to partnership – to "work together for the truth" with those we send to faraway lands. John commands us to love these missionaries with a hands-on kind of love, even if we do not know them personally (verse 5) precisely because we are partners in the gospel! This means that one of the best ways your Community Group can get involved in international missions is to adopt a missionary and begin caring for them.

The church's vision may be to see each of our missionary units supported by several Community Groups who are strategically praying for, communicating with, and regularly sending packages to our member missionaries. Bottom line: We want each of our missionaries to have real and consistent care just as 3 John says they should. Would your group be willing to adopt a missionary, provide the care, and the love they need? If so, here are your next steps:

- **Talk it over as a group.** Pray about it as a group. Discern your ability and willingness, as a group, to commit the time, energy, resources, and relational investment necessary to love and serve one of our missionaries or ministries well, "in a manner worthy of God" (v 6).
- **Designate a person in your group** who will be the missionary care leader. This person/couple will connect with both the missionary and a Missions Mobilization Team member.
- **Get started.** There are numerous ways you can care for your missionary unit:



Prayer - Get prayer requests from your missionary unit and pray as a group at least once a month.



Communication - Have personal conversations with your missionary unit at least once a month through email, written letters, or Zoom.



Care packages - Commit to send a care package to your missionary unit at least twice a year. Set a goal of once a quarter.



Have them Visit - When your missionary unit is in the U.S., have them come and visit your group.



Visit them - Encourage group members to visit your missionary unit on the field. People could do this individually or you could do this as a group, if possible.

Adopting a missionary is a simple way you and your Missional Community can begin serving in missions. For information about adopting a Kentucky MSC missionary, visit www.kybaptist.org/adopt-a-missionary. To learn more about adoption options with national and international SBC missionaries, contact the Missions Mobilization Team (missions@kybaptist.org or 502-489-3530).

PASTORAL CARE FOR SENT-ONES *by John Barnett*

Providing missionaries with a Touch Point of Pastoral Care

Purpose: The goal of the Pastoral Care Plan is to have every missionary family and single adopted and advocated for by our church and pastoral care team.

Limitations: Pastoral Care is intended to provide a base level of encouragement, care, and advocacy. Our Pastors need not feel the full load of care and advocacy unless desired. Each missionary has access to care through multiple channels including community groups, a care team, and missional staff (voluntary or paid).

Details: We ask that pastors consider committing to a missionary family/single and following through on basic touch points of communication and being accessible to the missionary. We want each missionary to feel like our pastors are “in their corner.”



● **Know what you are committing to.**

Every Month: Provide a simple touch point. This could be a short email of encouragement, WhatsApp, a handwritten letter, or something of the like.

Every 6 months: Have one Zoom call.

Every year: Send a care package from your family to theirs. If possible, build it into the budget, and do not forget to include shipping cost.



● **Commit to a missionary family/single by:**

1) Signing up for available missionaries on the excel document. Please email for access if needed.

2) Send an email to the missionary letting them know that you are committing to be their pastoral advocate.

3) Calendar your monthly touch point so you do not forget!



● **Keep us in the loop as needed.**

Keep us in the loop as needed. If you need help, have questions, or are concerned about your missionary; please let us know and we will be glad to help.

MISSIONARY SUPPORT by Teresa Parrett

God calls some to go. Others He calls to support those who go. Support may be financial as we normally think, but there are many other ways to support our missionaries.

Pray

When asked what you can do for them, without blinking an eye, most missionaries say pray. If you know some missionaries personally, ask how you can pray for them, then pray specifically for their requests.

Many missionaries have prayer cards with specific ways you can pray for them. Collect the prayer cards and pray for them regularly.

Publications such as *Missions Mosaic* and *Open Windows* include calendars with missionaries listed on their birthdays. And, in Kentucky, the interSEED calendar (www.kybaptist.org/interseed) lists birthdays of those serving in-state. Use these to pray for missionaries.

Learn of the missionaries' needs so that you can be specific in your praying.

Encourage

Serving in the mission field, whether locally or globally, can be very lonely and discouraging at times. Sending cards, letters or emails on a regular basis will encourage the missionaries in their work and let them know that they have not been forgotten. A phone call, zoom, email, or an occasional visit will also be of great help to the missionary. Perhaps take the missionary family out for a meal.

Remember the missionary on his/her birthday, at Christmas or other special days with a gift. And, perhaps even provide a get-away for the missionary family.

Meet a need

Find out about resources needed in the ministry and help to supply that need. Do a food drive, hygiene drive, coat drive, new mom packs, etc. to help with their much-needed resources.

Assist in ministry

Volunteer to serve at the ministry. Whether an individual or mission team, there are almost always ways to use your unique gifts, skills and talents. Helping with construction and outreach needs or training for their clients, etc. is most always welcomed.

Partner with or adopt a missionary and send individuals and/or mission teams several times throughout the year to assist in the ministry.

Financial

Many of the 9,700 Southern Baptist Convention missionaries (6,000 with the North American Mission Board, and another 3,700 with the International Mission Board) receive some form of support provided through the Cooperative Program, Lottie Moon Christmas Offering, and/or the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering. However, there may be times when unexpected needs arise, and the missionary can use additional funds. Donations would be most welcome during those times and can be made through NAMB or IMB.

Others, such as Mission Service Corps missionaries serving in Kentucky and across the United States, are self-funded and raise their own support to be able to go where God has called them. Consider putting one or more of these missionaries in your personal or church budget and partner with them in ministry. To learn of missionaries in this category contact the Kentucky Baptist Convention or the North American Mission Board. And, contact the International Mission Board for self-funded missionaries serving in other countries that would benefit from someone coming alongside and helping with financial needs.

Ask God to show you how you can support the work of missionaries on the field. Not only will they be blessed, but you will as well.

IMPORTANCE OF THE PASTOR AS A CATALYST FOR MISSIONS *by Coy Webb*

The Pastor is called to be a preacher/teacher within the body of faith. This place of leadership gives him a unique authority and influence in the local church. When the shepherd of the flock leads, the flock will follow. This is crucial for the general health of the church but also for the missional health of the body of Christ.

The pastor is called to be God's strategist for the local mission field but is also critical for God's command to take the Gospel to the nations. When the pastor has a passion for missions the church will be ignited to go into all the world for the sake of the Gospel.

The pastor is vital in:

- 🕯 Casting a missional vision. If it is not said from the pulpit most in the pews do not think it is important.
- 🕯 Helping the body of Christ understand lostness. When the pastor is consumed by the urgency of our work for Christ, it will overflow to the people in the pews.
- 🕯 Making missions a regular and important part of worship. Missions should flow from the worship of God. We were created to give God glory. When we meet God in worship, it stirs our hearts to make His name known among all peoples. The pastor plays a key role by seeking ways to make missions a part of worship (preaching on missions, showing mission clips, praying for missions, highlighting missions offerings, using missions illustrations in his message, inviting missionaries to speak).
- 🕯 Preaching the Word faithfully and challenging the people to live life on mission for Christ.
- 🕯 Leading by example. The church will never be more committed than their leader.
- 🕯 Fostering the development of missionaries within the congregation by seeking to grow and encourage those in the family of faith to serve and surrender to a missions' calling. Pastors are called to equip the saints, so that these disciples may be sent out on mission for Christ. The Missions Mobilization Team at the Kentucky Baptist Convention can assist individuals in connecting with our Southern Baptist missionary sending organizations to begin exploring the missionary appointment process.
- 🕯 Developing a comprehensive mission strategy to move the church to reach its Jerusalem, to have impact in the church's Judea and Samaria, and to take the Gospel to the farthest corners of the globe.

🕯️ Being an encourager of missions and missionaries. Invite missionaries to your church and help the church to build relationships with missionaries.

🕯️ Promoting missions giving. This is the lifeblood of missions, and when we give cooperatively we can do more for the Kingdom than any of us can alone. The pastor plays a vital role in helping the church to understand why we give to missions and choose to work cooperatively as Southern Baptists.

🕯️ Encouraging the church to pray for missions, unreached peoples, and missionaries.

🕯️ Energizing the flock to “Go.”

The strength or weakness of each local church’s missionary program, its missionary support, and its missionary outreach will depend, more than any other one element, on the mission-mindedness of its pastor.

WHY A MISSIONS CELEBRATION EVENT? *by Coy Webb*

“Go into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature” (Mark 16:15).

A missions celebration is an opportunity to celebrate what God is doing through missionaries and Kingdom ministries, connect in partnerships, and to awaken church members to join God on mission. Missions celebrations can be planned as one day or weekend events.

What will the local church receive at a Missions Celebration?

- Exposure to Southern Baptist and Kentucky Baptist missionaries
- Awareness of how Cooperative Program funds and missions offerings are making a difference for the Kingdom
- Education on how a local church can mobilize for missions
- Opportunity for God to call the church and individual believers to “Go” on mission
- Partnership Mission connections

What might a Missions Celebration one-day or weekend agenda look like?



A One-Day Event

Noon	Missionary Luncheon
1:30 p.m.	Missions Fair
2:30 p.m.	Breakout Sessions (Missions/Ministry Training or Missions awareness sessions)
3:30 p.m.	Breakout Sessions
6:00 p.m.	Mission Banquet
7:00 p.m.	Mission Worship Celebration



Weekend Event

Friday:	Arrival/Orientation
Saturday:	10 a.m. Set Up
	11 a.m. Missions Fair
	Noon Missionary Lunch or Women’s and Men’s Lunch
	Option 1: 1:30- 4 p.m. Breakout Sessions
	Option 2: 1:30- 4 p.m. Afternoon Local Mission/Evangelism Projects

6 p.m. Mission Banquet
7 p.m. Mission Worship Celebration
Sunday: Missionary speakers



A Weekend Event (Another Option)

Saturday Night: Mission Banquet
Sunday Morning: Missionary Speakers (Missionary Speakers could share with children and youth during Sunday School/Small Groups)
12:30 p.m. Missionary Luncheon
1:30 p.m. Set up for Missions Fair
2:30 p.m. Missions Fair
3:30 p.m. Breakout Sessions
Sunday Evening: Option 1: Missionary Speakers
Option 2: Mission Banquet - 6 p.m.
7:00 p.m. Mission Worship Celebration

Some Ideas for Breakout Sessions

- How to Utilize Latest Technology to Connect with Missionaries
- Tools to Develop a Strategic “Great Commission” Plan for your Church
- Impacting My Own Neighborhood with the Gospel
- Partnership Mission Opportunities
- Mission Team Training
- When Helping Hurts
- Ready Church...Mobilizing your Church for Disaster Relief Ministry
- Training for Operation Inasmuch
- Mission Team Leader Training

(Use the talents and giftedness of the various missionaries who are available for the weekend.)

Steps to Hosting an Effective Missions Celebration

- Enlist a church or associational MC Coordinating Team
- Meet with your church or associational leadership
- Contact your state Missions Mobilization Team to check for calendar conflicts
- Consult with state MMT on connecting with strategic missionaries
- Develop a MC financial plan
- Orientate Church MC leaders

- Contact MC missionaries
- Implement your Associational MC Plan

Missions Celebration Planning Team

- Team Leader
- Spiritual Preparation Coordinator
- Hospitality Coordinator
- Transportation Coordinator
- Promotion Coordinator
- Special Events Coordinator (Age-level focused)
- Financial Coordinator



*Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them
in the name of the Father and the Son and of the Holy Spirit,
teaching them to observe everything that I have commanded you*



(Matthew 28:19-20)



SECTION TWO:

PREPARATION FOR MISSIONS

Training Leaders

SPIRITUAL PREPARATION *by Doug Williams*

As the eleven apostles wait on the Mountain in Galilee for Jesus, they are filled with mixed emotions. No doubt they wonder, "What will Jesus say and what will we do next?" When Jesus appears to the them, the heart of His message is "make disciples of all nations" (Matt 28:19).

Short-term missions is for the purpose of making disciples, not just somewhere else, but among our own church members. Pastors and church leaders should view short-term missions as a two-point prong - making disciples locally and globally. We go elsewhere to assist missionaries in their work of making disciples, but we also understand short-term missions as a vital part of making disciples of our own church members.

There is something incredibly valuable about pouring into our own church members while they are away from normal routines and distractions. Don't miss this opportunity through short-term missions to have long-term discipling impact on your church members.

Here are some suggestions for discipling your short-term mission teams.

1. Encourage team members to enlist prayer partners. These partners can be within the church, family members, or other believers outside of the church. Lead them to give weekly or monthly prayer matters leading up to the time of the mission effort. For the time of the mission effort have your team members give a daily prayer point guide to their prayer partners before they leave. Also, encourage team members to have at least one prayer partner that prays with them each week leading up to the mission effort. They can pray through facetime, in person, over the phone, etc.

2. Develop personal time in God's Word and prayer. Nothing prepares the team member more for missions than his/her personal time with God. Several months before the mission effort, teams can be encouraged to read through certain passages or books of the Bible. For example, reading through Acts prior to and during the mission effort is a great way to prepare the team spiritually for what they are about to do. Providing specific prayer guides for the team member's own spiritual preparation is essential as well. This might be the first time these team members develop an intentional personal time in God's Word and prayer.

3. Teach them how to share the gospel. Missions is not missions if the gospel is missing. There are many tools that can be used to teach teams how to share

the gospel. The point is not one particular method as much as making sure each team member can articulate the gospel concisely and clearly. Spending time with the team not only teaching them how to share the gospel but giving them opportunities to practice on one another and even in the community before the team leaves is critical. The goal is not teaching them to be an expert in winning arguments, but simply telling the “old, old” story of Jesus and His love. The gospel is the power of God for salvation, not our presentation or method (Rom 1:16). Share the gospel and trust God to do His work!

4. Utilize your time on the field for discipleship. While on the mission effort, being intentional about pouring into the team members is essential. Taking them through a study in the Bible (like Acts) or a book is a great way to have deliberate discipleship time while on mission (there are a number of short, but impactful books that could be used for this purpose). Either in the morning before the team leaves out for the day or in the evening when you settle down from the day, walking the team through a planned study time is a valuable way to point the team to God’s Word and apply both the Word and their daily mission experiences to their Christian life. Amazingly, God often uses His Word and the experiences of the team while on mission to grow them exponentially. Take advantage of that time for team discipleship.

5. Don’t forget when you get back home. Pray for new habits and convictions that begin to form while on the mission effort to remain once you are home. Team members often ask themselves and their churches, “now what?” when they return home. The experiences are often overwhelming and can cause frustration when others back home don’t quite see things in the same way as the team members upon their return. Learning to leverage one’s experience for personal growth and influence of others is a delicate but important step.

Here are some “when you get back home” suggestions:



- **Remain active with your prayer partner(s).** Continue praying with and meeting with others for accountability and encouragement.
- **Stay deep in God’s Word.** The habits of personal Bible intake you begin to form on mission will be life transforming if you stay with them. Be consistent in your personal Bible time.
- **Don’t overreact by selling everything you own (just yet) nor see everyone else as less spiritual than you.** Meditate often on Philippians 4:10-14 about finding contentment in whatever situation

the Lord brings your way. Further, the temptation you will face is one of being judgmental to those who didn't go, haven't gone, or refuse to go. Steady wins the race.

- **Don't waste your mission effort.** It's easy to merge back into the traffic of life and forget what you experienced through God's Word and His work. Find one way you can continue serving the gospel in your own community. How are you living on mission where God has planted you?

- **Remember, the goal is to make disciples (locally and globally) (Matt. 28:19-20).** While the experience of disciple-making globally is thrilling, who would God have you pour your life into for long-term impact where you live? You can begin with the study you went through on the mission effort by sharing it with someone else for discipling purposes. Meet monthly or weekly to discuss what you learned with someone else. In other words, make disciples here and there.

WHAT IS SPIRITUAL WARFARE? *by John Barnett*

The Bible speaks about the reality of a conflict we face as believers, and we popularly call that conflict “spiritual warfare.” Given the fascination of this topic, it is easy to mystify the spiritual battle and miss the Bible’s basic teachings about this conflict:



The Bible is a book about God, not about the devil. The Bible does not answer every question about warfare, nor does it grant us permission to focus our attention on the devil. Any approach to warfare that magnifies the devil’s power does not reflect biblical spiritual warfare.



Satan is not our biggest problem. We face three enemies: the world, our flesh and the devil (Ephesians 2:1-3). In some cases, the three are so interwoven, it is difficult to tell them apart. Our primary problem is not Satan, though; we are our biggest issue.



God reigns, even over the enemy. We have strife between human beings and the serpent because God put that conflict there (Genesis 3:15). That strife would lead to the cross, where the death of Jesus would break the back of the powers (Colossians 2:15). Now, God sovereignly uses the battles to make us the followers He wants us to be.



The enemy we face is a defeated foe. Satan has been bound through God’s judgment and the cross, is being bound through the preaching of the gospel and will be bound for eternity. We do genuinely wrestle against principalities and powers (Ephesians 6:12), but the devil and his forces have never been outside of God’s control.



On one hand, warfare is the devil’s attempt to deceive and divide believers to keep us from glorifying God and carrying out the Great Commission. From the Garden of Eden, he has tried to bait us with false teaching, lure us into sin and turn us against each other. He seeks to devour us (1 Peter 5:8), so we can no longer be a light to a lost world. As Church Lawless commonly summarizes it, the enemy wants us to mess up (fall into sin), give up (get discouraged), get puffed up (live in arrogance), split up (divide) or shut up (quit evangelizing).



Satan battles against us because we are God’s witnesses to the world. When the apostle Paul described lostness, he often framed it in terms of spiritual warfare. Non-believers follow the prince of the air (Ephesians 2:2). They are blinded by the god of this world (2 Corinthians 4:3-4), bound in darkness (Colossians 1:13, Acts 26:18) and caught in Satan’s snare (2 Timothy 2:25-26). His goal is to keep us from proclaiming and living out the gospel that sets people free.



On the other hand, we are not on the defensive in this battle. Yes, we are to stand against Satan (Ephesians 6:11, 13, 14), but standing is not simply waiting and deflecting the arrows of the enemy. Even Paul, who called the Ephesians to stand, sought their prayer so he would keep proclaiming the gospel boldly even when he was imprisoned (Ephesians 6:18-20); his own “standing” meant that he would faithfully evangelize even if the war cost him his life. We put on the full armor of God not so that we can defend ourselves, but so we can march into the enemy’s kingdom to do the work of the Great Commission.



The offensive nature of this battle demands that we do evangelism and discipleship. Evangelism requires intentionally taking the light into the darkness. Discipleship then requires teaching others to understand their position in Christ and to put on the full armor of God. If we do not evangelize, lost people remain in Satan’s kingdom; if we do not disciple, we send believers into the war unarmed. Either can result in tragedy.

In the Great Commission, the Lord commands us to make disciples of all nations and he established his church to be the way we would gather to worship, grow in discipleship, and go to every nation with gospel, i.e., every tribe, tongue and people could know and worship Him. The very task of missions and church planting places missionaries and planters in the sights of the enemy. Because we are seeking to reach lost people, develop strong disciples, and plant healthy congregations who plant more congregations - all of which means that we are offensively engaging the enemy’s territory - we can rest assured that the enemy will fight back.

We do not need to fear, however. In the power of God, simply love Christ, and live and speak for Him in such a way that God is glorified and an already-defeated Satan is threatened (Acts 19:11-16).

The Missions Mobilization Team exist to serve you and your church, as you seek to fulfill the Great Commission. If you have any questions, please contact John Barnett at john.barnett@kybaptist.org or 502-654-3385.

* Some information comes from Dr. Chuck Lawless’ Spiritual Warfare Class notes and his writings. Used with permission.

ENLISTING THE TEAM *by Doug Williams*

While we want every Christian to be a disciple-maker, not everyone is always suitable for traveling to other places for such a task. Enlisting proper team members for the mission is an essential part of ensuring we have an effective and faithful mission. Here are some suggestions for enlisting your mission team.

1. Clearly communicate the mission to the church. This communication is prior to any informational meeting. Pastors play a key role in communicating and giving “stage time” to the mission that the church will engage in. You can also use videos or stories that might describe the need and opportunity of this mission effort to impact a particular place and people with the gospel. Use as many (creative) communication platforms as necessary to inform the church of the upcoming mission opportunity.

2. Work closely with the pastor(s) in the process of recruiting or approving team members. As the shepherds of the church, pastors need to be involved in the decision process of those who participate in the mission effort.

3. Plan an informational meeting. Those who express interest need to know key details (as much as possible) in finalizing their decision. Schedule an informational group meeting with interested persons. Cover such details as:

- Location
- Purpose of the mission (as it aligns with the strategy of the host missionaries)
- Cost (travel, food, lodging, ministry expenses, travel insurance)
- Accommodations (lodging, travel, food, etc.)
- Expectations of team members (health abilities, type of work, behavior, etc.)
- Q&A time

4. Schedule interviews and/or an application process. Whether through an interview with those interested or filling out an application, this step is important in making sure that those desiring to go are a right fit for the mission effort. Both interviews and an application can be part of this process. At the very least, an application should be involved. Issues covered in the interview and/or application include:

- Location.

- Personal conversion story.
- Description of personal growth (e.g., prayer, Bible reading, church involvement, personal witnessing).
- Explanation of why the individual desires to go on this mission effort (looking for sense of passion or willingness to take the gospel to others, make disciples, etc.).
- Look for team players. There are no lone rangers in missions (e.g., Paul never traveled in isolation nor worked on his own). Those unwilling to work as a team player and support the host missionary and short-term team should not go.
- Gain a feel for the personality of the person and ability to relate well with others (not looking for a certain personality type as much a person that can relate with others in a personal way).
- Willingness to be flexible and serve as needed. The person needs to understand that a servant heart is expected of all team members.
- Physical and emotional stability.

5. Inform each interested person of the decision. In many cases, the answer for an interested mission team member will be “yes, welcome to the team.” On occasion, the team leader, pastors and other decision makers will have to inform interested persons that the answer is “wait”. This is one of the hardest elements in short-term missions, but it is nonetheless crucial. I say “wait” because we want every believer to be a disciple-maker and want to encourage them in their pursuit of this goal locally and globally. However, for various reasons the timing may not be right. Not everyone desiring to go is either ready to go nor should go. Here are some suggestions for dealing with the hard cases of saying “wait”:

- Pray about the decision with key leaders.
- At least two leaders meet with the individual about the decision.
- Communicate clearly why the answer is “wait” (person’s testimony is unclear, lack of spiritual maturity, motive for going, unwillingness to be flexible or a team player, etc.).
- Give steps for individuals to grow in areas of concern.
- Encourage them to continue to cultivate their passion for God and making Him known (through regular worship attendance and church involvement, Bible reading, praying, sharing gospel, building relationships, etc.).

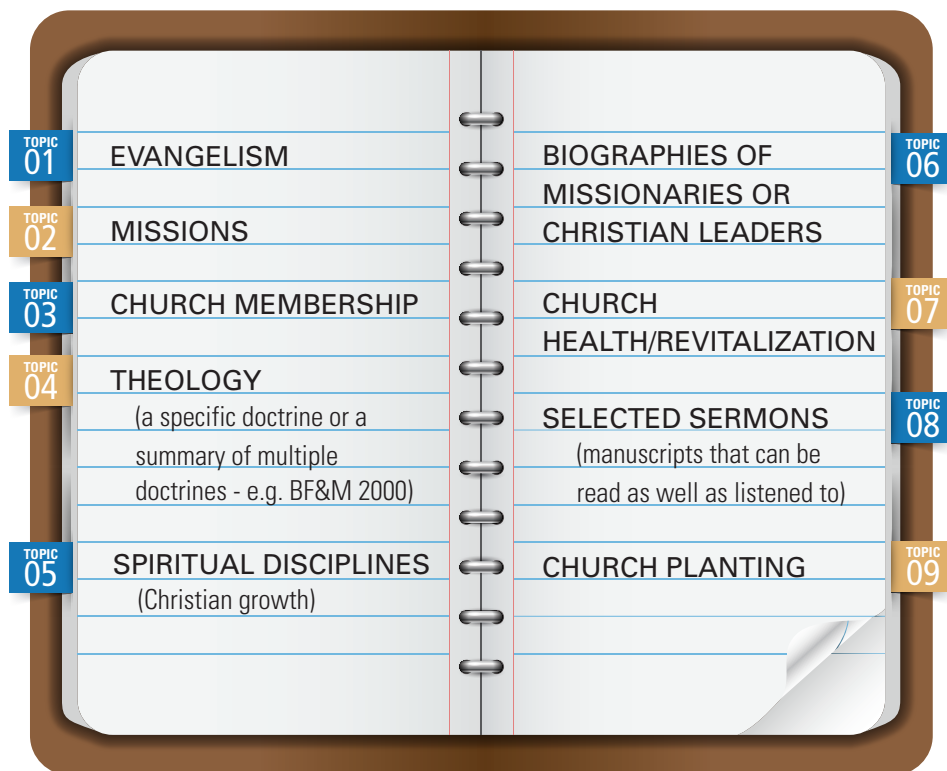
- Communicate everything with clarity, compassion, and grace.
- Affirm them in the Lord and thank them for their desire to go.
- Pray with the interested person about the decision to wait.

PREPARING TEAM DEVOTIONS *by Doug Williams*

Short-term missions is strategic for making disciples not only globally, but locally within of our own congregations. Using short-term mission efforts for disciple-making among our own church members is one slice of the disciple-making pie.¹²

No need to reinvent the wheel here. Ample resources are available for mission teams to use for team devotions. As already mentioned, teams might select a book of the Bible or a portion of Scripture to work through prior to departure as well as while on the mission field. Questions related to the passage can be developed that generate team discussions when meeting together before and during the mission effort.

Teams might also select short, but pertinent books on specific topics to read prior to departure and to discuss while on the field. Suggested topics include:



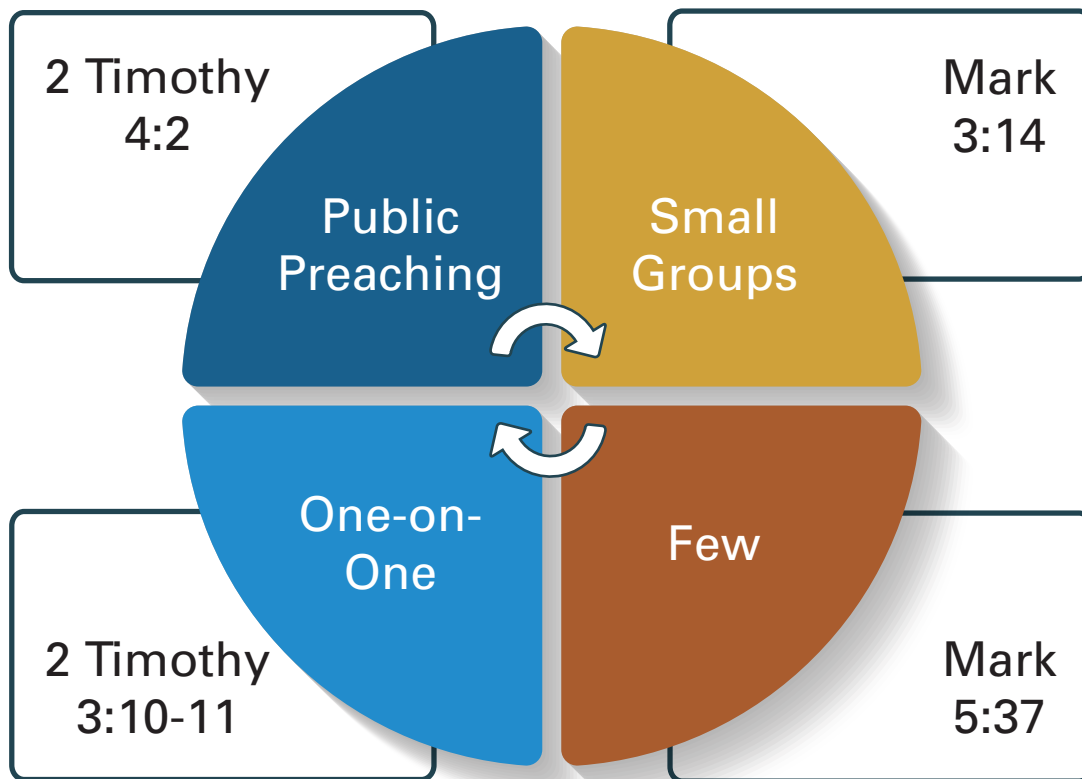
¹² The Great Commission is really about disciple-making (Matt. 28:19 - "make disciples of all nations"). Whether we speak of missions in our city, state, country, or world, we are talking about developing followers of Jesus. Discipleship is not as much linear as it is circular. It's not so much a step-by-step process as it is a wholistic, dynamic process. It's like a chocolate pie. You can cut a piece of chocolate pie out and give it away to someone. But if you ask me whether I want a piece of chocolate pie or the whole pie, give me the whole pie. Jesus' approach and Paul's approach to disciple-making was wholistic. One slice doesn't do it; it takes the whole pie. By pie, I refer to discipleship as a circle that involves four elements: public teaching (2 Tim. 4:2); small groups (Mark 3:14); the few (Mark 5:37); and one-on-one (2 Tim. 3:10-11). See Discipleship Circle graphic, page 49.

If using a book study, prepare some questions related to each chapter or section of the book you plan to discuss. Use mornings or evenings with the team to not only review the upcoming day or debrief the day, but to discuss the topic for intentional discipleship time.

The point in team devotions is to maximize the concentrated time with the team for Jesus' model of Mark 3:14 - being with and sending out. Mark gives us the reason for Jesus choosing the twelve (apostles). He spent time with them and sent them out to share the good news. Jesus is modeling what it looks like to make disciples - it's time together and it's time serving. In fact, Matthew gives us a similar paradigm for discipleship. Jesus mentored (taught) (Matthew 5-7); modeled (served with) (Matthew 8-9); multiplied (sent them out) (Matthew 10).

Short-term missions allows churches to build disciples in a similar way that Jesus and Paul modeled it for us. We can mentor, model, and multiply our church members in a concentrated way unlike at other times throughout the year. Capitalizing on your time with the team for teaching and serving is invaluable and will often transform the way they engage the church and others once back home.

Discipleship Circle: 4 Elements of Disciple-making



COMMUNICATING THE MISSION *by Doug Williams*

Communicate, communicate, communicate. The importance of communication cannot be overstated. For the church to take “ownership” in the mission partnership (and short-term effort), they must hear about the mission often and in various ways. The last thing we want is the Charlie Brown teacher effect.

You remember when Charlie Brown is in school and his teacher talks to him? All you hear is “Whaaa, Whaaaa, Wha, Whaaaa, Whaa.” It’s just noise to us. Well, we don’t want the mission of the church - making disciples of all nations - to be noise to the church. We want the mission to be clear and convincing to the church.

Find creative ways to express clearly and convincingly the mission partnership to the church (because the goal is a partnership and not just a trip somewhere), so that even while not everyone physically goes, all feel that they are part of what the church is doing. But communication is not just with the church, but the missionary and team members. Here are some suggestions for communication, so that the mission of the church is accomplished for God’s glory.

1. Communicate with potential host missionary about the partnership.

Converse with the potential missionary about their strategy and how your church could assist them in it. Ask what they are looking for in a partnership. Discuss accommodations and who will arrange them (lodging, transportations, food), interpreters if needed, what a long-term partnership might look like with the missionary and your church (expectations, length, etc.)

2. Communicate with church leaders and mission committee/team. Make sure the pastors or necessary church leaders and/or mission committee/team are involved in the decision of who the church will partner with and where. Pastors should set the vision for this, but it does not mean that they do all the leg work to form the partnership. Pastors are vital in casting the vision for these gospel partnerships, but should involve others in the implementation of it.

3. Communicate with the church about the mission. To have the Great Commission be part of the DNA of the church, it must be clearly and regularly communicated. Further, when a specific mission partner is determined, the church must work hard at communicating the partnership with the congregation.

- Speak about the missionaries and their family often, both in public gatherings and regular conversations.
- Find ways to share information with the church about the area of partnership and the missionaries (in some cases being sensitive

- about what information is shared, of course, for those serving in secure locations).
 - Social media
 - “Mission Walls/Maps” in the church
- Give pulpit time to not only discussing the importance of the Great Commission in the life of the church, but specifically the church’s mission partners.
- Pray regularly in public worship and small groups for mission partners. Provide mission prayer guides for private and family prayer times as well.
- Provide opportunities to zoom (etc.) with missionaries during worship gatherings and small groups.
- When possible, invite mission partners to speak at the church and share about their work on the field. Make it a time of celebration for what God is doing and commitment for more laborers.

4. Communicate with the team members. Preparing the team well for the short-term mission involves communicating regularly with them. Meet monthly when possible, but communicate often with your team. After the initial team meeting that provides basic information to cover with those interested in participating, further communication is necessary.¹³ Here are items to cover over the course of your time preparing for the short-term mission effort:



Payments and raising funds



Emergency contact info



Dividing up responsibilities among team members for what the team will do while on mission



Passports (if necessary) - helpful web sites:
www.travel.state.gov



Daily schedule while on mission effort



Visa (if necessary) -
www.travel.state.gov





Transportation (mode of transportation while on mission)



Required and recommended immunizations (if necessary) - www.cdc.gov/travel

¹³ See Enlisting Team, page 72.


 Addresses of where team will be staying


 Finalizing accommodations for lodging


 Packing


STS Simple Truthful Statement (STS) - what every team member will say, particularly overseas, when asked why they are traveling


 Food allergies and needs

 Flights if necessary - need full names as it appears on ID/Passport and date of birth to order tickets

 Using cash vs. using credit cards while traveling within country and abroad (as well as money exchange)

 Security precautions - www.osac.gov (overseas security advisory); <https://step.state.gov/STEP/Index.aspx> (US Embassy registration)

 Travel insurance - <https://www.missionsafe.com> or <https://www.travelwithgallagher.com>

 Plan your team celebration upon return (as a team and/or with church)

5. Communicate with the missionaries regularly. A final piece of communication involves regular contact with the missionaries. Not only does this serve to prepare the team well for the short-term mission, it provides the missionaries with constant interaction with their partner church(es). This interaction offers ongoing encouragement for the missionaries as the mission field is often a place of isolation filled with challenges. Isolations and challenges do not exist on the mission field alone. What often makes the mission field more difficult, however, is the fact that many are serving in places where access to the gospel is minimal and the counsel of local believers is limited (at best). On top of these challenges is the reality of new cultures and languages and relationships. The more contact the partner church can have with the missionaries the better encouragement the missionaries receive. Connect with them not simply to plan your short-term mission effort, but as beloved friends rooted in the gospel.

Short-term Planning

TIMELINE *by Doug Williams*

Planning your short-term mission takes preparation. While there may be times when a mission effort can be pulled together quickly, most often the preparation requires many months.¹⁴ No rigid timeline exists for short-term missions, but there are some general steps that allow a team to prepare well in advance in order to maximize the impact of the team with the strategy of the host missionary. Here is a suggested timeline that can be used as a guide:

- 10 to 12 months prior** - determine assignment
- 9 months prior** - determine team leader(s)
- 9 months prior** - publicize mission effort
- 6 to 9 months prior** - recruit team/receive volunteers, deposit due
- 6 to 9 months prior** - contact travel agent to begin searching ticket prices
- 6 to 9 months prior** - schedule initial info meeting, collect bi-monthly or quarterly payments
- 6 months prior** - apply for passport and check requirement for visas
- 6 months prior** - plan team meetings and meet monthly to discuss general mission prep
- 3 to 4 months prior** - purchase plane tickets
- 3 to 4 months prior** - get immunizations (shots!) if necessary
- 3 to 4 months prior** - team meetings should become more specialized according to what the team will be doing on the field
- 2 months prior** - develop prayer team
- 4 weeks prior** - plan commissioning service for team
- 1 week prior** - hold commission service
- 1 week or month after** - plan celebration time with team and/or church


¹⁴ Disaster Relief is an example of mission efforts that take place quickly, but even then preparation and training have occurred months and even years prior.

FINANCIAL: DETERMINING THE COST & RAISING SUPPORT *by Teresa Parrett*


After you have prayerfully selected the location for your mission trip, you will need to figure out the financial part. Setting the budget and raising support for your trip can be one the most important steps in the process because a few errors or oversights can mean thousands of dollars that you weren't expecting.

Determining the Cost


The costs associated with each trip will vary depending on where you are going, the number of persons on the trip and the length of the trip. Do your homework and budget as closely as possible the cost of your mission trip. Areas to consider when "counting the cost" include:

 **Travel** - Will you be driving or flying?

- **Flying**
 - Cost of airfare
 - Baggage
 - Ground transportation
- **Driving**
 - Number of vehicles
 - Cost of fuel
 - Mileage

 **Lodging** - Will you be staying in a church, mission house, camp, hotel or some other place?

- Cost per room
- Number of persons per room


 **Meals** - Will you take food with you or buy on site? Will you prepare your own meals or eat out? What are food costs in the area where you will be serving?

- Cost of food
- Number of persons
- Will local missionaries be eating with you?
- Meals during travel

 **Personal/Administrative Costs**

- Passport
- Visas
- Supplemental health and/or travel insurance

- Immunizations
- Travel medications
- Background checks
- Mobile phone international plan

 **Ministry Materials** - Will you take materials with you or buy on site? What are the costs of materials in the area where you will be serving?


- Tools
- Protective gear
- Construction materials
- Outreach supplies

 **T-shirt and/or video for team members**

 **Love offering or host gift for the missionaries you visit**

 **Spending money**

 **Side trips**

 **Contingency funds** - Budget a little extra for unexpected expenses that might come up. Some recommend 5% of your total budget. And, have a little cash on hand.

Your mission trip can run into quite a bit of money. However, there are some things you can do to help keep the cost down. Some suggestions are:

Travel costs

- Look for ways to cut costs
 - Driving vs. Flying
 - Airline discounts, group rates, etc.

Meal costs

- Bring your own food and cooks to prepare the meals
- Eat at less expensive restaurants

Lodging costs

- Bring air mattresses and sleeping bags and stay in a church
- Stay in a mission house, a camp or retreat center, in homes, or less expensive hotels

Plan ahead

- Buy materials when on sale and not at the last-minute

Raising Support

The cost of a mission trip can get rather expensive, however there are means to help with the cost. While a church may be able to pay all of the expense for a mission team member, it is more meaningful if he/she makes a personal investment in the trip, even if it is in raising the support.

- Family, friends, co-workers and acquaintances of team members will often donate to the trip. Have team members write letters telling their story, why they are going, the vision of the mission and directly ask for assistance.
- Other churches, Sunday School classes, etc. that have ties to some of the team members may contribute to the trip.
- Community dinners, bake sales, car washes, etc. are ways to raise money for the mission trip.

Spread the word. Let others know about the mission trip, then invite them to take part by contributing. Trust God that the needed funds will be available as you go and share the Gospel on mission.

SECURITY: WHY IT IS ESSENTIAL FOR SHORT-TERM MISSIONS *by Doug Williams*

The world today is much different than it was 10 or 20 years ago. While global traveling is much easier, it is also more difficult. Preparing our teams for traveling and serving in strange places (whether in the US or abroad) is essential for at least three reasons.

THE SAFETY OF OUR TEAM IS IMPORTANT

We desire to keep our team members as safe as possible when traveling to places they are unfamiliar with. Being aware of your environment and following best practices when traveling will go a long way in keeping the team safe.

LONG-TERM MINISTRY IMPACT IS CRITICAL¹⁵

As we partner with missionaries in places around the world, we want to ensure that we do nothing to jeopardize the work they have been doing (often for years) and desire to accomplish.

NATIONAL CHRISTIAN SECURITY IS VITAL

We also want to be certain that we do not compromise the security of local believers. Believers in many places of the world face serious threats to their livelihoods and physical health if we are uncaring about our approach and interactions.

Therefore, being security-sensitive for our team, our partner missionaries, and national believers is essential.

Theology of Risk¹⁶

The purpose of a theology of risk allows individuals and groups to think through the reality that any mission endeavor involves risk. New Testament missionaries faced risk, and it is only appropriate to understand that today's missionaries may also face risks or crises while serving God during mission efforts. In the face of such crises, a clear understanding of Scripture, as related to risk, should prepare mission team members to honor God despite difficult circumstances.

Introduction

- The Great Commission (Matthew 28:18-20) is the foundation of all the church does in the name of Christ. Like Paul and Barnabas in the book of Acts, we are called upon to "risk" our lives for the cause of Christ (Acts 15:26).

¹⁵ Points 2 and 3 are summarized from Team Leader Training: Impact Your World (International Mission Board, SBC), 2007.

¹⁶ Adapted from Alabama Baptist Convention State Board of Mission Crisis Action Team, Policy and Procedural Manual.

- Missions can involve high levels of risk - criminal, political, health, or even natural catastrophe. Understanding God's call on our lives is essential (Luke 9:23; 2 Timothy 2:1-4). The biblical legacy of risk is evident in Scripture. Paul was ready to be bound and even die, if necessary (Acts 21:13). Some early believers could have escaped but chose not to (Hebrews 11:32-38).
- No single response to danger is given in Scripture. Both fleeing and facing danger is given. There is freedom in either case; therefore, we must be careful not to develop hard-and-fast "rules" for risk. For example, Stephen faced risk in Acts 7-8, and the early believers fled in conjunction to his death (Acts 8:1-4). Neither are viewed as superior or less-than in these circumstances. In fact, God uses both facing and fleeing for His glory (Acts 11:19-26).
- The problem for the church today is often not the decision of whether to face or flee danger, but whether we should even consider danger as an option. We assume that Jesus wants us to be safe and secure, so why would we go to other places where there are risks? Jesus does not call us to safety; He calls us to be satisfied (in Him).
- Facing or fleeing danger seemed to be assessed most often in Scripture based upon the need for the gospel in a particular place. In Corinth, Paul, who was apparently fearful, was assured by God that he would be safe while he remained in Corinth preaching the gospel (Acts 18:9-11). He understood that his calling was one of testifying to the gospel of the grace of God in places where it had not been heard (Acts 20:22-24). He knew danger awaited him.
- There is a sense of urgency in Scripture for gospel advancement. This urgency means that, at times, Jesus calls us to face danger, and at other times, He calls us to flee from danger. May God give us the wisdom and grace to do both.

The Great Commission and a theology of risk

- When Jesus our Lord gave us the Great Commission, He outlined our mission as disciples of Christ. Therefore, in seeking to develop a theology of risk for the Great Commission, we should look to the Bible as our basis for such a document.
- In the Great Commission, we discover three important reminders for all disciples seeking to be true to the mission given to us by our Lord. These three reminders offer a simple template for a theology of risk for the church.

The Great Commission reminds us of Jesus' power over all things.

- Matthew 28:18 removes any doubt as to the sovereignty of our Lord Jesus Christ. He has power over "heaven and earth." Because our Lord is all-powerful,

and He is sovereign over all things, now and forevermore, we can be assured that He is the One worthy of our service and sacrifice.

- These are the words of the risen Lord, who had overcome death at the cross. On that foundation, He claimed all authority, and He gave us the authority to represent Him in the world which we live.

The Great Commission reminds us of Jesus' purpose for all of our ministries.

- Matthew 28:19-20 clearly articulates our mission in today's world. "As we go," which carries the force of a command to go, we are "to make disciples of all nations." In doing so, we are to "baptize" them and "teach them to observe all things" that Jesus has commanded.
- This all-encompassing mission offers us the universal call to make disciples of all nations or people groups. Acts 1:8 is the strategy for accomplishing this mission. As His disciples, we are called to make disciples in our neighborhoods and in all the nations.

The Great Commission reminds us of Jesus' promise to be with us always.

- Perhaps the most meaningful promise of Jesus is given to us in the last phrase of the Great Commission. He promises to be with us all the time and everywhere we go in His name. This is an enormous comfort but also a challenging reminder that we live in a dangerous world.
- Jesus said to His disciples, "In the world you will have tribulation," but, "in Me you may have peace" (John 16:33). Jesus is being very candid with all of His disciples. There have been martyrs for Christ throughout the history of Christianity. There will always be danger, but He is always with us.
- As 21-century Christians, we stand on the shoulders of godly people, who in days past served our Lord at tremendous cost to their safety and security. Our calling is to be found faithful as stewards of the gospel until He comes or until He calls us home to be with Him.

Serving in Security-sensitive Areas

When teams partner in places that are security-sensitive, following general guidelines will better ensure the safety of everyone involved - short-term team members, long-term missionaries, and national partners. The missionaries the short-term team is working with can inform the team of the sensitive nature of the area they serve in and their protocols.

The IMB uses three primary security levels:¹⁷



CODE	OPEN COMMUNICATION
01	Presence of missionary and evangelism is openly known and practiced.
CODE	CAUTIOUS COMMUNICATION
02	Environment is tolerant but suspicious toward evangelism. Communication with public is prudent and limited.
CODE	RESTRICTED COMMUNICATION
03	Environment is intolerant and antagonistic toward evangelism. No public statements about their work.

Simple Truth Statement (STS)










Regardless of the level of security, it is at best wise in all cases and absolutely necessary in security-sensitive areas for the team to have an **STS (Simple Truth Statement)**. The STS is the reason every team member gives for why they or the group are in the country or city they have traveled to when asked either in casual conversations or even by an authority figure. The STS might be as simple as: ***We (I) are (am) here to visit friends and see the city (country).*** You can even name a particular site you plan to visit. Here is the key: *make sure that every team member says the same STS and that the missionaries you are serving with know your STS. Further, make sure that the missionaries approve of the STS.*

Security Guidelines¹⁸

For the protection of the team, missionaries, and national partners, here are some security guidelines that will benefit the short-term team.

¹⁷ Taken from *Team Leader Training: Impact Your World* (International Mission Board, SBC), 2007.

¹⁸ Taken from *Team Leader Training: Impact Your World* (International Mission Board, SBC), 2007.

-  **1 Never identify people overseas by name.** Sharing personal information of partners overseas while you are overseas can jeopardize the work. Do not share personal information in conversation or through social media.
-  **2 Avoid using Christian and mission terminology.** Instead of using terms like “pray, missions, Bible, church, evangelism,” etc. one can say “talk with Dad, the family, the book, the work,” etc. Never use the term IMB. Instead say “the company.”
-  **3 Never identify yourself with a church, denomination or the IMB.** Avoid clothing and hats that connect you with any of these groups.
-  **4 Do not leave written or printed information in your room that could identify local church or mission leaders.** Places you go, like hotels, restaurants, and airplanes have “ears.” Workers in these places may share information they overhear or see with government officials.
-  **5 Consider that all communication is being heard or read by others.** Speak by phone as if you are not in a private conversation. Letters, emails, texts, etc. are very public. If names are used, only use first names and never first and last names.
-  **6 Never give the impression of being critical of local governments or religions.** As an American, you will likely be viewed with suspicion in many of the places you travel to, so do not say anything negative about governments or religions that will hinder your witness.
-  **7 Avoid visiting with other Christians or missionaries while on your trip.** Unless requested by the IMB staff or local partners, contact with other believers in security-sensitive areas should be guarded.
-  **8 Refuse to be photographed or interviewed by news media.** Common sense must be used in these cases. You have no control how videos and pictures will be used by others to potentially harm the work of Christ.
-  **9 Always follow the leading of your host missionary and be sensitive to the Holy Spirit.** As a new person in a new place that is security-sensitive, listen and follow the directions of your host. Their directions for the team are not meant to hinder ministry, but to enhance long-term ministry. Further, as the Holy Spirit opens opportunities for gospel conversations, but sensitive to your situation and surrounding and tell others about the good news of Jesus.

SECURITY AWARENESS FOR MISSION TEAMS *by Coy Webb*

Our number one concern in serving in global missions should not be safety but obedience to God's command to go where He calls. Yet, though safety should not be the number one concern of those engaging in global missions, it is foolish not to consider security in today's volatile world. Planning for the unexpected, having contingency plans, and practicing good security awareness can minimize adverse situations.

The psalmist declared, "Teach me to do Your will, for You are my God. May Your gracious Spirit lead me on level ground." (Psalm 143:10)

The psalmist confirmed obedience to God's call but asked God to lead him in a way that his feet could be steady, and he would not fall. This is great instruction as we plan security for mission teams.

Teams should practice good security by:

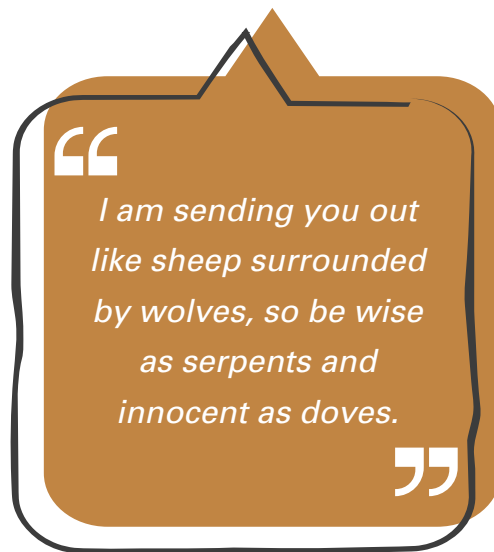


Here are good security tips for teams traveling to do missions:

- Do not publicize team's travel plans on social media.
- Do not bring giveaway items for public areas. Handouts can cause riots and violence to break out.
- It is best not to wear expensive jewelry, or flash cash in public. This can draw wrong attention to yourself.
- Be careful with photo equipment, computers, cell phones, and your passport.
- Do not make yourself a target by drawing needless attention to yourself.
- Seek to blend in as much as possible.
- Try to establish what normal looks like.
- Pay attention to anything that deviates from the normal.
- Know where you are going.
- Maintain safe protocols.

- Utilize buddy system. Try to stay in a group. No one should wander off on their own.
- Maintain a state of “relaxed awareness.”
- Observe details and take note if groups or individuals not connected with the team give unusual notice.
- Do not share unnecessary personal information with individuals, such as where team is staying, travel plans, schedule, etc.
- Develop a contingency plan if an adverse situation arises that includes a safe place to meet if team is scattered and agreed protocol.
- If traveling to high security areas, keep in mind that these places are often unpredictable, fluid, capable of changing rapidly, and prone to violence.
- Remember - obey instructions of missionaries or national partners always.

Being prepared and developing some general security protocol will help your team to serve more safely and effectively. Understand the potential risks of global travel and learn some practices to minimize potential risks. Security awareness and training helps teams avoid adverse situations by increasing awareness.



(Matthew 10:16)

MINIMIZING ON-MISSION RISKS *by Eric Allen*

Too many Christians believe that when we are doing God's will, we will be safe from harm. Such a promise is not found in the Bible. He promises to use our life for his glory and bring us safely to heaven for our joy and his honor. God does not promise us safety anywhere in this fallen world. As Hebrews tells us, many believers faithfully committed to God's will have "faced jeers and flogging." Others "were chained and put in prison" and "they were stoned, they were sawn in two, they were killed with the sword" (Hebrews 11:36-37). Could God be any clearer?

There are risks anytime we go anywhere, but those risks can be minimized through thoughtful planning and deliberate actions. A mission trip can be a life-transforming and very meaningful experience. But there is nothing God-honoring about dying because of a dumb decision or bringing on suffering through stupidity. Our boldness to go and share Christ should be tempered with wisdom.

The greatest opportunity for spiritual growth and Kingdom advancement can be hindered because of an accident or emergency. Church leaders must recognize the possible risks involved with mission trips and how to prepare for those risks.

When traveling to an unfamiliar location there is always the potential for risk. Depending on the location, crime may be elevated and/or political or cultural differences may put participants at greater risk than in our country. In addition, places like hospitals, police stations and help centers could operate differently than in the U.S. It is important to plan ahead for all possible risks, such as a vehicle accident, illness, kidnapping, robbery, natural disaster or even a state of political unrest. If an unfortunate event does happen on the mission trip, research and planning will aid your church and mission team in the long run. While risks will vary depending on the location of the mission trip, it is the responsibility of church leaders to realize and assess possible risks as part of the planning process before the trip begins.

Care should be taken to research the destination to ensure that the trip will be safe for travelers and to lower the possibility of surprise for the group. Through research, the church should learn possible health risks, dangers and cultural norms. If the mission trip is taking place in a foreign country, research should be conducted on issues, such as immunizations, laws and customs. Important travel information can be found on the U.S. Department of State website, including consular information sheets, travel warnings and public announcements. Also be sure to share your research with the entire travel group through briefing meetings before the trip.

Developing written guidelines for your trip will aid the planning process and help to reduce the risk for trip participants.

Here are some things to determine when planning a mission trip:

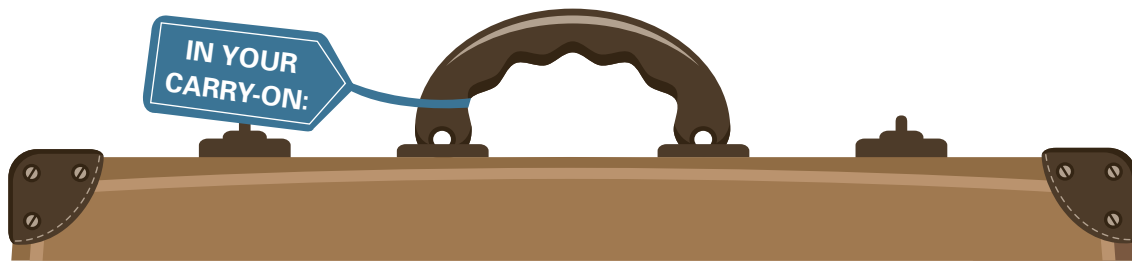
- Select requirements for travelers, such as age, health, experience and spiritual maturity.
- Conduct background checks on traveling adults and determine their duties for the trip.
- Decide what kinds of documents travelers must provide prior to the trip - medical release forms, parental consent for medical treatment, and proof of insurance.
- Designate a contact person, not on the trip, who will communicate between the church, the travelers and their family members.
- Have each traveler receive a physical examination from their physician, including any needed immunizations and prescriptions, at least six weeks before the trip to ensure their health.
- Ensure that there is a first aid kit with you to address minor health issues or accidents.
- Determine your need for insurance coverage - for things like liability and accident coverage for the group, foreign travel liability coverage, evacuation or medical transport coverage in a foreign country. 30-70% of short-term missionaries will get sick or have an accident overseas this year. Most mission leaders and tour operators confuse "travel insurance" with "trip cancellation insurance" and don't require it. Check with your church's insurance provider for information and assistance.
- Establish procedures for emergency situations. Do you have a medical response plan? Do you know where the nearest hospital is located? Minutes matter so discover where it is before it is needed.

There are risks associated with going on mission. These risks should be calculated and minimized. However, these should not be obstacles to accomplishing the mission to which God has called us: the Great Commission. By following these tips, your mission trip promises to be a rewarding and safe experience for everyone involved.

PACKING DOESN'T HAVE TO BE OVERWHELMING *by Eric Allen*

The time for departure on your mission trip is almost here. You've prepared the team and gathered the supplies you'll need to engage in ministry. You've made preparation for your transportation, your passport is ready for a new stamp (if traveling internationally) and your suitcase is lying open on the bed, waiting to be filled.

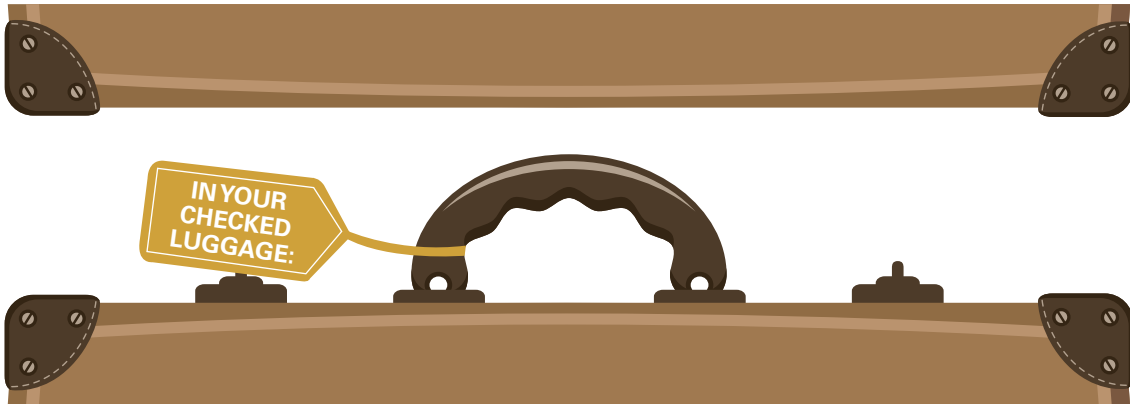
Now comes the hard part - packing for your mission trip! It can be hard to know what to take on a week-long (or longer) trip, particularly if you've never been to where you're going. It can be a challenge to know what to take and sometimes remembering to pack it is just as challenging. Therefore, whether you're a last-minute packer or just forgetful, the packing list below will serve as a help to you and your team when you begin to fill the empty suitcase. While what you'll need depends on where you're going (nationally or internationally) and what the activities of your group will be, the mission trip packing list below is a great start.



- Passport and airplane ticket, if going overseas.** You can't get too far without either of these, so place them in a secure place that you'll remember, like a special pocket in your backpack.
- Any medications you use regularly,** including allergy medicines.
- Medications you may need in a new environment:** Anti-malarial medications, lotion or salve to treat insect bites, and over-the-counter medicines such as Tylenol, Imodium, and Pepto-Bismol.
- Toiletries.** Remember that anything in your carry-on must meet TSA regulations and liquids are limited to 3.4 ounces.
- Medical Insurance Card.** The first thing needed if medical attention is sought after is a copy of your medical insurance card showing your provider and policy number.
- Money and/or an ATM card** for souvenirs and tips. U.S. dollars are accepted in many countries throughout the world, but large bills may not be accepted. Ten and twenty dollar bills are easier to handle within the US and overseas.
- Anti-bacterial hand sanitizer or wipes and pocket-sized tissue packs.** Keeping your hands clean and sanitized decreases your chances of sickness. If traveling internationally, some places may not have soap and water available.

- At least one day's change of clothes.** Unfortunately, baggage on foreign flights can get lost or delayed, so it's a good idea to have an extra set of clothes in your carry-on if you're flying.
- A book, magazine or tablet** for reading while traveling.

- Sunglasses.** It may be sunny where you're going, and you don't want to spend the trip squinting!
- Camera.** Even if you don't plan on taking photos on your way to your destination, valuable electronics are better off in your carry-on bag than in checked luggage.



- Sunscreen.** You may be visiting a place that has much more sun that you are used to, so it's a good idea to pack sunscreen with a high SPF. Packing sunscreen and any liquids in plastic baggies is a good idea if you don't want clothing ruined by an accidental opening.
- Hearty snacks.** The food at your destination should be tasty and safe to eat. However, you may want familiar snacks like protein/granola bars or trail mix for between meals. Just pack enough to share with your teammates!
- A flashlight with extra batteries.** While your destination may have electricity, it's always good to have a flashlight on hand for walking in unlit areas or in the case of a power outage (not uncommon in many foreign countries).
- Water bottle** that can be refilled with clean water.

- Appropriate clothing for your mission activities.** What is appropriate should be determined by the missionary you are working with as they know the culture and what is acceptable there. So, check with the missionary and when in doubt, dress conservatively and recognize that you are a witness for Christ.
- Shoes** (work boots, walking shoes, sandals, etc.). The type of shoes needed will be determined by the kind of work you'll be doing and where you're going, so ask your missionary host.
- Hat and/or bandana** to protect your face and neck from the sun may be needed.
- Small backpack** to carry personal items throughout the day.
- Non-slip flip flops** for the shower may also be a good idea, depending on your situation.

- Insect repellent with DEET.** This is particularly important if you are traveling to a country where malaria or dengue fever is a threat. But even in the US, mosquitoes may pose a threat in parks or in the evenings.
- Socks, pajamas, and underwear** for the length of your trip.
- Language dictionary.** If going to an international destination, a pocket dictionary or an app for your phone is a necessity!
- Travel converter/adaptor** for international travel. Your phone, computer and many other things you depend upon require power. Unless you take a travel converter/adaptor with you, you won't be using those things.
- Plastic bags** for packing dirty clothes for the return home.
- Notebook and pens** to record new words, memories, and observations.
- Bible.** Your faith is the most important thing you'll take and share on your journey!
- Poncho or raincoat** if your destination receives a significant amount of rainfall or cool weather is expected.
- Flexibility.** Traveling and serving in a new culture is incredibly rewarding, but occasionally plans can change at the last minute. Expect the unexpected and know that not everything has to go according to plan for the trip to be worthwhile, both for you and those you are working alongside.



Now you're ready to go! Enjoy your trip and be ready for a great adventure! God is going to do some incredible things through you ... and in you.

FOLLOW-UP: UNPACKING YOUR MISSIONS EXPERIENCE *by Eric Allen*

After you've planned, prepared, implemented and returned from your mission trip, it's time to unpack. Not just your suitcase, but the mission experience itself. Follow-up is an important part of going on mission because it helps the participant to understand what they learned and how God can use it in their everyday life.

There are people needing a witness in our own neighborhood and unreached people in our local community. Taking a mission trip to another state or even a foreign country should help us to be more comfortable sharing our faith and encourage us to be a Christian witness in our hometown. There are so many ways to impact our community and the area around our church using the same skills and resources we take overseas. So, help your church members returning from their mission trip to unpack their experience and awaken within them the realization that the mission isn't over.

Here are some suggestions for unpacking the mission experience that provide continued growth:

- Talk about the ministry experience and ask how what was done there can be used here at home.
- Share journal entries, pictures and videos with the church.
- Have a time of testimony and "sharing" during a public worship service.
- Provide a safe environment for discussing what they learned about themselves (weaknesses, failures, disappointments) and what God is teaching them.
- Ask them what they learned about God?
- Share about the experience on social media (as appropriate to the location you were serving in) with pictures and testimony of God's activity.
- Challenge them to consider how the mission experience may be the beginning of a journey God has planned for them, leading to vocational ministry, missionary service, or involvement in local ministry.
- Help them to plan service initiatives at home that draw connections between their missions experience away and service at home.
- Encourage them to continue the spiritual disciplines practiced on the trip like prayer, devotions, Bible study and worship.
- Send letters or emails of thanks and encouragement to the host missionary. Share with them how God used the mission experience.

- Discuss what "next steps" they will take on their spiritual journey.
- Send a reminder email or letter to every participant 1 month after returning with a picture of the group on the mission trip with the words... "Don't forget! God did great things and He isn't finished with you."



Cultural Awareness

COMMUNICATION IN OTHER CULTURES *by Doug Williams*

Crossing cultures can be an intimidating adventure. Adding to this anxiety is the feat of communicating cross-culturally. While many people do not simply long to get out of their “comfort zone,” the Great Commission necessitates that we be willing to go places and do things that make us a bit uneasy.

Communicating the gospel clearly and engaging other cultures carefully is essential in every situation, but even more so when crossing cultures. To communicate the gospel clearly and engage carefully other cultures, one must first understand and be able to communicate the gospel with clarity in their own culture. Here are some tips for communicating and engaging with other cultures.

1. Realize that different is not necessarily bad; it's just different. When crossing cultures, differences will quickly emerge. Realizing that others doing things differently than you does not mean one is right and the other is wrong is important for effective cross-cultural work. Learning why you do what you do and why others do what they do helps us understand one another and appreciate our differences even more.

2. Learn basic phrases and words. While no short-term team will learn a new culture or language in a week or two, taking the time to learn basics of the host language will endear you with the nationals much faster.

3. Watch and learn. Watch how other cultures greet one another. Watch how your host missionary or national partner interacts with the culture. Observation is often the best teacher. What you see done by trusted leaders, do yourself. Whether it is the way people greet one another or interact with older and young people, males and females, etc. practice what you observe.

4. Know what you should not do. Being careful to not offend in new cultures is vital for gospel witness. Not using a certain hand (e.g., left hand in some cultures), saying certain things, wearing certain clothing (short sleeve shirts or pants for ladies), making certain gestures (waving with the left hand) or talking to someone of the opposite gender can all be cultural mistakes that hinder gospel advancement. Some cultures are not as easily offended by foreigners making cultural mistakes, while others will be less forgiving of these blunders. Learning from your host missionaries and national partners is an important way to avoid these potentially offensive mistakes.

5. Be a learner, not an expert. Regardless of how much you have studied and read about the country or culture, you are not an expert. Go with a posture of wanting to learn from the missionaries and national partners. If they encourage you to do a certain thing or not do a certain thing, please follow their advice for the sake of long-term gospel impact in that place. Ask *good* questions that will help you understand the culture and communicate better.

6. Communicate through a trusted translator when possible. Using a translator will be essential for most overseas short-term teams. Here are some best practices for using translators:¹⁹

- Speak clearly and slowly.
- Use an entire sentence and/or phrase and pause after each for the translator to speak.
- When possible, share notes with your translator prior to speaking.
- Speak to and make eye contact with the audience, not the translator.
- Avoid jokes, slang, and figures of speech - they rarely make sense in other cultures.
- Use inflection and tone for emphasis.
- Let the translator read the passage of Scripture.
- Keep it short and simple (when appropriate). Note: a 20-minute message or talk will be about 40 minutes because of translation. Adjust accordingly.
- Express appreciation for the interpreter and hosts. In most cultures this is very appropriate and even expected.

7. Be clear and passionate about the gospel. Share the gospel clearly and passionately. Sharing stories in most cultures is an effective way to communicate. Sharing Bible stories with nationals is a great way to be clear and passionate about the gospel. If, for example, you are in a farming area, share a story about farming or sowing seeds from the Old or New Testament. After sharing the story, explain how the story points to the gospel of Jesus.

¹⁹ Adapted from *Team Leader Training: Impact Your World* (International Mission Board, SBC), 2007.

CULTURAL AWARENESS & COMMUNICATION by Teresa Parrett

Cultures can be very different whether going across your state or around the world. It may even be different from one county to the next or from an urban to rural setting. Getting to know the culture of the area where you will serve is of utmost importance and should be done for any mission trip, no matter where you're going.



- **Verbal Communication** - Keep communication clear and simple. Be careful not to use colloquialisms or slang words and be alert to words that may have a different meaning in another country. A colloquialism in one part of a state may even have a different meaning than in another area of the state. Words may even have different meanings from one generation to the next. For example, the word "text" had a totally different meaning when many of us were growing up than it does today. So, be on guard as to the words you use and how you use them. Other things to consider in your verbal communication are:

- **Pitch and volume**
- **Interrupting vs. waiting-your-turn to speak**
- **Pace of speech**
- **Meanings of words**

- **Nonverbal Communication** - Learn the nonverbal communication differences in the area where you will serve, since it can take many forms. Some nonverbal things to consider are:

- **Eye contact** - In some areas avoiding eye contact when speaking is a sign of respect, while in other areas it is just the opposite.
- **Touch** - A kiss on the cheek is an appropriate greeting in some countries, while a firm handshake is considered the way to greet someone in other cultures.

- **Gestures** - Be careful about using gestures while in another country. The United States “OK” sign has a totally different meaning in some countries.
 - **Physical space** - This will even vary from person to person in one’s own culture. Some people like to get close when talking one-on-one with a person, while others of us prefer a little more distance.
 - **Facial expressions** - Winking for example has one meaning in the United States, while it can be perceived as being rude in another culture.
 - **Posture** - One example is slouching. While a slouched person may be considered to be relaxed in one setting or culture, it can be seen as disrespectful in another.
- **Gender Roles** - Understanding gender roles, especially those of females, can be very diverse. Some countries do not hold women in very high esteem and some areas do not believe women should teach men. So, please consider the gender roles before going on a mission trip, even in the United States, and do be respectful of other’s beliefs.
 - **Dress** - Appearance or dress includes hair, makeup and jewelry, as well as clothing. It is always a good idea to dress modestly, not overdoing the makeup and especially not wearing flashy clothing or jewelry. Is it appropriate for women to wear pants or does the culture expect them to wear dresses and skirts? Are short pants appropriate or should long pants be worn?
 - **Bible Translations** - In some areas the KJV may be the only translation of the Bible that is accepted. Even though you may not personally use the KJV be considerate and don’t force another translation on the people you serve. If so, you may not be accepted or invited to return.
 - **Education** - Know the education level of the people you will serve and share on their level. Do not talk down to people, but also do not talk over their heads.
 - **Religious Views** - Be careful not to force your religious view on others but meet them where they are. This does not mean to compromise your beliefs but you will never reach people by forcing your views on them.
 - **Eating** - Food in another culture, even in the U.S., can be a big issue. Politely eat what you can but don’t make a big issue about what you cannot eat. Don’t make jokes or complain about food that is provided for you. Appreciate and be thankful for what is offered.

- **Morals** - Be on your best behavior and don't do anything that would give even a hint of immorality.
- **Time Sensitivity** - Attitudes to time differ among cultures. In some countries being late for an appointment is acceptable, while in others, it's unacceptable, and even considered rude. Promptness is always a good idea however, especially if you do not know the culture where you are serving.
- **Joking/Humor** - Humor is culture-specific. Avoid humor or joking until you know that the person you're communicating with "gets it" and is not offended by it. Many things that pass for humor in one culture can be seen as offensive in another.

A suggestion for those serving in the Appalachian culture is:



And, those are good suggestions for wherever you go.

It would be an impossible task to list all of the communication barriers or differences, so a good rule of thumb is to do your homework on communication before going on your mission trip, whether to a local ministry or a far away country.

Don't let poor communication hinder sharing the Gospel. Every person is looking at life and hearing the biblical message through their cultural glasses. Every behavior, including speech, mannerisms, facial expressions, eye contact, dress and everything about a person communicates something. Those who are not concerned with how they relate and communicate to people immersed in another culture are in danger of hindering the advance of the Gospel and that is your main reason for going on mission.

WHY CULTURAL AWARENESS IS IMPORTANT *by Coy Webb*

Jesus commanded us in Matthew 28:18-20 to “*go and make disciples of all nations.*” To do this effectively requires us to have some understanding of the community and the culture that God has called us to minister within. Race, age, religious belief, economic status, language, educational background, unique community marks of identification, major social issues all have impact on our mission field and can be bridges or barriers to the Gospel.

Every church needs a cultural awareness of their mission field. The Apostle Paul taught us about the need for cultural awareness in ministry in 1 Corinthians 9:22,

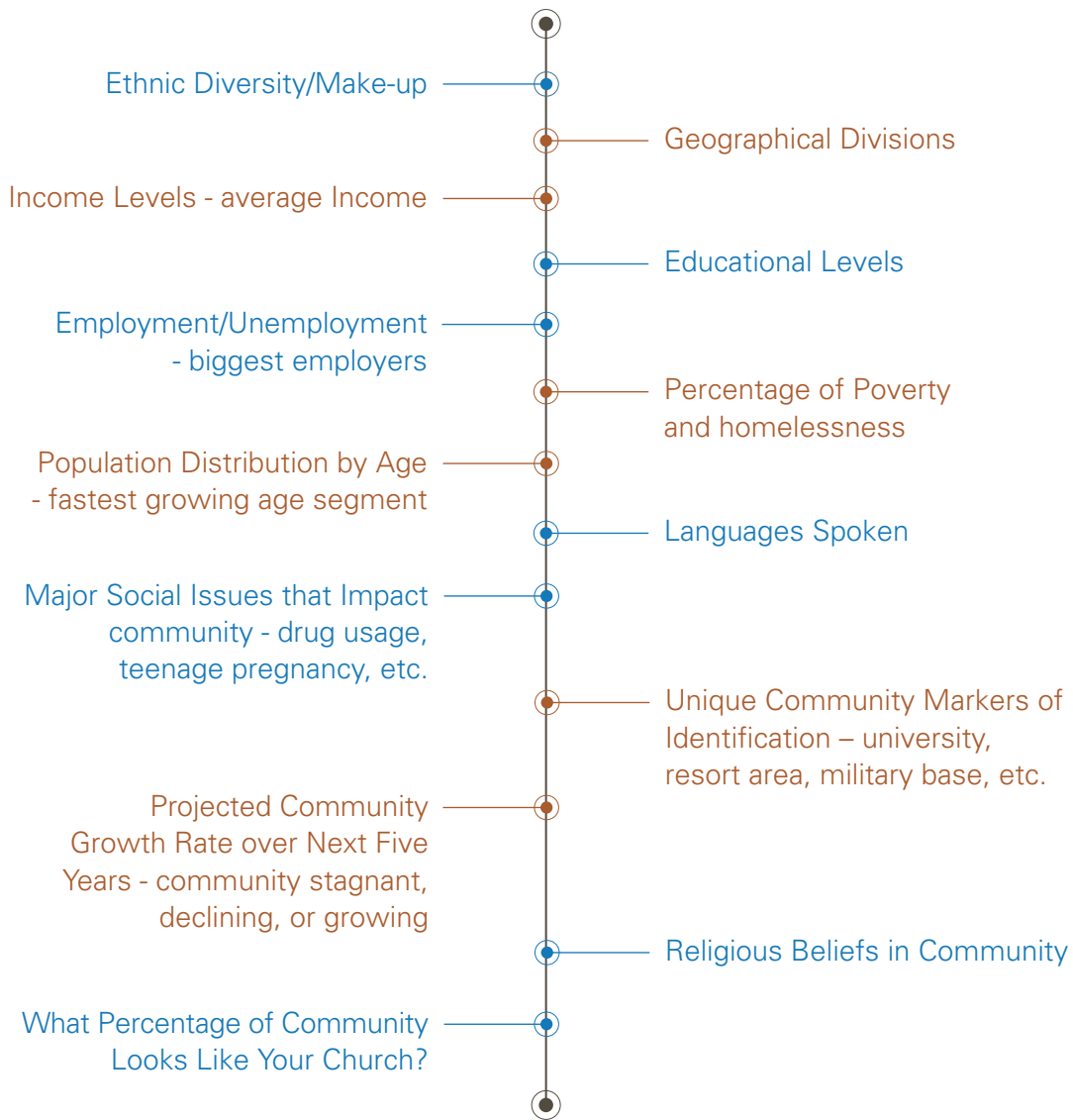
“I have become all things to all people, so that I may by every possible means save some.”

We are called as believers to be Ambassadors for Christ. A good ambassador:

- Has knowledge of who he is and who he is representing.
- Knows extensive knowledge of the place that he has been assigned...culturally, socially, politically, geographically, etc.
- Shows respect for the people that he will serve among.
- Seeks to identify and connect with the people that he will work with.

Do I know my community?

Strategic Cultural Demographics – Strategic Mapping



There are several ways to gather this information to help you to understand the culture of your community. Information can be gathered from census and other community data resources on the internet. Often real estate groups, local Chambers of Commerce, and schools will have good community information.

Church leaders should also do personal observation in the community to verify or to discover additional community information. Drive through the community. Walk through neighborhoods. Look for significant community markers or cultural markers (ethnic restaurants, non-Christian places of worship, community assistance or resource centers,

colleges, military base, recreational areas). Identify local places where people congregate. Observe and engage people in local gathering places.

The goal is to learn about people in your community and identify points where the church can build bridges to Christ.

The keys to developing a missional cross-cultural strategy in your church are:

- Listen and observe
- Be sensitive
- Look to build bridges to Christ
- Share the Gospel in the heart language of your community/target group
- Make decisions when possible with those of your target group
- Be inclusive when you reach people – allow them a place in the family of faith
- Be willing to make changes that break down barriers to the Gospel
- Do not sweat a few mistakes but seek to learn from them

CULTURAL AWARENESS - DO'S AND DON'TS *by Teresa Parrett*

Some Do's and Don'ts to consider when going on a mission trip:



- Learn about the culture BEFORE you go.
- Some research ahead of time on topics such as
 - How to interact with people in the area where you will serve.
 - Common stereotypes about the area you will be working in.
 - The context in which you will be serving and the specific organization with which you will be serving.
 - The preferred Bible translation.
- Come alongside local churches/ministries to help THEM do the work that God has called THEM to do...and then work yourself out of a job.
- Ask what the local church/community NEEDS before sharing what you want to do.
- Go more than once. Develop relationships over time. Build a partnership.
- Be flexible to the point of being fluid.
- Listen before speaking.
- Be prepared to do almost anything.
- Be humble and prayerful.
- Be normal and focus on loving people. Be yourself. Talk and act normally - as if the people who are new to you are any other new person you might encounter back home. Rest assured in who God created you to be and focus on building relationships, not achieving goals or objectives. Especially with evangelism, words have so much power if you've taken time to get to know someone and really care for him/her.
- Ask people if you can pray for them. If they say yes, pray with them right then and there.
- Bring spiritually mature adults, especially if you have a youth group. Most ministries that host volunteer groups are short-staffed. Bring enough competent adults to supervise your crew (generally one adult for every five - six youth).

- Honor the people you are serving by learning their stories. They are human beings created by God and desire acceptance and love. Ask questions and learn from them. Learning stories is a great avenue to evangelize and disciple.
- Conduct yourself in a way that positively reflects Christ. Keep down conflict within your mission team.
- Be focused on God's glory among the nations.
- Be flexible.
- Be a learner.
- Be encouraging.
- Be low maintenance.
- Be patient.
- Use common sense.
- Hold back exaggerated facial expressions.
- Avoid comparing everything to your home country or city.
- Wear appropriate clothing. Leave the "clever" t-shirts, flashy jewelry, etc. at home.
- Use culturally relevant illustrations in your sermons/lessons.
- Keep a positive attitude.
- ENJOY YOUR EXPERIENCE

Don'ts

- Rely on your own strength, knowledge, or personal experience.
- Take photos, especially of clients, without asking. If you do take photos, do so sparingly and limit them to your fellow volunteers.
- Share things on social media that will hinder the work or endanger those with whom you are ministering to and with. The rule of thumb is to always ask the host missionary what can be shared and what can't.
- Post negative comments or things that will be degrading on social media and don't post pictures without first getting permission.
- Make ANY kind of cultural or political jokes.

- Assume anything.
- Believe the lie that God isn't already there. God has been working in the lives of the people you are meeting long before you got there. He loves them far more than you ever could. Just go to tell the old, old story.
- Be afraid of differences. Skin color is just that. Languages are just that. Housing is just that. But there is one God, one Spirit for all. Allow differences to change your perspective and appreciation, but don't let differences affect the mission. Christ broke down the walls of hostility so that we could become one people.
- Make assumptions. Ask if something is not clear.
- Miss the moment.
- Be loud and obnoxious.
- Forget to use local currency.
- Expect locals to speak your language or talk like you.
- Do it just for the social media post.
- Make promises to missionaries/people that you can't fulfill immediately.
- Don't make financial (or other) commitments you cannot keep.
- Gossip.
- Criticize your hosts' culture or the United States.
- Complain about anything.



SECTION THREE:

PRACTICES IN MISSIONS

Basic Command

HOW TO INVOLVE THE UNINVOLVED *by Eric Allen*

Have you ever felt that only a small number of church members were doing the majority of the work? It's pretty common in churches, at least the ones I've been a part of, to depend upon the same few individuals to teach Sunday School, sing on the praise team, lead the men's ministry, serve as deacons and coordinate the discipleship ministry. When this happens, we are observing what is called the 80-20 rule or Pareto principle.

The Pareto principle states that roughly 80% of the effects come from 20% of the inputs or causes. The principle was named after Vilfredo Pareto, an Italian mathematician and economist who noted, in 1906, that 80% of land in his native Italy was owned by the wealthiest 20% of the population. Pareto went on to comment that 20% of his garden's pea plants produced 80% of the peas he grew.

What if we're observing the 80-20 rule in our churches because we don't provide opportunities for the uninvolved 80% to be involved in ministry that utilizes their gifts, skills and experiences? Ephesians 4 teaches that believers have been gifted and should be equipped for the work of the ministry. Ephesians 2 reminds us that "we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them." So, what if we're not seeing more believers involved in ministry and missions because we've limited the ministry opportunities made available to them?

An example of this was recently seen when one of the international missionaries with whom we partner needed someone to come alongside them to help with the artificial insemination of dairy cattle in a remote area among Muslims, where a plague had killed most all of the cattle population. Several Kentucky farmers with the experience and knowledge stepped up to meet the need and provided a Christian witness too. These farmers may not have volunteered to lead a VBS class or sing in the choir, but God had gifted them uniquely for "such a time as this."

There are many unique missions opportunities that allow believers to find joy and fulfillment in serving because they're using the talents and gifts God has equipped them with. Christ followers want and need to serve - but not all are given a chance if ministry opportunities ONLY exist within a very narrow window of mission experiences.

Listed on the next page are just a few of the many ways that Christ followers can use their passions, skills, talents and experiences to be uniquely on mission.

- Athletes are needed to help with sports camps (football, basketball, archery, etc.).
- Help is needed with literacy classes or after school tutoring.
- Farmers are needed to help with artificial insemination of cattle and crop production.
- Business and leadership classes for professionals in other countries.
- Cooking and food service help is needed in disaster relief work.
- Business owners can help with the development of micro-businesses that provide income for indigenous church planters and missionaries.
- Volunteers can learn how to install and repair wells that provide remote villages with fresh water.
- Those with construction experience are needed to provide ramps or make repairs for the handicapped and elderly.
- Plumbers and electricians have skills that can be utilized internationally or here at home as a witness.
- Skilled chainsaw and heavy equipment operators are needed in disaster relief work.
- Car mechanics could provide assistance to single mothers and the elderly.
- Medical professionals can serve through clinics in remote villages or in areas of poverty here in the U.S.
- Small motor repair courses can be used as a ministry in many cities throughout the world.
- Leather or metal work can provide an income for church planters in many places if they are trained and provided start-up resources.
- Retirees have years of experience to offer and should prayerfully consider using their unique skills and gifts for an extended period of time.
- Students should consider giving a month or a summer to serve in a mission opportunity related to their major or degree program.

Every skill or talent can be used for God's honor if we give it to Him through missions opportunities. The next time you observe the Pareto principle happening in your church, consider how a unique missions opportunity would involve that unengaged believer to use his passion, gifts, and talents.

STEPS TO COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT *by Eric Allen*

Ministry in and to the community is the most critically important, but often overlooked, activity of the local church. The church gets busy doing the “inward focused” activities that serve and even appear to strengthen the church. But somewhere along the way, they fail to turn outward and engage the local community by meeting it’s needs and sharing the gospel. This inward focused mentality is killing many churches.

Tom Rainer in his book *The Autopsy of a Deceased Church* shares that one of the common denominators among dying churches is their failure to engage the community around them. We see it in every city, both urban and rural. What used to be a thriving and community-involved church is now stagnant, unengaged and quietly dying.

Lifeway research shares that 78% of non-church attenders believe that the local church is more concerned with organized religion than with making a difference in their own community. Perhaps that’s why non-attenders aren’t coming anymore. They question what the church does and its significance in the life of the community.

Churches must start asking the question, “How can we effectively engage our community in such a way that we meet real needs and open doors for sharing Christ?”

Before a church dives into uncharted waters and begins ministry to the community, there are important steps to take that will ensure it is relevant, needed and well executed. Just because “X,Y,Z” church in another town is doing a ministry well is not reason enough for your church to invest and engage in the same ministry, unless it's needed by your community, and God is leading your church to implement it.

Here are some suggested steps for engaging your community through meaningful and relevant, gospel-centered ministry:

- 1. Pray Seeking God's Leadership** - for direction, open doors, resources, powerful witness, laborers for the harvest, and receptive hearers. Prayer teams, elderly widows/physically handicapped, prayer walking areas of need. Total dependence on God.
- 2. Share Vision and Involve Others** - with church staff, lay persons, community leaders and people of influence; through book study, sermon series, testimonies, newsletter/web page or blog.
- 3. Assess Community Needs** - assessment tools and help in understanding them are available from the Missions Mobilization Team of the Kentucky Baptist Convention at www.kybaptist.org/missions or missions@kybaptist.org.
- 4. Determine Giftedness and Available Resources** - church resources, passion of members, spiritual gift inventories, surveys; Ephesians 4 - God has equipped

each believer for "works of service". There are several different church assessment tools available. Contact the Kentucky Baptist Convention for assistance in determining which one will be most helpful to you - missions@kybaptist.org.

5. Find Your "Sweet Spot" - by matching discovered community needs with the church's gifting and resources to determine which ministry to engage in.

6. Plan the ministry

- Enlist Passionate Person and Leadership Team
- Decide on Ministry
- Determine Mission Statement
- Prepare Goals and Objectives
- Prepare and Implement Action Plans
- Gather Resources and Enlist Volunteers
- Provide Ministry Training - including evangelism (testimony, tracts, scripture, CWT, Share Jesus Without Fear, FAITH, 3 Circles, Tell Your Story or Most Important Thing, etc.).

7. Set the ministry in motion

8. Evaluation

The possibilities for community engagement through meaningful ministry are endless and only limited by you!

Here are some Community Ministry Ideas:

PARENTS & MARRIED COUPLES
parenting courses, marriage enrichment classes, money management

MEN
literacy, job skill training, computer use, jail/prison, mentoring for ex-offenders, homeless shelters

WOMEN

wives of deployed soldiers, mothers of preschoolers, pregnancy care, shelter for abused women/children, prostitution/human trafficking, mentoring mothers

STUDENTS

tutoring/homework assistance, backpack ministry, latchkey kids, sports ministry, foster parenting/adoption, college/university campus

HEALTH CARE

clinics, preventive health workshops/screenings, taxi service to doctors, prescription assistance, nursing homes

SUPPORT GROUPS

gambling, sexual addiction, substance abuse, grief recovery, divorce

SPECIAL MINISTRY

developmentally disabled, physically handicapped, internationals, refugee resettlement, raceways, truck stops, resorts & campgrounds

COMMUNITY

food/clothing, benevolence, money management classes, cooking classes on limited budget, rehab house trailers, multi-housing, laundromat, adopt a public school, car repair for low income families

LOCATING MISSIONS OPPORTUNITIES *by Teresa Parrett*

There are unlimited opportunities for church mission teams or individuals to serve in missions, both at home and abroad, and a number of places to locate these opportunities. Whatever gift, skill or talent you may have, God can use you in reaching others for Him. You may be an individual feeling led to serve with a particular ministry, or part of a team serving with a ministry. Even if you are unable to physically go, you can support those who do go by praying, collecting resources, or contributing financially to the mission team or ministry.

Pray for God to lead you to the area where He would have you serve. When selecting your mission project, consider such things as travel distance and lodging for your team. Match the giftedness of your team, your resources, and experience with the mission project. All of these will help make your mission experience run smoother. However, you still must be willing to be flexible. With the best of planning things can change once you are on the mission site.

Local Missions

Start by looking around in your own neighborhood or county for mission opportunities. Perhaps there are churches in your local area (or association) that need help with Vacation Bible School, construction, or other needs. Look for ministry centers, food or clothing ministries, pregnancy care centers, literacy missions, or other ministries in your local area that need volunteers to assist. The local Associational Mission Strategist is a good place to start with locating the needs in your area.

State Missions

The Kentucky Baptist Convention (KBC) has a website where churches, associations and ministries can post needs for volunteer mission teams. Go to www.kybaptist.org/go to view a listing of these needs. You can search by location, type of project and length of assignment. Each project has some detailed information about the request and the direct contact information for the ministry or church.

National Missions

The Kentucky Baptist Convention also has some “out-of-state” missions posted on their www.kybaptist.org/go site. Look for those under the “United States/Canada” tab.

Look on the North American Mission Board (NAMB) website, www.namb.net/go to learn of ways NAMB can help you or your church to be involved in missions in the United States and Canada.

International Missions

The International Mission Board (IMB) has a listing of areas to serve internationally. Go to www.imb.org/go to view those opportunities to serve short-term, mid-term, or long-term. Discover your role in missions with the IMB.

Other State Conventions

Check out websites of the state conventions where you have an interest in serving. Look under their “Missions” tab for ways to serve in their states. Tennessee Baptist Convention (www.tnbaptist.org/) and Arkansas Baptist Convention (www.absc.org/) are a couple of examples.

Disaster Relief

Get trained in Disaster Relief (DR) and be ready to serve when disasters strike. To learn more about Kentucky Baptist DR go to www.kybaptist.org/dr.

Woman’s Missionary Union

As an auxiliary of the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC), Woman’s Missionary Union’s unwavering focus is “making disciples of Jesus who live on mission” (www.wmu.com/about-wmu/). WMU carries out this mission by

- providing missions discipleship resources for churches and individuals,
- offering opportunities to engage with compassion ministries, and
- equipping people through leadership development experiences.

WMU IS

- **Biblically rooted**

Scripture guides us in knowing God, His ways, His character, His mission, His redemptive acts, and His purpose for the church.

- **Missions focused**

Jesus commissioned His disciples to proclaim the good news, disciple people of all nations, and teach them to live out the truths He taught.

- **Church based**

Jesus gave the church authority to act on His behalf. Teaching all ages prepares the church to fulfill His mission.

- **World aware**

God is always at work among all peoples, and WMU joins Him where they discern He is calling.

- **Denominationally supportive**

No one church can do alone what many churches can do together. WMU’s voluntary cooperation extends the missions reach of the local church.

WMU desires to walk alongside and support churches who want to learn about missions, pray for missions, give to missions and do missions, and tell about Jesus.

Kentucky WMU offers opportunities for children through adults to engage in missions. Participate in hands on compassion ministries through Changers Kids, Kentucky Changers, and Adults Changers. National WMU offers missions discipleship resources to help your church be intentional about fulfilling the Great Commission. Go to www.wmu.com for more information or to download a free sample of material.

Contact the Kentucky Baptist Convention

The Kentucky Baptist Convention Missions Mobilization Team is available to help with locating local, state, national and international opportunities. For direct help call 502-489-3530 or email missions@kybaptist.org.

MISSIONS AT HOME IN KENTUCKY *by Teresa Parrett*

Why Do Missions in Kentucky?

Many times, when we think of missions, we think of somewhere “across the seas,” but the Great Commission tells us to go to our “Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.” With an 18.5% poverty rate, and an average of only 12.1% of the Kentucky population in church on a given Sunday, Kentucky is a state with lots of physical and spiritual needs and is certainly a mission field.

The number of single parent homes, grandparents raising grandchildren, few jobs (or loss of jobs) in some areas, low literacy and education rates, job skills, and drugs are just some of the issues that cause poverty to be so high in Kentucky. As a result, many children do not have the food, clothing, health care, and essentials they need. Many are not taught the stories of the Bible, have not heard that Christ loves them, and are not encouraged to attend church where they would learn these things.

Mission teams and self-funded missionaries serve in Kentucky to help alleviate these physical and spiritual needs. Thousands come each year to assist local churches and missionaries in reaching out to the physical needs, opening doors to share about the spiritual. They may serve on a short-term mission trip, partner with a church or ministry and make multiple trips, or commit to long-term service in an area. In-state mission opportunities are numerous.

Short-Term Opportunities

Looking for ways to put your faith into action? Missions is year-round in Kentucky and there are lots of ways to get involved. The KBC Missions Mobilization Team can help connect you with dozens of one day to one- or two-week opportunities to demonstrate the love of Jesus through acts of service. Mission opportunities are available across the state and include pretty much anything for which an individual or team might be gifted. Check out the many short-term listings at www.kybaptist.org/go. You can search by type of project, location and length of assignment.

Mid-Term Opportunities

Opportunities are also available to serve from a few weeks to 6 or 9 months. With many of the nearly 2,400 Kentucky churches being small in number, some can use help with a music program, children’s ministry, food & clothing ministry, or other types of outreach.

Ministry centers across the state can use summer interns to serve alongside them. These mid-term opportunities too, can be found at www.kybaptist.org/go. Click on the “6 months or more” tab to view.

Long-Term Opportunities

Perhaps God is calling you to serve long-term as a self-funded Kentucky Mission Service Corps Missionary. A Kentucky Mission Service Corps missionary (KY-MSC) is an adult (18

years of age or older), called by God and connected to a Kentucky Baptist Convention church, who commits to serve from nine months to two years (renewable). The positions engage in or directly support missions, church planting, collegiate ministry or evangelism, in cooperative partnership with a Kentucky Baptist Convention church, association or organization.

John & Shaughanessy Morris, from Hazard, sensed God's call on their lives as missionaries. They felt certain they would serve "over-seas" in another country, but God called them to their own people of eastern Kentucky. John & Shaughanessy now direct God's Appalachian Partnership in McDowell (Floyd County), Kentucky, a ministry that meets the spiritual and physical needs of people in Appalachia.

The KBC can assist with the application process and placement in a ministry. Go to www.kybaptist.org/msc/ for more information.



How could God work through our missionaries and church planters if we better supported them through strategic intercession?

The interSEED monthly prayer calendar is a resource for Kentucky Baptists to support missionaries and church planters serving in Kentucky. These monthly prayer calendars encourage believers to pray for missionaries on their birthdays.

The prayer calendar can be found at www.kybaptist.org/interseed.

Adopt-a-Missionary





Do you want an exciting and meaningful boost for your church?

Do you want your church or small group to be more involved in missions?

Do you want to "get to know" a missionary?

Missionaries are not orphans, but adoption is a beautiful word that helps describe the strong relationship between missionaries and the churches and friends who pray and encourage them in their ministries. The church at Antioch, in a sense, adopted Paul and Barnabas as special messengers of the gospel to Asia and Europe (Acts 13:1-3).

An adopting church or group will experience:

-  A personal relationship with an active missionary.
-  A strengthened commitment to missions.
-  A heightened awareness of mission opportunities.
-  A fresh, outwardly focused ministry perspective.

 Group building and bonding through service to others.

 An opportunity to see God at work and an invitation to join Him in it.

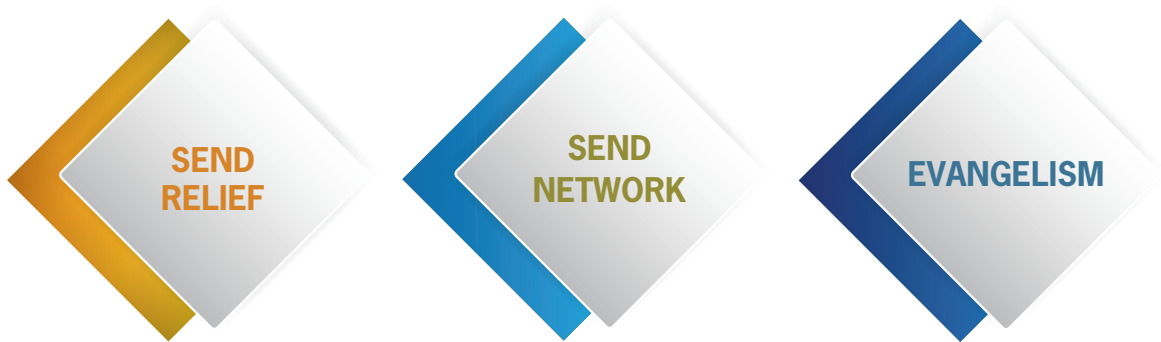
The adopted missionary will benefit greatly from the prayer support, encouraging phone calls, emails, cards, visits and care packages they receive from their adoptive church. Sending mission teams to help with projects and resource needs are also a huge help and, opportunities to visit and speak at the adopting church will be greatly welcomed by the missionary.

Check out the Adopt-a-Missionary program at <http://www.kybaptist.org/adoptmissionary> and consider adopting a Kentucky missionary.

Contact the Kentucky Baptist Convention Missions Mobilization Team at missions@kybaptist.org for help with any or all of these opportunities.

NAMB by Doug Williams

As an entity of the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC), the North American Mission Board (NAMB) “exists to work with churches, associations and state conventions in mobilizing Southern Baptists as a missional force to impact North America with the Gospel of Jesus Christ through evangelism and church planting” (www.sbc.net/aboutus/entities/namb.asp). We work closely with NAMB in assisting KBC churches with their three areas of focus:



Like other SBC entities, NAMB is funded in part by the convention’s Cooperative Program (CP). CP helps fund ministries and missions through cooperating state conventions and the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC). Nearly 23 percent of all Cooperative Program contributions received by the Southern Baptist Convention are directed to North American missions through NAMB (www.sbc.net/aboutus/entities.namb.asp).

The graphic on the following page further explains how CP impacts not only missions in North America and the world, but the KBC and greater SBC family.

CP COOPERATIVE PROGRAM OVERVIEW

When Your Church Gives \$1,000

The Cooperative Program is the financial fuel for reaching every person for Jesus Christ in every town, every city, every state and every nation. For every dollar you give to the local church, a portion goes to power the work of the Kentucky Baptist Convention and the Southern Baptist Convention to train pastors, send missionaries, plant new churches and strengthen existing churches.

Gifts from your church are distributed among Kentucky Baptist and Southern Baptist causes based on percentages. Each church determines how much they will send through the Cooperative Program.

Southern Baptist Convention Distribution		
International Mission Board	22.68%	\$226.80
North American Mission Board	10.26%	\$102.60
Baptist Seminaries	9.86%	\$98.60
SBC agencies and operations	2.20%	\$22.00
Total SBC:	45.00%	\$450.00
Kentucky Baptist Convention Distribution		
Mission Board		
Church Consulting & Revitalization Team	11.67%	\$116.70
Evangelism Team	9.93%	\$99.30
Executive Office Team	13.54%	\$135.40
General Items	1.93%	\$19.30
Missions Mobilization Team	3.94%	\$39.40
KBC agencies and institutions		
Baptist Healthcare Systems	0.03%	\$0.30
Clear Creek Baptist Bible College	3.47%	\$34.70
Crossings/KY Baptist Assemblies	1.92%	\$19.20
Kentucky Baptist Foundation	1.35%	\$13.50
Oneida Baptist Institute	2.64%	\$26.40
Sunrise Children's Services	2.15%	\$21.50
Woman's Missionary Union	2.43%	\$24.30
Total KBC	55.00%	\$550.00
Total CP 2020-2021	100.00%	\$1,000.00

How is the Cooperative Program distributed?



Churches

When your church gives through the Cooperative Program, half of the money stays in Kentucky and the other half goes to the Southern Baptist Convention.



Kentucky

2,360 churches – 600,000 members – 11,219 baptisms
In Kentucky, Cooperative Program funds are used by the Kentucky Baptist Convention to help pastors and churches through consultations, trainings and other resources. A portion also goes to Clear Creek Baptist Bible College, Crossings, Kentucky Baptist Foundation, Oneida Baptist Institute, Sunrise Children's Services and Kentucky Woman's Missionary Union.

North America

3,057 missionaries – 235,748 baptisms
552 new church plants

Some of the Cooperative Program funds going to the Southern Baptist Convention are sent to the North American Mission Board, which supports more than 5,000 church planters and strategists in the United States and Canada. The Cooperative Program also helps support the nation's six seminaries and the Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission.



World

3,615 missionaries – 47,929 baptisms
12,368 new church plants

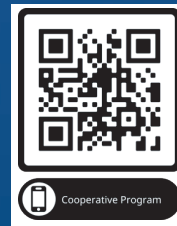
The Southern Baptist Convention additionally sends Cooperative Program dollars to the International Mission Board, which supports more than 3,600 international missionaries.

Want to learn more about how CP dollars from your church are distributed?

Scan the QR code with your smartphone or go to

www.kybaptist.org/CP

or contact KBC at: cp@kybaptist.org.



IMPACTING TODAY, CHANGING TOMORROW

TEN TIPS FOR INTERNATIONAL MISSION VOLUNTEERS *by Coy Webb*

God has called every believer to go into all the world and to make disciples. Short-term mission volunteers can be used by God to reach the nations, and to make tremendous impact on the advancement of God's Kingdom.



Here are my top ten tips for believers who seek to serve internationally:

- 1. Do not expect other cultures to be like your own.** Everyone tends to think that our own culture is the norm. Differences in culture is not always good or bad, it may just be different from your own. Avoid being critical of other cultures or comparing it to America.
- 2. Be a learner.** Ask questions. Learn about local customs. Embrace new foods and new experiences. Show genuine interest in the people that you will meet. Knowledge of others and culture will always strengthen your witness.
- 3. Learn some language.** Not all of us are gifted in language, but most of us can learn a few words. Learn to say "Hello", "Goodbye", and "Thank you". Nationals appreciate our effort in even small ways, and it demonstrates that we want to build relationships.
- 4. Treat others with dignity and respect.** Put others before ourselves as the Scriptures teach us, whether they be nationals or fellow team members.
- 5. Have a servant spirit.** Christ demonstrated the effectiveness of a servant spirit in His ministry and calls us to do the same. A servant spirit opens doors for the Gospel and makes us a better team member.
- 6. Welcome others into your presence.** Be open to people. Seek to engage others in culturally appropriate ways. Kindness, smiles, and a gracious attitude are bridges for the Gospel.
- 7. Demonstrate a spiritual depth.** Prayer, Bible study, and worship are foundations for maturity in Christ. You cannot share what you do not possess. Prepare yourself spiritually to be a witness and to give evidence that you are a disciple.
- 8. Be fluid.** Things will not always go as planned. Trust that the Holy Spirit is working in the changes and go with the flow.
- 9. Demonstrate a passion for Christ.** Be ready to share your story and what He means to you.

10. "Go." You will never be used by God until you say "yes" and go. Would you be that one or, even better, would you take someone with you?

A lost world is waiting. Jesus commanded us to **"Go."**



*And how can anyone preach unless they are sent? As it is written:
'How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!'*



(Romans 10:15)

INTERNATIONAL MISSION BOARD: UPG, UUPG *by Doug Williams*

The Beginning of the Foreign Mission Board

"In the words of William Bullein Johnson, first president of the Southern Baptist Convention, the Foreign Mission Board was created with the formation of the Southern Baptist Convention in 1845 ' . . . for the purpose of organizing an efficient and practical plan, on which the energies of the whole Baptist denomination, throughout America, may be elicited, combined and directed in one sacred effort for sending the word of life to idolatrous lands'" (www.sbc.net/aboutus/entities/imb.asp).

International Mission Board

Now known as the International Mission Board (IMB), the mission is still the same. This mission is expressed today as: "serving Southern Baptist in carrying out the Great Commission to make disciples of all nations. The vision for that mission includes 'a multitude from every nation, tribe, people and language, knowing and worshipping our Lord Jesus Christ' (Rev. 7:9)" (www.imb.org/about).

UPGs and UUPGs

Much has been said over recent years about unreached people groups (UPG) and unreached, unengaged people groups (UUPG) among missiologists. In short, unreached people groups refers to "ethnolinguistic groups in which the number of evangelical Christians is less than 2 percent" (www.imb.org/beliefs-key-terms/#unreached). While this 2 percent gauge can be helpful, missions should not limit whether a group is reached solely by this determinate.

IMB Mission Strategy Today

Therefore, the IMB mission strategy is to focus "on both unreached peoples and places. We deploy missionary teams to unreached places where Christ is largely unknown and the church is relatively insufficient to make Christ known in its broader population without outside help. We also deploy missionary teams to reached places with a significant population of unreached peoples. In addition, we deploy missionary teams to reached places with significant potential for reaching unreached peoples and places. Regardless of place, we proclaim the gospel to all people with an intentional focus on reaching different peoples and, to the extent to which it is linguistically possible, gathering them into churches together. In this way, we are resolutely focused on playing our part in seeing disciples made and churches multiplied in every place and among every people group in the world" (www.imb.org/beliefs-key-terms/#unreached).

KBC and IMB as Partners

Ultimately, the Great Commission was not given to the IMB or even KBC. It was given to the church. The IMB and KBC are helpful inasmuch as these organizations assist the church to be and do what God has called the church to be and do. With all this in mind, the KBC partners with IMB to help KBC churches reach the world for Christ. We work closely with IMB missionaries to connect KBC churches for meaningful gospel

partnerships, assisting them to carry out the vision God has given them to reach peoples and places previously unreached by the gospel.

First Response

READY CHURCH *by Coy Webb*

Most churches, businesses, and organizations fail to prepare for times of disaster. The result is each of these entities lessen their ability to survive and recover from catastrophic events. However, a far greater tragedy is that the church often fails to minister in effective and positive manner following disasters.



Kentucky Baptist Disaster Relief's strategy plan, "Ready Church," enables churches to *prepare, connect,* and *respond* in times of disaster. This strategy enables churches to be the hands and feet of Christ to their hurting neighbors.

God has placed the local church to be light that reflects the hope of Christ. Disasters create unique opportunities to share that hope and offer the Good News of the Gospel to our neighbors in their hour of need.

Paul challenges Titus and the church in Titus 3:1:

"To be ready for every good work."

Why Ready Church?

1. Communities across the Commonwealth have the potential for tornadoes, floods, ice storms, public shootings, earthquakes, severe storms, power outages, fires, industrial accidents, fatal vehicle crashes, and terrorist attacks.
2. Kentucky has people who need compassionate ministry during times of loss and tragedy. God encourages us throughout Scripture to minister to widows, orphans, strangers, the broken, the wounded, and the "least of these."
3. Kentucky has people who need Christ. Compassionate ministry creates opportunities to share the Gospel and hope of Christ. Disasters open doors that have often been closed to the Gospel if churches are prepared to respond to our hurting neighbors with positive and caring ministry.

Ready Church enables the church to **prepare** for times of disaster. The local church can prepare for disasters by:

- Identifying their Jerusalem.
- Developing a strategic response plan that considers the most likely disaster events for your area and assesses how the church facility

and giftedness of the church can be best utilized during crisis events.

- Forming “GO” Teams.
- Training to be effective during response.

The “Go” Team can be a team of believers or multiple teams. The “Go” Team should seek the following areas of responsibility:



Ready Church enables the local church to **connect** to maximize effectiveness during crisis events. The local church should connect to:

- Local emergency management and community response leaders to share their ability to respond and to determine how to best fit in local response plans.
- Kentucky Baptist Disaster Relief or other organizations that can help the church with training to maximize effectiveness.

Ready Church enables the church to **respond** when crisis events occur by:

- Establishing a response protocol.
- Activating trained ministry teams to respond to the needs of their community in times of disaster.

Is your church ready?

WHAT IS KENTUCKY BAPTIST DISASTER RELIEF *by Coy Webb*

Our world continues to experience devastation and destruction annually. Man-made events as well as natural disasters continue to challenge our minds with “why.” Why has this happened? Why me? Why my community? As Believers, we cannot answer the “why,” but we can respond with love and compassion as we help those affected know that they are not forgotten by God.

Southern Baptist Disaster Relief is one of the three largest disaster response entities in the United States. Trained volunteers stand ready to respond when disaster hit across our globe. Disaster Relief ministry provides an opportunity for believers to be the hands and feet of Christ to hurting people.

Kentucky Baptist Disaster Relief ministry began in 1984 and is part of the larger Southern Baptist Send Relief network of 42 state conventions, the North American Mission Board, and SEND Relief. Kentucky Baptist Disaster Relief is supported by gifts of Kentucky Baptists through the Cooperative Program and the Eliza Broadus Offering for State Missions. This ministry offers opportunities for believers to be on mission for Christ during times of crisis.

The Apostle John instructed us:

“Let us not love with words or speech, but with actions and in truth” (1 John 3:18).

In times of crisis, people need more than empty words. They need someone to come alongside them with genuine help and real hope. Kentucky Baptist Disaster Relief brings practical help, the healing grace of Christ, and the hope of the Gospel to those devastated by disaster. More than 2400 Kentucky Baptists are trained as disaster relief volunteers. Volunteers can staff mobile kitchens designed to provide thousands of hot meals, move in with a chainsaw after a tornado, assist homeowners in cleaning up a flooded home, offer spiritual care as a chaplain, and provide many other disaster services.

Kentucky Baptist Disaster Relief volunteers are trained in:

-  Chainsaw Ministry
-  Chaplain Care
-  Emergency Childcare
-  Damage Assessment
-  Flood and Wildfire Clean up
-  Mass Feeding
-  Roof Tarping
-  Evangelism in Crisis

- 🌾 Mobile Communications
- 🌾 Shower and Laundry Ministry
- 🌾 Water Purification and Well Repair

Kentucky Baptist Disaster Relief has a host of resources that can be mobilized during times of disaster. Resources that can be deployed are:



- Mobile Lift
- Fork-lifts
- Mobile Shower Trailers
- Mobile Laundry Trailer
- Mobile Childcare Trailers
- Mobile Water Purification Units
- Mobile Roof Tarping Trailers
- Kubota Skid-Steer
- Mobile Kitchens with the capacity to prepare 68,000 meals a day for disaster survivors
- Chainsaw/Flood/Fire Recovery Trailers
- Mobile Communication Units
- Trucks/Pickups
- and more

To learn how you or your church can get involved in this Kingdom ministry go to <http://www.kybaptist.org/dr>, or call (502) 489-3527.

WHY GET TRAINED IN DISASTER RELIEF? *by Coy Webb*

Preparation is important in any area of ministry as it enables us to be more effective as we seek to be used by God to reach or minister to others. The wisdom writer in Ecclesiastes 10:10 declared, "If the ax is dull, and one does not sharpen the edge, then he must use more strength, but wisdom brings success." Preparing the edge by sharpening the blade will enable the tool to be more effective, just as training helps believers to serve more effectively in response to the survivors of disasters.



Top ten reasons to be trained in disaster relief:

- 1. Training prepares us in our understanding of disasters and the needs that arise in times of disaster.**
- 2. Training enables us to respond in appropriate and effective ways in times of disaster.**
- 3. Training prepares us to understand our role as part of a disaster team. Emergency Managers often list untrained volunteers as one of their greatest problems in times of disaster.**
- 4. Training enables us to sharpen our abilities to be most effective as we serve, in order to be an asset not a hindrance in the response. Spontaneous volunteers typically lack familiarity with situation assessments and incident management. Because of this, they usually end up being in the way, rather than providing meaningful help.**
- 5. Training helps us to understand hazards and safety concerns in disaster areas. Untrained volunteers are much more likely to be injured in disaster response as they are unaware of risk factors.**
- 6. Training prepares us to understand in a deeper way some of the trauma of disaster victims that we might be able to offer appropriate compassion.**
- 7. Training prepares the hands to be ready to serve effectively. Becoming trained enables you to respond in times of disaster with needed skills.**
- 8. Training prepares the head by giving knowledge to increase effectiveness. Untrained volunteers are often unprepared to work long, stressful days in austere and rugged living conditions.**
- 9. Training and relating to a known disaster response group enables better security in disaster areas. Untrained volunteers create atmospheres where**

scam artists, who seek to prey on hurting and vulnerable people, can get access into disaster settings under the guise of being a volunteer.

10. But the greatest reason to train is that God deserves our very best in all that we do and to achieve the best requires discipline, effort, and knowledge. Trainings are an opportunity to grow as Believers so that when God calls we are ready.

Disasters will come. Therefore, let me encourage you, be prepared to serve by being trained. Victims deserve that. Other disaster relief workers deserve that. But most of all, our God deserves that! A little training goes a long way in making us more effective and prepared to serve with excellence for the glory of our Lord.

You can learn how to become connected and receive training through Kentucky Baptist Disaster Relief at <http://www.kybaptist.org/dr>.

EVANGELISM DURING TIME OF CRISIS *by Coy Webb*

Jesus said to His first disciples, *“Follow Me and I will make you fishers of men.”* (Matthew 4:19.)

I had a good friend who was an excellent fisherman and made a decent living as a fishing guide. If there was one fish in a lake, my friend would catch it. Why was he such a good fisherman? He understood fish. He knew the time of day that fish were most active. He knew the best bait or lure to attract the fish that he was seeking. He knew how deep to drop the line. He knew the habitat of fish. He had an effective fishing strategy. Because he knew fish well, they were attracted to his hook. My friend rarely came home empty handed.

To catch fish, it helps to understand their habitat, preferences, routines, and most likely times to feed. To reach people, we need to share during times when they are most receptive to the Gospel. We need to share strategically.

Studies demonstrate that people are most receptive to life-changing truth during times of major change and extreme stress. People are more receptive during transitions like having a new baby, moving to a new home, or starting a new job. They are also more receptive during stressful periods such as divorce, financial problems, death, or loss in a disaster.

As a disaster relief leader, let me share **10 strategic tips** in reaching people during times of crisis:

- ✎ Listen to their story before seeking to share your own.
- ✎ Demonstrate genuine concern.
- ✎ Offer real help in any capacity that you are capable of.
- ✎ Be cautious in making promises and fulfill promises made.
- ✎ Avoid using manipulative actions and words. We are not salesmen, but we are trusting in God’s Holy Spirit to open and change hearts.
- ✎ Realize that unbelievers may not act or behave like followers of Christ. Avoid seeming judgmental and condemning. If they enter a relationship with Christ, He will change them into a new creation and help them to make needed changes by His power.
- ✎ Be prepared to share your faith story. Your story in Christ is a powerful tool in God’s hands.
- ✎ Be prepared to help them understand how they can experience salvation. Share what it means to accept Christ, repent of sin, believe in Christ, and confess Him as Savior and Lord.
- ✎ Allow time for questions, conversation, and the possibility of follow-up.
- ✎ Pray with them. This is appropriate even if they are not ready to make a life-changing decision.

THE CHURCH'S RESPONSE TO VIOLENCE AND TERROR *by Coy Webb*

Tragically, we live in a world that continues to witness increasing acts of violence in schools, churches, and other public places. These shocking events often leave communities reeling, and in need of spiritual care.

As the community tries to recover, things will normalize but will be forever different from how things were before. "Different" in these type of tragedies is an understatement. According to the National Center for PTSD, 77% or more who witness a school shooting may develop post-traumatic stress disorder. Symptoms of PTSD include pervasive and disruptive anxiety, nightmares, sleep difficulties, flashbacks, aggression, emotional detachment, social withdrawal, on-going emotional distress, and even physical pain symptoms.

These responses are often temporary and ease with time. However, some individuals may need psychological and spiritual counseling to be able recover and cope with PTSD. What can the church do to help those who have gone through and survived such a terror-filled event?

Observe behavior of those affected. Are they demonstrating symptoms of PTSD or behavior that demonstrates need of help?

Be there. People often do not need wisdom or advice; they just need to know that they are not alone and someone cares.

Acknowledge their pain and confusion. Let them know that you understand that this is a painful, overwhelming, or hurtful time. Assure them that they are having a normal reaction to an abnormal event.

Intentionally listen. Focus on the person. Follow what the person is saying. Be conscious of body language. Maintain eye contact. Fixate on what you can do, not what you cannot help with. Listen more than you talk.

Actively offer comfort. Be with them. Listen to them. Walk alongside them. Shield them from further harm. Help them discover resources to help.

Promote calming. It is OK to weep with those who are grieving but seek to focus on their needs not your own. Seek to help them reestablish normal activities and routines, such as eating, sleeping, exercise, etc.

Allow them to grieve and express their grief. Grief takes time and most people pass through several stages of grief before ready to move on from the grief event.

Hugs and appropriate physical touches. This can offer healing and comfort.

Pray with those hurting. Do not underestimate the healing that God often gives through prayer.

Do not try to answer the why questions or offer theology lessons on how God acts in certain events. In the crisis, people need to know you care, not what you may or may not know.

Offer spiritual help when appropriate. Those with spiritual foundations recover from disaster events in healthier and more positive ways than those who have no spiritual roots. Remember to express how God has helped you in crisis times and share your faith, not force your faith, on those who are vulnerable in their distress.



Lord, be merciful to us! We wait for you. Give us strength each morning! Deliver us when distress comes.



(Isaiah 33:2)

Special Opps

HUMAN TRAFFICKING AWARENESS *by Coy Webb*

How much is a soul worth?

God responds to this question with this declaration:

“For God so loved the world that He gave His Only Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life” (John 3:16).

This declaration teaches us that every human life has infinite value in our Creator’s eyes. Every person is created in the image of God, but tragically we live in a broken and sinful world which creates depravity and robs human worth. Human trafficking, the exploitation of men, women, and children, is a crime against humanity and one of sin’s most heinous depravities.

Slavery is illegal in almost every nation across our globe, yet millions of victims continue to be enslaved in our world. Here are the tragic facts according to the September 2017 report from International Labor Organization and Walk Free Foundation:

- ⚠ There are more human slaves in the world today than ever before in history.
- ⚠ An estimated 27 million adults and 13 million children are trapped in modern slavery.
- ⚠ 80% of those trafficked are females and approximately half are children.
- ⚠ Approximately 80% of trafficking involves sexual exploitation, and 19% involves labor exploitation.
- ⚠ Globally, the average cost of a slave is \$90.
- ⚠ The FBI estimates that over 100,000 children and young women are trafficked in America today. They range in age from 9 to 19, with the average age being 11. Many victims are not just runaways or abandoned, but are from “good” families who are coerced by clever traffickers.
- ⚠ Human trafficking is one of the largest international crime industries and earns traffickers billions of dollars as they victimize the vulnerable.
- ⚠ In approximately 54% of human trafficking cases, the recruiter is a stranger, and in 46% of the cases, the recruiters know the victim.
- ⚠ Human trafficking has been reported in all 50 states.

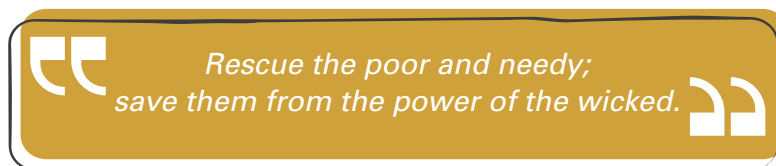
(“56 Little Known facts about Human Trafficking” by Karin Lehnardt, September 20, 2016)

One of the issues that impacts human trafficking in significant ways is pornography. Demand will always fuel supply. Consider these facts:

- Pornography is a major contributor as it devalues human beings as sexual objects to be used.
- 77% of middle-aged Christian men viewed pornography at work in the past 3 months.
- 8 out of 10 Christian men between the ages of 18-30 view porn at least monthly.
- Tragically, the number of Christian men viewing porn is equivalent with the national averages of non-Christians.
- 36% of Christian men view pornography daily.
- Of all consumers of online pornography, 71.61% are male and 28.39% are female.

(“2014 Pornography Survey of Christian Men,” by Joel Hesch, October 24, 2014)

The church cannot sit on the sidelines during this war for the souls of the exploited and vulnerable. The Gospel compels us to be His voice of truth, His hand of grace, and His feet of rescue.



(Psalm 82:4)

WHAT CAN THE CHURCH DO TO ADDRESS HUMAN TRAFFICKING? *by Coy Webb*

How should the church respond to those who are enslaved today?

“Wash yourselves. Cleanse yourselves. Remove your evil deeds from My sight. Stop doing evil. Learn to do what is good. Seek justice. Rebuke the oppressor. Defend the rights of the fatherless. Plead the widow’s cause.” (Isaiah 1:16-19)

The church cannot ignore the issue of human trafficking. The church is called stand against evil, seek justice, care for the least of these, and rebuke the oppressor. Our God calls us to speak out and to reach out.

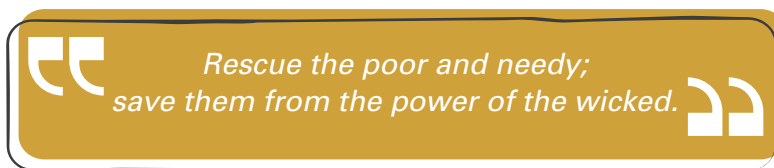
As followers of Christ, he calls us to be agents of justice and truth...of love and grace.

What can the church do?

- Care enough to get involved.
- Begin paying attention and being aware of those that may be victims of human trafficking.
- Avoid the temptation to blame the victims for their situations.
- Be willing to reach out and offer a hand of help and hope to someone victimized by trafficking. Offer unconditional love and remember that the chains of sin are not always broken quickly.
- Realize that breaking the chains of trafficking will not come easy; it will require time, patience, and endurance.
- Understand that not every situation will result in success, but through the power of God, victories are possible.
- Address the issue of pornography honestly with your church from the pulpit and in small groups.
- Begin men’s and women’s groups, where individuals can find a safe place to share their struggles and be freed from pornography’s hold through transparency, accountability, biblical study, and prayer.
- Train church, children, and youth leaders to recognize the signs of abuse and trafficking vulnerability; and seek to increase awareness how perpetrators utilize extortion and weak areas to exploit the vulnerable.
- Utilize MinistrySafe and their five-part system that provides a framework for sexual abuse prevention in your ministry areas. <https://ministrysafe.com/the-safety-system>

- Be cautious in allowing new members or new attendees to your church in serving in children's or youth ministry.
- Conduct Child Protection training for church, youth, and children's leaders.
- Develop child protection policies that build in safeguards.
- Conduct background checks on youth and children's leaders in the church before allowing them to serve.
- Teach Biblical sexuality in appropriate settings to youth and adults.
- Support or volunteer with a ministry that is working to free victims from trafficking.

The church can make a difference and free those chained by exploitation and evil.



(Psalm 82:4)

ORPHAN CARE IN THE LOCAL CHURCH by Dr. Paul Chitwood

Every year in our country, more than 3.6 million referrals are made to child protection agencies involving more than 6.6 million children. On average, 4 to 7 children die every day because of abuse and neglect. On any given day, there are well over 400,000 children in foster care in the United States. Given the number of kids in and out of the system over the course of a year, far more children now require protection from the state. For example, in 2015, over 670,000 children spent time in U.S. foster care.

What does any of that have to do with your church?

The psalmist wrote, *“Children are a heritage from the Lord, offspring a reward from him” (Psalm 127:3).*




Mark records that Jesus *“took a little child whom he placed among them. Taking the child in his arms, he said to them, ‘Whoever welcomes one of these little children in my name welcomes me’” (Mark 9:36).*

Matthew quotes Jesus as saying about children who were in his presence, *“See that you do not despise one of these little ones. For I tell you that their angels in heaven always see the face of my Father in heaven” (Matthew 18:10).*

James stated, *“Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress...” (James 1:27).*

As Kentucky Baptists seek to live out the teachings of Scripture, we recognize that we have an obligation to acknowledge, welcome, and do all we can to protect children, especially those who are vulnerable or have already been victimized. We have been called to care for orphans of dead parents and orphans of the living, kids whose family has been declared unfit, even a severe risk to the child. One of the ways we meet that obligation is through our financial support of the ministry of our Kentucky Baptist Homes for Children, known today as Sunrise Children’s Services. Every church giving through the Cooperative Program and/or through the special Thanksgiving Offering, supports Sunrise.

What more can we do?

-  Raise our awareness to signs of abuse and neglect and being proactive about reporting anything that looks suspicious is a good place to start.
-  With 8,700 victimized kids in the state system in Kentucky, let’s consider adopting a child or training to be a foster parent.
-  Most of us could provide respite care for a foster family, which means you keep a child overnight or over the weekend.

💡 Any of us could become a mentor and visit a girl or boy who lives in an institution without anyone in their lives who ever interacts with them except those who are paid to do so.

💡 We could serve as a CASA volunteer - a "Court Appointed Special Advocate" who has volunteered to be assigned to kids in the court system to help them navigate the bureaucracy and trauma.

💡 Maybe you could start an orphan care ministry in your church.

These are just some of the many ways we can help protect at risk children and seek to heal the hurts of those who have become victims.

CONSTRUCTION AS MISSIONS *by Teresa Parrett*

Construction skills of all types are much needed on the mission field and open doors to sharing the Gospel with those you serve.

One Kentucky missionary shared the story of a man they had been ministering to through their ministry center. The man had completed their three-month budgeting course and was in need of some home repairs. A mission team from Pennsylvania who had served in the area for the past two years worked on the man's home, including a bathroom that was falling in and in total disrepair. On the last day of the team's mission trip, the missionary went by to see how things were going. The home owner met him at the car, took him by the hand and led him to the newly renovated bathroom. The missionary, thinking the man wanted to show him his new bathroom, was quite surprised when the man said, "Today I knelt in the floor by this brand-new bathtub and accepted Christ as my personal Savior."

The missionary and mission team had met this man at his point of need, providing an opportunity to share Christ with him. The man's life was changed that day for all eternity because of a mission team that used their construction skills, but also took time to share the Gospel.

This is just one of many stories of how construction teams have used their skills on mission. Others include churches that were rebuilt after being destroyed by fire, tornado, or flood and a lady who financed the rebuilding of a widow's house that was beyond repair.

There are many elderly, single moms, needy families, churches and ministry centers that are in desperate need of teams with construction skills. Teams are needed throughout the year for everything from minor repairs to major construction or rebuild jobs. Consider putting together a construction team from your own church or association that can meet the building or repair needs of your local community, as well as state-wide, nationally, and internationally.

Some of the ways construction teams can serve on mission include:



- Handyman services
- Wheelchair ramps for the elderly and disabled
- Home repairs
- Roofing
- Painting
- Electrical



- Plumbing
- Winterization of homes
- New home construction for a needy family
- Church renovation
- New church construction
- Repairs/renovation/new construction at a ministry center
- Disaster relief responses

Look for construction opportunities on the Kentucky Baptist Convention website at <http://kybaptist.org/go> by searching for construction/maintenance in the “project type” tab.

Or, consider joining a Baptist Builder Team, a Carpenters for Christ Team, or a Campers on Mission Team and use your construction skills on mission for Christ.

DISPLACED PEOPLE: GOD'S GREAT COMMISSION STRATEGY *by John Barnett*



We live in an incredibly unique time to fulfill the great commission! Every day, millions of people are moving across the planet and communities, cities, and countries are literally changing overnight. In the midst of this migration, God is opening new pathways for the church to be on mission both locally and globally. Taking the gospel to the ends of the earth is not only about being a sending church, but also a receiving church. It has always been God's design for the gospel to spread to and through diaspora communities, or through those who have been displaced from their homeland.

Welcoming the displaced locally

As God poured out His Spirit in Acts 2, the disciples began to fulfill the Great Commission by ministering among the diaspora in their midst. The apostles were preaching to, baptizing, and discipling the "devout men from every nation" who had come to Jerusalem for the festival of Pentecost. These men, both Jews and proselytes, had come from the Near East, Asia Minor, North Africa, Arabia, and from the known world. Under the apostle's leadership, they formed the church, faced persecution, boldly proclaimed Christ, helped those in need, and God added to their numbers daily.

Going to the displaced globally

In Acts 8, God allowed persecution to send Philip to preach the gospel in Samaria, and God used an angel to send him to lead an Ethiopian eunuch to Christ in middle of the desert. In Acts 11, scattered believers from Cyprus and Cyrene preached about Jesus to the Greeks and many believed. They called themselves Christians and formed Antioch church. Then, in Acts 13, the Holy Spirit called out members from this church of displaced people to declare God's glory among the nations.

In the midst of a global crisis, God is opening gospel opportunities by bringing displaced people to our doorstep and calling us to go serve and share the love of Christ with those who have been displaced globally. All around the world, people are continually being displaced by war, famine, persecution, racism, human trafficking, natural disaster, and forced migration. Many of them have never heard the name of Jesus and are desperately seeking help, healing, hope, purpose, and truth!

Here are 3 ways the Mission Mobilization Team can serve you today:

Discover the Opportunities:

Learn about ongoing opportunities for your church to embrace displaced people both locally and globally. Through our mapping and community ministry

resources, the MMT can help you to not only discover the gospel gaps in your community, but also help you develop a plan.

Develop a Strategy:

We want to help you develop a comprehensive strategy to reach displaced people in your area. The steps of this strategy are summarized as follows:



Hear & Share - schedule a meeting with pastor and/or missions leadership for mission and strategy overview.



Access & Discover - conduct missions assessment profile (MAP) with key leaders in the church.



Develop & Implement - create an Acts 1:8 strategy with action steps and goals.



Train & Equip - the Missions Mobilization Team journeys with your church.

Equip your Church:

Our team can provide personalized resources and trainings to your church as they prepare to minister to displaced people in your region. Read more about our resources below.

Declaring God's glory among the nations by ministering to and through displaced people has always been a part of God's global plan. The question for us is simple: Are we willing to join him? Discover the new opportunities for you and your church today. Contact John Barnett at John.barnett@kybaptist.org or 502-654-3385.



PRACTICAL WAYS TO EMBRACE THE NATIONS AS YOUR NEIGHBOR

by John Barnett

Today, there are more than 100 million people around the world who have been forced to flee their homes due to violence and persecution. Out these millions of forcibly displaced people, approximately one-third have left their home country and sought refuge across international borders.

Our Opportunity to Demonstrate the Gospel

Imagine being a refugee landing in the United States for the first time. You've been waiting for years for the opportunity to start your life again. You haven't had a home to call your own, your children have only sporadically attended school, and your spouse suffers from insomnia and nightmares about the violence that drove you from your country. You don't speak English, and you have no idea how to get started in a new country. Refugees have an array of hopes and fears as they acclimate to a new culture and new way of life. As followers of Jesus, we need to stand ready to Welcome (Luke 10:25-37) those who arrive in our cities and neighborhoods. The local church must ask what we are doing to serve the refugees coming to our cities and neighborhoods. In order to embrace the nations as our neighbor, we must be motivated by the love of Christ to not only share the gospel, but also our lives (I Thess. 2:8). Here are some powerful and practical ways you and your church can embrace refugees (or the nations) in your community:

1. Be a Good Neighbor

Work together with your small group or circle of friends to welcome refugees. Form a Welcome Team— a small group of people from a local church that partners with a resettlement agency to welcome newly arrived refugee families. The goal is for each refugee who arrives in the United States to feel the warm welcome of his or her local community.

2. Help in the Home

There are many simple ways you can help refugee families settle into their new homes. Even learning to use everyday household appliances creates a learning curve for someone who has lived in refugee camps for years. Assist new refugee friends as they learn how to use the microwave, stove, washing machine, etc.

3. Give Welcome Kits

Remember how much gifts from wedding and baby showers meant to you when you were beginning a new stage of life? Refugees are starting a new life in America and the gift of household items, baby supplies, and furniture go a long way in assisting them (not to mention help them feel welcomed and loved).

4. Collect Backpacks

Any parent knows that school supplies can be expensive. Much more so for those entering a new culture. Have your church donate backpacks, notebooks, binders, and other necessary items to help equip local refugee children with the items they need to be successful in the classroom. Collect and distribute them to families in as simple a manner as possible.

5. Provide Financial Coaching

Offer to help new arrivals set up bank accounts and establish budgets. Depending on their origins and their length of stay inside a refugee camp, newly arrived refugees may not have used a checking account or a bank card in years, nor may they be sure how to plan for monthly expenses.

6. Tutor and Teach

Provide tutoring for children of refugees. These children start school immediately after arriving in the States and are in urgent need of help with homework and language. Adults may also welcome lessons in conversational English as well.

7. Take them Shopping

All the retail options - grocery stores, department stores, drugstores - can be overwhelming to someone arriving from a refugee camp. Show them around their new communities and explain the differences between these stores.

8. Offer Transportation

Navigating without a car in most American cities can be very difficult, especially to newcomers. Offer rides to doctor appointments, job interviews, schools, stores, and banks until new families can acquire cars or learn the ins-and-outs of public transportation in their new cities.

9. Create an Urban Garden

Does your church or community have unused green space? Consider providing a garden area where refugees can grow their own vegetables. Those who come from agrarian societies may be eager for an extra way to provide for their families.

10. Learn More

Seek out further training that will teach you and fellow church members strategic ways to share the gospel message and to embrace refugees

in your community. Let's engage this moment well, so that the first friends refugees make in our communities will be those who can demonstrate and speak the message of Jesus.



THE KENTUCKY BAPTIST CONVENTION:

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