

GREAT COMMISSION RESURGENCE¹

What is it?

The goal of a great commission resurgence is to be obedient to God's mission of spreading the gospel for the glory of Jesus Christ and the good of the nations. It should be the mission of every church and individual to obey the command of Jesus to make disciples. Further, the following "10 Commitments" are at the heart of a great commission resurgence:

I. A Commitment to Christ's Lordship. *We call upon all Southern Baptists to submit to the absolute Lordship of Jesus Christ in all things at the personal, local church, and denominational levels. (Col. 1:18; 3:16-17, 23-24)*

II. A Commitment to Gospel-Centeredness. *We call upon all Southern Baptists to make the gospel of Jesus Christ central in our lives, our churches, and our convention ministries. (Rom. 1:16; 1 Cor. 15:1-4; 2 Cor. 5:17-21)*

III. A Commitment to the Great Commandments. *We call upon all Southern Baptists to recommit to the priority of the Great Commandments in every aspect of our lives and every priority we embrace as a network of local Baptist churches. (Matt. 22:37-40)*

IV. A Commitment to Biblical Inerrancy and Sufficiency. *We call upon all Southern Baptists to unite around a firm conviction in the full truthfulness and complete sufficiency of Christian Scripture in all matters of faith and practice. (Matt 5:17-18; John 10:35; 17:17; 2 Tim 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:20-21)*

V. A Commitment to a Healthy Confessional Center. *We call upon all Southern Baptists to look to the Baptist Faith and Message 2000 as a sufficient guide for building a theological consensus for partnership in the gospel, refusing to be sidetracked by theological agendas that distract us from our Lord's Commission. (1 Tim. 6:3-4)*

VI. A Commitment to Biblically Healthy Churches. *We call upon all Southern Baptists to focus on building local churches that are thoroughly orthodox, distinctively Baptist, and passionately committed to the Great Commission. (Matt. 16:13-20, 18:15-20; Acts 2:41-47; Rom. 6:3-5; 1 Cor. 5)*

VII. A Commitment to Sound Biblical Preaching. *We call upon all Southern Baptists to affirm and expect a pastoral ministry that is characterized by faithful biblical preaching that teaches both the content of the Scriptures and the theology embedded in the Scriptures. (2 Tim. 4:1-5)*

VIII. A Commitment to a Methodological Diversity that is Biblically Informed. *We call upon all Southern Baptists to consider themselves and their churches to be missionaries in non-Christian cultures, each of which requires unique strategies and emphases if the gospel is to penetrate and saturate every community in North America. (Phil. 2:1-5; 4:2-9)*

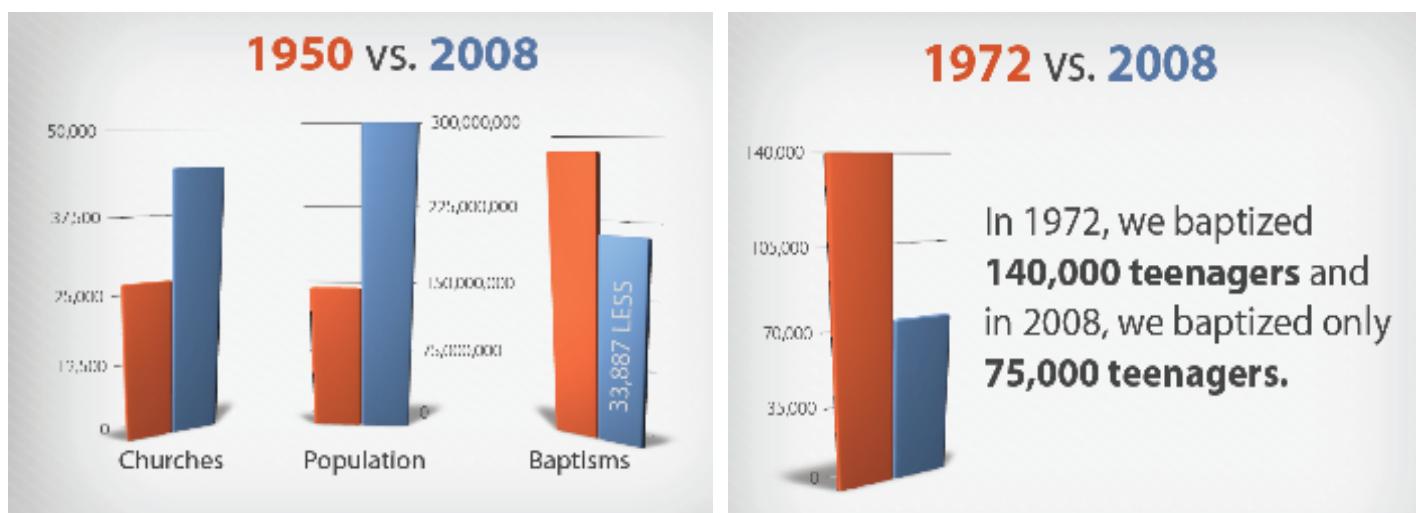
IX. A Commitment to a More Effective Convention Structure. *We call upon all Southern Baptists, through our valued partnerships of SBC agencies, state conventions/institutions, and Baptist associations to evaluate our Convention structures and priorities so that we can maximize our energy and resources for the health of our local churches and the fulfillment of the Great Commission. This commitment recognizes the great strength of our partnership, which has been enabled by the Cooperative Program and enhanced by a belief that we can do more together than we can separately.*

X. A Commitment to Distinctively Christian Families. *We call upon all Southern Baptists to build gospel-saturated homes that see children as a gift from God and as our first and primary mission field. (Deut. 6:1-9; Psalm 127, 128; Eph. 6:4)*

¹ All information adapted from <http://www.pray4gcr.com/>

Why do we need it?

The great commission is given to Christians in Matthew 28:18-20; Acts 1:8. If for no other reason than to be obedient to our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ we need to focus on this resurgence. Beyond this though is the unfortunate reality that 4 billion people have little to no access to the gospel with 1.5 billion of these never hearing the name of Jesus and missiologists saying over 90% of the world is lost without Jesus Christ.² The degree that we grasp the eternal lostness of the world will be the degree that we get serious about the great commission. In fact, roughly 70% of SBC churches are plateaued or declining proving we are either having difficulty or do not understand the urgency at hand to proclaim the gospel to the next generation. In addition, a new generation of Southern Baptists are ready and waiting deployment into the harvest fields but we lack the funding to send, support and propel them to advance God's kingdom and mission. Even more, Southern Baptists have much work to do reaching America in a multicultural, multiethnic, multilingual era. We need a Great Commission Resurgence that will make us do whatever it takes to reach America with the Gospel. Southern Baptists need a Great Commission Resurgence that will reorder our priorities, refocus our vision, reclaim our mission, and set our hearts on seeing the nations exult in the name of Jesus.



How does it happen?

A great commission resurgence rises or falls on God's people humbling themselves and repenting from sin and selfishness and turning toward God, honoring Him as first priority in every arena of our lives.

2 Chronicles 7:14 "If My people who are called by My name will humble themselves, and pray and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land."

Joel 2:12-17 ¹² "Now, therefore," says the LORD, "Turn to Me with all your heart, With fasting, with weeping, and with mourning." ¹³ So rend your heart, and not your garments; Return to the LORD your God, For He is gracious and merciful, Slow to anger, and of great kindness; And He relents from doing harm. ¹⁴ Who knows if He will turn and relent, And leave a blessing behind Him-- A grain offering and a drink offering For the LORD your God? ¹⁵ Blow the trumpet in Zion, Consecrate a fast, Call a sacred assembly; ¹⁶ Gather the people, Sanctify the congregation, Assemble the elders, Gather the children and nursing babes; Let the bridegroom go out from his chamber, And the bride from her dressing room. ¹⁷ Let the priests, who minister to the LORD, Weep between the porch and the altar; Let them say, "Spare Your people, O LORD, And do not give Your heritage to reproach, That the nations should rule over them. Why should they say among the peoples, 'Where is their God?'"

² The United States comprises only 4.5% of the world's population of 6.8 billion people.

A great commission resurgence must evaluate and employ resources toward planting biblically faithful and healthy churches. The local churches – God's people - are God's method of spreading the gospel, not conventions, associations or any other denominational entity or program.

The resources at hand are people and money. At the present time in the U.S., we spend 2/3 of Cooperative Program dollars on 1/3 of the population, and conversely spend 1/3 of money on 2/3 of population. The figures look like this: having 36,605 churches and spending \$316.6 million on 108.7 million people [in the south] vs. having 8,243 churches and spending \$71.5 million on 195.3 million people.

- The call is for the North American Mission Board to focus on spreading and planting churches in strategic metropolitan cities where the majority of people exist.
- In terms of individual finances, the average church member gives 2.56% of their income away. Therefore, it would appear that the church only must look to be more faithful in the area of biblical stewardship and giving to the cause of the gospel.
- In terms corporate finances, the state conventions on average keep 63% of Cooperative Funds. The BCMD retains 57.20% and sends 42.8% toward the Cooperative Program. Of that 63%, the NAMB returns \$50.6 million through various state convention ministries.
- The CP fund process looks like this:
 - o Each local church designates a \$% to be forwarded to CP from the state convention
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 - o From the CP monies the percentage is divided from graphic below
 - o In addition, the NAMB sends monies to state conventions based on agreements with each state. There is a report for these cooperative agreements to cease in 4 years time, changing money and ministry to be more strategic & project driven.
 - o In another change CP percentages, money to the IMB would change to 51% from 50%.

2008-2009 Cooperative Program Allocation Budget

\$205,716,834



CP—The Heart of Southern Baptist Missions and Ministries

Who is a part of it?

Southern Baptists are a fellowship of over 16 million members in approximately 44,848 churches in all 50 states and Canada. These churches work together through approximately 1,182 associations, 42 state conventions, and the Southern Baptist Convention to accomplish through voluntary cooperation far more than they could ever do alone.

Many questions remain as well as to how this practically will be defined in each state convention and local church. However, one supreme prayer is that God's people will each consider their part in advancing God's kingdom mission.

- Pray, repent, return, revive
- Join over 6500 prayer partners for a Great Commission Resurgence: www.pray4gcr.com
- Give sacrificially towards the cause of the gospel
- Invest, Invite, Incarnate the gospel with others