

Challenges

addressed to all **Southern Baptists**

as recommended by the Great Commission Resurgence Task Force

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- Get involved in a regular church-planting program at some level of your congregation's capability. This can include specific partnerships with another church, your association, state convention or NAMB.
- Adopt an unreached people group and an underserved megacity in North America and regularly inform the membership about them, pray for them, and when applicable, work toward short-term mission trips to serve them. Encourage families to consider moving to those cities to be part of the core group for that plant.
- Plan at least one evangelism training course annually for your church members; consider inviting members of other churches in your association to participate, especially smaller churches.
- Plan at least one North American or international mission trip a year and/or encourage members to participate in mission trips sponsored by a local association.
- Develop a comprehensive strategy for sharing the Gospel with every person in your community with no regard to racial, social or economic status. This may include elements such as home-to-home evangelism, neighborhood block parties, servant evangelism projects, one-on-one mentoring, after-school programs, university campus outreach, innovative outreach events, neighborhood Bible studies, evangelistic mercy ministries, etc.
- Enter, if possible, the world of private Christian schooling and Christian home schooling to provide a Christian alternative for the education of children, especially in areas hostile to the Christian worldview. See this as a complement to the many faithful Christians serving in the public school systems who see their calling to be salt and light in a missional assignment.
- Encourage Christian schools to send each student in their high school years on a cross-cultural missions experience or to an international mission field for at least one week before they graduate, developing a strategy to pay for these trips as a school in order to build a genuine passion and commitment to reach the nations.
- Develop a comprehensive strategy for Great Commission discipling of all church members. This may include elements such as Sunday School and/or small group ministries, mission education programs, one-on-one mentoring, affinity ministries (e.g. women, singles, etc.), pastoral leadership training, diaconal leadership training, etc.
- Develop a comprehensive church-based strategy for reaching and discipling college students, including international students.
- Develop a comprehensive church-based strategy for reaching and discipling individuals with physical and developmental disabilities.
- Send teenagers and young adults on mission trips with the hope of exposing every young believer to global missions.
- Partner with like-minded ethnic churches or missions in evangelizing immigrants and other underserved ethnic minorities, including migrants and other short-term workers.
- Reclaim the Baptist vision of regenerate church membership, recognizing that this vision is central to our Baptist identity and understanding of the church.
- Reclaim corrective church discipline as the biblical means of restoring believers to healthy discipleship and faithfulness.
- Emphasize meaningful church membership through such practices as decision counseling, believer's baptism, new convert mentoring, membership covenants, prospective member classes, and redemptive church discipline.

In the 2009 meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention, messengers adopted a motion to authorize the President of the Southern Baptist Convention to appoint a Great Commission Task Force, charged to bring a report and recommendations to the Southern Baptist Convention meeting in Orlando, Florida, June 15–16, 2010, concerning how Southern Baptists could work more faithfully and effectively together in serving Christ through the Great Commission. Over this year-long journey, the Task Force listened to what was on the hearts of Southern Baptists, what was most important to them, and then developed the final report and recommendations through much prayer and guidance from the Holy Spirit.

On June 15, 2010, the Southern Baptist Convention overwhelmingly adopted the Final Report and Recommendations of the Great Commission Resurgence Task Force. Along with the report and recommendations, the Task Force issued challenges to encourage individual Christians, local churches, associations, state conventions, and other SBC entities to have a greater passion and effectiveness for pursuing the Great Commission. As a convention of churches with a missional vision to present the Gospel of Jesus Christ to every person in the world and to make disciples of all the nations, we must do our best to bring greater glory to the Lord Jesus as we seek to disciple all nations in the fulfillment of Matthew 28:18–20. The following are the challenges made to Individual Christians, Individual Families, and Local Churches and Pastors.

Please take these challenges and use them personally as well as for your church.

Challenges for Individual Christians

- Return to God in deep repentance of and brokenness over sin, denying self, and coming to God with complete humility.
- Commit to the total and absolute Lordship of Jesus Christ in every area of your life, understanding that Christ's lordship is inseparable from all aspects of the believer's life, including family obligations, business and profession, and recreational or leisure pursuits. We especially call on men to respond to this challenge.
- Devote yourself to a radical pursuit of the Great Commission in the context of obeying the Great Commandments of loving God and loving others.
- Participate in a local church sponsored evangelism training class sometime during 2011 and make this a regular component of the discipleship process in your life.
- Develop strategies as an individual for praying for, serving, sharing the Gospel and discipling neighbors, coworkers, and others with whom you come into regular contact.
- Bear witness to the Gospel through personal evangelism, seeing every individual as a sinner in need of the salvation that comes through Jesus Christ alone.
- Participate in a North American or international mission trip sponsored by your church or association at least once every four years.
- Grow in giving as a faithful financial stewards with at least 10% of your income going to your local church. However, see 10% as a place to begin in grace giving but not the place to stop.

- Determine to exercise a greater level of stewardship through estate planning and planned giving, leaving a percentage of your estate to your local church, the Cooperative Program, and to a faithful Baptist entity such as NAMB, IMB, a Baptist college, or our seminaries.
- Give serious consideration to adoption and orphan care as a component of Great Commission living.
- Determine to develop a well-rounded Christian worldview that allows you to clearly articulate both what you believe and why you believe.
- Repent of any and all sin that has prevented you from being fully used by our Lord in fulfilling the Great Commission. This includes sins of idolatry, pride, selfish ambition, hatred, racism, bigotry and other sins of the flesh that dishonor the name of Jesus.

Challenges for Individual Families

- Return to God in deep repentance of and brokenness over sin, denying self, and coming to God with complete humility.
- Emphasize biblical gender roles with believing fathers taking the lead in modeling Great Commission Christianity and taking the primary responsibility for the spiritual welfare of their families.
- Recognize that parents have the primary responsibility of educating their children and helping them to cultivate a Christian worldview way of thinking and living.
- Build gospel saturated homes that see children as a gift from God and our initial mission field. Consider, in this context, the vital ministries of adoption and orphan care.
- Make prayer for and the evangelism and discipleship of children a family priority that begins with parents and is assisted by local churches.
- Develop strategies as a family for praying for, serving, and sharing the Gospel with neighbors, coworkers, and others with whom family members come into regular contact.
- Adopt a different unreached people group each month and pray as a family 1) for IMB missionaries working with the people group, 2) for the conversion, baptism and discipling of countless individuals within the people group, and 3) for the establishment of biblical churches among the people group.
- Adopt a different North American church plant each month and pray as a family 1) for the church's leadership team, 2) for the conversion, baptism and discipling of countless individuals in the church's region, and 3) for the birthing of future church plants from the church.
- Spend a family vacation participating in a local church or association sponsored mission trip.
- Consider setting up a mission's savings account for each of your children that would enable them to spend six months to a year in a North American or International Missions context soon after graduating from high school.

Challenges for Local Churches and Pastors

- Lead your church by calling a Solemn Assembly in January 2011 for the purpose of calling Christ's people to return to God, to repentance, and to humility in service to a renewed commitment to Christ and the Great Commission. We request that the newly elected President of the Southern Baptist Convention lead Southern Baptists in this effort.
- Become knowledgeable of the mission field of your specific region, identifying the various people groups and developing a strategy to penetrate the lostness in your region. Be intentional in working with your local association, state convention and NAMB in pursuing this task.
- Work to cultivate a Great Commission atmosphere that is contagious in your church and becomes the DNA of the pastor, staff, adults, students, youth and children of your local body of Christ.
- Working with the IMB and NAMB, set goals for Lottie Moon and Annie Armstrong that will enable us to send \$200 million to the IMB and \$100 million to NAMB in annual gifts by 2015.
- Strengthen mission education for believers of all ages, working with the Woman's Missionary Union and other missions education programs. Every believer must be made aware of the global missions challenge.
- Lead your church to grow and increase in sacrificial Cooperative Program giving.
- Make sure every sermon, devotion, or other type of teaching is gospel centered and driven by the inerrant and infallible text of Scripture with emphasis on how to apply the text to the lives of different kinds of people.
- Make sure every sermon, devotion, or other type of teaching clearly articulates and applies the gospel message and is centered in the grand narrative of Scripture.
- Call your people continually to a radical devotion and surrender to the Lordship of Jesus Christ.
- Preach passionately for the conversion of the lost and extend consistently the gospel call for persons to be saved.
- Honor the role of the evangelist, affirming the calling and witness of those who give their lives to the call of the Gospel.
- Challenge people to identify with Christ and testify to Him through believer's baptism by immersion.
- Call people passionately and consistently to surrender their lives to full-time ministry. Include in this call the challenge to a career as a missionary through the IMB or NAMB.
- Preach regularly and passionately on Christian stewardship, helping your people see this as a vital component of discipleship and life lived under the Lordship of Jesus Christ. Undergird this with lessons on biblical stewardship in your church's Bible Study ministries.
- Cultivate an atmosphere of evangelism, missions, discipleship and biblical theology that permeates every aspect of the church's ministry.
- Give particular attention to the evangelizing and discipling of children and youth.