



EDITED BY
PAUL CHAPPELL

AMERICA TOMORROW

AN EIGHT-FOLD CALL TO BAPTIST PASTORS

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First published in 2013 by Striving Together Publications, a
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Striving Together Publications
4020 E. Lancaster Blvd.
Lancaster, CA 93535
800.201.7748

Cover design by Andrew Jones
Layout by Craig Parker
Editorial assistance by Monica Bass
Special thanks to our proofreaders

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Printed in the United States of America

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INTRODUCTION

AN EIGHT-FOLD CALL TO BAPTIST PASTORS

DR. PAUL CHAPPELL

I've long been concerned about the spiritual state of our nation. But as the results of the 2012 election were made clear, I became alarmed.

I wasn't alarmed because of party or political issues. I was alarmed for my grandchildren, for the next generation in the church I pastor, and for my country itself.

The "progressive" America taking shape around us is digressing in almost every way. Morally, politically, financially, socially, and spiritually we long ago untied our beliefs and practices from our early faith and values. To say that our nation is speeding down a slippery slope is not an understatement. It would be more accurate to say that we are careening toward a frightening cliff. Short of the intervention of revival, the future I see is deeply concerning.

The 2012 election made a clear statement about the American people. Simply put, the leaders we elect reflect our values. When a political party jeers at the name of God, rejects God's plan for marriage, and endorses the killing of preborn children—and America elects leaders who hold these positions—we are in a difficult situation.

Today, the situation is dark. What will it be tomorrow?

More importantly, what can you and I do to reverse the direction, to stem the tide? What can we do to shape a different tomorrow than is being projected by the direction of America today?

We have been complaining of the decline for several decades, but what are we doing to change it? What *can* we do to change it?

I'm not a politician. I'm not a legislator. I'm not a judge.

I'm a Baptist pastor, and I believe the hope for America is found in Jesus Christ.

Ours has not been the only time period of internal corruption and hostility toward Christians. I am reminded of a far more dire time in which John the Baptist began preaching. By Roman authority, Herod Antipas governed Judea and Samaria with pettiness and self-interest. The ruling Jewish leaders treated John the Baptist with contempt. Yet he was faithful to his calling to "prepare the way of the Lord."

Our responsibility today is similar to John the Baptist's responsibility. We, too, are preparing for the coming of our Lord. "For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him" (1 Thessalonians 4:14).

I look forward to Christ's return with eager anticipation. But until then, I long to make a difference in this generation—to prepare the way of the Lord.

For the sake of the next generation, I want to see God use me to impact America tomorrow. In these pages, I would like to present eight biblical and strategic steps of action every Baptist pastor can take to help make a difference and prepare the way of the Lord.

I've asked some of our church pastoral staff and faculty of West Coast Baptist College to help me present these steps. These pages contain practical, action-orientated plans for the eight steps below.

For a brief overview, here they are:

Earnestly Seek Revival

In the time following the American Revolution, our nation was in spiritual decline. For instance, Thomas Paine's *Age of Reason* sought to debunk biblical Christianity, and it gained great popularity in American colleges. In 1794, a group of Baptist pastors drafted a "circular letter" to churches of every denomination asking their members to dedicate days in prayer for revival in America. By the end of 1795, the Second Great Awakening had begun and continued for fifty years. God's people drew close to the Saviour, and whole towns were converted to Christ.

Since then, America has been blessed of God with multiple revivals that began in a single church or area that then spread nationally. Our prayer for today is for a revival of God's people. "Wilt thou not revive us again: that thy people may rejoice in thee?" (Psalm 85:6).

Our hope is not found in political reform, ballot measures, or a political party; our hope for America is in the Lord alone. The future of our nation rests not on the “elephant” or the “donkey,” but on the Lamb that was slain. We need revival.

Walk in Integrity

While we are commanded to preach the Word, we must also live the Word. If we fail in our personal lives, the message of truth with which we have been entrusted will be rejected by a cynical and doubting generation. “Pray for us: for we trust we have a good conscience, in all things willing to live honestly” (Hebrews 13:18).

Get Back to the Great Commission

When souls are saved, lives are changed. When enough lives are changed, nations are changed.

As America is slipping toward a post-biblical mindset, a spiritual revival with the fruit of soulwinning and discipleship could truly make the difference.

We are not party boosters, but think with me how the cumulative efforts of Baptist churches in America could sway our nation. There are approximately 45,000 Southern Baptist churches and 15,000 unaffiliated Baptist churches. Sixty thousand churches reaching and discipling ten adults a year for four years is 2.4 million people. This is approximately the difference in the popular vote of our most recent election.

Again, what I am concerned about is the hearts of those who elect our leaders. The soul of our nation is swaying away from biblical Christianity and into the false promises of secular humanism. More important than the vote on the next healthcare bill is the eternal destination of millions of men and women in America.

As we witness, we have the opportunity to proclaim the love of Christ. I do not believe the vast majority of women voted for President Obama because they desire abortions. I believe they want a sense of understanding and help with their unique burdens. My job has never been to point men and women to a politician, but I can point them to a Friend who sticks closer than a brother—to a burden bearer named Jesus.

Plant Churches in the Inner Cities

It's time to radically rethink our missions strategy and look at our own inner cities as our mission field. The inner cities of America have largely been abandoned by Bible-preaching churches. But the souls of people in these areas matter to God.

We must not wait for a denomination or fellowship to start new churches. Churches start churches, and it's time to get our churches involved in the process. Lancaster Baptist Church has started the Victory Baptist Church in North Hollywood-Burbank and the Los Angeles Baptist Church, but we need a hundred more in these densely populated areas. We need far fewer conferences and much more action. As we pray and fast, the Holy Spirit will send laborers out of local churches. (See Acts 13.)

Reach Every Cultural Group

Everyone in this country—no matter how they got here or when and where they came from—are people in need of Christ. It is a missions opportunity and our responsibility to reach every cultural group in our communities. With Hispanic communities growing throughout our country, few churches have reason not to begin a Spanish ministry.

Establish Campus Ministries

Much of the change in modern America began twenty-five years ago in public school curricula and programs. Children have been desensitized to biblical teaching through programs like “anti-bullying” that would often be better described as “back down” propaganda for the gay agenda.¹ These tender hearts and pliable minds are being influenced against God before their consciences are even fully developed. If there is a group that we must reach with the gospel, it is the children in American public schools.

Bus ministries can and do reach children, but there are many more who will never ride our buses. Because the law allows for clubs, including Christian clubs on high school campuses, we have worked with local Christian teachers to establish Bible clubs on several high school campuses. The impact has been eternal.

Another often overlooked “mission field” is the campuses of secular universities. Here the anti-God movement has had its foothold for decades. Students in these universities are inundated

1 “Anti-Bullying Campaign Demeans Christians,” May 1, 2012, <http://www.paulchappell.com/2012/05/01/anti-bullying-campaign-demeans-christians/>.

with philosophy that not only denies God, but fiercely opposes Him and resists any standards of morality.

We can see the young adults of these universities as being an annoyance and perhaps a threat to the future of our nation as they integrate intolerant philosophies. Or, we can see them as a tremendous mission field.

There may be no life stage that faces stronger spiritual warfare than that of single adults. Satan wants to rule this time of life, yet God's more abundant life must be shared with this generation with joy and energy. A recent study showed that religious "nones"—those who identified with no religion—has risen to 20 percent of Americans. Among adults ages 18–22, the proportion is 34 percent.²

In the 2012 presidential election, the Democratic Party ran buses from these campuses to polling places. Perhaps we could follow their lead and run buses from campuses to Bible-preaching churches. We can also establish Bible clubs on these campuses. As local churches, we must not take the attitude that, "Someone else will reach our Jerusalem." It is our responsibility, and we must not abandon the spiritual destiny of the next generation to parachurch organizations.

Pray for National Leaders

I miss Jerry Falwell. Whether you agreed with all his actions or not, he had a national voice and was willing to speak as the prophets of old for righteousness' sake. Men today with similar resources and

2 "‘Nones’ on the Rise," Pew Research Center, October 9, 2012, <http://www.pewforum.org/Unaffiliated/nones-on-the-rise.aspx>.

national voices often appear more concerned with self-preservation and avoiding offense than proclaiming the Bible truth.

Some attempts have been made to call men to righteousness, but we need God-anointed leaders. These will not be men who simply insert their opinion into the moment. They will be men like Moses and David who have dedicated themselves to service for God. God can raise them up. When God heard the prayers of Zacharias and Elisabeth, He gave them John the Baptist—the forerunner of Jesus Christ. God will still hear the prayer of righteous people calling for revival. He can even raise up leaders who will lift up the name of Jesus.

George Müller once observed, “The great fault of the children of God is, they do not continue in prayer; they do not go on praying; they do not persevere. If they desire anything for God’s glory, they should pray until they get it.” Pray that God would raise up men with convictions and courage for this hour.

Stand for Truth

Ephesians 6:13 teaches us, “Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.”

I truly am concerned about the America my grandchildren will grow up in. I may not be able to change the direction of large groups of people, but I can grow in grace and personally stand for the Lord. I can give the gift of a faithful example to my children and church family.

Our Christian friends in China have proven to us you don't have to be in a democratic or Christian nation to be true to Christ, to evangelize, and to establish new churches. Our hope for America may pass, but our hope in Christ will always stand.

It is my prayer that pastors across America will evaluate this eight-fold call and determine to engage in each area for the cause of Christ. Missionary C. T. Studd said it well: "Only one life will soon be past; only what's done for Christ will last."

I want my life to count for Christ. I want to *do* something to impact America tomorrow. Will you join me?

STEP ONE

EARNESTLY SEEK REVIVAL

DR. JOHN GOETSCH

When most Christians speak of revival today, they do so in a historical context. They speak of a great moving of God in the Bible or perhaps of the Great Awakening, but they don't refer to something that happens today. They may recall attending revival meetings or hearing an evangelist preach, but nothing significant changed in them, their churches, their cities, or their nation as a result. With each passing generation, true biblical revival seems more and more impossible.

Are we doomed to live in a godless age with spiritual darkness thickening around us? The Bible does say that "...evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived" (2 Timothy 3:13). Today much of the world ignores God, makes a mock at sin, and busies itself with everything but the eternal.

Our political leaders make no mention of God or prayer. The media only reports the scandals or abuses of religion. Any talk of God or the Bible is labeled intolerant in our schools or public forums. Churches that haven't closed have become social gatherings or entertainment centers at best, and their pulpits are strangely silent about any need for revival.

We say that we are “one nation under God” in our pledge of allegiance, but it appears that God has disappeared beneath secularism and atheism. Our currency still says “In God we Trust,” but our attitudes and actions prove otherwise. Is this what God intended? Sadly, many Christians are saying, “yes.” They believe that these are the last days before Jesus comes and nothing spiritually significant will happen. We have got to just hold on until the rapture.

This end-of-the-age fatalism is clearly unscriptural and plays right into the devil's hands. A study of revivals in the past shows us that great spiritual awakenings have always followed seasons of gross immorality, financial collapse, political corruption, and spiritual apathy.

The revival under Josiah's leadership came on the heels of fifty-seven years of idolatrous worship. The house of the Lord was boarded up and His Word forgotten.

The prophet Elijah preached during the reign of Ahab whom God said 1 Kings 21:25 was the most wicked leader to ever rule in.

Bible-preaching churches weren't being planted, nor were people saying “what must I do to be saved” in Nineveh when Jonah finally showed up to preach.

Most historians tell us that the American colonies were so far from God in the early 1700s that we would have never become a nation had it not been for the first Great Awakening.

The moral decadence in England was at an all-time high just prior to the Wesleyan revivals.

America was on the brink of financial collapse when two men began to pray during the noontime hour in New York City in 1858. Several months later, nearly one million people came to Christ through what is known as the “Prayer Meeting Revival.”

For most of us today, we think of the great account of the day of Pentecost in Acts 2 and wish something like that could happen again. A small group of people were fasting and praying when suddenly the floodgates opened and three thousand were saved, baptized, and added to the church. And they were not “foxhole conversions,” if there is such a thing, for the Bible declares that “...they continued stedfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers” (Acts 2:42). The next chapters read like “Ripley’s Believe It or Not” as five thousand men are soundly converted in Acts 4:4 and multitudes of both men and women are saved in Acts 5:14. When persecution came to these people in Acts 8, they scattered everywhere and planted churches throughout the known world, so that by Acts 17:6 they are accused of turning the world upside down.

Now, many will say that Pentecost and the success of the early church cannot be repeated. We have convinced ourselves that this was a one-time event which God never intended to be repeated. But that is a contradiction of the Bible and a wicked lie of Satan. When the Holy Spirit’s power was given on the day of Pentecost to the

believers of the first century, there was immediate confusion and debate as to what was taking place. In the midst of the criticism and controversy, Peter made a significant statement: “But Peter, standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice, and said unto them, Ye men of Judaea, and all ye that dwell at Jerusalem, be this known unto you, and hearken to my words: For these are not drunken, as ye suppose, seeing it is but the third hour of the day. But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel” (Acts 2:14–16). What was taking place here did not surprise God! He Himself had predicted it centuries earlier through the prophet Joel. Thankfully, those early believers believed His promise in Acts 1:8. That’s why they were in Jerusalem—praying; fasting; and waiting for the power of the Holy Spirit that would enable them to accomplish the work that He had commissioned them to do in Matthew 28:18–20.

Peter’s sermon continued: “And it shall come to pass *in the last days*, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams: And on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my Spirit; and they shall prophesy: And I will shew wonders in heaven above, and signs in the earth beneath; blood, and fire, and vapour of smoke: The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before that great and notable day of the Lord come: And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved” (Acts 2:17–21).

To what does the term “last days” in verse 17 refer? The Holy Spirit through Peter states that what they were about to see would come to pass in the “last days.” I do not think it is difficult to

understand that the last days is in reference to the “church age”—the time period beginning with the power of God’s Holy Spirit being given to the local church at Jerusalem until the rapture. We sometimes call this the “church age” or the “age of grace,” but all agree as to when it is—right now.

If the last days began with the Holy Spirit being given to the church in Jerusalem, when did these last days end? It appears by our attitudes and actions with respect to revival that these days have already ended. When? At the beginning of the Industrial Revolution? At the end of World War II? At the start of the twenty-first century? At some election?

Friend, we are still in the same period of time that Peter and the believers in that upper room were in back in Acts 2! The Holy Spirit’s power for soulwinning, discipleship, and revival has not been withdrawn or exhausted! The harvest is still white, souls are still lost, the Holy Spirit’s power is still available, and revival is still possible!

The problem is not with lost people—lost people have always been lost and they live ungodly lifestyles. The problem is not with the soil of man’s heart—man’s heart has always been hard. (If you want an example of hard hearts, consider that the same men who were saved on the day of Pentecost had cried “crucify Him” a few weeks prior.) The problem is not with the gospel—it always has had and always will have power to save. Nor is the problem with the concept of the local church, for when Jesus Christ founded it, He said, “...the gates of hell shall not prevail against it” (Matthew 16:18).

Well, maybe we need to alter our methods then, because something’s not working. Perhaps this age will not tolerate

preaching in old-fashioned revival type services. It's just not "techy" enough, or "relational" enough. Perhaps the Bible has lost its edge and preaching is outdated. After all, everything has "shelf life"... including God and the truth.

If you believe that—throw away your Bible! God hasn't changed His charge to "preach the Word!" His truth is unchanging, and He promises that it will always accomplish His purpose when preached in the power of the Holy Spirit: "For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater: So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it" (Isaiah 55:10–11).

Forget the hype, the emotion, the gimmicks, and the man-made strategies designed to emotionally charge people into a relationship with Jesus Christ and His truth. "...Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the LORD" (Jeremiah 17:5). Paul declared that "my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God" (1 Corinthians 2:4–5).

This is not the time for less preaching or fewer services. Pastors, get past your fear of how many will come or how much it will cost. It's time to schedule, plan, and conduct a revival meeting in our local churches once again.

Nineveh was one sermon away from repentance. Pentecost was one sermon away from thousands being saved, baptized, and added to the church. America's independence rested on a few sermons. Today, our future and that of our children depends on whether or not we will trust God at His Word or believe the lies of Satan about revival.

Practical Considerations for Revival

We can't tell God what to do or when to do it, but we can put ourselves in a position for Him to work. In 2 Chronicles 7:14 He has plainly laid down the requisites for that to happen: "If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land."

Scheduling a revival meeting doesn't ensure revival takes place. But scheduling a week of revival services does prepare room on your calendar to receive revival. And it does allow for consecutive preaching that can soften hearts toward God's Spirit.

I truly believe that the America of tomorrow will be shaped by the revival meetings of today—or by the lack of them.

Do you believe that biblical preaching can change our nation? I challenge you then to schedule a revival meeting and earnestly pray that God will use that to send revival to your church.

Ask God when you should plan a week of revival services. There is never a bad time for revival, but some seasons may fit your church schedule better than others. Invite an evangelist to come. You don't need a big name or an experienced preacher. A God-called

evangelist with God's Word as his message and God's anointing as his power will be the tool that God can use. Then begin to pray and prepare your people for the week.

On the following pages, I suggest practical guidelines of preparation. Every local church and every community is different, and you will need God's wisdom as to what will specifically be helpful for you. It is laid out in an eight-week schedule so that you can implement the preparation in an orderly manner. Of course, these are only suggestions, but I believe if you will incorporate this preparation, you will see revival before the meetings start and long after they have ended.

Prayer

Prayer in preparation for revival is of utmost importance. If we will not earnestly pray, the rest of these suggestions and plans are useless and not worth reading. Many plans for revival have failed simply because we have not prayed. In a day when we have tons of plans, we have merely ounces of prayers. God does not promise to bless our plans, but He said, "The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise" (Psalm 51:17). If you can afford to do nothing else, you and your people must urgently pray for the week together. The following suggestions would serve as a minimum effort in regard to prayer:

The pastor, staff, church, and evangelist must pray daily for at least two months before the revival.

1. Eight weeks prior to the meeting, people should be encouraged to pray daily for the revival. They should claim and

memorize a prayer promise each week. These could be announced in the bulletin, Sunday school, or Wednesday evenings. A few suggestions are: Isaiah 65:24; Jeremiah 29:13; Jeremiah 33:3; Mark 11:24; Luke 11:9; John 15:7; Philippians 4:6; James 5:16; 1 John 5:14–15.

2. Five weeks prior to the meeting, people should be encouraged to ask God to lay on their heart specific individuals who need to be saved and begin to pray for them.

3. Four weeks before the meeting, all prospects being prayed for should be put on prospect cards. (See page 12.)

4. Three weeks before the meeting, the pastor should arrange for some homes to be used for cottage prayer meetings the week prior to the revival.

5. Two weeks before the revival, the prospect list should be collected and organized for the cottage prayer meetings the following week. All of the prospects should be put on a list to be handed out at the prayer meetings or placed on a dry erase board at the homes, so that everyone can pray specifically for each individual to be saved.

6. The week before the revival, cottage prayer meetings should be held nightly in various locations throughout the area (Wednesday evening at church). The pastor or staff member should lead each of these meetings so as not to waste time but to urgently pray for those on the prayer-prospect list. All members should be encouraged to attend at least two of these cottage prayer meetings.

Saturday evening around 8:00 p.m., a special prayer meeting could be conducted at the church. The evangelist should be invited to attend so he can become familiar with the prayer requests and the people of the church who are praying.

Timeline	Tasks to Accomplish
8 weeks prior to revival	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Read all preparation material. 2. Announce revival weekly and urge people to pray. 3. Begin work on advertising.
7 weeks prior to revival	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review all preparation—pray over what you plan to use. 2. Finalize all advertising materials. 3. Set some specific goals for revival.
6 weeks prior to revival	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Get all materials printed for advertising. 2. Have prospect prayer cards printed. 3. Have decision cards printed if needed. 4. Have visitor cards printed if needed. 5. Obtain outside speaking engagements.
5 weeks prior to revival	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Begin to teach revival and soulwinning on Wednesday nights. 2. Urge people to pray for specific individuals.
4 weeks prior to revival	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Call other area churches and send them a promotional letter. 2. Begin handing out prospect prayer cards in all services.
3 weeks prior to revival	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Organize special music for services. 2. Arrange for cottage prayer meetings in homes. 3. Enlist personal workers (train if necessary). 4. Enlist ushers for all services.
2 weeks prior to revival	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Enlist nursery workers for services. 2. Collect the prayer prospect lists and prepare them for cottage prayer meetings. 3. Make this a soulwinning week. 4. Pass out revival circulars. 5. Erect signs and posters.
1 week prior to revival	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Conduct cottage prayer meetings nightly. 2. Men's prayer meeting, Saturday night at 8 p.m. 3. 12 hour prayer chain, Saturday night at 10 p.m. 4. All church visitation, Saturday morning. 5. Send personal letter to all members and prospects. 6. Preach on revival and encourage all to be present for the first service.

A Saturday night prayer chain can be set up starting at 10:00 p.m. and continuing through the night until Sunday school, Sunday morning. Members can sign up for a time period of their choosing. (Some churches break these time slots into thirty-minute periods, others into ten-minute periods.) The prayer chain allows the church to have people praying all night prior to the revival.

A pre-service prayer meeting twenty minutes before the service would be good each night. Many will be involved in bringing their prospects with them to the service or preparing to serve in some fashion, but there will be others who will want to come and pray.

Specifics to include in prayer are as follows:

The pastor: Pray that God will give him unusual wisdom and leadership of the Holy Spirit as he plans and leads the revival.

The evangelist: Pray for safety as he travels, for the Holy Spirit's power in preaching, and wisdom in soulwinning.

Personal: Each Christian should pray for personal revival. Pray that God would show them needs in their own lives as well as strengthen them in the Lord and draw them closer to their local church.

The church: Pray that God's people will be strengthened in Bible reading, prayer, godly separated living, soulwinning, and total dedication to Christ.

The unsaved: Pray for these by name that they will come to the services and be saved.

Pastor, if your people will begin to pray early for revival, you will reap many of the prospects before the meetings begin and will continue to reap long after they end.

Prospects

It has been said: “Soulwinning is not soulwinning; it’s prospect hunting.” If we can find those whom the Holy Spirit is dealing with, we will be able to reach them during the revival week for Christ. Prospects do not all of a sudden appear when the evangelist drives up. They must be gathered weeks before and prayed for earnestly. Here are some suggestions in helping you gather prospects for the meeting.

Have some prospect cards printed. These can be as simple as a three by five card with the following information on them:

Revival Prospects

Job 16:21 “O that one might plead for a man with God.”

PROSPECT PRAYER LIST

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

I promise to pray daily for the above and try to get them to come to at least
one service during the revival.

Signed: _____

1. Five weeks prior to the revival, encourage your people from the pulpit to ask God to lay some specific individuals on their hearts for the upcoming revival meetings.

2. The next two weeks (fourth and third weeks prior to the revival), hand out prayer prospect cards to everyone in the services and ask them to put down the names and addresses of those whom

God has laid on their hearts and turn them in to the church office or in an offering plate.

3. Two weeks prior to the revival, make sure all of the prayer-prospect cards have been collected. Compile one list to be handed out or used at the cottage prayer meetings the following week.

4. These prospects should be prayed for by name at the cottage prayer meetings, written a personal letter inviting them to come to the meetings (see page 15), and visited on Saturday before the revival.

Soulwinning

1. Five weeks before the meeting, teach the people on Wednesday nights about soulwinning and how to make a visit for the revival.

2. Two weeks before the revival could be called “Soulwinning Week.” Prospects should be invited by those who submitted them and be enlisted to attend at least one night. These should be called again the week before and during the week of revival to remind them of their commitment.

3. An all-church soulwinning time can be held on the Saturday morning just before the revival. Perhaps a light breakfast could be planned to encourage folks to come. A brief time of prayer and instruction should be included before going out and making visits to all of the prospects.

4. The pastor and evangelist should go soulwinning during the week of the revival, focusing on the prospects turned in as well as on those visitors who attend the revival services.

Advertising the Meetings

The effect of advertising varies from church to church and from area to area. Be sure that in all advertisement you include: the name of the church, address, phone number, pastor's name, evangelist's name, dates of the meeting, and time of services. Make sure that you have them printed in plenty of time. Six weeks before the revival is not too early.

You can never advertise too much, but be prayerful that you will have wisdom in using the funds you have in the areas of advertisement that will be the most effective. You should know what you can afford financially and what works best in your local area.

1. Newspaper: Take a picture of the evangelist to the editor of your local newspaper with an article for the meetings. The evangelist can provide some biographical information that will help you. The newspaper that you will want to advertise in should be the one that the people in your area are the most loyal to reading. In a small town, this may be a weekly paper or shopper's guide.

2. Radio or Television: Some stations will make free announcements on behalf of community projects or church organizations. These should be brief and typewritten using the necessary information to attract people to the meeting. Again, use the station that people are loyal to in your area.

3. Church announcements: Begin announcing the revival early in your own church. It will only take a minute to announce the date and encourage people to set aside that week for the revival. If you print an annual church calendar, be sure to include the revival dates so people can plan their vacations so as not to conflict with

the meetings. Four weeks before the meeting, call other area pastors and invite them to the services. Send them a flyer announcing the meeting along with a typewritten announcement for them to read in their services.

4. **Letters:** A letter containing the details of the meeting and information about the evangelist should be mailed to the homes of all members of the church as well as the prospects from the prayer-prospect list. This letter should be written by the pastor and should arrive two or three days before the meeting. Encourage all to be present for the first service.

5. **Revival flyers:** These can be designed as a flyer or a card. They should contain all necessary information and a picture of the evangelist. These are most effective if given out along with a personal invitation.

6. **Signs and Posters:** Some businesses will allow you to place an attractive poster in their store windows. A large attractive sign could also be erected at the church or an announcement on the street marquee about two weeks in advance.

7. **Websites:** (This could include the pastor's or church's blog or Twitter as well.) These should contain all revival information and should be posted no later than the time the first announcements about the meeting are made in the church services.

Music

Good music contributes much to a good revival. The pastor should meet with those involved in the music and convey the following:

1. The pianist and/or organist should begin playing at least ten minutes before the start of the service.
2. The congregational songs should be lively, cheerful, and familiar.
3. The song leader and pianist should be prepared and on time. All services should begin at the time announced.
4. Special music should be scheduled three weeks in advance and rehearsed prior to the week. I would suggest that you do not have more than two specials per night, with one just before the message. Stay away from professionals. God will use well-rehearsed musicians who sing and play from their hearts to the glory of God.

Personal Workers

1. Personal workers should be contacted (and trained, if necessary) three weeks before the revival. The number necessary will be dependent on the number available and the size of your congregation.
2. You may need to give them some Scriptures to study on salvation, baptism, separation, dedication, etc.
3. These workers should sit near the front and be watching you during the invitation so that they will know when they are needed.
4. Each personal worker should have decision cards to fill out that will be used for follow-up.
5. If they run into problems, they should be instructed to take the person to the pastor or evangelist after the service to get further help.

Children's Services

Children need revival too. The size of your congregation, the number of children, and the availability of workers will determine how you include the children in your plans. In some cases, you may want to leave the children above nursery age in the service for the preaching, while in other instances, you may want to design a service just for them. Children's services are beneficial to both the children who receive God's Word at their own level and to the adults, in that it enables them to give attention to the preaching. Here are a few suggestions:

1. Children should come to the main service and then be dismissed just before the preaching to their own service if there is ample room. This gives them an opportunity to feel a part of the big picture of revival in the church.
2. Ages four through third grade are best for a special children's service. Those younger than four can be in a special toddler nursery. Fourth grade and above are old enough to be in the preaching service.
3. Several workers will need to be enlisted for the various nights. They should be experienced workers and well-prepared each night. If the evangelist's wife or family members wish to conduct this service, that will be of great help as it will allow your people to be in the service.

Nursery

It is always wise to use your nursery every night. Many prospects will ask if you have a nursery, and having one will encourage them to come. Here are a few suggestions for the revival nursery:

1. Workers should be enlisted at least two weeks prior to the meeting. Use confident, gracious ladies who understand their responsibilities. Revival is not the time to train new workers for the nursery. Visiting mothers will receive their first impression of your church when they drop off their children. Make it a good one.

2. Have enough workers and plenty of supplies. Workers should be in the nursery at least twenty minutes before the services begin.

3. Rotate workers so no one is in the nursery every night of revival. Nursery volunteers need revival too!

Ushers

Efficient ushers can do much to help the revival run smoothly. They are not only needed during the service itself but can serve as a welcoming committee to those who come. They should be reminded by the pastor of a few important areas:

1. Always smile and be friendly to everyone.
2. Be early: about fifteen to twenty minutes prior to the service should be adequate.
3. Be neat in appearance.
4. Be aware of the needs of the children, such as a crying baby or misbehaving child.
5. Have plenty of visitor cards in hand ready to pass out during the welcome by the pastor. These should be printed six weeks prior to the revival if you do not already have some. The visitors can drop them in the offering plate when it is passed. The pastor should be given these cards after the service each night. These are your best prospects! Don't miss them.

The Evangelist

Most evangelists are not hard to please. They are not coming to be a burden to you or your church.

1. If the evangelist does not have his own accommodations in a vehicle of some kind, you will need to secure a hotel room, a prophet's chamber at the church, or perhaps an empty home or apartment for the week. It is difficult for the evangelist to stay with church members as it presents conflicts with schedules, etc.

2. Find out when the evangelist prefers to have his meals and how many. Each will have some preferences, and you want him to feel at home and on schedule while he is with you. Going to someone's home allows him to get to know your people (make sure you go with him), but does take quite a bit of time out of his day. Restaurants or a meal at the church will be more time-efficient but not as personal. Some evangelists are glad to be on their own for their meals as they may have some dietary needs or wish to fast certain times during the week.

3. Check to see whether the evangelist has a desire to study at the church, and if so provide an office or quiet place for him. If he is bringing materials that can be made available to your people (CDs, books, etc.), be sure to discuss this with him and provide a place for him to display them.

4. Be sure to find out the evangelist's arrival time and make sure he is picked up at the airport if he is traveling by air. If he is driving, encourage him to meet you at the church so that you can go over any details with him prior to the start of the meeting.

5. If he needs transportation during the week, be sure to secure a vehicle or drivers to accommodate him.

6. If his family is traveling with him, be sure to think through his schedule for the week with time allotted for his wife and children, as well as their needs while they are with you.

7. Obtain as many outside speaking engagements for the evangelist as you can. A God-called evangelist will go anywhere at any time to win souls or encourage Christians. These should be arranged six weeks prior to the revival. Some possibilities are: Christian schools, pastors' meetings, sports teams, Bible clubs, and perhaps radio and television programs.

8. While the evangelist is with you, use him. Ask him to teach a Sunday school class on Sunday morning and preach to the youth on Sunday night before or after the service. Don't be afraid to work the evangelist—that's why he is coming—to do the "work" of an evangelist.

Finances

A God-called evangelist will say very little about how you take care of him financially. He travels by faith and lives off of love offerings given by God's people where he preaches. If you have the faith to invite him, he should and will have the faith to come trusting the Lord to meet his needs.

1. Anticipate the expenses of the meeting. If the evangelist is flying, his airfare should be covered. If he is driving, you should pay his travel costs to the meeting. Most full-time itinerants average this amount so that every church pays a similar amount. It is wise

for the pastor to either build this amount into the annual budget or take some offerings prior to the meetings to cover these costs. If you are providing lodging for him, this expense will need to be raised as well.

2. A love offering should be taken each night of the meeting for the evangelist. Remember, he does not have a salary each week nor does he receive any benefits. A week off for rest or travel means no income, so you should do your best to be generous. God will bless the church that is generous to God's men.

As you care for the financial aspects of the meeting, remember that revival meetings are not an expense—they are an investment. A good revival will not cause your offerings to go down in the months ahead but will produce people who are obedient in all areas including their giving.

Decision Cards and Follow-Up

It is important that a follow-up visit be made on all decisions made during the week. It is senseless to pray for souls if we have no intention of helping them to grow. Here are a few suggestions:

1. Have decision cards printed if you do not already have them. Make sure that each personal worker has access to a good supply. They should be filled out as accurately as possible, including name; address; telephone; age; decision; who invited them to the meeting; and which personal worker dealt with them.
2. All decision cards should be given to the pastor nightly.
3. After the revival, make a list of all the decisions and begin follow-up visitation as soon as possible. You should encourage

them in their decisions and give them verses on baptism and church membership if needed.

4. Be sure the teachers of Sunday school classes get a list of decisions made by those in their age groups. Dedicated teachers will follow up on these converts immediately.

Unless We Act

Can we “produce” revival? Obviously not, but we will never know how God wanted to awaken His people and save the lost if we do not prepare. Pray about the right time; invite a God-called evangelist; prepare your people for the week; and let God through the preaching of His Word send the results. It’s a biblical model that is proven.

We may be just one service or one sermon away from revival. Unless we act, we may never know.

STEP TWO

WALK IN INTEGRITY

DR. MARK RASMUSSEN

In a world of changing values and collapsing morals, it is vitally important that God's men walk in integrity. Paul instructed Timothy how to behave "in the house of God" which is the "pillar and ground of the truth" (1 Timothy 3:15). If pastors and spiritual leaders do not lead lives of personal integrity and demonstrate impeccable character, it will not be long before our churches and ministries are enveloped in wicked living and licentious lifestyles.

Integrity is an indispensable trait for a spiritual leader. If you lack integrity, it does not matter how many other good and honorable traits you possess; your life and ministry will corrode from the inside out.

A man without integrity is like a bridge without adequate support beams—it looks good and works for a while, but eventually

it comes crashing down with catastrophic consequences. To lack integrity is to lack the foundation for godly living and Christ-centered ministry.

While living without integrity has severe repercussions, living with integrity brings great blessing. Perhaps one of the most direct results of integrity is the good name it develops. Proverbs 22:1 says, “A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches, and loving favour rather than silver and gold.” Our name is that which is known without, but that name will only reveal decisions that we have made in our hearts. This is why David, a man after God’s own heart, said in Psalm 51:10, “Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me.”

The church of Christ is commanded to have a good testimony. This is precisely what Jesus was teaching when, in Matthew 5:14–16, He declared, “Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.” We cannot bring glory to Christ if we do not have a good name. And we cannot have a good name if we do not have integrity.

Developing Integrity

It could be stated that integrity deals with doing the “little things right” or making the right choice in areas that seem to be “little.” In Song of Solomon 2:15, Solomon points out that “little foxes...spoil the vine.” Jesus taught a similar principle in Luke 16:10 when He said,

“He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much.” A childhood rhyme says, “For want of a nail the shoe was lost. For want of a shoe the horse was lost. For want of a horse the rider was lost. For want of a rider the battle was lost. For want of a battle the kingdom was lost. And all for the want of a horseshoe nail.”

If you would like to know if you have integrity, look back over the last week and ask yourself if you did the little things right. Did you have a pure thought life? Did you honor your wife? Did you seek to present yourself in a better light than you deserved? Did you walk with God? Were you completely honest?

Dr. Bob Jones, Sr. said, “Back of every tragedy in human character there is a slow process of wicked thinking.” Very few men have tragic failures all at once. There are almost always scores of inconsistencies and private sins that precipitate the public fall. That is why we must walk with God on a daily basis and keep our hearts right with Him.

Life is full of pressures. The world, the flesh, and the devil all seek to apply pressure that would first cause us to bend and then ultimately to break. But God’s Word teaches us that God can use the fire to refine us so we come forth as gold.

If living in integrity is both possible and commanded by God, how is it developed?

Consider Joseph, who may be the greatest illustration of the importance of walking in integrity, despite the most difficult of circumstances. As Joseph passed tests that God allowed him to endure, he was actually growing to be the second in command of all Egypt. Joseph lost his family, his privileges, and even his Hebrew name, but whether it was in Potiphar’s house or the prison, he

never lost his integrity. It was his integrity that ultimately brought him before Pharaoh and allowed him to be elevated.

Imagine what would have happened if Joseph quit concerning himself with walking in righteousness and honesty while in prison (or while he was in Potiphar's house, for that matter)! He would never have had the opportunity to interpret the butler's dream, and he would never have been brought to interpret Pharaoh's vision.

If we want to live lives of integrity, we must first be honest with God. We may be tempted to ignore our need to open ourselves to Him because of our realization of His omniscience; however, humility and honesty before God is essential.

In Psalm 51, David pours his heart out to God in pure humility. He says such things as "Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight..." and "Behold, thou desirest truth in the inward parts: and in the hidden part thou shalt make me to know wisdom." A few verses later, he begs, "Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me."

It is only after this display of sincere humility of spirit that David can say, "then will I teach transgressors thy ways; and sinners shall be converted unto thee." Without a doubt, a lack of humility leads to arrogance in action. Often this arrogance in action destroys both reputation and opportunity to minister. However, a man who is humble before God will be humble in service. And only in humility will our service be blessed.

First Peter 5:5 commands us to be clothed in humility. John the Baptist, who Jesus described as the greatest born of women (Matthew 11:11) described himself as being unworthy to untie the sandals of the Lord (John 1:27). If we would walk in integrity, we

must bare our inner lives to the Word of God and allow the Holy Spirit to show us where we sin.

The humility found only through honesty with God directly allows for the second requirement of integrity—honesty with others. How many times have you been tempted to slightly alter or hide your belief because of pressure felt from those around you? We must realize that the overriding goal of our existence is to honor God. Someone once said, “There are two choices on the shelf, pleasing God or pleasing self.”

A lack of willingness to be honest with those around us about our own weaknesses, faults, or desires is what causes so many to lose their good name, to lose credibility, and to lose their ability to be used by God. Life is not about us; it is about bringing glory and honor to the name of Jesus Christ.

The third and final requirement for integrity is honesty with ourselves. The Word of God states that “the heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it? (Jeremiah 17:9).” We must be honest in acknowledging that we are sinners, and we are not above sin. The Lord reminds us of this when He warns, “Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall” (1 Corinthians 10:12). We need to be honest about what we are and where we need help.

Saying you believe one thing, but doing another is not integrity. Take some time to carefully evaluate your own life. Be honest with yourself. Only then can integrity flourish. Remember that integrity is about more than moral uprightness; it is also about being honest.

Accountability—the Keeper of Integrity

Since it is extremely easy to be self-delusional regarding our personal integrity, it is imperative that we have accountability partners. It has been rightly said that when we elevate accountability, we eliminate doubt.

It is wise to have a council of advisors that will regularly check with us regarding certain areas of our lives. Each of us must ask ourselves, “In what areas do I struggle?” Undoubtedly, for each person these would be different.

Listed below are a number of questions each of us should not only be *willing* to answer, but that we actually *do* answer regularly. It does not help to know your struggles if you do not take the time to measure your success or failure to those temptations. The Holy Spirit will also guide us in creating other questions that might be personally relevant.

Have I spent time with God on a regular basis?

Has my thought life been pure?

How much time did I spend in prayer this week?

Am I giving to the Lord’s work financially and with my time?

How have I demonstrated a servant’s heart?

What significant thing did I do for my spouse and/or family?

What was my biggest blessing? Did I thank the Lord?

Did I take time to show compassion for others in need?

Did I control my tongue?

Did I read God’s Word this week?

How has His Word impacted my life this week?

Have I shared my faith this week? Did I hand out tracts?

What have I done for someone else this week?

Did I have dedicated time set aside for my spouse and children?

How am I growing as a believer?

How did I obey the greatest commandment of loving my neighbor?

The call to integrity is challenging. There is not an individual who has always made the right choice. But the Apostle Paul tells us to forget those things that are past and to press toward the mark of the high calling of God (Philippians 3:13–14).

As we begin to consciously elevate personal accountability in matters of integrity, perhaps the greatest encouragement of all is to realize that God promises that we can do all things through Him (Philippians 4:13).

STEP THREE

GET BACK TO THE GREAT COMMISSION

JERRY FERRSO

Even before the *Titanic* arrived on the big screen in 1997, people had been fascinated by its story, perhaps because of its many dimensions, perhaps because of its unsupported certainties. Clearly, many mistakes were made that led to its sinking. Although it was called the unsinkable ship, it sank. And it sank relatively easily.

We know that 1,502 people perished in an icy grave. We know there were not enough lifeboats on board. We know that many of them went out half-full, some with only four or five people, when they had the capacity to carry at least sixty.

But one of the greatest tragedies about the *Titanic* is the fact that while there was room in the lifeboats, no one would go back to save anyone else. They had rowed out a distance from the sinking vessel because they were afraid of its suction. Survivors

said they could hear the screams of the people as the *Titanic* finally disappeared below the surface.

Here were people in lifeboats that had room. They could have rowed back and pulled others in. Yet they did nothing about it. They waited for about an hour, and then they went back. By then, they were only able to save a handful of people. They waited until it was too late.

Today, this event has become a fascinating tragedy. And among God's people, it's a parallel tragedy to what we are doing today.

There are people all around us who are lost in their sins. We who believe what Scripture says about eternity know this to be true; and if we will listen, we can hear their screams as people fall into a Christless eternity.

But we don't do anything about it. We sit in the lifeboat a safe distance from the destruction merely observing—or oblivious.

This was not Jesus' attitude. He said, "I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work" (John 9:4). The all-knowing Christ stressed the importance of sharing the message of salvation, because life is so fragile. James reiterates this same truth in James 4:14, "Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away."

In the final chapter of Matthew, we find our resurrected Saviour challenging the early believers with what is known as the Great Commission. These are some of the final words that our resurrected Saviour would personally speak to His disciples. Think with me for a moment: what would your parting words be to those closest to you if you knew your departure from this world was near?

I have no doubt it would be words of value, love, importance, and instruction. Such were Christ's last words:

And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.—MATTHEW 28:18–20

I love what Dr. Don Sisk has said about this portion of Scripture: “His last command should be our first priority!”

Christ longs for us to carry out His last command, but too often we sit in the lifeboats just out of reach of the lost.

Why aren't we passionate about this final admonition from our Saviour? Why do we give minimal effort to the Great Commission? Shouldn't a Great Commission evoke great commitment?

I pray this chapter will encourage you in two ways. First, I pray it will ignite a burning desire to be a faithful witness of the gospel message of Jesus Christ. And second, I pray it will help bring about a great commitment to mentor others in the area of soulwinning. You and I can be passionate soulwinners, but the real fruit of our efforts is seen when we multiply ourselves by training others. The Apostle Paul challenged Timothy to make a decisive investment in training others. “Thou therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also” (2 Timothy 2:1–2).

Are you ready to row your lifeboat—and to take others with you—to the perishing multitudes?

Where Do You Begin?

If the culture or the spirit of a church needs a change, it starts at the top! It begins with mentoring and modeling.

The pastor has to be the one who champions this cause. Pastor, you have to set the example in this area and once you do, you can expect your church members to follow.

The apostle Paul stated to Timothy in 2 Timothy 3:10 “But thou hast fully known my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, charity, patience.” Paul was greatly concerned that his life matched his message. Because of Paul’s consistency in his witness, he was able to challenge Timothy to likewise preach the gospel.

I have the privilege to direct the outreach ministries of Lancaster Baptist Church. Each week, I conduct soulwinning meetings and oversee the logistical aspects of strategic door-knocking and follow up.

But the soulwinning fervor in our church is really the result of our pastor’s burden. He was faithfully soulwinning when there were only a dozen church members. And after twenty-seven years of ministry, he is still actively attending soulwinning meetings and going out into the community sharing Christ. His example reinforces the value that we are trying to communicate to our church family—soulwinning is the main thing.

Jesus Christ had this priority at the forefront of His ministry. In Luke 19:10, Jesus clearly communicates the mission that consumed

Him: “For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.”

Without the example of church leadership making the Great Commission their personal priority, the church family will not choose this as their focus either.

Provide Training

Even with the pastor setting the pace in soulwinning, many Christians struggle to faithfully share their faith.

The negligence of the church is not due to a lack of opportunities to witness. Jesus made it clear that there are plenty of prospects.

And Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people. But when he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd. Then saith he unto his disciples, The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few; Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest.

—MATTHEW 9:35–38

Though the harvest is plenteous, the laborers are few. What a sad commentary on the Christian work force. But why? Why don't we have more believers fervently telling others about the change Jesus has made in their lives? He has rescued us from an eternity

separated from the presence of God. Since we have embraced the message of love, forgiveness, and redemption, it seems as though we would be passionate about sharing this transforming message.

I believe one of the greatest obstacles that stands between Christians and soulwinning is fear. When we are not confident about something in any area of life, we tend to procrastinate or offer excuses as to why we are not engaged in that given activity.

Fear is a powerful emotion. Proverbs 29:25 warns, “The fear of man bringeth a snare: but whoso putteth his trust in the LORD shall be safe.”

Fear is a trap; it holds a person captive. Fear of people, fear of failure—these fears are real, and they paralyze many.

We need to eliminate or remove the excuse of “fear” that many believers offer for not going out soulwinning by the proper equipping of the church. Ephesians 4:11–12 places this responsibility on church leaders: “And he gave...pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ.”

By equipping believers to share their faith, we enable them to carry out God’s commands in regard to the Great Commission.

At Lancaster Baptist Church, we have an annual soulwinning training time in the fall season. This works well for our church because our Open House outreach takes place in October.

As we prepare for the training time, we encourage those who haven’t been trained in personal soulwinning or those who sense they need a refresher to sign up for a seven week training course. Each year, we offer two courses:

Evangelism 101: “How Do I Lead Someone to Christ?”

For this course, we teach through Pastor Chappell’s book *To Seek and to Save*.¹

Evangelism 401: “How to Answer Tough Questions”

We offer both of these courses as Wednesday evening electives that take place at the same time as the midweek Bible study. This enables us to use the already-provided childcare for church services. It also means that new soulwinners are not spending their Tuesday or Saturday soulwinning time in training.

Below is a “to do” list and timeline that helps us to execute and communicate this important training to our church family. The dates listed below are from our 2012 calendar. I will explain some of these items in more detail as we continue.

<i>TEAM Soulwinning Fall Launch</i>	Sept 15
Put in a purchase order/Order <i>To Seek and To Save</i> books/workbooks	July 24
Design new Launch book and enrollment cards	July 24
Order extra cardstock for enrollment cards	July 24
Plan soulwinning rally room locations	July 24
Plan soulwinning elective room locations	July 24
Get a database ready for input with partners	July 25
Communicate with adult Bible fellowship teachers about upcoming Launch, asking them to begin announcing and promoting on Sunday	July 26
Confirm soulwinning map areas for each class	Aug 5
Begin proofreading new Launch book and enrollment cards	Aug 7
Pass out enrollment cards in adult classes and keep a running database of those enrolled—including which soulwinning time they plan to attend (making it easier to assign partners)	Aug 11
Send Launch book to print	Aug 27
Have enrollment cards in choir practice	Aug 28

1 *To Seek and to Save* by Paul Chappell. Books and workbooks available through strivingtogether.com.

Make sure all deacons & everyone in ministry is signed up	Aug 28
Have teachers assign partners for their adult Bible fellowships (Announce at teachers' meeting and via email)	Aug 29
Merge/Sort/Print all soulwinning partners by adult Bible fellowships	Sept 10
Assimilate <i>To Seek & To Save</i> books & workbooks for Evangelism 101	Sept 13
Distribute partner cards and Launch booklet in adult Bible fellowships	Sept 15
Send reminder email to Tuesday soulwinners on Monday	Sept 16
Send reminder email to Saturday soulwinners on Thursday	Sept 19

Seek Commitments

Getting people signed up is a major endeavor, but we have found that making a commitment card encourages people to faithfulness.

At Lancaster Baptist Church, we promote sign-ups during the annual soulwinning launch in August or September. We pass out enrollment cards in our Adult Bible Fellowships (ABFs).

TEAM SOULWINNING REGISTRATION

Name: (please print)

Email Address:

☐ Yes, I will attend **Soulwinning Orientation** on Wednesday, September 12.

☐ I would like to enroll in **Evangelism 101 Training** beginning September 26.

I plan to go soulwinning at the following time: (choose one)

☐ Tuesday mornings

9:30 AM

North Auditorium

☐ Tuesday evenings

6:30 PM

North Auditorium

☐ Tuesday evenings

6:30 PM

West Palmdale Residence

☐ Saturday mornings


9:30 AM

North Auditorium

Choose one:

☐ I am new to soulwinning or would like more training.

☐ I am experienced as a soulwinner.



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Through these enrollment cards, we are able to accomplish several important things:

1. Enlist new soulwinners.
2. Re-enlist soulwinners who have become lackadaisical.
3. Soulwinners are able to pick a scheduled time for their soulwinning.
4. Gather the level of experience of each soulwinner.
5. Promote the “Evangelism 101” and “Evangelism 401” classes and enlist members.
6. Partner our members from the information we receive from these cards.

Conduct Regular Soulwinning Meetings

The major motivation for soulwinning is the Holy Spirit working in our hearts. When Jesus is in us, we will share Him through our day-to-day lives. But it is hard to overstate the importance of a regularly scheduled soulwinning time for your church or the encouragement of a soulwinning rally.

For each of the scheduled soulwinning times of our church, we have a brief rally. This generally consists of a congregational song before I share a verse and a brief challenge or soulwinning tip. We then pray together, and soulwinners partner up to go out.

It is best to keep the rally brief so as to maximize the time church members have set aside for soulwinning, but it is important to have one. This emphasizes the importance of soulwinning. It also facilitates the commitments people have made and provides

opportunities to meet up with others who are going out. And finally, the soulwinning rally is a tremendous place to distribute visits and soulwinning maps.

Map Your Community

In preparation for a huge surge of new soulwinners, we prepare visits and areas where they can go soulwinning.

One of the most important aspects of our soulwinning program has been mapping. We are blessed with a number of soulwinning members who have responded to the call to tell others about Jesus. When they come during our scheduled soulwinning times (either Tuesday morning, Tuesday evening, or Saturday morning), we want to help them strategically reach our community. Some will follow up on visitors from Sunday; others will visit new move-ins to the community or Sunday school absentees. But the staple of our soulwinning program is the doorknocking maps.

We have to be careful. We knock on every door in our community an average of four times a year. Hundreds of soulwinners are out on a weekly basis. What would happen if everyone gave tracts to the same block of homes? Fewer people would get the gospel, and a couple hundred homeowners would be very frustrated. Systematically segmenting the community requires some preparation, but the benefits are well worth it.

We begin by dividing the community into several larger areas, usually by major streets. (This is easy in Lancaster. Our major streets are set up in a grid of one by one mile squares.) Each area is numbered with clear boundaries drawn on the map.

Next we take the master copy of each area and make several dozen photocopies. Then each photocopy has a single street or several connected streets highlighted. (We try to have about forty houses on each highlighted map.) To keep track, we highlight the same street or streets on the master. We repeat this process until we have several maps of the same area with different streets highlighted on each map. This pack of maps represents every street in that area.

While most of our community has been friendly to our soulwinners, there are a few who have requested not to receive visits at their doors. We want to respect these requests, but how do we manage a few dozen addresses among eighty thousand homes? The answer is our soulwinning maps. Each “Do Not Knock” address is listed by the numbered area. Then each time new soulwinning maps are highlighted, the secretary checks the “Do Not Knock” list and writes the address on the top of the map. It takes some training of your soulwinners to take note of these addresses, but it will save the resident and the soulwinner much grief. (By the way, we make sure these homes receive invitations to our events in the mail.)

Finally, we ask our soulwinners to finish the maps and return them to the church. This gives us an accurate count of which neighborhoods have received invitations recently.

Each Sunday school class is assigned a different area, and as the maps are completed, a master map is highlighted. This helps the classes see how many homes they have reached collectively.

Times of outreach for major events are great times to re-highlight all of your areas again. If you have a Christmas musical, Easter musical, or major fall outreach, set a high door-knocking

goal for your church family, and have maps ready to help them meet that goal.

Train your people, preach on soulwinning, and when they come to tell people about Christ, have a handful of gospel tracts and a map ready so they know exactly where they can find some people who haven't recently heard the gospel.

Striving Together

Our theme verse here at Lancaster Baptist Church is found in Philippians 1:27: "Only let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ: that whether I come and see you, or else be absent, I may hear of your affairs, that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel." Everything we do as a church is in some way connected to reaching people with the gospel message of Jesus Christ. We work together to enlist, equip, and encourage in soulwinning, and look forward to one day, hearing those words in eternity, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant!"

STEP FOUR

PLANT CHURCHES IN THE INNER CITIES

MARK IRMLER

Some years ago, the London Transit Authority was receiving complaints because their world-renowned, red, double-decker buses were driving past customers who were standing at the bus stops.




The Transit Authority put an explanation in *The London Times* that has become infamous with public relations departments around the world: “It would be impossible for us to maintain our schedule if we are always having to stop and pick up passengers.”

How easy it was for the Transit Authority to forget the original intent of a bus service, and focus instead on the secondary issue of keeping their bus schedules.





As we consider the steps necessary to reverse our course as a nation, we must come to grips with our failure to make our priority the multiplying of churches.

According to a national survey of independent Baptist ministries, we've experienced an unprecedented decline in church planting over the past six decades.

This survey gives us a glimpse of the number of new church starts among independent Baptist churches between 1950–2008.

1950–1969  + 20 years =   1.4 increase per church

During the '50s and '60s, church planting was the focus of many of our churches, and with it came an increase of 1.4 additional churches every twenty years for every existing independent Baptist church.

1970–1989   + 20 years =   .75 increase per church

During the '70s and '80s, we cut our church planting emphasis in half. It was now taking us two churches to reproduce what one church did during the previous twenty year cycle. I'll let you draw your own conclusions for the decline, but obviously our focus and priorities changed during these years.

1990–2008       + 20 years =   .25 increase per church

During the '90s through 2008, we cut our church planting by another two-thirds. Our generation of churches is responsible for seeing the lowest percentage of Baptist churches planted here in the

United States since the Great Awakening. It is now taking a total of six churches working together for twenty years to reproduce what one church produced from 1950–1970.

The priorities of our grandfathers' churches does not seem to be our priority today.

What would our nation and inner cities look like today if this generation of preachers would have had the same church planting passion as the previous generation?

In 1989, instead of 10,975 churches we would have had 26,340 independent Baptist churches.

In 2008, instead of 13,719 churches we would have had 63,216 independent Baptist churches.

Our independent Baptist church movement would have more churches than the Southern Baptist Convention here in the United States. Our population ratio would have been an astounding one church for every 4,884 people in the USA versus the one church for every 22,500 people we have currently.

There have been many distractions we have faced over the past sixty years that have caused us to remove our focus from the work which Christ commissioned us to accomplish. It's time for our churches to get back to the work of the church and see churches multiplied both in the inner cities and our world.

A Paradigm Shift

I purchased a book in the '70s titled *Planting the Independent Fundamental Church*. This book is a collection of helpful church planting articles written by fourteen different fundamental Baptist

church planters, including great men such as Dr. Monroe Parker, Dr. Bill Rice, Sr., and Dr. Tom Malone. These were great men who planted great churches.

But the foreword of the book reveals why my generation of preachers don't often get excited about planting churches out of their own local church: "With the 1971 academic year, our university embarked on a program of church planting. God has given us the burden of establishing at least twenty-five new churches each year, for if America is yet to be spared the judgment of God and to be given an opportunity for spiritual revival, there must be Scriptural churches through which God can work."¹

In my generation, there was a paradigm shift away from churches planting churches, toward the concept of colleges and individuals planting churches. Please understand, I'm not at all critical of this book's contents or the great men who contributed its content. The intent of the book was to help see churches planted which is a great thing. But the unintended consequences of this philosophy allowed hundreds—if not thousands—of pastors to be released from their God-given responsibility to start churches.

Beginning in the early '70s, we started to see fewer churches thinking about church planting which lead to fewer churches being planted.

The New Testament pattern was clear. It was the local New Testament church that was given the responsibility and mandate to plant churches. According to Luke 24:47, the Jerusalem Church was to be the starting place. This infant church was given the mission

1 Charles M. Underwood, *Planting the Independent Fundamental Church* (Bob Jones University Press, 1972), 7.

of the Church, which always has been the Great Commission: “Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen” (Matthew 28:19–20).

The history of the early church reveals that they thoroughly obeyed the Lord’s command through the ministry of church planting. The early church knew they could reach a *city* by addition, but they quickly realized that they could reach the *world* through multiplication.

The church’s mission is the Great Commission, but God’s method is church planting.

You cannot baptize or teach them “all things whatsoever the Lord commanded” without starting new churches. The pattern for the early church was one in which churches planted churches.

The paradigm shift of my generation has taken this God given responsibility out of the hands of many churches and placed it in the hands of a few individuals or para-church ministries.

The devil loves church planting. Mormon churches, Kingdom Halls, mosques, and doctrinally-weak Christian churches are all fruit of Satan’s plan to twist the true, biblical church-planting model. He inspires false teachers to spread a false gospel and a false church. He is quickly multiplying disciples, leaders, and false churches. Nowhere is this more true than the inner cities of America. The challenge is to launch out into the deep and trust God to help us plant churches in the inner cities.

Population Centers

We have a compounding problem. While our USA church planting emphasis has diminished decade over decade, our population has increased decade over decade.

According to the research in the book *Church Still Works*,² we need to plant about five hundred churches per year to keep up with the population growth of our nation.

In practical terms, we need one thousand of our independent Baptist churches to have some kind of plan in place to reproduce a new church every two years just to keep the status quo. Over twenty years that would be ten thousand new church plants versus our current 2,744 pace. If we desire to make a greater impact in our church to population ratio, we must develop a strategy to see more churches planted.

The greatest population centers of our nation also have the greatest concentration of population growth. Thus, it would stand to reason that our church planting efforts should focus on these areas of need.

Rural Population vs. Urban Population Growth

1750—5 percent of Americans lived in urban areas.

1850—15 percent of Americans lived in urban areas.

1950—35 percent of Americans lived in urban areas.

Today—80 percent of Americans live in urban areas.

The 2010 US census states that the nation's urban population increased by 12.1 percent from 2000–2010. What are we doing to

2 Available through strivingtogether.com

plant churches in our large metropolitan areas? Over the decades, many of the great churches we once had in the inner cities have abandoned the cities for the suburbs. The vacuum is being filled by every cult imaginable.

While we're in retreat, Satan is flooding the inner cities with disciples, laborers, and false churches. May God open our eyes and hearts to the mission field of the inner cities.

In places like New York City, with over eight million souls, the ratio of truth-preaching churches to population is one church for every 250,000 souls.

Did you know that the city of Los Angeles has a ten to one ratio of Muslim mosques and learning centers to our independent Baptist churches? The Mormons have a sixty to one ratio of their "ward" churches to independent Baptist churches.

A pastor friend of mine with a heart for church planting cleared up a misconception I held when it came to reaching some of the ethnic peoples in the inner city. He explained that although the demographics in a city may show a dominance of a cultural group (such as Hispanic), the vast majority of these are second generation people who speak English as a first language. This is true for the Hispanic population in many inner cities as well as many of the Asian populations in urban settings. Remember, too, that many students from the non-English cultural groups attend English speaking colleges and universities.

Another friend who is a church planter in New York City shared with me why it is imperative to plant churches in every neighborhood in the city. In a large urban area like New York City, 60 percent of its residents don't drive. Public transportation is the

mode that the majority of people use to get to work and church. The trains and subways run far fewer routes and trips on Sundays, so travel from one neighborhood to the next becomes difficult. One family in the church this man has planted spends two hours riding the subway just to get to the Sunday services.

A Plan Of Action

Acts 1:8 describes the directional nature of the Great Commission: “But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.” The word *both* in this verse instructs us to engage not only our own Jerusalem, but also our Judaea and Samaria as well as the uttermost part of the earth.

The church at Jerusalem fleshed out the Great Commission by being used of the Lord to see churches multiplied in Samaria, Judaea, and Galilee. Their plan was to strategically send manpower and resources into these areas to evangelize the lost and see new churches planted. (See Acts 9:31.)

Every church has a “Jerusalem” mandate as well as a mandate to reach beyond their city by being involved in multiplying churches.

In the last fifty years our movement has added only ten thousand churches. At the same time, the world population has gone from three billion to over seven billion souls.

The Five Year Plan

If only one hundred pastors determined to begin a church planting ministry and help start a new church every five years and teach that new church to do likewise, we would—in one generation—see *one hundred thousand* new churches started.

If one thousand pastors determined to begin a church planting ministry and help start a new church every five years and teach that new church to do likewise, we would—in one generation—cover the world with New Testament churches.

It's hard to imagine one million independent Baptist churches impacting one million cities, but that can be a reality in only fifty years if we would just commit ourselves to the work of multiplying churches.

Some churches can reproduce a new church or even a few churches every year. Others can see a new church started every two years. Every church can see a new church planted every five years.

Pastor, the command to preach the gospel in all the world through the vehicle of the local church is not impossible. It is simply neglected. I challenge you to seriously and prayerfully determine how your church will be involved in multiplying churches—how you will lead your people to take part in helping plant new churches.

Acquaint Yourself

Perhaps you sense God calling you to serve as a church planter. These next few steps are for you.

First, I encourage you to acquaint yourself with the city where you believe God is calling you. Our eyes affect our heart. The

greatest way to find out the needs of the inner city is to take survey trips of some neglected areas in a city nearby.

Acquaint yourself with the people and unique obstacles involved in seeing a church started in the inner city. Acquaint yourself with men of God who have invested their lives in reaching these great urban centers of our nation. Acquaint yourself with church planters who are right now in the early days of seeing an urban inner city church planted.

Let God use your survey trips to stir your heart concerning the need to reseed our inner cities with the gospel and new church plants.

Be a Student

Don't try to reinvent the wheel. God has provided many good men as models who have successfully planted reproducible churches in the inner cities and urban areas of our land. Learn from their failures and successes.

Most men can tell you more of what not to do in church planting than what to do. Learn from their mistakes. Ask questions such as, "If you had it to do all over again, what would you do differently?" Most men will gladly try to help you avoid some of the hard lessons they learned through trial and error.

Learn from their successes as well. Thank the Lord for His blessing on the lives of so many who have gone by faith into the very seat of Satan and have seen victories and lives changed for the glory of God. Learn both the positive and the negative, and trust the Lord to help you utilize some of the wisdom of those who have traveled the path of church planting in the inner city.

Enlist the Right People

Inner city church planting is not for the faint at heart. Not only do you need a capable pastor, but more importantly you need a preacher's wife who will be able to minister in a compassionate and caring manner to some of the most desperate and needy people in the world. Living in a high density urban environment is a challenge for a wife who is perhaps not used to it.

When working with inner city people, remember that there will be much upheaval and much less stability in their lives. The preacher's wife and family hold the key to longevity of ministry in the inner city. Success in the inner city will take years of consistent selflessness.

If in a graduating class of future preachers you find ten out of one hundred who will yield to the work of church planting, just one of those ten will have the ability and desire to go to the inner city. Pray that the Lord of the harvest would send forth more inner city laborers into His harvest.

Select the Right Location

Knowledge is knowing that a tomato is a piece of fruit. Wisdom is knowing that a tomato doesn't belong in a fruit salad. You need both wisdom and knowledge to make the right decision when it comes to the right location in any inner city work.

When we talk about church planting in the larger cities, we must understand there is a difference between the inner city/ghetto and the urban areas immediately surrounding the inner city. I know a pastor who first planted his church in the inner city and

soon recognized the need to move his church to a fringe area just outside the core of the city. He wanted to reach those in the core, but he needed stable families to help him accomplish the task. By locating his church on the fringe of the core, he could reach both the stable and the needy at the same time. His recommendation is to select an area at the edge of the core and work to reach people from both the outer urban settings and the core of the city.

New York church planters have been shut out of the public schools over the past few years, and meeting places are at a premium. Synagogues are popular, but it would not be uncommon to have a temple rented out to multiple groups on a Sunday. You may have a Muslim group leaving the temple when you arrive and then have a Pentecostal church arriving for their service when you prepare to leave.

Recognize the Influence of the Cities

Paul had the attitude that if he could reach Rome, he could reach the world. If the church wants to influence society, there is nothing more important for it to do than to reach the large metropolitan cities of our nation.

If you look at a colored election map, you'll see that it was the inner cities that carried the votes during the 2012 elections, so in reality, the power to govern came from the voices of those in the inner city.

Additionally, many of the inner cities of our nation also have an international influence. For instance, in New York City there are eight hundred languages spoken. Additionally, 40 percent of

the residents of the city were born in a foreign country. From the perspective of influence, if we can reach inner cities, we can reach the world.

The local New Testament church continues to be the pillar and the ground of the truth. Let's raise the gospel banner high and see many lives transformed by the power of God.

Resolve to Get Involved

Every pastor ought to have as his goal the multiplying of disciples, leaders, and then churches. Most preachers in our circles understand the importance of evangelism and making disciples, but I wonder if we recognize our personal responsibility to multiply leaders so we can multiply churches.

In just sixteen years, Shubal Stearns (1706–1771) was the catalyst that God used to see forty-two churches planted out of the Sandy Creek Baptist Church in what is now Liberty, North Carolina. Each new church had in its DNA the blueprint to start other churches. At his death, there were less than one hundred Baptist churches in our thirteen colonies, but by 1836, there were 7,299 Baptist churches in our country.

Paul challenged Timothy in 2 Timothy 2:2 to find and train faithful men. If there is a log jam, it's in this area of developing leaders. Whether in our local churches or Bible colleges, the need is to see disciples and leaders and churches has multiplied.

Most every pastor can develop a strategy of seeing one new church planted every four years. Would you take the challenge to plant one new church before the next presidential election? We

must see that it's not about how many churches are in a given area, but rather what percentage of people in that area go to a gospel-preaching church.

I know several churches who are recent plants themselves and are already multiplying by planting new churches. Additionally, I know seasoned pastors who have been intentional about actively reproducing churches out of their ministries—training up leaders and investing in new church plants.

In Acts 17:16, the Holy Spirit gives us a glimpse of the heart of Paul for the great urban cities of Greece, “Now while Paul waited for them at Athens, his spirit was stirred in him, when he saw the city wholly given to idolatry.” May the Lord stir us up for the task of church planting in our cities and cause a holy passion to grip us to do this great work.

STEP FIVE

REACH EVERY CULTURAL GROUP

CARLOS NAVARRETE

America is still the land of opportunity—for immigrants and soulwinners alike. For immigrants, the opportunity is a temporal one—they want to experience the “American Dream”—or at least escape the hardships of their home country.

But for us as soul-conscious Christians, the opportunity is a gospel one. We have both the mandate and the availability to share the news of salvation through Jesus Christ. In truth, the fact that people from other nations would come to our doorstep is a golden opportunity for local churches who are passionate about reaching the world with the gospel.

Why then is there such reluctance in many biblical Baptist churches to begin cross-cultural ministries? Why do we neglect people who have become a substantial percentage of our communities?

Living in Southern California, the largest non-American cultural group is Hispanic. An April 15, 2013, *Time* magazine article pointed out two facts about Hispanics in the United States: First, they are, by and large, an incredibly reachable group. Second, Charismatic groups with shaky theology and doctrine are reaching out to them.¹

Politicians, too, are reaching Hispanics. After the recent presidential election, one commentator explained that it was not Hurricane Sandy and the change in the political landscape that provided a win for President Obama. Rather, it was the fact that the democratic party effectively reached out to Hispanics. He said, “It was the Hispanic vote that really nailed Romney; 71 percent of Latinos voted for the President.”² Whether or not his opinion is valid, he is correct that politicians reach out to cross-cultural groups—particularly the Hispanic population—of our country.

There is no question that politicians and liberals have made strategic outreach to those from other cultures a priority, even making incredible inroads with them. Why then is the church of the living God slow to practice what we preach—that “God is not willing that any should perish” (2 Peter 3:9)?

Open Hearts

As soulwinners, we regularly pray that the Holy Spirit would go before us and open hearts to receive the gospel message. More

1 Elizabeth Dias, “Evangélicos!” *Time*, April 15, 2013, 20.

2 Bill O’Reilly, “Is Traditional America Gone for Good?” November 12, 2012, <http://www.foxnews.com/on-air/oreilly/2012/11/13/bill-oreilly-traditional-america-gone-good>

likely than not, there already is a large percentage of people in your community whose hearts are both open and searching.

The reality is, when someone's life is uprooted from their native nation, they become more open than ever. A new diet, culture, language, customs, city, streets...imagine how vulnerable you would feel if you were transplanted into Argentina. Being uprooted can open one's heart in an incredible way.

Another reason other cultures here in the US have an openness to the gospel is the economic hardships they face. Many immigrants learn new skills when they enter this country simply as a means to survive—often accepting jobs that American citizens are unwilling to take. Difficult times in our economy have produced wonderful opportunities for growth and ministry in our church and in our Spanish ministry.

And finally, those of other cultures tend to be more open because they are looking for acceptance while the whole world around them is screaming for change. Unfortunately, the open hearts of immigrants means that they are also open to false sects, false religions, and many other lies of Satan. And, believe me, cults take advantage of this openness.

Fortunately, it also means that they are incredibly open to the gospel. As we go door knocking in the Antelope Valley of Southern California, some of the most sensitive people to the gospel are immigrants. Many have no family or friends, and it is a wonderful thing when someone of their own language brings the Word of God to them.

Reaching foreigners with the gospel is an opportunity to communicate God's heart of love to them. Remember

that when the Israelites entered the Promised Land, the Lord specifically instructed them to show kindness to the foreigner. God wanted foreigners to know “I am the LORD your God” (Leviticus 19:33–34). The church that provides a ministry in a foreigner’s language communicates, “There is a Saviour who loves you no matter what language you speak.”

There is nothing like hearing the Word of God in your mother tongue. Even in Acts 2, there is the significant note, “every man heard them speak in his own language.”

The question is not if cultural groups are reachable. Without a doubt, they are incredibly open. The question is how open is our heart to reach them?

Bilingual Models

There are at least four workable models for churches to effectively reach people of other cultures for Christ.

1. Help plant a church of another ethnicity. With this method, you pray for and financially support a pastor who is planting a church to reach certain people groups. Lancaster Baptist Church did this in helping to plant the Los Angeles Baptist Church in the heart of LA’s Hispanic community. Pastor Chappell and our church family helped to encourage, train, and give until the church became self-supporting.
2. Begin a bilingual department of a church with the goal of it becoming an autonomous church. Much like the model above, the end result is a self-supporting church, but it begins within the walls of the mother church as a church ministry.

3. Translate your English services. Having your services translated into another language can be a good beginning of bilingual ministry. This is particularly helpful if there is just a small group of people in your community who have shown an interest in the gospel or if you are not able to hire an assistant who speaks the second language fluently.

4. Begin a department of the local church under the leadership of one pastor. This is the model Pastor Chappell has chosen for Lancaster Baptist Church, and God has blessed it greatly over the years. Although this is not the only good model, it has worked well for our church for a number of reasons.

As you prayerfully choose the model of ministry for your church, I would encourage you to consider a few factors that are unique to every church.

The demographic make-up of your area—According to the last us census, there are close to fifty million Hispanics living in America. Our church happens to be in the northern tip of the third largest Spanish-speaking county in the United States—Los Angeles county. In 1991, when Pastor Chappell recognized the growing number of Spanish-speaking people moving into our area, he began the Spanish department of our church. Today, almost 35 percent of our community speaks Spanish. In our church's Spanish department, there are now over ten different Latin American countries represented.

The social economic make-up of your area—Research your community. What kinds of immigrants are there? Are they field workers? Do they migrate? Are they only seasonal, or do they stay around? Are they segregated? Answering these types of questions

through thorough research will help you determine what ways would be most effective to help reach them.

The life stage of your church—Like any other new ministry, the pastor must determine if this is indeed the right time for the church to launch a bilingual department. As a pastor, you will want to seek God's face and His leading.

Defining the Purposes of Bilingual Ministry

Launching out for God in any endeavor is a decision of faith. Remembering the purposes and objectives for this decision is helpful in defining the process. What do we hope to accomplish in our outreach to those from other cultures?

Most obviously, we desire to fulfill the command of Christ to preach the gospel to all nations (Mark 16:15; Luke 24:47). Included in the Great Commission are the cultural groups that lie within our own nation—and particularly within our specific communities. To neglect these people is to neglect Christ's final instruction to the local church.

Americans have differing opinions on immigration laws and policies, and sometimes we struggle with how to treat people of other nations. Policy aside, I believe, as Christians, our first priority must be to please our Saviour by ministering to those in our communities. We accomplish this by preaching the gospel and loving people as Jesus would. Christ Himself showed us what this looks like when He offered the woman at the well the Living Water. He put aside social prejudice and cultural differences to reach an eternal soul in need of the gospel.

Another purpose of ministry to another cultural group is to carry out the pastor's vision for the church. If you are a senior pastor, you know the burden you have to reach your entire community with the gospel—not just those who happen to speak your language.

Almost every week, our church receives a phone call from a pastor desiring to reach people of a different language in this community. This is exciting because it evidences the grace of God working on pastors around our nation to obey the Lord's leading. I know it is uncomfortable for them to minister to people whose culture and words they may not understand.

If you are an associate pastor, your purpose in bilingual ministry is a bit different. You must understand and help fulfill your pastor's vision. As an associate pastor myself, I recognize that my role is to help fulfill Pastor Chappell's vision of reaching the Antelope Valley with the gospel. I happen to help him with those who speak Spanish, and others in our church help him in different roles. I see this as a sacred opportunity and trust—one that I do not take lightly. It is a joy for me to extend Pastor Chappell's vision for our church to our Spanish department. In fact, I believe this is my responsibility according to Ephesians 4:11–12: “And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ.”

The third objective in cross-cultural ministry is to reach the unique needs of God's people. As mentioned earlier, to hear the Word of God preached and taught in your language meets a deep need of the heart. This is not only true in leading people to salvation; it is also true in every stage of Christian growth.

Perhaps you have a rudimentary understanding of Spanish—maybe two years in high school. Even if you could understand bits and pieces of a service in Spanish, consider how spiritually famished you would become if the only spiritual teaching you received was in Spanish.

Culture represents so much more than language (although that is the most obvious and expressive component). There is also a set of economic, social, and dietary needs unique to a different cultural group. To this group of people, connecting with others—especially other growing Christians—who face the same challenges is incredibly encouraging. Additionally, it gives the church an opportunity and an infrastructure to reach these needs.

Overcoming the Obstacles

As with any work of faith, reaching out to other cultural groups will include obstacles. I believe the obstacles in this area of ministry can be particularly large for two reasons. First, it is a ministry with tremendous potential. Considering the growing population in the United States of those from other countries, reaching these people with the gospel is an unparalleled opportunity. When we begin such ministry, Satan doesn't ignore our efforts.

Second, language itself is such a powerful barrier. Misunderstandings and disunity can easily arise in such a setting. Satan takes advantage of this as well and works diligently to pervert the gospel and divide the Lord's church.

We are not powerless, however, against these obstacles. In the same passage from which we take our directive to reach

cultural groups, we have the promise of Christ's power and His presence: "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth...and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen" (Matthew 28:18, 20).

In our own ministry, I have seen spiritual people working together to overcome the challenges of reaching the lost in our community as well as building a multicultural church.

Consider the church of Acts 2. Having been involved in multicultural ministry, I don't believe the primary reason this church was a miraculous church was because of the miracles or sign gifts; I believe it was because members from many nations, tribes, and tongues were under one roof worshiping and serving God in unity. Phrases such as "in one accord" (v. 1, 46) reveal that many ethnic groups can exist within one church body with incredible unity. We have been privileged to have this same Spirit-filled unity at Lancaster Baptist Church for over two decades.

Ephesians 4:3 instructs us to endeavor—to work at—keeping "the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" (Ephesians 4:3). I believe that a key component to the fruit of the Spanish ministry at Lancaster Baptist is that Pastor Chappell has understood the importance of continually working for the unity of the Spirit throughout our church family—regardless of what language a church member speaks.

As the senior pastor, Pastor Chappell has been sensitive to the fact that it would be easy for the devil to plant a seed of doubt about his love for the Spanish congregation, and he has purposefully worked to communicate his love and care to those in the Spanish ministry on a regular basis. Especially in the early years of our

Spanish ministry, Pastor Chappell would stop by to communicate his love. As I grew in maturity and loyalty, I tried to communicate this for him more and more. Even now, however, he will often visit our services, preach in our services, make presentations, and share his vision for our Spanish ministry. I receive dozens of memos from him on a regular basis sharing ideas or ministries that he would like to begin to better to serve our Spanish-speaking people.

As a leader of the Spanish ministry, I must also endeavor to keep unity and lead the ministry to do the same. There are several ways I work to do this.

It has been my desire to obliterate any “them” and “us” mentalities within our Spanish congregation. I work to communicate to our people that it is “our church,” “our special day,” “our pastor,” “our special offering,” etc. I encourage the Spanish ministry to encourage their pastor on his birthday, his anniversary, his wife’s birthday, and our church anniversary.

I also believe that it is imperative for me to often communicate with my pastor that I am with him in heart and vision. The Lord knows I truly endeavor to be a blessing to my pastor’s heart, and I pray that I can continue to do so until the Lord returns.

On a personal level, I ask my pastor for counsel and guidance—not just in ministry, but also in my life and family.

In our services, I acknowledge Pastor Chappell and commend him in the presence of the congregation. When he walks in the room, I let people know he is there and that he loves them and would like to greet them. I remember that as the overseer of the church, it is his pulpit he is allowing me to fill. I see my role as an

extension of the pastor's ministry. I remind our congregation of his desire and heart for the future.

For any church to stay united, it's not going to be by accident. But this is especially true when there is a cultural and language obstacle toward unity. Overcoming these obstacles requires us to purposefully work together—that we “stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel” (Philippians 1:27).

God uses spiritual people to do His spiritual work of reaching every nation. No matter what language people speak or what nation they come from, God is interested in changing hearts and lives through the power of the gospel. The only question that remains is, are we interested in reaching them?

STEP SIX

ESTABLISH CAMPUS MINISTRIES

LARRY CHAPPELL

It is impossible to catch a glimpse of “America Tomorrow” without observing the youth of America today. Sadly, a simple survey of youth trends and culture would indicate that we are quickly losing ground in the battle for today’s youth. *USA Today* reports that more young adults than ever are not only leaving church, but are also ditching their biblical worldview along the way.¹

Each generation has a biblical responsibility to train and equip the next generation to walk in truth. Psalm 78:6–7 says, “That the generation to come might know them, even the children which should be born; who should arise and declare them to their children: That they might set their hope in God, and not forget the

1 Cathy Lynn Grossman, “Survey: 72% of Millennials ‘more spiritual than religious,’” *USA Today*, April 27, 2010, http://usatoday30.usatoday.com/news/religion/2010-04-27-1Amillfaith27_ST_N.htm.

works of God, but keep his commandments.” As Baptists, how are we doing with this responsibility?

If America is to experience revival, we must not only retain the youth of our churches after they graduate, but we must also reach the masses of young adults who have never been approached with the gospel.

America’s school campuses, from elementary schools to state universities, are a mission field. The frequent exposure to humanistic philosophies and sinful behavior within these learning environments has taken its toll on American culture. We could discuss at length the problems—school shootings, sex education, evolution, humanism, and a catalog of other evils. This would be a bleak discussion. Let’s instead focus on the solution: Jesus.

As you read the following pages, please consider your involvement in getting the solution, Jesus, onto the campuses nearest your church. It’s time we take action by any means possible to reach America’s youth before it truly is too late. Their souls are precious to God, and their influence will shape the future of our nation.

Why You Should Consider Campus Ministries

If you’re not yet convinced of the desperate need for local churches to assist in the establishing of campus ministries, please consider the four following reasons:

You can make a difference in the lives of hurting, searching, and growing students.

I recently read that our nation's adolescents can be described with the following words:²

1. Secularized—God's influence has been removed.
2. Desensitized—Sin has become the norm.
3. Traumatized—Their perspectives has been clouded by abusive relationships.
4. Immobilized—They have no cause.

Unfortunately, these descriptors apply to both saved and unsaved teens. Hurting students will continue to hurt unless they experience the healing grace of Christ. Searching students will discover humanistic and sinful philosophies unless they are presented with the truth of God's Word. New believers will struggle to grow within the toxic environment of public education unless someone encourages them and discipless them in sound doctrine.

Our nation's public schools have been described as "temples of darkness" and while it is easy to understand why those terms are being used, it causes one to wonder how we are doing in our efforts to take the gospel light onto these campuses. Yes, it was a terrible day when the Ten Commandments were removed from the school walls, but the students have remained, and more than ever they need exposure to Jesus Christ.

² Dewey M. Bertolini, *Back to the Heart of Youth Work* (Victor Books, 1994), 64–69.

Many anti-biblical activist groups have already established a presence within public schools and universities.

Today's youth—particularly elementary through high-school-aged students—are increasingly exposed to anti-biblical philosophy during their formative years. For example, the Gay-Straight Alliance (GSA) has worked diligently to recruit students and equip them with the tools needed to begin a Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender (GLBT) club on their campuses. These clubs are quickly growing in numbers across the nation. Their purpose is to invite students to question and explore their sexual identity without the moral foundation of Scripture. The club members are routinely challenged to organize gay pride parades, gay proms, and numerous other social outings.

Many students today are searching for an identity and a place to belong. Television shows such as “The New Normal” along with the help of countless celebrities have packaged the homosexual lifestyle as a completely normal alternative. Organizations such as the GSA are providing unbiblical community and identity to students who are longing for acceptance.

Tolerance and *anti-bullying* are often the buzz words in the establishing of these groups. Ironically, Christian teens who kindly hold to biblical values are often mocked and bullied themselves... occasionally even publicly by gay activists.³

We should be thankful for the freedom of speech and religion extended to every student. The truth is that the GLBT students have

3 FOX News Insider, “Dan Savage Bullies Christian Teens in Speech at Anti-Bullying Conference,” April 30, 2012, <http://foxnewsinsider.com/2012/04/30/dan-savage-bullies-christian-teens-in-speech-at-anti-bullying-conference-says-to-ignore-bull-in-the-bible>.

the same legal right to form clubs within the public education system as Christian students have the right to form Bible clubs. I do not believe that the primary purpose in establishing a Christian presence on public campuses should be to go to war against other religions and lifestyles, but rather to proclaim the gospel and seek to help students discover the truth of God's Word. The bottom-line is that this cannot happen unless Christian leaders work alongside Christian students and teachers to help establish a Christian presence.

It is likely that Christian teachers and coaches are already putting forth the effort to minister to students on their own campuses, and they need your help.

Every time our church has set out to establish a Christian club on a nearby high school campus, it wasn't long before God allowed our path to cross with a Christian teacher or coach who was already ministering to students on that campus. Each situation was unique. Some teachers were struggling to launch a Christian club while others were facilitating their students in amazing ways.

Regardless of the circumstances, every Christian teacher we've met has overwhelmingly welcomed our involvement in their schools. They need us, and we need them. Effective campus ministry rarely occurs without the help of a school official, such as a teacher. They can provide you with a wealth of information to assist in the starting of a campus ministry.

Legally, Christian teachers who are employed by a school are generally limited in their religious practices in front of their students. This makes them all the more eager to help a group who is able to

give the biblical help they wish they could. It is almost certain that there are Christian teachers and coaches who are laboring alone at a nearby grade school or university in your town. An hour or two of your time each week would greatly encourage and enable them to have a greater impact for Christ.

You will gain unique perspective on the reality of adolescent culture.

Often times, there is a disconnect between my perception of youth culture and the reality of it. This is not a suggestion for every youth leader to become a student of pop culture to connect with students, but it is true that we are better equipped to confront sin and teach real life application when we are aware of what students are actually dealing with.

I literally grew up at church. I'll never forget the eye-opening experience of walking onto a high school campus for the first time. It was scary and exciting all at the same time. If all your ministry opportunities occur only "at church," you may be missing out on some awesome "frontline" ministry experiences. Getting an outside perspective is a great way to keep your passion for life change fresh, realistic, and faith-based.

Potential Campus Ministry Opportunities

If you desire to make a difference within the campuses near your church but don't know where to begin, start by familiarizing yourself with many campus ministry opportunities available today. In the next few paragraphs, we'll cover a few of the opportunities

that our church has taken advantage of. This is not necessarily an exhaustive list. God may open a door that is unique to your church family and not listed below.

On the logistical side, please note that “campus ministries” is a broad term meant to include ministry opportunities from elementary schools through state and local colleges. The way you approach these different venues varies drastically. Before taking action, please familiarize yourself with the legalities of campus ministry. While a student’s right to religious expression is undeniably protected, teachers and outside guests are limited in their involvement.

Christian Clubs (primarily on high school and college campuses)

Lancaster Baptist Church has been blessed throughout the years to see many young adults come to Christ through public high school Christian clubs. The Christian club is simply a student-led gathering on campus that is recognized by that school’s student body council. The club may meet before school, during lunch, or after school. Technically, the club must be started by a student of that school, and a teacher must volunteer to be that club’s official “sponsor.”

So how can you help in the creation of a Christian club? Identify Christian students, connect them with Christian teachers, and give them the information and tools needed to start the club. Again, the club must be student led, but you can equip the students to lead and facilitate them in the establishing of the club. Once the club is started, you can attend each week as a guest speaker.

There are a number of organizations such as Youth for Christ, Fellowship of Christian Athletes, and others who conduct weekly

clubs on campuses across the US. Most schools will only allow one Christian club, so you'll want to be aware of any other organization that may have already established a club. In some cases, if you meet the local leaders of these organizations, they would allow you to come in and speak to a large number of students who already attend their clubs. This opportunity varies from school to school, so you'll definitely want to do your research.⁴

After School Programs (primarily on elementary and middle school campuses)

In recent years, God has allowed our church family to expand our campus outreach by participating in after school children's programs that have already been established by various non-profit organizations. For example, Child Evangelism Fellowship (CEF) has a reputable blueprint for establishing and promoting after school programs. CEF works with the school administration to offer parents after school child care with a biblical emphasis. These clubs take place on campus and are called "Good News Clubs."⁵

The great benefit of these clubs is that the children are enrolled by their parents. Think about that for a minute...you have their permission to instruct their children with biblical truth. What a great opportunity!

4 For more detailed instructions on this topic as well as a sample club constitution, please visit <http://ministry127.com/student-ministry/starting-a-christian-Bible-club>.

5 For more information on the Good News Clubs, contact Child Evangelism Fellowship, or visit http://www.cefonline.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=86:after-school-good-news-clubs&catid=13:good-news-clubs&Itemid=100049.

It really makes sense to reach the next generation while they are young. I am thankful that each week, our children's pastors have the opportunity to teach biblical principles and give the gospel to elementary students. Not only have we seen a large number of students saved already this year, but we've also been able to reach their families as well.

Adopt-a-School Concept

A few years back, our local high school district added a large school to accommodate growth in our community. This brand new school was built less than a mile from our church campus. During this time we established the "Adopt-a-School" concept. The point of "Adopt-a-School" is to simply let our neighboring school know that we love them and care for them. The "Adopt-a-School" concept is more of a mentality than a program. We constantly look for ways to be a blessing to this "adopted" school. Here are just a few of the ways we've tried to implement this concept:

- We occasionally take the school administration donuts and coffee in the morning.
- We have catered meals for their sports teams on the day of their game.
- We have taken our youth group to cheer for their sports team.
- Once, it unexpectedly rained in our valley so we purchased several hundred rain ponchos and then distributed them with tracts to the students who were walking home.

As you can see, these are somewhat random expressions of kindness, but they have made an impression. If you are desiring to

start a club, but can't seem to get your foot in the door, perhaps you could begin implementing the "Adopt-a-School" mentality.

Campus Volunteer

Another great opportunity is to become an official school volunteer. This will take a bit of time and effort on your part. The application process will require a full background check, drug test, CPR certification, finger printing, and a pile of paperwork. But I believe the advantages far outweigh the effort.

A few years back, shortly after some of our youth staff completed the volunteer application process, two high school students who were both very popular were tragically killed in a house fire. As school volunteers, members of our youth team were able to assist in grief counseling. Later that same day, we were asked to speak at a school-wide rally called "Healing After Tragedy," where we were able to present the gospel.

If you plan to get heavily involved in campus ministry, one of the best things you could do is become an official school volunteer.

Parenting Classes

We've spent much time discussing the need to minister to young adults who are searching for truth, but what about their parents? In many cases, parents of teenagers are groping for the resources to walk through the adolescent years with their children. They know their children are struggling, and they are at a loss to help them—or to maintain strong relationships with them in the home.

Last year, a teacher who attends our church was able to work with her school principal to establish parenting classes. These voluntary classes take place after school, and the teacher from our church invited us to conduct them. These classes were received very well, and we were able to get the gospel out to each parent in attendance.

Effective Campus Ministry Priorities

I truly hope you'll consider launching out of your comfort zone and ministering on public school campuses. If God allows you to successfully establish biblical presence, you must steward this opportunity and strive to maintain effective ministry. Here are some ways to accomplish this:

Pray for God to open doors for the right people at the right time.

Don't ever force your way into a school. We have seen God open some amazing doors that led us into the right school at the right time. It is impossible to overstate the importance of prayer.

Seek counsel from other ministry leaders.

Especially if you are an assistant pastor or laymen in your church, make sure to follow your pastor's lead before jumping into any campus endeavor. In some cases, such as a brand new church plant, establishing a campus ministry may be too much to tackle at the time. Again, make sure you have your pastor's blessing and direction before you start.

Act ethically, legally, and appropriately.

There is no way to stress enough that when you are involved in campus ministry, you are a guest of that campus and it is a privilege for you to be there. It is not your place to debate preferential issues with teachers or students. Teach basic Bible principles—it goes a long way.

Always act appropriately. Never allow yourself to be placed in a situation that does not look right. You could potentially damage your church's testimony and harm the cause of Christ.

A great resource in understanding the legalities of campus ministry is Dr. David Gibbs' book *Keeping Christ in the Public Schools*. We frequently refer to this book for basic information and clarification regarding legal policies.

Think long-term involvement.

If you desire to conduct effective campus ministry, you have to think long term. Unfortunately, there have been several youth leaders throughout the years whose passion for campus ministry faded quickly. Long-term commitment requires building relationships, planning ahead during school breaks, enlisting and training more leaders who will partner with you, and personally deciding to stick around.

Become genuinely interested in the activities of the schools and in the students.

Campus ministry that is built around your ego won't last very long. Real campus ministry is about reaching people. You will limit your effectiveness if you are not genuinely interested in the school you

are trying to reach. What's their mascot? School colors? Rivalries? Summer schedules?

The first year I became involved in campus ministry, I had a student ask me to attend a fundraiser with him. The fundraiser event was a walk-a-thon...on my day off! To be honest, I really did not want to go. When the day of the event came, I reluctantly showed up and passed out water cups for about an hour and then left.

I'll never forget the next club meeting. This young man, who had been distant and uninterested, was now visibly engaged and listening to each word of my lesson. What made the difference? I took an interest in him. I learned an important lesson that day—care more for people than you do for your own agenda.

Invest in student leaders who can maximize campus impact.

For campus ministry to be successful, there must be students who will catch the vision and run with it. Campus ministry that is solely structured around you will be limited and short-lived. You can only take a club or program so far. Identify students who have the potential to lead and equip them and train them to do so. These students have a much greater influence among their peers, and they are at school all week. Provoke them unto good works. As a student, they have greater liberty to promote Christ on campus than you ever will. Invest in them and encourage them.

When given the opportunity to speak, give the gospel.

What is the end goal of campus ministry? Large school rallies with pizza, posters, and pep talks? No, not really. The end goal is gospel transformation—Christ changing students' lives through the

power of His resurrection. Gospel transformation cannot take place unless the gospel is preached.

During my second year of high school ministry, I became discouraged by how few teens were accepting Christ on campus. Another youth leader and I had been speaking at multiple clubs throughout the year with decent attendances, but few salvations. This sounds really silly, but one day it occurred to me that although we had taught practical Bible lessons throughout the year, we had failed in sharing the gospel and giving the students a chance to respond. From that point on, our youth staff determined to give the gospel at every opportunity.

Last week I received a text from one of our youth leaders who leads a club at our closest high school campus. It simply said “5 saved at Eastside!” I’m thankful he gave the gospel and that five students responded. We’ll now do our best to follow up with the same students and help them to grow in their faith.

We definitely have our work cut out for us, but God’s promises are still true. His Word will not return void, and He is still at work in the lives of students within public schools today. Please consider how God may desire to use you to reach a nearby campus with the gospel.

We believe Romans 10:13, “For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.” But sometimes we forget the questions following it: “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?” (Romans 10:14).

Public school campuses are needy places—mission fields ripe for the gospel.

STEP SEVEN

PRAY FOR NATIONAL LEADERS

TIM CHRISTOSON AND DR. MIKE ZACHARY

There is no doubt that in God's plan the local church is to be the catalyst for change in a nation. We do not look to Washington D.C. for revival—we look to God and plead, “Wilt thou not revive us again: that thy people may rejoice in thee?” (Psalm 85:6).

Yet, it is just as indisputable that the actions of government leaders do affect Christians and they do influence the American people—both through their examples and legislation.

Thus, when we pray for revival, we should also pray for our national leaders. We should seek to minister to their needs, encourage any attempts they make toward upholding biblical values, and pray for them to have wisdom to make choices that will preserve the peace of our nation.

To ignore our leaders—or to only be disparaging toward them—is to overlook our opportunity to influence the political shapers of our nation’s future.

A Biblical Perspective on Government Leaders

The Bible speaks clearly and directly about the Christian’s relationship with government, and there is no way to sidestep the fact that Christians have a duty to foster relationships with governmental officials that is based on respect and obedience. While the statement “We ought to obey God rather than men” (Acts 5:29) demonstrates that there are limits to our obedience to government, our default position as Christians is that we should obey authority and find ways to live peaceably in our society.

God, in His sovereignty, puts rulers in place.

One of the great themes of the book of Daniel is the sovereignty of God in human kingdoms. When God answered Daniel’s prayer to have the king’s secret revealed, Daniel blessed the Lord and noted how our all-powerful God “removeth kings, and setteth up kings” (Daniel 2:21). Daniel fully knew that it was God, not mankind, Who allowed certain men to be set in positions of governmental authority.

Further, when Nebuchadnezzar made an official proclamation about the strange events of his life where his “heart was made like the beasts” (Daniel 5:21), part of God’s purpose was to remind him that “the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will” (Daniel 4:17). When Nebuchadnezzar came back to his right mind, he had learned humility and that God

“doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?” (Daniel 4:35).

Sometimes, people can be irritated with government officials because planned events seem to encounter too many hurdles. It is important to remember, however, that God Himself is aware of all the obstacles we encounter; and when these problems exist, it creates opportunities for God to show Himself strong. Even when we feel anxiety and frustration, we must remember that God knows who is in power, He can easily change who is in power, and He can easily change the hearts of the people who are in power (Proverbs 21:1).

God can use evil rulers for His purposes.

King Jehoiakim (reigned 608–598 BC) came to power when the people of God were experiencing very difficult times, and the Bible declares that “he did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD” (2 Kings 23:37). God knew His people would need to receive strong judgment if there was any hope of curbing their rebellious behavior.

Jeremiah the prophet clearly proclaimed that God would use King Nebuchadnezzar to destroy their nation: “Behold, I will send and take all the families of the north, saith the LORD, and Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, my servant, and will bring them against this land, and against the inhabitants thereof, and against all these nations round about, and will utterly destroy them, and make them an astonishment, and an hissing, and perpetual desolations” (Jeremiah 25:9).

The teaching of the Scriptures is clear—God can use a godless ruler or the king of a heathen nation to accomplish His purposes.

The Bible commands Christians to pray for government officials.

I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; For kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty.

—1 TIMOTHY 2:1–2

Not only are Christians commanded to pray for government officials, they are also commanded to give thanks for them. Sometimes, people sincerely ask, “How can we be thankful for leaders who are destroying our country?”

When the book of 1 Timothy was written, the infamous Nero was Emperor. Though we are not sure it is true, many people believed that Nero intentionally set the city of Rome on fire to clear ground for a new palace complex. Ultimately, the Roman Senate declared Nero an enemy of the state, and he committed suicide.

Even though Nero was a poor ruler known to be an enemy of Christianity, Paul wrote that “prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; for kings, and for all that are in authority.”

As we pray for government officials, we are to specifically pray that we can live our Christian lives in quietness and peace. It is no secret that the system of this world is the enemy of Christ. In His time and in His way, God will set all in order. Whether Christians live in nations openly hostile to the government or in nations that offer relative freedom, they are commanded to pray that they will be able to practice their faith in peace.

Christians are commanded to obey the law.

Here, the biblical command is completely clear. Titus was instructed to teach his church members to “be subject to principalities and powers, to obey magistrates” (Titus 3:1).

Of course, first-century Crete was not considered a Christian nation, nor was it a nation founded on the principles of liberty as described in the US Declaration of Independence. Thus, the command of Scripture is not “if you live in a Christian nation where religious liberties are constitutionally guaranteed, then you should obey magistrates.” Nor is the command of Scripture, “if you live in a community where the laws allow you to build as you please, then you should obey magistrates.” Christian people are not only supposed to obey the law, they are commanded to pray for the people enforcing the law.

The Bible describes when civil disobedience is acceptable.

Sometimes, we can be selfishly shortsighted. There are cases when people want to battle for their constitutional rights because they disagree with the speed limit in their neighborhood or because they do not want to spend money to ensure that a building has adequate fire protection. Undoubtedly, there are times when the laws and codes seem unnecessarily burdensome, but the Bible does not teach that Christians should disobey the laws when they are irritating.

In the first century, the apostles were cast into prison because the religious authorities of the day were trying to eradicate the message of Christ (Acts 5:18). But God Himself worked against

these authorities, sending an angel to let the apostles out of prison. When the apostles appeared before the council, the High Priest made it clear that the religious leaders of the day did not want the message of Christ to be preached and proclaimed. When the civil authorities had demanded that the apostles cease and desist from preaching the message of Christ, Peter proclaimed, “We ought to obey God rather than men” (Acts 5:29).

In this instance, God used the wise counsel of Gamaliel to prevent the apostles from being executed. In other instances, God has allowed people to become martyrs for the cause of Christ (Revelation 2:13, 17:6). In all of these cases, however, it is clear that the dispute was not about paying taxes or obeying the fire code. While Christians are to endeavor to be good citizens, they cannot allow governmental policies to silence their witness for Jesus Christ.

How to Pray for and Build Good Relationships with Government Officials

In light of the clear biblical teaching on governmental relationships, it behooves Christian people to do what they can to build good relationships with government officials. Of course, there are antagonistic people in every occupation, but many government officials appreciate it when you make the effort to meet them and to learn about the work they do. The following suggestions are practical ideas about beginning the process of building good relationships with and supporting government officials.

Make an effort to understand the governmental structure of your city.

Obviously, not all cities are set up the same way. In some cases, the people of the community elect the mayor; in other cases, a council or board determines which of its members will act as mayor. If you understand the structure of your city, it can save you from some embarrassing gaffes, and it will also enable you to work on projects more efficiently.

A commonly encountered form of city government consists of a mayor and city council working with a city manager. In these situations, there is typically a separation of powers. For example, it might be that the mayor and city council would have to vote to approve a building project, but the detailed answers about obtaining permits and working with building inspectors would be handled by city staff members under the direction of the city manager.

In certain cases, the mayor and city council are prohibited by law from handling certain details of how the city operates. If you were to encounter a problem, it is important to know how much of the remedy can be handled by working with the mayor/city council and how much of the problem must be handled by working with the city manager/city staff.

Make an effort to meet city government officials.

It is better to have relationships with city government officials prior to requesting help in resolving an issue. As with all human relationships, things go better when there is a pre-established sense of trust and respect. If members of your city government have already met with you, have already seen your congregation, and

have already begun to develop the sense that you are good citizens, it is much easier to work together on challenging situations when they arise.

It is appropriate to invite elected officials to meet with the pastor and/or appropriate church staff members. These meetings can be rather informal meetings in the office, or they can be highly visible meetings where an elected official greets an entire congregation during a service. When people are running for office, they often appreciate an invitation to appear before your congregation; and when people are in office, they typically appreciate good ongoing relationships with the community.

Be careful to understand the rules of your city. In some cities, for example, elected officials may receive gifts, but not gifts valued higher than seventy-five dollars; but non-elected officials are not allowed to receive any gifts whatsoever. By understanding the rules ahead of time, you can make decisions of how to appropriately express appreciation. For example, in some cities you wouldn't want to present a non-elected official with a beautiful leather Bible, only to be told that the employee cannot accept bribes.

Meet the Chief of Police and the Fire Chief.

In addition to meeting with these people individually, consider having a special Sunday service when police officers and fire fighters can be honored. In many cases, police officers and firemen are treated with disrespect; so it can be refreshing for them to experience a moment when the important work that they do is appreciated and honored.

Write letters of appreciation.

When you remember that most people never attend any city government functions until they have a problem, you realize that words of appreciation would be especially appreciated. In your letter, it would be appropriate to thank them for their dedicated service, to let them know that you are praying for God's blessing on their lives, and to wish them well in both their professional and personal lives.

Attend some events, like city council meetings, even when you have no business at the meeting.

It is a token of goodwill to attend meetings, just to stay abreast of the issues important in your city. If you make it a point to be friendly, you can meet and greet a number of city officials and city employees who attend these meetings; and this is an excellent way of sustaining good relations.

Make an effort to understand the governmental structure of your county.

Just as with cities, there is variation in how county governments are organized. Not only is it important to understand the structure of the county government, it is important to understand the relationship between your city and your county.

Let's suppose you are hoping that some of the roadways near your church would be better maintained. In some cases, you would contact the city; in some cases you would contact the county; and in some cases, you would need to contact state or federal agencies.

Meet county officials and send them letters of encouragement.

As with city officials, a simple note of appreciation can go a long way. Express your thanks for the work they do to better the county in which you live and serve.

Determine who represents your district in your state assembly.

For example, Lancaster Baptist Church is in District 21 as far as the California State Assembly is concerned, and in District 36 as far as the California State Senate is concerned. In the last election, the winning Assemblyman from District 21 won the election by the narrow margin of 145 votes (66,005 to 65,860). Though not all elections are this close, it is important to remember that, at the local, county, and state levels, elected officials have good reason to be responsive to the people who put them in office.

Know who represents you in the United States House of Representatives and the United States Senate.

Learn their names, pray for them, and write to let them know you appreciate their service and are praying for them.

Pray for the President of the United States, the Vice President of the United States, and the Governor of your state.

In addition to praying for your local officials and representatives, pray for the higher levels of leadership. We are all good at complaining about the decisions they make, but how many of us faithfully pray for them? Pray for their salvation (if they do not profess faith in Christ), for them to have wisdom to see the needs

of those they serve, for them to exercise courage in decisions, for their families, and for them to have positive influence through their leadership.

Serve Your Leaders

In American government, we expect those we elect to positions of leadership to serve us. We even refer to them as “public servants.”

As Christians, however, it is our privilege to serve others—including those we’ve elected to serve us. And one of the best ways we can serve them is by fervent prayer. James 5:16 promises, “The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.”

Do you believe that? Will you pray for those God has allowed in positions of leadership? And will you pray that God will raise up godly leaders for our nation?

STEP EIGHT

STAND FOR TRUTH

DR. PAUL CHAPPELL

China's best known monument is the Great Wall that surrounded the country during the Ming Dynasty. At four thousand miles long and over twenty feet tall, the wall was designed to be an impregnable obstacle to invading armies.

The idea was a good one, and it would have worked well—except that the enemy was able to bribe the gatekeeper. With the compromise of one guard, an impenetrable wall was rendered useless.

Gatekeepers of Truth

In ministry, our rally cry is “Onward, forward!” Christ commanded us to “go,” so we seek to advance the gospel.

We pray for fresh revival. We redouble our efforts in fulfilling the Great Commission. We plant new churches. We reach out into campuses and ethnic groups.

Simply put, we move forward.

But when it comes to the truth itself, we do not progress—we stand fast.

Those who see truth as progressive become like the Chinese guard on the wall who sold his country for a personal bribe. For the acceptance of men, a larger ministry platform, or weariness in the battle, they surrender the truth.

God has called us to stand as gatekeepers of the truth. And He has given us a full armor in which to stand guard. Ephesians 6:13 teaches, “Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.”

It is easy for believers—especially in the Western world, where the church is generally prosperous and respected—to be complacent and become oblivious to the seriousness of the battle around us.

Pastors in America are not stalked in public and pounced on in secret worship services as are many pastors in China. Our churches are not assaulted with open fire as they are in Egypt. Our leaders do not serve hard labor sentences in prisons of torture as church leaders do in Asia.

So we forget that truth is under siege. We let down our guard.

But truth is under siege. Satan continues to hurl his fiery darts; and if we don’t determine to stand, our loss will be a disgraceful one.

Lulled into complacency, we will remove our armor and willingly hand over the truth in a pragmatic decision for prosperity.

God is our strength, but His power is only appropriated by obedience. He instructs us to put on the armor He has provided (Ephesians 6:11).

How do we stand for the truth? I suggest five practical stances as you hold the truth.

Remember to Personally Stand for the Truth

Before Satan targets your ministry, he targets your heart. God commands us to resist his pull: “Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you” (James 4:7).

The Apostle Paul understood the personal nature of spiritual warfare. With passion and strategy, Paul made one spiritual conquest after another. He went to pagan cities as the first Christian witness and boldly proclaimed the gospel of Jesus Christ. I am truly awed when I think of a lone man entering these cities and lifting his voice to the truth. What courage, what boldness, and what victories God gave! From one city to the next, Paul led people to Christ and planted churches—and all of this in a morally decadent culture.

But even this man who was used of God to reach much of the Roman Empire with the gospel knew his susceptibility. He knew he was not beyond personal failure. And so he wrote, “But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway” (1 Corinthians 9:27).

With the voice of one who was experienced in personal combat, Paul wrote Timothy, “*Take heed unto thyself*, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee” (1 Timothy 4:16).

Take heed. Satan attacks men before he attacks ministries.

We are vulnerable, but Christ is strong. When we put our confidence in our strength, we fail. But when we put our confidence in Him, we have victory. First John 4:4 reminds us that we can overcome “because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world.”

From a position of personal victory in Christ’s strength we can—and must—remain steadfast as we preach the unchanging truths of God’s Word.

I’m reminded of Martin Luther’s statement when he stood before the Diet of Worms accused of heresy for preaching salvation by faith alone. He defended himself, “My conscience is captive to the Word of God....*Here I stand, I cannot do otherwise.*”

Every believer who is faithful to God’s Word cannot do otherwise than stand firm.

Hold fast the truth—personally and positionally.

Remember to Stay Involved as Salt and Light

Although it may be difficult to minister in a post-Christian society, our witness makes the most impact when it is most needed.

Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good

for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men. Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.—MATTHEW 5:13–16

Consider the audience who first heard these words. In the paragraph before, they had heard instruction on *when* (not *if*) persecution would come. It was not easy to be salt and light in the first-century Roman Empire, but the early church did it.

We’ve known so little of what can be called real persecution here in America that I’m afraid we don’t value the truth as we should. It seems we’re quick to explain why our salt has lost its zest and why our lights don’t shine rather than asking what we can do to be a stronger influence on our society.

So, what can we do?

Preach the Bible position on issues of the day.

One of the subtle moves of those who seek to undermine truth is to attach moral issues to political platforms. It’s bigoted to argue that one party’s stance is better than the other. But it’s biblical to preach that abortion is murder and same-sex marriage is sinful.

Christians need to understand that the Bible speaks to the moral issues of the day. When these issues surface in legislation, explain them from a biblical viewpoint—including preaching the key Scripture passages that address that specific issue.

For instance, when a state referendum is raised concerning same-sex marriage, teach your people what God's Word says about marriage. Ask them to turn to Genesis 1:27, 2:24, Matthew 19:5, and Romans 1:26–28. Preach what the biblical family is supposed to be from Ephesians 5.

Our people need to know what the Bible says concerning these issues. But this will only happen as pastors preach these issues from the Scripture passages that teach them.

Equip your people with materials.

If you wonder how much weight written materials have for today's generation, take a look at the pamphlets, flyers, signs, and websites sponsored by liberal influencers.

Yes, materials influence. They also make truth easier to spread.

John R. Rice knew this, and the materials he made available through the Sword of the Lord publications was a great benefit to the cause of truth. It allowed Bible-believing Baptists an opportunity to develop and spread printed literature that spoke to the core issues of the day.

Our ministry has likewise attempted to address these needs through Striving Together publications, especially through our "Contemporary Issues" series of booklets and our minibooks.¹

Whatever sources you use, it is vital to give solidly biblical material to equip your people.

1 Visit strivingtogether.com for more information, including quantity discounts.

Notify fellow pastors of unbiblical laws being proposed.

I have always appreciated it when other California pastors have called to tell me of a harmful piece of state legislation coming up for vote in Sacramento. In many cases, as the Lord leads, I've even mentioned the concerning legislation to our church family and provided them with the information to respond to lawmakers.

Contact elected officials and oppose ungodly legislation.

Many elected officials will respond to calls, letters, or emails from their constituents—especially when the response comes as a combined effort from Christians of multiple churches.

We post online our rants about ungodly legislation and the officials behind it, but often we fail to contact the officials directly. One phone call will go a long way. One letter will go even further.

Encourage leaders who are standing for right.

Write leaders who do vote against ungodly legislation—even if their vote was overruled—and thank them for standing for right. In Washington D.C. as in the legislative assemblies of most states, those who are willing to uphold biblical values are in the minority. Express appreciation for their stand.

Witness to local leaders.

Our church family has done our best to develop positive relationships with our local leaders—our state representatives, city mayor, city council, law enforcement officers, and first responders.

We host an annual appreciation day in their honor, and we make opportunities to share the gospel with them.

Attend local meetings.

Involve yourself in the betterment of your community. Attend city council and town hall meetings. Let your local leaders know that you are personally invested in making your community a better place.

Remember Past Generations Did Not Have A Moral Majority

Other than immigrants from some countries, today's Americans have only known freedom. And for the most part, we've known a society that was still heavily influenced and largely shaped by the Christianity of our forefathers.

But today, America is on a fast slide from the truth. Culturally and legislatively, our nation is forcefully rejecting God and righteousness. Without a nationwide revival, my grandchildren (and quite possibly my children) will live in a heathen country that is antagonistic toward—if not suppressive of—Christianity.

If we're not careful, we will observe this decline of the moral landscape and throw up our hands in despair. What difference does our work make? How can we plant churches in a country that is resisting truth?

Our freedom has been a blessing, but it has never been a necessity for the spread of truth. Remember, first-century

Christians didn't have a moral majority—they didn't even have a political voice.

The New Testament records in sharp detail the suffering early Christians endured at the hands of the government.

And others had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment: They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented; (Of whom the world was not worthy:) they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth.

—HEBREWS 11:36–38

I have toured the catacombs tunneled under ancient Rome by Christians of the second, third, and fourth centuries after Christ. I've visited Piedmont, Italy, where thousands of Waldensians were massacred *en masse* in two days. I've seen Bunhill Fields, the famous burying place in London for nonconformists; stood in Bedford Prison, where John Bunyan penned *Pilgrim's Progress*; and viewed the Limmat River in Zurich where Felix Manz was drowned.

Our Baptist forefathers did not have a moral majority. But they did stand for truth.

I'm concerned that if we believe we need a moral majority to stand, we may have to lose our freedom to be reminded that the strength of the New Testament church has never stood in culture's acceptance. It has always stood on God's Word and in the Holy Spirit's power. With these, we can continue to stand for truth in a decadent society.

Remember Christians in Our World Today Are Suffering

It's not just Christians of the past who have suffered for the truth. As you read these words, Christians today are being tortured for their faith.

China, Iran, Egypt, Libya, India, North Korea—and those are just a few. All over the world, Christians are facing fierce persecution, and God is giving them courage and grace to stand for the truth.

The Apostle Peter used the testimonies of suffering Christians to firm the resolve and strengthen the faith of other believers. As he warned them to be vigilant against Satan, he followed with the admonition, “Whom resist steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world” (1 Peter 5:9).

Paul instructed Timothy to *expect* persecution: “Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution” (2 Timothy 3:12).

The suffering of Christians in our world today reveals the pettiness of trifles we allow to fill our time and consume our focus. Rather than getting bent out of shape regarding issues that don't have a bearing on our stand for the truth, perhaps we should heed the instruction of Hebrews 13:3, “Remember them that are in bonds, as bound with them; and them which suffer adversity, as being yourselves also in the body.”

Remember our brothers and sisters in Christ who stand for truth in other countries. Pray for them, and commit to likewise stand.

Remember the Purpose for Standing

Why all the effort to stand for truth? Why the emphasis on standing personally, the investment of being salt and light, the effort of providing resources and informing others?

We can answer these questions with the pointed question of a young shepherd boy: “Is there not a cause?” (1 Samuel 17:29).

Too much is at stake for us to bow out now. How can we release the truth when men have given their lives for it? How can we deny the truth when Christ has suffered to bring us its freedom?

I suggest four reasons—four holy purposes—we must stand for the truth.

The Glory of God

Remember what incited David’s courage to face Goliath? “...who is this uncircumcised Philistine, that he should defy the armies of the living God?” (1 Samuel 17:26).

David was no match for Goliath, but that made no difference. A holy adrenaline kicked in when David heard the giant blaspheme his God. Notice again, in David’s words to Goliath, his passion for God’s glory and his unwillingness to stand idly by while God’s name was defamed.

*Then said David to the Philistine, Thou comest to me with a sword, and with a spear, and with a shield: but I come to thee in the name of the LORD of hosts, **the God of the armies of Israel, whom thou hast defied.** This day will the LORD deliver thee into mine hand; and I will smite thee, and take thine head from thee; and I will give the carcasses*

*of the host of the Philistines this day unto the fowls of the air, and to the wild beasts of the earth; **that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel.***—1 SAMUEL 17:45–46

The Generations Following Us

I don't lightly make statements such as I made earlier about my grandchildren possibly growing up in a heathen nation. Truthfully, I tremble for them. I don't want them to face the persecution our forefathers have faced.

But more than I fear for their physical safety, I care that they know the truth and that they know the truth is worth defending. Should I release my hold on the truth and my vigilance for its perpetuation, I would be telling my children and grandchildren that the truth is not worth defending.

Solomon told his son, "Buy the truth, and sell it not; also wisdom, and instruction, and understanding" (Proverbs 23:23). Unfortunately, Solomon's example of pluralism sent a different—and a louder—message to his son. With his words, he told Rehoboam to buy the truth; but by his actions, he told him it was all right to sell the truth if it was personally or politically expedient.

Grievously, many men who once stood for the truth have let their guard down and fallen for the wiles of the devil. They not only *believed* the truth, but they *preached* it as well. Somewhere along the line, however, they failed to *live* the truth—and the generations following suffered. Perhaps this is one reason Paul's greatest fear was "that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway" (1 Corinthians 9:27). It is not

enough to simply preach the truth. Standing for truth means that we personally live it as well.

The Commands of the Word

How can we rationalize compromise in light of the clear commands of God's Word? God gives us everything we need to stand—and He commands us to do so.

Go, stand and speak in the temple to the people all the words of this life.—ACTS 5:20

Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong.—1 CORINTHIANS 16:13

Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness;
—EPHESIANS 6:11–14

Only let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ: that whether I come and see you, or else be absent, I may hear of your affairs, that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel;
—PHILIPPIANS 1:27

Therefore, my brethren dearly beloved and longed for, my joy and crown, so stand fast in the Lord, my dearly beloved.—PHILIPPIANS 4:1

Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle.—2 THESSALONIANS 2:15

We cannot compromise truth *and* be faithful to the Word of God at the same time.

The Souls of Men

Who suffers when God's people compromise?

The local church suffers—we lose our purpose.

The generations following us suffer—they lose the truth.

But there is another group who suffers—lost men and women who do not hear the gospel.

The eternity of some depend on your stand for truth. Don't compromise.

Moral Markets

Today, truth is clearly for sale. Politicians trade truth for legislated sin. The general populace sells truth for the pleasures of sin. And even pastors surrender truth for the acceptance of men.

In a day when truth is on the market—freely exchanged for expediency of the moment—God calls His people to hold His eternal truth and stand for it.

Stand therefore. And having done all, stand.

CONCLUSION

SEIZE THE OPPORTUNITY

DR. PAUL CHAPPELL

It doesn't require prophetic insight to see the moral trajectory of our nation. We see a nation turning her back on the God who blessed her and insisting on a tolerance that excludes His principles. We see a people who are bent on following the downward progression of the sins listed in Romans chapter 1.

As a pastor, it is all amazingly discouraging. As a patriotic citizen, it's disheartening.

But I will not spend my days in depression or anger. Some may complain or withdraw, but these responses are not consistent with the plan of God. Christ *promises* to build His church—even in the midst of a pagan society: "...I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it" (Matthew 16:18).

There has never been a more needy time in our country in which to preach the gospel. We must not sit on our hands bemoaning the state of affairs. We must act—strategically, decisively, obediently.

In these pages, we've laid out an action plan—eight steps to engage our culture with the gospel of Jesus Christ. My final challenge to you is a question: Will you seize the opportunity?

I believe that the local church is the hope for our nation, and I choose to obey Christ's instruction, "Occupy till I come" (Luke 19:13).

Occupy—it means "busy yourself." Will you do it? Will you earnestly pray over the steps presented in this book, asking God to direct and bless your involvement? Will you make definite plans for how you and your local congregation will win souls, plant churches, and reach your community with the gospel?

Will you close this book as a "good read" and set it aside? Or will you act?

I don't know how much longer our nation has without revival. And I surely don't know how long we have until Christ returns. But I do know that our time is short. As Leonard Ravenhill once said, "The opportunity of a lifetime must be seized in the lifetime of the opportunity."

The hope of tomorrow's generation lies in what we do with today's opportunities. Will you seize the opportunity?

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AmericaTomorrow**



AMERICA TOMORROW

AN EIGHT-FOLD CALL TO BAPTIST PASTORS

The “progressive” America taking shape around us is digressing in almost every way. Morally, politically, financially, socially, and spiritually, we long ago untied our beliefs and practices from our early faith and values.

To say that our nation is speeding down a slippery slope is not an understatement. It would be more accurate to say that we are careening toward a cliff. Short of the intervention of revival, the future is deeply concerning.

There has never been a more needy time in our country in which to preach the gospel. We must not sit on our hands bemoaning the state of affairs. We must act—strategically, decisively, obediently.

This is book is a manual—an action plan—for pastors who care about engaging a lost culture in the gospel of Jesus Christ.



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