

Christ commanded us to share His message with the world and to raise up disciples (Matt 28:19-20). Missions and intentional evangelism are the two main efforts that the Lord uses to grow His Kingdom. The commandment, what we know as “The Great Commission,” is not just for those called to vocational ministry, but for all believers, in all places, and for all time.

The Apostle Paul, writing to the church at Rome, lays out the gospel mandate through a series of questions that ask, “How then shall they call upon Him whom they have not believed? How shall they believe in whom they have not heard? How shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach unless they are sent?” (Rom 10:14-15). In order to be saved, people have to believe. In order to believe, they have to know what to believe. In order to know what to believe, there has to be somebody who tells them. In order for there to be somebody who tells them, somebody has to be sent. This really sums up the mission mandate of the church because salvation is not possible apart from the gospel.

That’s why we, as a body of believers, must be committed to missions and all the avenues the Lord provides for us to engage in missions. Being involved in missions includes both physical and financial elements. In fact, it is impossible to have one without the other in order for a church to be engaged in biblical missiology. So, where do we start? Our missions strategy is modeled after the outline given by Christ where He explains that His disciples will be His “witnesses in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and to the ends of the earth” (Acts 1:8). Therefore, our Missions Team will focus on those four areas of geography. Our Jerusalem is our local community (Nashville and the surrounding towns). Our Judea is the state of Arkansas. Our Samaria is the United States. The ends of the earth is the same as it was for the disciples of the first-century and is therefore what we would call International or Global Missions.

Regardless of the geographical area of missions that you might serve in, the essence of missions always begins with evangelism, which is sharing the message of Christ with others. Involvement in evangelism is required for all who profess to be believers and followers of Christ, therefore, our entire body of believers should all be involved in missions through evangelism. In addition to our personal involvement, we should take advantage of the opportunity the Lord may provide to partner with a missionary. Our missions team is currently seeking the Lord’s direction as to which of our associational missionaries we might partner with in the coming year. Furthermore, as a faith family, we should seek the Lord’s direction for the possibility of planting a local church in one (or more) of the focused geographical areas in our missions strategy that is devoid of the gospel. Lastly, we also be committed to raising up the next generation of pastors, ministers, and missionaries and sending people around the world to share the message of the gospel and to make disciples who are, in turn, disciple makers. And here is the best part—this cycle NEVER stops! We continue to work in each of these areas of our missions strategy until the Lord calls us home or until the glorious return of our Savior and King!

Following are the goals for our Missions area of Vision 2025.

1. Have at least 50 members participate in some mission endeavor alongside the church by the end of 2019.
2. Partner with a BMA missionary by the end of 2019.
3. Partner to plant a church by the end of 2023.
4. Have at least eighty-five percent of members participating in mission endeavors by the end of 2025.

I want to challenge you to intentionally pray and seek the Lord’s direction as to which area of missions you might be involved and that our faith family would stand united, striving together to accomplish these goals as the Lord gives us opportunity. Just like with each area of focus for Vision 2025, you will have the opportunity to commit to an area(s) of missions by completing a commitment card that will be made available in December. Additionally, to assist our church members with our mandate to share the gospel, be on the lookout in the spring months for a discipleship class on evangelism.

Church family, the possibilities that are available to us through missions are endless, and it excites me beyond words to see how the Lord is going to use our body of believers to carry out His Great Commission and add to His Kingdom. I hope it excites you as well. May we be found faithful...and ready!

Brent