



What is CP?

The Cooperative Program – How it came about

Since its inception in 1845, the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) has always had one mission – the Great Commission (Matthew 28:19-20). To fulfill its assigned part of this divine mandate, each SBC entity made special offering appeals to the churches. This method was referred to as the “societal” approach to missions and resulted in severe financial deficits, competition among entities, overlapping pledge campaigns, and frequent emergency appeals which greatly hampered the expanding ministry opportunities God was giving Southern Baptists. Some entities took out loans to cover operating costs until pledges or special offerings were received.

In 1919, the leaders of the SBC proposed the 75 Million Campaign, a five-year pledge campaign that, for the first time, included everything – the missions and ministries of all the state conventions as well as that of the Southern Baptist Convention. Though falling short of its goals, a God-given partnership of missions support was conceived – The Cooperative Program. Since its launch in 1925, the effectiveness of CP has been dependent upon individuals, churches, state conventions, and SBC entities cooperating and working toward a common goal of sharing the gospel with every person on the planet.

Cooperative Program (CP) Missions – How it works

Simply put, it begins with you. You give yourself first to God (2 Corinthians 5:8). Next, out of gratitude and obedience to God for what He has done for you, you commit to give back to Him, through your church, a portion of what He provides. This is commonly called a tithe and represents ten percent of your income (Leviticus 27:30, Malachi 3:10).

Your church decides the next step. Every year your church prayerfully decides how much of its undesignated gifts will be committed to reaching people in your state and around the world through Cooperative Program (CP) Missions. This amount is then forwarded to your state Baptist convention.

During the annual meeting your state convention, messengers from your church and other churches across the state decide what percentage of CP Missions gifts contributed by local congregations stays in your state to support local missions and ministries. The percentage to be

forwarded to the SBC for North American and international missions and ministries is also determined at this time.

At the SBC Annual Meeting, messengers from across the country decide how the gifts received from the states will be distributed among the SBC entities. These gifts are used by Southern Baptist entities to send and support missionaries, train pastors, missionaries, and other ministry leaders; provide relief for retired ministers and widows; and address social, moral, and ethical concerns relating to our faith and families.

The bottom line – people around the world hear the gospel and receive Christ.

Note: Your local Southern Baptist association does not receive CP gifts directly. It ministers through gifts received directly from churches and often receives CP gifts indirectly in the form of support from state conventions and the North American Mission Board.

Cooperative Program (CP) Missions – What it does

Churches in your state work together through your state convention to support a wide array of ministries and missions including: evangelism efforts, children's homes, volunteer missions, missions education, new churches, colleges and universities, collegiate ministries, camps, and much more. For additional information concerning your state convention, log on to <http://www.sbc.net/> and click on state conventions.

Through the International Mission Board (<http://www.imb.org/>), Southern Baptists support approximately 5,500 missionaries who are engaging almost 1,200 different people groups around the world.

New churches numbering over 1,500 are planted through the efforts of about 5,500 North American Missionaries, whose efforts are coordinated through your North American Mission Board (<http://www.namb.net/>) and individual state conventions.

Working together, Southern Baptists saw almost a million new believers baptized last year.

Six Southern Baptist seminaries (Southern, Southeastern, Midwestern, Southwestern, Golden Gate, and New Orleans) educate around 15,500 pastors, missionaries, and future church leaders each year.

The Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission is dedicated to addressing social, moral, and ethical concerns, with particular attention to their impact on American families and their faith. They also provide print resources that offer scriptural responses to the moral and ethical problems of our culture.

Your prayers and support also undergird the work of GuideStone Financial Resources, the Historical Library and Archives, and the Southern Baptist Foundation.

Although they receive no CP Missions support, LifeWay Christian Resources and the Woman's Missionary Union (WMU) actively promote CP Missions in publications and missions resources.

Cooperative Program (CP) Missions – Its Potential

If “two are better than one’ (Ecclesiastes 4:9), how much better are 16 million plus in more than 42,000 Southern Baptist churches across the United States. With a global population exceeding 6.8 billion and a command to take the gospel to every nation, we must enhance our cooperative efforts if we are going to fulfill Christ's command.

To help CP Missions reach its potential, would you please:

- **Pray.** Pray regularly for your Southern Baptist Missionaries in your state and around the globe. “Pray to the Lord of the harvest to send out workers.” Matthew 9:38 (HCSB)
- **Give.** Out of love for the Lord, give regularly to Him through your church. If you are not tithing, begin to do so and discover the blessings of giving beyond the tithe. Encourage your church to increase its participation in Cooperative Program (CP) Missions.
- **Go.** Be involved in some sort of missions endeavor. Talk with your pastor about the available opportunities. You are God's missionary right where you live. “Go...and make disciple of all nations.” Matthew 28:19 (HCSB)

“Since you excel in so many ways... I want you to excel also in this gracious act of giving.”
2 Corinthians 8:7 (NLT)

"Bring all the tithes into the storehouse." Malachi 3:10 (NLT)

Thank you for your love for the Lord, your love for people, and your participation in Cooperative Program (CP) Missions.