Not Alone: More Than a Slogan

In his book, *Going Solo*, sociologist Eric Klinenberg noted the following statistics about the new trend of living alone:

- In America, 32 million people live alone, representing 28 percent of all households.
- In cities like Atlanta, Denver, Seattle, San Francisco, and Minneapolis, 40% or more of all households contain a single occupant.
- Five million people in the United States between ages 18 and 34 live alone—10 times more than in 1950.
- The largest category of single people is the middle-aged group (ages 35-64).
- The US is not unique in these trends. In Paris, half of all households contain single people, and in Stockholm, the rate tops 60%.

Klinenberg also notes that this trend of being alone spills over even into families living together. He writes: “Those in large suburban homes often splinter into private rooms to be alone. The image of a modern family in a room together, each plugged into a separate reality, be it a smart phone, computer, video game, or TV show has become a cultural cliché.”

I understand we can all need some alone time. But the Bible makes it clear that followers of Christ need fellowship. For example, the Apostle John wrote, “that which we have seen and heard we proclaim also to you, so that you too may have fellowship with us; and indeed our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ” (1 John 1:3, ESV). Likewise, churches benefit from partnership.

Since the New Testament era, church and mission leaders like the Apostle Paul have called upon churches to work together to plant, strengthen, and mobilize churches so that the Gospel of Christ is proclaimed. This year marks the 20th anniversary of the SBC of Virginia as a state Baptist convention, an example of Gospel partnership. We form a coalition of churches for the Great Commission.

**As a Great Commission coalition, we plant churches.**

With more than six million lost people in Virginia and Metro Washington, DC, we must work together to increase our disciple-making capacity and plant churches that proclaim the Gospel.

**As a Great Commission coalition, we strengthen churches.**

Healthy churches and strong leaders are needed to make disciples of Jesus Christ. In an effort to help strengthen the disciple-making capacity of local churches, we are focused on the priorities of leadership development, pastor wellness, and church revitalization as we move forward.

**As a Great Commission coalition, we mobilize churches.**

The Great Commission involves movement—going. A key to healthy church life and strengthened churches is for churches to be mobilized in Christ’s mission. Mobilizing churches to make disciples of all nations is important because each church can, should, and must obey the Lord’s command to make disciples. Thank you for being a part of this Great Commission coalition. *Not Alone*—it’s more than a slogan!

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