

What Every Church Can (and Should) Do

PARTNERING TO REACH THE NATIONS

What would it look like for EVERY SBC of Virginia church to play an equal role in reaching the nations with the Gospel of Jesus Christ?

Maybe this seems like a silly question. Budgets, attendance, and other factors seem to make it impossible for churches to play an equal role in the Great Commission. Of course, churches of differing sizes and financial realities cannot play equal roles in Gospel mission in every way. But it is possible for EVERY church to play an equal role in the most essential way.

Each church has a unique context.
EVERY CHURCH has the same Spirit.

Each church has a unique giftedness.
EVERY CHURCH has the same Commission.

Each church has a unique platform.
EVERY CHURCH has the same power.

Each church has a unique calling.
EVERY CHURCH has the same provision.

As Erik Raymond writes, “Prayer fuels mission—because the Mission is God’s mission. We are simply asking Him to do what we know He wants to do—and to do it through us.” One would be hard-pressed to find a place in Scripture or in Church history where a move of God’s Spirit to reach people with the Gospel was not preceded by and bathed in prayer. Therefore, it would be foolish to think that God is not still working and moving through and in response to the prayers of His people. Here are three questions to help SBC of Virginia churches diagnose whether they’re playing an equally vital role in God’s mission:

IS MY CHURCH PRAYING? This is the obvious starting point. Does action

precede prayer or vice versa? Are neighbors and nations placed before the congregation regularly with the belief that God wants to move in power in people’s lives?

HOW CAN MY CHURCH PRAY MORE? Or maybe the better question would be HOW CAN MORE OF MY CHURCH PRAY? What methods and times are being utilized to engage church members in praying for neighbors and the nations? What would it look like for weekly worship services to be times of God’s people praying passionately for God to move among the nations? What can be replaced by prayer in the church’s weekly gatherings? Because nothing can replace prayer.

HOW CAN OUR CHURCHES PRAY TOGETHER? Imagine SBC of Virginia churches united to pray for the same peoples and for the same powerful work of God. In 2019, SBC of Virginia is partnering to pray for and with the IMB’s work in Europe among NAME (North African and Middle Eastern) peoples. An initiative called The Changing Face of Europe is an opportunity for churches to commit to pray daily/weekly/monthly for the work of the Gospel among unreached peoples who have migrated to the European continent. As God has moved unreached peoples nearer to a Gospel witness, SBC of Virginia churches are asking God to move these peoples out of darkness into light. What will God do as His people partner to pray together?

“Prayer fuels mission—because the Mission is God’s mission.”

—Erik Raymond, Author and Preaching Pastor at Emmaus Bible Church in Omaha, NE

If the mission is God’s mission (and it is), then to move forward in mission without prayer leaves our churches in jeopardy of moving forward without God. As E.M. Bounds writes in *The Weapon of Prayer*, “One of the constitutional enforcements of the Gospel is prayer. Without prayer, the Gospel can neither be preached effectively, promulgated faithfully, experienced in the heart, nor be practiced in the life. And for the very simple reason that by leaving prayer out of the catalogue of religious duties, we leave God out, and His work cannot progress without Him.”

PRAY...PRAY MORE...MORE
PRAYING...PRAY TOGETHER.

Raymond, Erik. “Prayer and Mission Are Inextricably Linked.” March 17, 2015. <http://tinyurl.com/prayer-linked>

Bounds, E.M. *The Weapon of Prayer*.

GET INVOLVED

To join in praying for these unreached peoples, sign up to receive weekly emails at sbcv.org/changingeurope and follow on social media at [instagram.com/changingeurope](https://www.instagram.com/changingeurope) and twitter.com/changingeurope.