

# FIRST PERSON: A letter from IMB President Paul Chitwood

*By Paul Chitwood*

*International Mission Board President*



Chitwood

Dear Church Family,

It's been a difficult year and, we'd all agree, it still is. That's as true for our Southern Baptist overseas missionaries as it is for the rest of us. Some serve in countries that are returning to martial law lockdowns after having endured them for months on end earlier this year. While grateful for the technology, many are weary from long days of working online. Others have been busy distributing food in refugee camps and delivering personal protection equipment to medical clinics. They've lost colleagues, some due to COVID but others unrelated to the pandemic. Hundreds have been forced out of countries they had served for years, even decades, with very little prospect of returning. Now they face the challenge of a new assignment, learning a new language and culture.

Many have been in a prolonged state of waiting for deployment or redeployment, hoping that world leaders will soon open borders and foreign governments would issue visas.

Yet, with God's help, what has been true for 175 years is still true today: Southern Baptists' witness among the nations remains uninterrupted. Challenged? Yes. But uninterrupted. We

still have thousands of Southern Baptists' most gifted sons and daughters proclaiming Christ among the nations.

I'm asking you to support them. For those of you who are already giving or already plan to give through this year's Lottie offering, thank you. For everyone else, would you consider a gift? Pastor, if your church doesn't typically take up a special offering for IMB, would you consider doing it this year? Would you set aside just one Sunday to receive a love offering for the lost among the nations that they might hear the Good News about Jesus?

To be clear, I'm not asking for myself. My support, and the support of our stateside staff, comes through the Cooperative Program. And we are grateful. In contrast, every penny of the Lottie offering is used overseas. It gets to the nations, without exception.

Today, 154,972 people will die lost among the nations. These precious souls having given no indication that they have believed the Gospel and trusted Jesus as their Savior and Lord. Many of them have never heard the name of Jesus and know nothing of His Gospel. Southern Baptists love these lost among the nations, and we want them to hear the Gospel and be saved.

We – every believer – must work together to see that stark statistic decline. Your International Mission Board exists to fulfill the Revelation 7:9 vision that every language, every tribe and every nation will stand before His throne. More missionaries must be sent to the edges of lostness so that more people can hear the Good News. To that end, we plan to send an additional 500 fully funded missionaries over the next five years. In order to do that, we will need your help. And I'm asking for it today.

Will you give today?

Blessings,  
Paul Chitwood

PS: You can give today at [imb.org/lmco](http://imb.org/lmco)

**imb**

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