

# GUEST OPINION: Cooperative Program possibilities are endless

*By Lloyd Sweatt  
Correspondent*



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I have three grown daughters. When they were young they would often respond to large, and at times, overwhelming tasks with the words, **“I CAN DO IT ALL BY MYSELF!”**

Many who pastor a church, any size church, realize **“They CANNOT do it all by themselves.”** Our Lord, Jesus Christ has given us a large, overwhelming task of, **(Matthew 28:19-20)** <sup>19</sup> **“Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: <sup>20</sup> Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.”**

Our marching orders include teaching all nations, as we go to make disciples, and is an **IMPOSSIBLE TASK ALL BY OURSELVES.** I do believe in God’s Word when Paul wrote in **Philippians 4:13**, **“I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.”** Paul did not say, **“I can do all things BY MYSELF!”**

Somewhere along the way, probably before the year 1925, the Lord gave a vision, gave a plan for Southern Baptist Churches to **COOPERATE** together to carry out this large and overwhelming task of the Great Commission. When I study the beginning of what we know as the church, I discover in **Acts 2:42-27** some unique and powerful principles of cooperation. This passage reads:

<sup>42</sup> *And they continued steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.* <sup>43</sup> *And fear came upon every soul: and many wonders and signs were*

*done by the apostles. <sup>44</sup> And all that believed were together, and had all things common; <sup>45</sup> And sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need. <sup>46</sup> And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, <sup>47</sup> Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.*

One of those powerful principles of cooperation is found in verse 44 which needs repeating, "And all that believed were TOGETHER, and had all things COMMON." There was cooperation with those early believers. Since then the church has grown! This growth has led to Mississippi. I am a believer in Jesus Christ serving in a Mississippi Baptist Church and I realize that I CANNOT DO THIS OVERWHELMING TASK OF REACHING THE WORLD BY MYSELF.

I cannot: **1)** Plant every church; **2)** Put together and teach potential servants of our Lord in colleges and seminaries; **3)** Run a children's village; **4)** Lead camps and conferences across our state and beyond; **5)** Go help those in need of relief from a disaster; **6)** Assist, build, encourage, evangelize, and support churches and ministries across our world; **7)** Plus many, many other overwhelming tasks where our Lord is doing amazing things! I CANNOT DO ALL THESE BY MYSELF!

**BUT . . .** I can work together with other churches and be a part by cooperating together with "... all that believed, (believe), were, (are), together, and had, (have), all things common;" I still believe that the most effective way to carry out our mission is through churches who realize they CANNOT DO IT ALL BY THEMSELVES! Our mission is through churches cooperating together. That is the program!

I am thankful for those many believers who TITHE, who faithfully give to their local church. I am thankful to those

churches who believe that there is a calling and need beyond their local church. Those many churches that decide to give a percentage, a gift, realize they cannot DO MINISTRY AROUND THE WORLD BY THEMSELVES.

I am thankful to leaders in our Southern Baptist Convention who lead with integrity and a calling to carefully carry out the mission of our Lord. I am thankful for leaders in our Mississippi Baptist Convention who will be called to carefully carry out the mission of our Lord. I am thankful to many Mississippi Baptist Churches that are fulfilling our Lord's MISSION BEAUTIFULLY!

I am thankful for local leaders who are leading with integrity and character. Those leaders in our own convention who are assisting churches to reach every person in Mississippi to hear the best news of all time, that Jesus Christ was resurrected from the dead and we can know God by grace through faith in Christ. That overwhelming task starts in the communities, towns, and cities across the state, but it extends to all the world.

I AM THANKFUL THAT I DON'T HAVE TO DO THIS ALL BY MYSELF! I am thankful that I can cooperate and be involved in being an extension of **Acts 2:47**, "Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved."

May our Lord Jesus Christ bless YOU as WE COOPERATE TOGETHER!  
The POSSIBILITIES ARE ENDLESS!

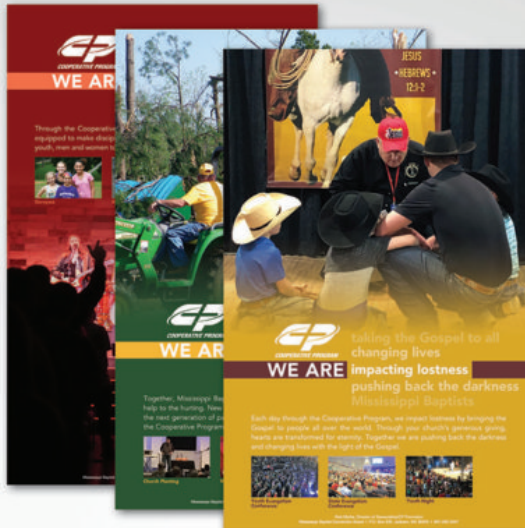
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*For more information on the Mississippi Cooperative Program and to download promotional resources, visit <https://www.mbc.org/what-is-cp/cp-resources/>. E-mail: [lleavell@mbcb.org](mailto:lleavell@mbcb.org). Telephone: (601) 292-3347.*



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