

Partner with the IMB through 'Together for the Nations'

By Chloe Newton

Staff Writer

International Mission Board (IMB) Church mobilizers D. Ray Davis and Mike Lazenby joined "Around the Table" podcast hosts Tanner Cade, MBCB Director of Communication Services, and Jon Martin, MBCB Chief Strategy Officer. The guests touched on the problem of lostness, church involvement in missions, and the importance of the Cooperative Program.

The International Mission Board (IMB) wants every church to be involved in missions. D. Ray Davis and Mike Lazenby work in mobilization for the IMB to assist churches to fulfill that vision. Davis served as a missionary for over 30 years before transitioning to his current role. Lazenby also served overseas and has assumed the role of mobilization strategist for the Gulf Coast.

On February 1 at First Church, Madison, the IMB will host "Together for the Nations," an event informing churches on the world's greatest problem and how churches can be a part of the solution.

"Dr. Chitwood [IMB President], has been very clear that we need to really wrestle with the fact that the world's greatest problem really is lostness," said Davis. "It's helpful to think about upon death, every other problem I have goes away except for this one, if I have not settled my faith in Christ."

Churches in Mississippi are eager to learn how they can be more involved with reaching the nations. Davis and Lazenby get a front row seat to watch as both small and large churches fully invest in the Great Commission.

“The IMB wants to serve each church in the way that it feels like it needs or that it wants,” said Davis. “It looks different church to church. But that’s part of the joy I have in the role is getting to go meet a pastor or a mission team...

“We’re looking to partner with churches. Missionaries come out of churches... We like to tell people it’s not about the size and the resources you bring. Those things are important, but they’re not ultimate. What is really important is what is the DNA of that church? A church that becomes mobilized begins to fire on all cylinders like praying, giving, going, and sending.”

“You don’t need to shoot for the moon first,” added Lazenby. “You have to start taking steps. Missionaries are not sent out of churches that just decide, ‘I’m going to send someone.’ They begin through their leadership to have a heart to pray for the mission, to give sacrificially, to go and taste it.”

Davis and Lazenby emphasized the importance of the Cooperative Program and the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering. The IMB does not function or send missionaries without the offerings of church members.

“I was able to move a family and serve in Southern Africa and be fully supported,” said Davis. “I had leaders who had been going before me and who understood strategy, helped train me. And it’s all undergirded by cooperation. We cooperate together to be able to do this mission. At the IMB, we talk about the great pursuit as well. How do we get to all of the people? And the engine behind that is the Cooperative Program.”

“Those things don’t just happen by chance,” said Lazenby. “That happens because of faithful giving. It’s a partnership. It’s cooperation. So that we’re extraordinarily thankful for that. It’s a very worthwhile way of doing missions, and it’s what makes us unique.”

For more information, email info@imb.org or email Chad McCord,

Director of Missions Mobilization, at cmccord@mbcb.org.

To listen to the full “Around the Table” episode visit Podcasts – Mississippi Baptist Convention Board (mbcb.org).