

While most states have a mission offering for some aspects of their work, the Cooperative Program continues as the lifeline for all ministries. That's good because:

- All churches can participate by sending Cooperative Program missions money to the Baptist convention office in their state.
- Church members can participate by giving through their churches and encouraging their church to increasingly give through the Cooperative Program.

History verifies the effectiveness of the Cooperative Program as an efficient, accountable system for churches to cooperatively support ministries that meet the needs of people. Annually representatives from churches in each state approve the amount of money that stays in that state for mission work and how much is sent on to the Southern Baptist Convention.

The Bible teaches believers *to be wise* in relating to unbelievers making *the most of every opportunity* (Col. 4:5). With fresh enthusiasm encourage your church to seize this opportunity to unite with other Southern Baptist churches to generously support the ministries in your state convention through the Cooperative Program.

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Provided by the Cooperative Program office of your Baptist State Convention

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The Cooperative Program at Work Where You Live

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If asked, "Where do you live?" most people will answer with a town or city and a state. Since the names of some towns are found in several states, the state is vital to their answer.

Historians and researchers provide ample information about each state - the population, exact land size, the official state bird, flower, motto, song, and even the state nickname. When Christians are asked to describe the states where they live, hopefully, they will add a spiritual dimension - a concern that all persons in their states hear the good news of God's love in Christ.

Remember the words of Jesus? *But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth* (Acts 1:8). With the power of the Holy Spirit churches are to share

Christ in their local areas, in the expanded region around them, across their state convention area, and *to the ends of the earth*. An early missionary pioneer, Henry Martyn, reminded us, "The Spirit of Christ is the spirit of missions, and the nearer we get to him, the more intensely missionary we must become."

In the mid-1920s God led Southern Baptists to adopt a plan enabling churches to give financial support for ministries throughout their state as well as the whole world. With that support your state convention has plans to help churches grow and improve their local ministries. Plans to start new churches in growing areas and churches for persons who speak different languages.

