



Taking Missional Responsibility

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Southern Baptists have long thought of themselves as a Great Commission people with evangelism and missions as the heartbeat of our denomination.

Unfortunately, studies have indicated that Southern Baptists have shown a net loss in membership for two years in a row, reporting in 2008 the lowest number of baptisms since 1987. By many accounts, Christianity is declining in America.

This same decline is evident in Europe and has been noted for many years. Several weeks ago, a YouTube video began circulating that looked at the growth of the Muslim population in Europe.

The message of this video was simple: Muslims are rapidly growing in Europe because they are having more children than the white European population. The conclusion was that Islam would continue to grow in strength and influence in Europe eventually resulting in a predominantly Muslim Europe.

This idea of childbirth being the source of reversing a decline seems to have taken hold. Recently, an SBC seminary president referred to this trend of high birth rates in Muslim families using it as an example to encourage Southern Baptists to have more children. Having children has a "missiological motivation," he said.

While this seminary president has since explained that he does not see childbirth as a substitute for evangelism, still I am troubled by his statement.

I, for one, believe Southern Baptists are at a crisis point. While we all would agree on the vital importance of raising our children to faithfully follow Christ, I believe we need to be recaptured by the missional heart of God.

I believe we need to take seriously our responsibility to share our faith with those who are not yet Christians.

The issue is not the survival of the denomination. The issue is faithfulness and obedience to God.

In UBA we take seriously our missional responsibility. That's why we are organizing our churches and challenging them to share the gospel with everyone in Houston by Easter, 2010. Some may call that absurd, but I call it being faithful to what God would have us to do.

I hope your church will be one of the many that join together to share the gospel with friends and neighbors. More about how we are going to do that in future articles.

For more information about Union Baptist Association and its ministries,
view our website at <http://www.ubahouston.org>
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Our Vision:

*Healthy, reproducing congregations cooperating to transform
our communities, Houston, and the world!*