



AMERICAN BAPTIST CHURCHES OF THE SOUTH
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ENGAGING DISCIPLESHIP

Open My Eyes, My Heart, My Hands MARK 10:46-52

America for Christ Offering 2012

January 8, 2012

Dear Pastor and Church Leaders,

The 2012 *America for Christ (AFC)* theme is *Engaging Discipleship: Open My Eyes, My Heart, My Hands*. This theme is a powerful reminder that we have been sent into the world (Matthew 28) to be ambassadors of God's love, expressed through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. The primary rule of engagement is "love your neighbour as yourself" (Matthew 22:39).

We can ignore this calling and get busy doing church by singing hymns, listening to sermons, giving our tithes and offerings, getting involved in the choir or joining a committee. These activities may make us feel spiritually good, but God is calling our church to daily follow the incarnational practice modelled by our Lord, who continually engaged people and cultivated relationships. Active discipleship is a selfless love that responds to the need, hurts and pain of those at the door of our church. Our true prayer and Christlike attitude should be "*open my eyes, my heart and my hands* that I may be of service to others, Lord, use my life."

Dietrich Bonhoeffer perhaps said it best when he wrote, "God loves human beings. God loves the world. Not an ideal human, but human beings as they are; not an ideal world, but the real world. What we find repulsive in their opposition to God, what we shrink back from with pain and hostility, namely, real human beings, the real world; this is for God the ground of unfathomable love" (A Year with Dietrich Bonhoeffer: Daily Mediations from His Letters, Writings, and Sermons").

As God's children in this world, we are called to engage people. As we meet people every day in our life's journey, we should share the love of Christ in word and deed. As God's people, let us extend our hands daily to lift and encourage those around us who may need hope and a transformative touch of love. This year's theme *Engaging Discipleship: Open My Eyes, My Heart, My Hands* encourages us to come along-side people. Let us see the need, let it break our hearts and, with our hands, let us comfort and be a blessing to others.

I am asking you to join me in giving generously to this year's America for Christ Offering and help us reach our goal in support of making a difference in the lives of others for the cause of Christ. See our goals.

Engaging Discipleship that reflects God's love!

Yours Truly,

W. L. Parrish, II



2012 AMERICA FOR CHRIST OFFERING

“Engaging Discipleship: Open My Eyes My Heart, My Hands”

Mark 10:46-52 KJV

National Goal: \$ 1.5 Million

Region Goal: \$38,000 Challenge Goal: \$43,250

Area	Goal	Challenge Goal
I	\$ 11,000	\$ 12,000
II	\$ 15,200	\$ 18,000
III	\$ 3,400	\$ 4,400
IV	\$ 4,700	\$ 4,800
V	\$ 2,100	\$ 2,200
VI	\$ 1,450	\$ 1,600
VII	\$ 150	\$ 250
Total	\$ 38,000	\$ 43,250

2006 AFC CONTRIBUTIONS BY AREAS

	No of Churches	2011 Participants	Raised
Area I	35	19	\$10,716
Area II	84	33	\$14,817
Area III	56	7	\$ 3,194
Area IV	20	8	\$ 4,303
Area V	22	2	\$ 690
Area VI	14	3	\$ 1,910
Area VII	<u>9</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>\$ 137</u>
TOTAL	240	74 (31%)	\$38,376

29% of all dollars raised supports regional mission and ministry.