



Another Chapter in the Covenant Brethren Church - Samaritan's Purse Partnership

Following the Global Connect Conference in March of 2023, Lynne Rienstra and Dane Fowlkes of Samaritan's Purse invited Covenant Brethren Church board chair Grover Duling and vice-chair, Scott Kinnick, to meet with the leadership of Samaritan's Purse and other like-minded church pastors and leaders on May 15-17. The meeting was called the Samaritan's Purse Strategic Partners' Gathering and was held at the International Headquarters in Boone, NC.



2023 Global Connect Conference, Boone, NC
Scott Kinnick and Grover Duling on the far right

As you can see in the photo above, it was not a large group, but the attendees were specifically invited by Samaritan's Purse because of their shared commitment to the authority of God's Word and their shared commitment to proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the world. Those wearing red lanyards were the guests and the others were Samaritan's Purse staff. The Covenant Brethren Church was the only denomination invited. Other invited guests were from some large and small, individual congregations.

The group discussed ways to make Samaritan's Purse and the local churches' ministries more effective in their partnership. Five questions were put forward to help guide the discussions. They were:

1. What are the three biggest challenges you and your church face right now? How might Samaritan's Purse come alongside you in these areas?
2. What are the three biggest opportunities God has placed before your church right now? How might Samaritan's Purse come alongside you in these areas?

3. How might deeper engagement with Samaritan's Purse enhance your church's ability to connect the commandment to love our neighbor with your missional work and service?
4. What might Samaritan's Purse be missing in relation to fostering deeper engagement with your church and other local churches in the United States?
5. What would the ideal partnership with Samaritan's Purse look like for your church?



Franklin Graham addressing the attendees

The leaders of Samaritan's Purse listened to what all the visiting church leaders had to say. They were looking for ways that Samaritan's Purse could offer help to the local churches, and how they could work together on common ministry goals to the benefit of both ministries.

Scott and Grover were impressed by Samaritan's Purse's commitment to make sure that everything they do is done in Jesus' name. Telling people about Jesus is at the very core of their ministry, and all of the planning at this meeting was to be built around that purpose. They were also impressed to see the commitment that Samaritan's Purse has to the local church and to realize that this is the agent that God most often moves through.

The Samaritan's Purse staff talked about their desire to expand The Greatest Journey ministry. This is a follow up discipleship ministry offered to older children after they receive a shoebox. Children are invited to attend a twelve-week Bible course that takes them through God's word and explains the plan of salvation. Eighty percent of the children who attend this course come to receive Jesus as their Savior. Each child goes on to influence four to six other people, either family or friends, to become believers also.

Sadly, Samaritan's Purse can only afford to offer this to about 40% of the older children who receive shoeboxes. Their hope is to see the financial support and student participation in The Greatest Journey program reach 100% among those who are eligible.

Another ministry the conference attendees were introduced to was an emergency water program as seen in the photo to the right. Samaritan's Purse works to supply household water filters to people in parts of the world where clean water isn't available. This lack of clean water may be the result of naturally poor local water conditions, or because of interruptions in the normal water supply due to war, natural disasters or other problems. Attendees were reminded of the scripture in Mark 9:14 where Jesus said, "For whoever gives you a cup of water to drink in my name, because you belong to Christ, assuredly, I say to you, he will by no means lose his reward."



Water Filtration Pack

The goal of all these discussions was to work on ideas that would guide the Samaritan's Purse partnership with local churches for the next several years. There was a genuine desire on the part of the leadership of Samaritan's Purse to find ways to work more

effectively with local churches so that both groups would become more effective in sharing the Gospel and being the hands and feet of Jesus at home and around the world. Franklin Graham shared his concern for the youth of our country by saying we have to find ways to reintroduce children to the Word of God. This starts, he said, in the home and we have to find ways to reach the homes with that Gospel message.



Grover Duling and Franklin Graham
Samaritan's Purse Headquarters – Boone, NC

Grover was able to personally thank Franklin Graham for putting Jesus first in all that Samaritan's Purse does. He also expressed appreciation for the invitation for Covenant Brethren Church to partner with Samaritan's Purse. Franklin expressed his appreciation for our partnership.

All in all, Grover and Scott left the weekend encouraged about CBC's partnership with Samaritan's Purse and thankful that God had brought our two organizations together.

Submitted by Craig Howard, Scott Kinnick & Grover Duling