

24:14—THE WAR THAT FINALLY ENDS



Dr. Steve Smith devoted his life to following Jesus and leading people to faith in Jesus and then discipling others to do the same. It was his great desire to see the Great Commission fulfilled in our generation. This article is an updated version of an article from January 2018 that lays out that challenge for us.

Finally, let the Lord make you strong. Depend on His mighty power. Put on all of God's armor. Then you can stand firm against the devil's evil plans. Our fight is not against human beings. It is against the rulers, the authorities and the powers of this dark world. It is against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly world. (Eph. 6:9–12 NIRV)

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A renewed war has been quietly waged for the last 30+ years. At first, it began as a quiet insurgency by a few “freedom fighters” unwilling to see billions of people live and die with no access to the gospel. Radicals, not accepting that so many lived in bondage to the “ruler of this world,” laid down their lives to see Jesus set the prisoners free.

This insurgency has spread more rapidly and more broadly than the Arab Spring. It has enacted more lasting change than the fall of the Iron Curtain. Initial sparks have grown into a global firestorm. Millions of spiritual troops have arisen in this battle: to date, 73 million new disciples from within the harvest; prisoners of the devil in the past, steadfast proclaimers of Jesus today.

They advance the banner of Christ against demonic strongholds and despite human opposition. Their chief “weapons” are the love of God and the gospel of Jesus. Their struggle is not against humans but against the spiritual forces of evil. (Eph. 6:12) They lay down their lives for Jesus, while forgiving and blessing their persecutors. They thrill at the salvation of multitudes in unreached areas, yet during dry spells and frequent suffering, they rejoice that their own names are written in heaven. (Luke 10:20)

Most are not “professional” fighters; they work regular jobs but wage spiritual war day and night. Some take jobs that pay less to have more time to serve their King. Some volunteer for dangerous missions to rescue the lost. All have a heart to share freely with those who enter their kingdom communities. This groundswell overwhelms every major obstacle to the King of Kings, by the power of the cross. Laying down all to follow the call to finish what Jesus began spreads and fuels the mission.

BY **STEVE SMITH** AND **STAN PARKS**

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Steve Smith March 11, 1962–March 13, 2019. Steve Smith served overseas with the International Mission Board (SBC) for 18 years, helping initiate a Church Planting Movement (CPM) among an unreached people group in East Asia, and then coaching, training, and leading others to do the same throughout the world. Upon his retirement from IMB in 2016 until his death, Steve served simultaneously as the Vice President of Multiplication for East-West Ministries, as a Global Movement Catalyst for Beyond, and as a co-leader of the 24:14 Coalition, a global effort to engage every unreached place and people with a movement strategy by 2025.

Stan Parks, Ph.D. is a trainer and coach for a wide variety of CPMs around the world. He currently co-leads a global 2414 Coalition to start church planting movement engagements in every unreached people group and place by 2025 (2414now.net). As part of the Ethne leadership team he is helping various Ephesus teams seeking to start cascading CPMs in large UPG clusters. He is the VP of Global Strategies with Beyond.

Then I heard a loud voice in heaven. It said, "Now the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God have come. The authority of his Christ has come. Satan, who brings charges against our brothers and sisters, has been thrown down. He brings charges against them before our God day and night. They overcame him because the Lamb gave His life's blood for them. They overcame him by giving witness about Jesus to others. They were willing to risk their lives, even if it led to death." —Rev. 12:10–11 NIRV

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This is no return to the horrific Crusades of earthly battles waged falsely and dishonorably in the name of Jesus. This kingdom is invisible, as Jesus declared:

My kingdom is not of this world. If my kingdom were of this world, my servants would have been fighting, that I might not be delivered over to the Jews. But my kingdom is not from the world.
—John 18:36, ESV

They are in a war for the souls of people and are willing to ignore unbiblical restraints of human theological and denominational traditions. Unfortunately, sometimes they are opposed by some church leaders who have misunderstood their different expressions of how to live as authentic disciples of the King.

They believe that all disciples are empowered and commissioned to reach the world, not just pastors and missionaries. These disciples have chosen to believe that disciples, churches, leaders and movements can multiply as movements of the Spirit, just as they did in the early church. They have chosen to obey the commands of Christ and receive the same authority and Spirit-empowerment as 2000 years ago.

Church Planting Movements (CPMs) are spreading again today just as they did in the book of Acts and at various times in history. They are not a new phenomenon but an old one. They are a return to basic biblical discipleship that all disciples of Jesus can emulate, as:

1) followers of Jesus and 2) fishers for people. (Mark 1:17)

On every continent, where it was once said "A CPM can't happen here," movements are spreading.

Biblical principles are being applied in practical, reproducible models in a variety of cultural contexts. God's servants are winning the lost, making disciples, forming healthy churches and developing godly leaders, in ways that can multiply generation after generation and begin to radically transform their communities.

These movements are the only way we have found historically for the kingdom of God to grow faster than the population. Without them, even good ministry efforts result in losing ground. (See the article, "Daring to Succeed," starting on page 24.)

The tide of this renewed effort is surging forward with unstoppable force. This insurgency is no passing fad. With 25+ years of reproducing churches, the number of CPMs has multiplied from a mere handful in the 1990s to 950+ as of May 2019, with more being reported each month. Each movement's advance has been won with great endurance and sacrifice.

This mission—to start kingdom movements in every unreached people and place—comes with real casualties of persecution. This is an ultimate struggle to see the name of Jesus prevail in every place, so He is worshipped by all peoples. This mission costs everything, and it is worth it! He is worth it.

After almost three decades of a resurgence of movements in modern times, a global coalition has arisen, not by boardroom brainstorming, but by leaders within and alongside movements banding together to fulfill one overarching objective:

And this good news of the King's reign will be heralded throughout the whole world as a testimony to all peoples, and then the end will come. (Matt 24:14, translation by Steve Smith)

As God draws multitudes of new believers from every tongue, tribe, people and nation into His kingdom, we yearn: "**Come, Lord Jesus!**" (Rev. 22:20)

We cry out: **Your kingdom come!** (movements)

No place left! (fully reaching all Rom. 15:23)

Finishing what others have started!

(honoring those before us)

We have subordinated national, organizational and denominational brands to greater kingdom collaboration to accomplish this mission. We call our open-membership, volunteer band by the verse that inspires us: 24:14.

Through prayer, we as the 24:14 Coalition were led by God to aim for movements in every unreached people and place.

We felt God gave us an initial goal and a deadline to increase urgency: We are praying and serving to see a kingdom movement (CPM) engagement in every unreached people and place by December 31, 2025.

We are not a Western-centric initiative. We are composed of house church movements from South Asia, Muslim-background movements from the 10/40 window, mission sending agencies, church-planting networks in post-modern regions, established churches, intercessor networks and many more. We are a coalition of CPM practitioners not waiting for a plan from executive leadership (though many executives are on board). We are inspired by a call for a wartime mentality to sacrifice alongside brothers and sisters, to see the gospel proclaimed throughout the world as a witness to all peoples.

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This coalition is standing on the shoulders of those who have gone before us. We are reaping the results (where we have not sown) of millions of sacrificial intercessors and witnesses throughout the centuries.

There will be a final generation. It will be characterized by the global spread of the kingdom, and will advance in the face of global opposition. Our generation feels strangely like the one Jesus described in Matthew 24.

24:14 consists of movement leaders and people, organizations, and churches across the world committed to four things:

1. REACH the UNREACHED: In line with Matthew 24:14, bringing the gospel of the kingdom to every unreached people and place.
2. THROUGH CPMs: Fully reaching them through biblical Kingdom Movements of multiplying disciples, churches, leaders and movements.
3. WITH URGENCY BY 2025: Doing so with a wartime urgency by the end of 2025 in the power of the Spirit, no matter what it costs us.
4. We COLLABORATE with others in the 24:14 community so we can make progress together.

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We are in a spiritual war, though most believers seem to live as if in peace. As long as God's people slumber, the enemy wreaks havoc in communities, churches, relationships and personal discipleship. Priorities, time and focus remain dissipated. No D-Day objective looms. No great mission prevails, so sacrifice remains minimal or non-existent. Yet were the whole church to wake up to a wartime mindset, the gates of hell would quake! (Matt. 16:18)

The 73 million (and growing) grassroots troops who have come to faith in these CPMs are spreading the good news globally. As stories of God's breakthroughs trickle into churches around the world, reinforcements arise to go out into the battlefields. The slumbering giant of the global church needs to wake up. But this giant must not awaken with a peacetime mindset. This is no business model for comfortable church growth; this is spiritual warfare.

Our mission has three key elements. First, we need to discern the gaps where movement engagements are lacking. Second, the most effective troops to start new movements are leaders from existing movements. As a global church we need to prioritize prayer, personnel and funds to support

existing CPMs in sending out messengers to unengaged areas to start new CPMs. Third, we need to help train, deploy, and coach new movement catalysts to the places and peoples that existing movements cannot serve.

Keeping these three priorities in focus will allow us to achieve the initial goal of movement engagement and overall purpose of movements in every unreached people and place.

Of the 17,000+ people groups and 7000+ unreached people groups, we estimate that about 2,500 of them are already effectively engaged with CPM strategies. That leaves the vast majority still needing purposeful CPM initiatives. But we need to look more closely than the macro-level of a major people group or city. We are utilizing a list of nearly 43,000 global districts overlaid with these people group lists. Globally, that may be as many as 80,000 geographical and ethnolinguistic segments of the world needing movements. As you read this, global researchers are compiling sensitive data from CPM practitioners to identify which population segments have movements and movement engagements and which still need them.

2025 is not the end. It is just the beginning of the end. We need CPM catalysts in every one of these 80,000 segments sacrificially committed to the war effort of spreading God's kingdom through movements. Once catalysts are in place (between now and 2025) the fight has just begun to evangelize the lost and multiply disciples and churches to see a kingdom transformation of those communities.

Jesus didn't intend his Great Commission for just a subgroup of his followers, but for everyone who knows him as their Savior. He calls every believer to play a role in finishing the task.

We can see an end to a 2,000-year spiritual war. The enemy's defeat is in sight. "No place left for Jesus to be named" is on the horizon. (Rom. 15:23) God is asking us to pay the price and deeply sacrifice to be the generation that fulfills Matthew 24:14.

Which brings us to you. God is calling you to join this volunteer army. What could happen if the global church arose with a sacrificial seven-year push to engage every unreached place with a movement of God?

We invite you to be a part of the revolution! Here are some ways to join the battle.

LEARN

See 2414now.net to learn more, watch vision casting videos and find on-ramps to join this wartime effort.

SHARE DATA

24:14 is tracking the engagement of around 80,000 targets of people groups and places that we will engage with a movement engagement by 2025. Help us understand the gaps by reporting where you are engaged and the progress there. (Visit 2414now.net/the-task)

PRAY

Prayer movements always coincide with Church Planting Movements. We have put together a detailed explanation of how you can be involved in prayer for the 24:14 Vision (2414now.net/pray)

GIVE

While 24:14 is a global band of volunteers, financial resources are needed for special initiatives, collaboration of movement catalysts, training leaders, and mobilizing national believers to cascade movements to new unreached areas. See projects we are working on (Visit 2414now.net/give)

VOLUNTEER

24:14 has a list of roles that must be filled in order to make the 2025 vision a reality. A complete list can be found at 2414now.net (Scroll to "How You Can Get Involved," choose the option that fits you and navigate to the *Be a Part of the Community* page)

GO

Get trained to effectively start CPMs, whether across an ocean or in your backyard. 24:14 has a network of home hubs and field hubs to provide a pathway for reaching a UPG, starting in your local context. Browsing 2414now.net/hubs will give you complete information on getting involved.

Most 24:14 efforts are not supported by outside funds. Outside funding for CPM catalyzation, and support comes via individuals, churches and organizations. Yet there are some central funding needs. See 2414now.net/give for more information on supporting 24:14 global efforts. 