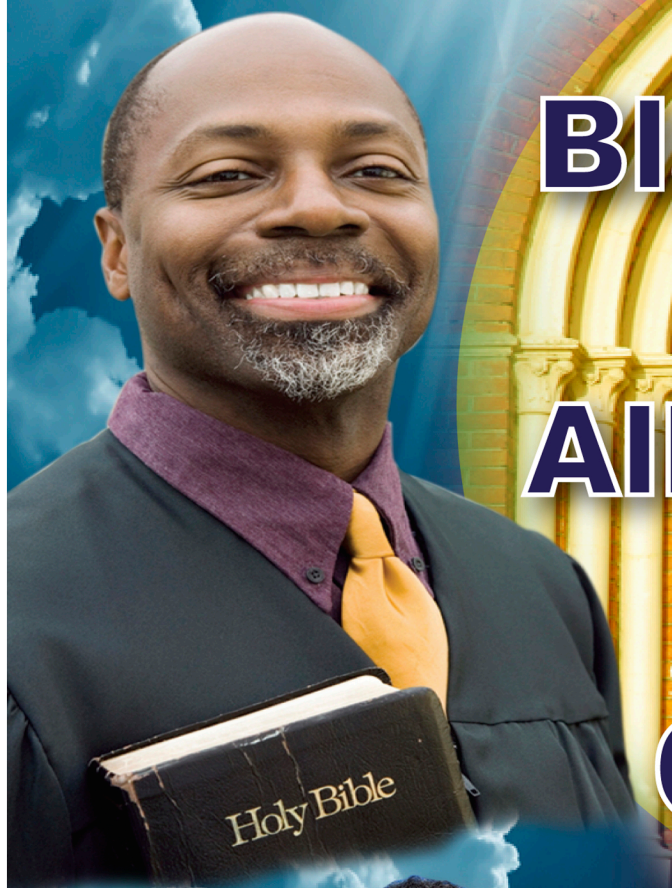


# National Black Church Initiative

*“Over The Next Ten Years from 2011 to 2021”*

**The  
Black Church  
Invites  
All Black Men  
Back to  
CHURCH**



# National Black Church Initiative

P.O. Box 65177  
Washington DC 20035  
202-744-0184  
dcbci2002@gmail.com  
[www.naltblackchurch.com](http://www.naltblackchurch.com)

Dear Pastor:

It is with great joy that the **National Black Church Initiative (NBCI)** announces the Bringing Black Men Back to Church Program in your city. We vow to bring 10 million black men back to church over the next 10 years. There can be no greater task at hand for the Black Church than to bring black men back to Christ Jesus.

We all agree that the central focus of the Christian Church is to win souls for Christ, our Savior. The National Black Church Initiative (NBCI) is a coalition of churches working to eradicate racial disparities in healthcare, technology, education, housing, and the environment. NBCI's mission is to provide critical wellness information to all of its members, congregants, churches and the public. NBCI offers faith-based, out-of-the box and cutting edge solutions to stubborn economic and social issues. NBCI's programs are governed by credible statistical analysis, science based strategies and techniques, and methods that work. Visit our website at [www.naltblackchurch.com](http://www.naltblackchurch.com).

We humbly ask you for support in Christ. Find out how your church can help!

Sincerely,



Rev. Anthony Evans  
President



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### **INTRODUCTION**

## **The National Black Church Initiative Invites African American Men Back To Church**

The National Black Church Initiative (NBCI) is a faith-based coalition of 34,000 churches comprised of 15 denominations and 15.7 million African Americans is committed to bringing African American men back to church. NBCI, in partnership with major black religious leaders and denominations nationwide, believe that African American men have nowhere to go but back to church. Given the serious issues facing African American men, including rising levels of incarceration, drug use and unwed fatherhood – we can no longer stand by while our men openly defy God’s word. This program is a part of NBCI’s Healing Family Initiative, programming which seeks to bolster African American families against the tide of violence, poverty, moral depravity, and failure. It is time for the majority of African Americans to follow the examples set by successful African American families; the Obama’s being a shining beacon of accomplishment, and reverse trajectory of the African American family. Visit our website for more information about NBCI’s Healing Family Initiative at <http://www.naltblackchurch.com/healing-family.html>. Additionally, like all NBCI Initiatives, this program has education at its cornerstone. NBCI’s Education Initiative is a holistic approach - a whole family program wherein we also account for

all of the adverse socio-economic factors impacting student achievement and family structure. Visit our website for more information about NBCI's Education Initiative at <http://www.naltblackchurch.com/education/index.html>.

African Americans represent the strongest church attendance and affiliation amongst all ethnicities in the United States. According to the Pew Forum 2007 survey, people of black ethnicity were most likely to be part of a formal religion, with 85% being Christians. However, according to the Barna Research Group, a Christian research firm based in Ventura, Calif., more than 90% of American men believe in God, and 5 out of 6 call themselves Christian. But only 2 out of 6 attend church on any given Sunday. This means that in America, 60% of church attendees are women.

Black women overwhelming outnumber black men in regular church attendance. While black men may believe in God, in most cases it ends with belief. If single black women are attending church regularly and following the guidelines that the church has put in place and the black men are not, what does this say about the future of the black family?

Our focus is to open our doors, arms and hearts to understand the complex sociological and psychological factors that prohibit African American men from being consistent churchgoers, better fathers, less abusive spouses and better members of society. As a religious leader in the African American community for the past twenty years, we take our position as a moral authority very seriously.

NBCI believes that the first step for our African American brothers is to return to church – atoning for their sins and reestablishing their relationship with God through Christ. Over the next ten years we will develop comprehensive ministries to sustain this initiative and commit African American men to the path of righteousness.

The kick-off of this 7-year program is September 25, 2011 – but the first step in re-engaging African American men. Our goal is to reach over 10 million African American men nationwide, providing technical assistance to aid churches in reaching African American males and sustaining their membership. The black church must commit to reaching African American men to mold black males into strong fathers, husbands, members of society and protectors of our community. A society cannot exist without sober, ethical and functional men participating and leading families into a new age of African American successes. The black church must impart Biblical mandates for individuals, families, the community and the nation.

This will be an expensive initiative, fully funded by the church. Utilizing existing church programming and local, city, state and federal resources, this program will be an interdisciplinary response the issues facing African American males.

To achieve our goal of reaching over 10 million men over the next seven years NBCI will focus on the following elements:

### **1. Removing Barriers to Church Attendance**

Male evangelism ministries will be created in each church nationwide - groups of 25 existing church members will design a comprehensive outline of issues and concerns facing their particular community. Additionally, transportation will be addressed as lack of transportation



could serve as a barrier for some African American congregants. Utilizing church transportation and city and state resources, African American males should have every opportunity to facilitate attendance.

## **2. Counseling**

There are many types of counseling that the church is qualified to impart – the church has historically been a resource for the counseling needs of its congregants. Now, through partnerships with mental health professionals, medical professionals and private and public accredited resources the church is in a better position than ever to meet the counseling needs of African Americans.

- *Mental Health Counseling*
- *Spiritual Counseling*

Black men must be taught how to become effective followers of the ethics and teachings of our Lord Jesus Christ. These men must not be taught the language but the action – the implementation of God’s word is of the utmost importance.

- *Marriage/Sexual Counseling*

While the decline of marriage is clearly an American problem, statistics point to the glaring truth – African Americans are disproportionately devaluing the importance of marriage nationwide. The marriage rate for African Americans has been dropping since the 1960s and today has the lowest marriage rate of any racial group in the United States. According to the 2001 US Census 43.3% of Black men and 41.9% of Black women in America have never been married and Black women are least likely in American society to marry. These figures are double that of white men and women. Between 1970 and 2001 the overall marriage rate has dropped, overall by 17%. However, for African Americans during this same time period the marriage rate dropped a staggering 34%.

NBCI addresses the needs of the African American family by focusing on the core of our community, facing problems head-on, developing innovative strategies to implement change, and enforcing new socially beneficial norms. Through intensive marriage counseling we strongly believe that the statistics surrounding African American marriage will improve.

## **3. Drop-out Prevention**

According to the American Promise Study examining Cities in Crisis, “Nationwide, nearly one in three U.S. high school students fails to graduate with a diploma. In total, approximately 1.2 million students drop out each year – averaging 7,000 every school day or one every 26 seconds. Among minority students, the problem is even more severe with nearly 50 percent of African American and Hispanic students not completing high school on time.” NBCI’s Dropout Prevention Initiative seeks to identify, assist, encourage, and sustain. ‘Identifying’ behavior that points to dropout risk, communities in which dropout rates are more prevalent, as well as the individuals who have dropped out of school. ‘Assist’ by resolving any social, psychological,

academic, financial, or physical barriers to continuing education within a family with a focus on the student. 'Encouraging' putting the family and student back on a course which facilitates education and stability through after school programming, positive reinforcement, and counseling. Finally, the program is 'sustained' by integration these program strategies in conjunction with school systems, the faith community, the community at large, local, state and federal resources and businesses.

#### **4. Employment**

Historically, the unemployment rate for African Americans has always been higher than the national average. However, now it's at Depression-era levels. The most recent figures show African American joblessness at 16.2 percent. For black males, it's at 17.5 percent; And for black teens, it's nearly 41 percent.

The black church recognizes the importance of African American male employment – many factors contribute to impairing African American males from obtaining gainful employment. In this new effort we will emphasize entrepreneurship, good work ethics, and the importance of good financial management. The church also serves as a network of resources, specifically the 70,000 small businesses within NBCI's membership network. We are encouraging these small businesses to hire African American males that are not their family members, to expand the opportunities available and increase wealth within the African American community.

Therefore, we have elicited a partnership with the National Black Chamber of Commerce in an effort to reach this goal.

#### **5. Incarceration Prevention**

Since the early 1970's the prison and jail population in the United states has increase at an unprecedented rate – a more than 500% rise resulted in over 2.2 million people incarcerated in our nation's prisons and jails. This growth has been accompanied by an increasingly disproportionate racial composition – Bureau of Justice statistics document that one in six black men had been incarcerated as of 2001 and if current trends continue one in three black males born today can expect to spend time in prison during their lifetime.

Many churches currently participate in re-entry ministries; NBCI wants to increase participation 100 fold. Additionally, incorporating education, drop-out prevention, employment counseling and family interventions will seek to heal a community plagued by crime, drug-use and racial disparities.

This initiative will be amongst the most difficult of our programs to date. The black church also acknowledges that this will be an expensive initiative – we will be asking our member churches to donate \$5,000 yearly to fund this program over the course of the next seven years. We are committed to bringing African American men back to church, re-instituting God's word and infusing our families and communities with the moral precepts God mandates for our lives.

# PROGRAM

## The Black Church Welcomes All Black Men Back to Church

Genesis 1:26-27, 1 Peter 3:7, Ephesians 5:23, 1 Timothy 2:13, Psalm 103, Matthew 28:16-20

Visit our website: <http://www.naltblackchurch.com/mentochurch.html>

### Our Vision:

**We must understand that God is after men's heart. He does not want men to just come to church to please their wives and girlfriends. He wants men to seek Him with all authenticity. It will take time to win the hearts and minds of the men in your family and community to God's vision for their lives and the vision of your local church. It will take time to build their trust and confidence in your leadership and your pastor's leadership. - "No More Excuses" - Rev. Michael A, Stevens**

The Bringing Black Men Back to Church initiative is committed to getting 10 million or more black men back into the church over the next ten years. We want every black man in America to know that our doors and our hearts are always open to them. By returning to the church, black men will bolster their families against the tides of violence, poverty, moral depravity, and failures that plague the African American community. By re-establishing their connection with the Lord, black men will become better fathers, husbands, members of society and leaders in the community.

Now is the time to protect our community against the many ills that are bringing on its downfall.

If nothing is done, the ever-rising rates of drug use, incarceration and unwed fatherhood will surely destroy the achievements the Black Church has made and tarnish its positive stance as a moral authority.

### Our Plan:

It is essential that we understand the spiritual, sociological, and psychological factors that keep black men out of the church so that we can understand how to reach them. To do this we must educate and train black men who are already members of churches on how to fish for other black men who are not. The goal is not necessarily to increase church attendance, but to aid black men into their commitment to becoming productive and viable members of society, especially in the black community. We do this by simply reminding them, through the ethics and teachings of Jesus, of their biblical position in God's kingdom. What many black men have done is voluntarily abdicate their duty and authority to black women. This is not only unfair, but it is wrong. This initiative of Brining Black Men Back to Church would allow African American men to re-assert themselves and reclaim their proper role in the church as a Christ-centered man.



This program is not a part of the Promise Keeper's Movement, but we have similar values. At its center are the teachings of Christ and the role God wants the black man to play in society, in church and in his home.

We plan to create five Black Men Renewal Centers within large churches within NBCI's five faith commands (New York, Atlanta, Dallas, Chicago and Oakland). The centers will conduct comprehensive assessments for the explicit purpose of making sure that African American men know what direction to turn to in order to receive the proper services for whatever ails them. In addition, the center will serve as an emergency intervention hub for African American males who are suffering from various social-psychological issues. The centers will also provide comprehensive training to churches that want to establish effective science-based black men ministries.



- This includes, but is not limited to:
- Training the church outreach staff, helping with the message the church wants to convey to the black male population of their community;



- Helping the church organize its personnel staff to serve this population properly; and
- Other related services.

The centers will be staffed by a clinical psychologist, pastoral care clergy, three counselors and two administrative support staff.

The projected cost of staffing and operating each center is estimated to be \$1 million. The program will be funded by the support and contributions of churches, organizations, private businesses, volunteers and the community at large. We hope not to accept government funding for this initiative because we do not want a government mandate on how to run this program. We can use their money, but we do not want them to delegate its use. Because of the religious nature of this program, government money may not be compatible. Therefore, we need every one who is concerned about this problem to contribute. All donations are tax deductible.

### How can your church participate?

This project will not be successful without the help of the Black Church. We are calling on every Black Church in America to participate in the program.

We need at least 10 volunteers from your church to start an outreach group. The group will be active six days a week. We are asking that Monday through Friday your members reach out to men in the community and encourage them to re-establish their relationship with God through Christ. On Saturdays, your group should meet with others from local churches and discuss their progress and the effective approaches they find to reach wayward men. The training will be provided by the Black Men Renewal Centers.

We are asking that your church donate between \$25,000 and \$50,000 yearly to help establish this program. We are relying on donations and free-will offerings from churches and individuals to make this a success. Re-establishing black men to the church is the chief biblical mission of the church; therefore it should fully fund the project. The return value for the amount that we seek is just pennies on the dollar compared to the lives that it will save and property that it will protect. Is this too expensive to save the lives of 10 million black men?



## The Black Church Welcomes All Black Men Back to Church

[View Photos of the Washington, DC "Men to Church" March, April 10, 2012](#)



# **A Plea for Black Men to Come Back Home to Church**

Genesis 1:26-27, 1 Peter 3:7, Ephesians 5:23, 1 Timothy 2:13, Psalm 103, Matthew 28:16-20



YouTube: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IOc70CiZezU>

**Order Your Bring Black Men Coming Back To Church  
Promotional Kit!**

**(See your order form in the back cover of this booklet)**

## How can your organization participate?

We would like to encourage local, state and national groups and organizations to certify that each of their male members is a member of a black church and that they are committed to the program.

We ask that you encourage your male members to start/join outreach programs at their church. Commit your organization to raising \$25,000 and donating it to the Black Men Renewal Centers to aid in the Bringing Black Men Back to Church initiative. All donations will go towards operating the program, both in training volunteers and producing materials for use in the field.

## How can individuals participate?

Verify that your church is participating in the Bringing Black Men Back to Church Initiative. It is a simple step, but just by making sure your church is aware of the program, you will not only help ensure its effectiveness in your community, you will be helping us reach our national goal.

Whether you are a man or woman, please make sure that every event your church attends people are aware of the initiative. Encourage your friends and family members to start outreach programs in their churches.



	Total Black Men in Prison/Jail*	Black Men Enrolled in Postsecondary Education
2000	829,200	717,491
2001	842,000	712,724
2002	851,600	964,056
2003	857,300	1,003,742
2004	826,700	1,014,474
2005	837,700	1,070,591
2006	831,100	1,081,647
2007	858,600	1,107,892
2008	870,800	1,072,536
2009	864,100	1,175,319
2010	844,600	1,341,354

\*Source: BJS, National Prisoner Statistics Program, Federal Justice Statistics Program, National Corrections Reporting Program, Survey of Inmates in State and Local Correctional Facilities, and National Inmate Survey 2010.

\*Source: Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education System, Enrollment Survey 2000-10.

If you are a man, we invite you to join/start an outreach volunteer program at your church and invite other men to participate. As a man you are the cornerstone of this initiative. By speaking to your peers, sharing your experiences and encouraging them to join a church, you will be working to uphold and solidify the strength and leadership of community and fulfill your promise to Christ to uphold His teaching and of winning souls for HIM.

We are asking for individual donations of \$500. Your contribution will directly help guarantee the success of outreach volunteer groups throughout the country.

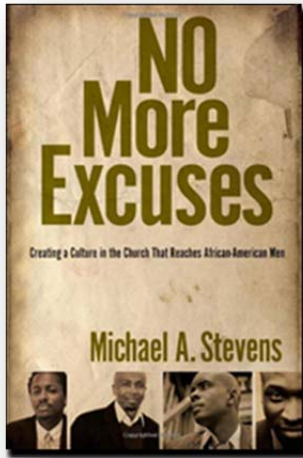
## How can black women participate?

This initiative wants to make sure that every black woman is a member of a church as well. How can you ask black men to go to church if you do not? Encourage the black men in your life to go to church! Their attendance will guarantee the initiative succeeds. Bring your husbands, sons, and nephews to church with you. Seeing black men and their families in church together, young black men will be inspired to start families of their own and value marriage. As the heart of African American society, it is up to you to make sure the men in your life know that going to church will help make our community stronger.

We are asking for individual donations of \$500. Your contribution will directly help guarantee the success of outreach volunteer groups throughout the country.



# No More Excuses: Creating a Culture in the Church That Reaches African-American Men



In this thought-provoking book, Michael A. Stevens examines the cause of absence for African-American males in the houses of worship and the solutions to this growing epidemic. After reading this message, you will understand why most men avoid church, learn what can be done to engage and retain a healthy balanced gender congregation, and recognize the spiritual impact when men are connected to their local church.

As a leading expert in African-American church growth, Stevens dispels the misconceptions and offers a blueprint for the future of one of the church's most endangered species.

## **About the Author**

Michael A. Stevens Sr. is committed to the discovery and development of personal purpose and positioning for the lives of men. He is the founder of University City Church in Charlotte, North Carolina, and serves as a superintendent in the Church of God in Christ. Pastor Stevens received a Bachelor of Science degree in political studies from North Carolina A & T State University.

He hosts a national weekly talk radio show, The Michael A. Stevens Show. Pastor Stevens has lectured coast-to-coast and abroad in such countries as South Africa, Peru, Bermuda, Kenya, Belize, and Israel.

He has been married to his college sweetheart, Sharon, and they are blessed with three wonderful children.

Pastor Stevens was named one of "30 Emerging Voices Under the Age of Forty" by Charisma magazine and has written some articles for them since.



## Evangelism and discipleship

- Accept Christ as his personal savior
  - Orientation of the Christian doctrine
  - Assigned a male mentor and a deacon for one year and half
  - Church should form a Black Men Back to Church committee consisting of all black males to assist
- 
- Report on church attendance status every quarter
  - Offered the services of the church: clothing, drug and alcohol counseling, employment counseling
  - Counseling concerning HIV status
  - Provide intake information concerning his mental and spiritual state of being
  - Anger management course must complete within three months of church membership (mandatory)
  - Housing assistance offer to who were recently released from prison or jail
  - Referral and follow new member to programs they needed
  - Working to clear up any back child support and reconnect them with their children
  - Offer counseling between them and the mother of their children
  - Offer money management and budgeting help
  - Helping them clean up and obtain a valid driver's license or identification card
  - Refer to city and county agencies responsible for providing services for them not offered by the church

# BE NEWS



## **Black men are falling behind in the medical field, American Medical News reports.**

The most recent Assn. of American Medical Colleges report on medical education diversity says that 2.5% of medical school applicants were black men in 2011, a drop from 2.6% in 2002. The number of Asian and Hispanic male applicants increased during that period and the share of white male applicants has remained about the same.

“We have a major, major problem in this country,” said Marc Nivet, EdD, the AAMC’s chief diversity officer. “There is just simply an enormous amount of indisputable evidence that we’re not intervening as effectively as we’d like as a society to increase the talent pool of African-Americans who are capable of taking advantage of the science curricula available up and down the pipeline.

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REQUEST

# **How Your Church Can Help:** **Bringing Black Men** **Back to Church**

Mail:

National Black Church Initiative  
P.O. Box 65177  
Washington, DC 20035  
202-744-0184

**We are humbly requesting that each:**

**Church Denominations or Associations: \$5,000**

**Church Contribution: \$2,800**

**(Membership & Black Men Coming Back to Church Promotional Kit)**

**Individual Contribution: \$500**

**(Membership & Black Men Coming Back to Church Promotional Kit)**





## ARTICLES

### Group Aims to Draw Black Men to Church

.pdf [3.9mb]



THE PHILADELPHIA TRIBUNE  
www.phillytrib.com

After several years of examining literature about Black churches and the Black community, the National Black Church Initiative (NBCI) has come up with a seven-year plan to attract 1.5 million males to church and keep them.

[» Read more](#)



THE PHILADELPHIA TRIBUNE  
www.phillytrib.com

## Group aims to draw Black men to church

FRIDAY, 29 JULY 2011 00:26

WRITTEN BY NICOLE LOCKLEY TRIBUNE STAFF WRITER



After several years of examining literature about Black churches and the Black community, the National Black Church Initiative (NBCI) has come up with a seven-year plan to attract 1.5 million males to church and keep them.

The Rev. Anthony Evans, president of NBCI, said if Philadelphia churches participate in the plan, he expects 250,000 new male church members in the city. NBCI is a coalition of nearly 34,000 churches. It was founded in 1991 with an emphasis on addressing physical, mental, biological and emotional health issues within the Black community. The newest initiative to bring more Black men into church addresses these issues.

Churches participating in the effort will follow guidelines to address five areas of interest.

"The mental health issues that face African Americans, and physical health issues that face African Americans, holds them back from being responsible dads and good spouses," said Evans.

Steps include addressing what barriers stop men from attending church. Each church will have 25 designated men responsible for recruiting new male members.

"The coalition and churches will train those men how to effectively fish these African American men," said Evans.

Counseling will be available for mental, spiritual and martial health issues. Churches are asked to inform NBCI of health and counseling professionals in their congregation. These individuals will volunteer to help men who need it. Evans said member churches have already identified these professionals.

School dropouts will be addressed.

"This comes as a result because everybody from the prison to the school is yelling at the top of their lungs that they need help with African-American men," said Evans. By building confidence and getting encouragement from church members, this will encourage males to stay in the church, according to Evans. "Men don't stop coming to church when they're old, they start dropping out of church when they're small."

businesses are being asked to hire the men.

By addressing unemployment, education and providing counseling, the numbers of men in jail and killed will decrease, according to Evans.

Evans said the Black church is the only entity that can address and fix the problems the Black community faces. He recently reached out to NAACP and National Urban League for their support.

"It is a crisis," said the Rev. Lillian Smith, pastor of Tindley Temple United Methodist Church located on South Broad St. She said her church has an average of 400 members, and 40 to 45 percent are male.

Smith said the problems in the Black community can be solved and such a program could work.

"It will help to provide groups, small groups where men can be themselves and honestly say what's going on and receive the spiritual support so they can face the next day — to know that they have someone to call on and someone that is praying for them," said Smith.

When told about the initiative to get Black men in church, she said her church would join the effort.

The Rev. William Jefferies, pastor of First Baptist Church in Morton, Pa., said he's seen a decline in the male members in his church as well as other local churches, but has no explanation for it.

"The Biblical foundation is if you love God, and you fear God, and you serve God and obey God then you're bound to positively effect your family, your marriage and your children," said Jefferies, who agrees the program will positively effect the Black community.

"I think it will have an immediate effect on Philly if you look at the Black men on parole. If you look at those numbers in Philly and look at the numbers two years from now, those numbers will drop. They will now have a structured community helping them," said Evans.

## Are Men Missing From the Black Church?

By  
Mashaun D. Simon



## Are Men Missing From the Black Church?

By Mashaun D. Simon

Are black men missing from the church today?

At least one man thinks so. So much so that he is working to build as much support as possible to "bring black men back to the church."

The National Black Church Initiative, which markets itself as a faith-based coalition of 34,000 churches, plans to kick-off its seven year "bring the black men back to the church" initiative in September.

Rev. Anthony Evans, president of NBCI said the initiative is part of NBCI's Healing Family Initiative which seeks to bolster African-American families against the tide of violence, poverty, moral depravity and failure.

"Given the serious issues facing African-American men, including rising levels of incarceration, drug use and unwed fatherhood -- we can no longer stand by while our men openly defy God's word," he said.

Evans believes if something is not done now, in the next 10 years "our churches and communities will be non-existent."

"There is something missing from the heart of the black church - the presence of our black brothers," Evans said. "The sisters have all the power and will have to stand down to create a balance. There will be

some push and pull in the congregations, but this is a sacrifice that we all will have to make. You cannot have a church where



women are in lead of every ministry."

However, there are some that are not so convinced there is a problem.

Rev. Dr. Charles E. Collins, Jr., an associate minister at Pleasant Hill Baptist Church in Duluth, GA believes the main question to be asked is, "Who says Black men aren't in church?"

Collins believes it would be foolish to think black men are missing from the church.

"Actually, according to the population and where black men are the percentage is probably very appropriate," he said. "We hear they are locked up or on the streets. I would say...black Men are in church at the rate they always have been, and ....very much in the roles they have been."

The NBCI uses a Pew Forum 2007 survey and the findings of the Barna Research Group to support their argument. According to the Pew Forum survey, people of black ethnicity were most likely to be part of a formal religion, with 85 percent being Christians. And according to the Barna Research Group, a Christian research firm based in Ventura, Calif., more than 90 percent of American men believe in God, and 5 out of 6 call themselves Christian. But only 2 out of 6 attend church on any given Sunday.

This means that in America, 60 percent of church attendees are women. However, these surveys do not distinguish between African-American men and women, or men and women of other racial and ethnic backgrounds.

Do these statistics assist in proving Evans' point?

It is true, said Collins, that women are the general population holders, which in turn making women the greater percentage of the church population.

"But black men are still there constantly creating, gaining, and coveting new titles, new positions, new roles, and new garments; and holding on to them for dear life," he said.

Dr. Dennis W. Wiley, co-pastor of the [Covenant Baptist Church](#) in Washington, DC agrees.

"There has always been this reality that there are more black women in the church than there is black men," Wiley said. "But from what I can see, black men are not missing from the church. I would push back on that."

There should be a focus on the constituency that's lacking, that's incarcerated, and that's drifting on the corners somewhere, Collins said. However, helping people develop their religious identity more while in the church is "what we are called to do," he said.

Wiley said that is what they are trying to do in his church.

"There is a new generation that does not know much about the church and never heard about the church," he said, adding that in order for the church to attract anyone "the black church has some very serious challenges that it needs to confront."

According to the NBCI, their focus is to open "our doors, arms and hearts to understand the complex sociological and psychological factors that prohibit African American men from being consistent churchgoers, better fathers, less abusive spouses and better members of society."

Instead of asking questions like, "Where are the black men," Collins said the focus needs to be adjusted on what draws folk in order to understand why they are present or understand where they are.

"Those are the answers that we seek," he said. "And that's what we should want to know more about so we can figure out what people need and how we can best service them...or I should say how the Body of Christ can best serve them."