

Training is the Key to Effective High School Missions

by Heather C. Rantal



*Notice: The views expressed in this Senior Integration Paper do not necessarily represent the views of Covenant College.

Introduction

When I was fourteen I wanted to live in a large beautiful house with beautiful things. My mother said I'd have to marry a brain surgeon to support my expensive tastes. My sister was going to be a missionary in Africa and live in a grass hut. I would support her. However, after traveling to Prague, Czech Republic for just two weeks I saw the world a bit differently, and after three more short trips during my high school years God transformed my heart and shown me the blessings of obedience. Because of these short-term mission trips God has made it clear to me that he is calling me to deny my former interests and follow him to the mission field.

God used four short-term mission trips during high school to open up my eyes to see a bigger world. I was privileged to share the gospel with a young girl named Klara from the Czech Republic and to see her respond in faith. I hungered to meet others who needed Jesus, and especially felt a burden and love for those from other countries. My church and my youth pastor were committed to encouraging young people to participate in missions and gave me the opportunity to do so. Because of their encouragement my life will never be the same.

After participating in my various high school mission trips with very different training for each, it became clear to me that quality training and preparation for high school short-term missions is essential. Teenagers (even children raised in Bible-believing churches) haven't a clue how to raise support, don't know the first thing about cross-cultural differences, and many have never thought about how their own personal testimony might encourage someone to know Jesus.

I have experienced well trained teams that have been a blessing to our missionary hosts as well as groups of immature, self-centered "missions rookies" frustrated that their "vacation" wasn't all they had expected.

In his article, "Better Team Preparation Pays Off," Paul Borthwick says:

“We live in a time when almost any person or church can pursue short term missions...In a culture that loves experiential learning two weeks overseas every year degenerates into little more than an intensified collection of trips to the cultural exhibits at Disney’s Epcot Center. If the person possesses the time and money, short-term missions offers a catalogue of openings for ‘been there, done that, got the T-shirt’ satisfaction, appealing to those whom some call ‘experience junkies.’ In all cases, sending untrained people whose primary qualification is their ability to afford the trip results in lost potential for long term impact. What should we do with the potential dangers of the short term missions craze?” (113)

Borthwick agrees the big issue is team preparation. Without adequate preparation he says,

“We found that both effectiveness on the field and long term results after the trip were diminished” (115). Borthwick advocates mandatory preparation and training including:

- team meetings
- a weekend retreat
- reading and memorization assignments, and
- a local cross-cultural ministry experience

This process “increased the team’s effectiveness on the field and the trip’s long term fruitfulness” (115).

It has been a vision of mine since I was eighteen and completed my last mission trip with my youth group to write a training manual that youth pastors could use to prepare young teams for short-term missions. This book would be a tool for anyone who desires to take a team of informed, equipped, and emboldened teenagers across a cultural barrier to strengthen their faith and expand their worldviews—potentially change many lives.

This training manual will focus on three aspects of preparation: spiritual, emotional, and physical. Each aspect will be integrated into a twelve-week training course complete with appropriate scripture for Bible study and memorization. Topics covered under spiritual preparation will include what the Great Commission means to us today, the theology of short-term missions, what it means to be a child of God and how that relates to missions, sharing your testimony, sharing the gospel, and being an ambassador for Christ.

Emotional preparation will focus on cross-cultural issues: communication, conflict, cultural taboos, cultural sensitivity; it will also deal with individual motivations for missions and the stages of culture shock. Physical preparation will include everything from support raising to voltage converters, packing tips to travel suggestions.

The book will be outlined in such a way that every week each member of the team is being challenged in all three areas. The goal of the training manual is that youth groups will be prepared to raise support, travel smart, and effectively augment the work of the missionaries/churches with whom they will be working by arriving with godly motivations and servant's hearts.

The following pages are the preliminary work for this book. I have researched short-term mission books and have not found sufficient material for training high school teams. There are many resources available but none that specifically speak to teenagers going on two or three-week trips. I plan to eventually finish this work and have it published, but for the present I will give an overview of the final product by focusing on one major aspect from each category. The Foreword explains to youth pastors and team leaders the importance of team preparation and includes thoughts on why it is valuable for a high school student to participate in short-term missions. The *Introduction for Students* presents the idea of short-term missions giving reasons why a high school student should consider participating. Chapter One covers the theology of short-term missions. Chapter Two gives the biblical basis for support raising as well as giving helpful guidelines for going about the support raising process. Chapter Three introduces the reader to cultural differences and outlines the three stages of culture shock. The final chapter gives tips for packing and travelling.

As you read these pages keep in mind that I am condensing material that would be discussed over twelve weeks and have left out considerable amounts of information. The information I hope to include in my book is covered in the Twelve Week Training Manual outline I have provided in the Appendix.

Foreword

A Note to Youth Pastors *an* *is Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures* by Mary Baker Eddy ***d Team Leaders: The Vital Importance of Team Preparation***

Short-term missions trips have practically become a fad in the last couple of decades. With airfare so inexpensive it doesn't take much of a sacrifice for any ordinary church member to decide to personally take part in missions. We often hear the phrase, "All Christians are missionaries." Although it is important for Christians to be missions-minded using this statement to avoid training is dangerous. In his article, "What have we done?" Jim Lo discusses his concern for short-term missionaries today: "I see too many Christians signing up for short-term mission trips without getting any training. Their attitudes are summed in the words of one student who told me: 'I do not need to be trained to be a missionary since God has made me a missionary already' " (Lo 437). Without training, well-intentioned short-termers may end up doing more harm than good leaving nationals and career missionaries "embittered because they feel they were used to host a glorified vacation" (Borthwick 113).

"The secret to successful mission trips is preparation and training of the participants; the key to that preparation lies in the team meetings convened in the months leading up to the trip" (Forward 110). If you are going to provide your youth group with an opportunity to see the work of God in the world and get them involved in it, you have accepted a great responsibility. Most likely you will be working with a missionary and/or local church (hoping) to embellish their ministry, make new contacts, aid in construction, or disciple new converts. You are taking a group of very naïve and potentially offensive American teenagers to a different culture where they will experience life like never before. They will be pushed, pulled, stretched, twisted, and

broken. This trip has the potential to strengthen the faith of every member on the team (as well as your own) as well as further the kingdom of God by the testimony your group. Members of your team might end up getting converted themselves!

However, there is also potential for absolute chaos. How many on your team have ever left the country before? Do they know how to raise support? Share the gospel? Love others selflessly? Seek the good of the group over their own desires? Most teenagers have never really been challenged to do any of these things. Without the proper training and preparation your mission trip could end in disaster.

Successful short-term missions must begin months ahead with team preparation. How can you make the most of team preparation and ensure that your team is ready to leave? My proposal to you is that team preparation is the most vital part of the entire short-term experience. Rigorous training causes team members to realize their commitment begins long before the start of the trip.

“Tough preparation moves participants from being experience consumers to being genuine servants. Many people sign up for selfish reasons, but after solid training their motives can be brought into line with God’s purposes. They may have enlisted for an adventurous vacation, but the training process transforms their perspective and they go out to serve people, meet a need and work as a team” (Borthwick 117).

Increased preparation will bring better interaction with missionary hosts and nationals. A person’s interest and zeal to serve increases in direct relation to the amount demanded of them (117).

This book can be used in the youth group setting as twelve-week training manual for short-term mission trips. Most youth group mission trips last 1-3 weeks. Even for that short amount of time it is necessary to spend three to four months in intensive preparation. Cross-cultural experiences should not be underestimated in their complexity and the task of mission should never be taken lightly.

God has commanded us to go into all the world. The Apostle Paul did not begin his missionary journeys until fourteen years after his conversion. He spent a great deal of time in preparation for his ministry as did Jesus whose official ministry did not begin until he was thirty years old. We have not been commanded to wait until we are thirty, but this does not mean we should not be prepared. In 1 Peter 3:15 we read, “Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have.” In this book the essential topics for preparation are covered including the many aspects of spiritual, emotional, and physical preparation.

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Introduction for Students

Why Should You Go on A Mission Trip?

Lee was an average kid—raised with good morals in an average religious family. He never went to church growing up until his junior year of high school when a friend from his soccer team invited him to come to youth group activities on Friday nights. After getting to know this new group of people Lee realized that they had something that he didn't. Shortly after becoming involved in the youth group, Lee became a Christian.

He decided to go to Northern Ireland on a short-term mission trip with the youth group that summer. When he got to Ireland God grabbed his heart and showed him what it really meant to follow Jesus. While in Northern Ireland Lee truly became a follower of Christ and learned what it meant to depend fully on him. Not only did Lee now understand he was to live for Christ, he realized that God was calling him to pursue youth ministry—to seek out those who did not understand the fullness of the joy of the gospel. He promised the Irish teenagers he would be back and ended up returning to spending two months with them at the end of the summer. After graduation he became a youth intern at the church that had led him to the Lord and went on to pursue a college degree fully intending to use it in youth ministry in the future.

This is only one example of how God can use a short-term mission trip in the life of a teenager. Lives can be changed in dramatic ways due to a brief experience in a foreign culture. Those who participate in the work of missions have an opportunity to see the power of God displayed as he opens their eyes and hearts to the work that He is doing all over the world. Why should you, a teenager, give up your time and energy for a mission trip?

While there are many fears that keep Christians from missions (or from sharing their faith at all) God's love compels us to go despite our fears. In 1 John 4:19 we read, "We love because

he first loved us.” If we truly understand the love of God—that he humbled himself and died for us when we were his enemies—compassion for the lost should be the supernatural result. A missionary to Sweden said:

“Sweden is a beautiful, clean, and welcoming country. The people are hard-working and respectable. They are not alcoholics, prostitutes, or criminals. Their children are well-behaved and well-dressed. The Swedish people look like they are doing just fine. Sometimes we wonder if we are really needed there. But if the Bible is true, they are going to Hell.”

You know the message that will save these people from eternal separation from God. Do you love them enough to tell them?

You might have a lot of questions. “Where will the money come from? I can’t afford the trip.” “I don’t even know how to share the gospel with someone. I know it myself but it’s different trying to tell someone else.” “What if they don’t want to listen?” Remember, “God has not given us a spirit of fear, but a spirit of power, of love and of self-discipline” (2 Tim. 1:7). Can you call yourself a fisherman if you’ve never caught a fish? In the Great Commission we read that “all authority has been given” to Christ and he has given it to you in his command for you to “Go!”

If you go, you will not return the same person you were when you left. You will be challenged and you will grow in your understanding of who God is and who he has created you to be. Are you ready for the greatest adventure of your life? If you commit yourself to the work of the Lord you will be more blessed than you can even imagine.

“Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever!”

~ Ephesians 3:20-21 ~

Chapter One

All About Short-Term Missions

Why do we participate in missions? John Piper says, “Missions is not the ultimate goal of the church. Worship is. Missions exists because worship doesn’t. Worship is ultimate, not missions, because God is ultimate, not man” (Piper 11). If everyone on earth worshipped the one, true God, there would be no need for missions. But many on earth have yet to bow before their creator—so there is work to be done! Worship is the greatest human activity in the world. The purpose of missions is to create more worshippers and we, as God’s people, have been given the privilege and responsibility of joining in that task.

The Bible in its entirety is the story of God seeking and saving his people through sending missionaries to them. “Missions is rooted in the nature of God, who sends and saves” (Van Rheenan 14). God originated the mission. When Adam and Eve hid from God after they sinned God sought them out. Jesus Christ enacted the mission by coming to earth and dying to make it possible for sinners to be reunited with God. Luke 19:11 says, “The Son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost.”

The Holy Spirit gives power to the mission making it possible for the church to join in the work of God. When Jesus commissioned the apostles to be his “witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth” he said, “You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you” (Acts 1:8). The Church carries out the mission so the world can hear the truth. The flow of the mission of God is clearly defined here:

“The mission of God originated in the mind of God. The mission flowed from him to Christ, who proclaimed God’s kingdom message and in his death enacted God’s kingdom plan. He prayed that the Father would send the Spirit. This Spirit empowered the church for mission. The message flowed, then from God to Christ to the church, who, empowered by the Spirit, carries the mission to the world” (Van Rheenan 19).

We, the church, participate in missions because it is God's plan that we do so. The world hears the message because the church carries that message to them. Missions cannot be neglected by the church. God will equip his people and prepare the way for them, and "because the mission is God's, it will succeed" (19).

Why do we participate in Short-Term Missions?

Yes, the Bible supports missions, but many people raise questions about the effectiveness of short-term missions. You're not going to recreate Pentecost, so is there any benefit in going for only a few weeks?

Jesus started the "short-term trend" by sending out his own disciples on short missionary trips. He later sent out 70 others to do the same (see Luke 10). He gave them instructions about why they were going, what to take, where to stay, and told them that they were to be supported by the generosity of others. "You couldn't really call these expeditions 'missions' in the sense that we use the word today. They went to their own kind of people. They spoke the same language and lived with the same customs. There was nothing cross-cultural about it. But on one occasion, Jesus took them deep into a foreign culture. What His disciples learned during those few days is essentially what Jesus teaches people today during cross-cultural short terms. The story is told in chapter four of John's Gospel" (27).

The Apostle Paul, our most famous Biblical missionary, was a short-termer as well. He was called to plant churches all over the Roman world. Once the church was planted he moved on to the next city. Most Christians support the idea of church planting. Evangelism is important, but without a church to continue the work of discipleship and further evangelism, a few converts will not be enough to sustain a life-giving ministry. How can a two-week mission trip plant a church? A two-week mission trip might be nothing more than an adventurous vacation for those

who participate. However, short-term missions have the opportunity to strengthen the work of career missionaries as well as expose team members to a larger view of God's work in the world and strengthen local churches toward the goal of becoming World Christians.

What is a World Christian?

David Bryant emphasizes the importance of becoming a "World Christian." World Christians are "day-to-day disciples for whom Christ's global cause has become the integrating, overriding priority for all that he has for them. Like disciples should, they actively investigate all that their Master's great commission means. Then they act on what they learn" (Gaukroger 11). Not all of God's people are called to be foreign missionaries. But God has called us all to be involved in his work. As a short-termer you are saying that you are a willing servant. You are not committing your career, just your heart and a short amount of time to serve in God's global cause. (Gibson 17-18)

"The mission task is complex. The evangelization of the unreached will need more and more people called and committed to entire lifetimes of mission service. But at the same time, the short-term movement of our day just could be God's chosen means for this complex mission of the Church to expand in ways that traditional missions never imagined" (18).

If we care about the things that God cares about, we will care about the world and we will offer ourselves for his service. We are all called to participate in missions. Some go, others send, we all must pray. Why sit and wait for God to tell you specifically what you are supposed to do? Go until God stops you. He has already made it clear that is what we should do.

"How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them? And how can they preach unless they are sent? As it is written, 'How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news.'"

~ Romans 10:14-15 ~

Is it a Waste of the Church's Resources?

Travel has never been cheaper and the world has never been so small. Casablanca is only six hours from New York. William Carey, known as the “Father of Modern Missions,” spent the “equivalent of today’s \$400,000 to get passage for his family *one way* to India. That’s 20 times the average Christian’s annual salary today” (23). “To worry about short-termers using money that would otherwise go to career missionaries is to think in terms of the limited-pie theory. This reasoning says that there’s only so much mission money around, so it isn’t fair or wise to take it from career missionaries” (24). However, short-termers often earn much of their money or receive money that wouldn’t normally be designated to other missionaries. Churches can end up giving more if their own members are being sent out. It’s one thing to hear about a missionary in Nagaland, but if *you* are going to Northeastern India your grandmother might be a little more willing to support that mission.

Short-term missions are valuable to the local church much more than they are a drain on the church’s resources. Paul Kooistra, the president of Mission to the World agrees: “The real purpose of these trips is to strengthen the outreach of the local church. We are not wanting just to meet the needs overseas and ignore the needs in our own cities. We believe these projects provide that catalyst that sparks both the sensitivity to the needs around us at home and the passion needed to do something about them. It has often been pointed out that Christians will not cross the street to help a neighbor, but if you can get them to cross the sea to help the needy, they will cross the street when they return.”

How Does the Gospel Compel Us to Participate in Missions?

We participate in missions because God planned for us to do so. It is for his glory that we take the message of the gospel to the ends of the earth. Therefore, we delight in this work

because it is glorifying to God. “Where passion for God is weak, zeal for missions will be weak” (Piper 12). Where do we find this passion for God when we do not necessarily “feel” passionate about him or his work? You must go back to the gospel and rediscover what it means to be a child of God.

What is my responsibility toward others in light of the gospel?

Scripture commands that we preach the gospel. The “Great Commission” is a familiar passage to Christians. Many Christians could probably quote it; however, have you stopped to think of how it might be talking about you?

“Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.” (Matt. 28:18-20)

Wait! You can read this passage and miss some very important details. When reading scripture it is always important to look at the whole context. In doing this we will see that Christ did not send his disciples out alone but promised to go with them. Rather than focusing on the details of the command as we usually do, it can be helpful to read the passage like this:

“All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. **And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”**

In Mark 16:15 the words are repeated: “Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation.” Acts 1:8 reminds us that we do not go in our own strength, but by the power of the Holy Spirit: “You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.” It also reminds us that it is not enough to preach the gospel to your closest friends and neighbors. We must preach the gospel to the ends of the earth.

If you are a child of God (and you are if you trust in Jesus alone for your salvation) then these verses are talking about you. YOU will receive power and YOU must go! This is exciting! God has a plan, and you are it! There is no “Plan B.” No, God doesn’t *need* you. He could strike anyone with a light from heaven and they could be converted like Saul on the road to Damascus. But God has made many promises to his children and among them is that “in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose” (Rom. 8:28). God makes you a part of his plan because he loves you and wants you to experience the joy of sharing in his work. Charles Spurgeon, the great Baptist preacher said, “To be a soul winner is the happiest thing in this world. And with every soul you bring to Jesus Christ, you seem to get a new heaven here upon earth” (Carter 67).

Sure it’s a Great Idea, but why should *I* go?

Perhaps your youth group takes a trip to Ireland every year and you’ve heard some great stories so you’re curious. It sounds like a great vacation—at least it would be an opportunity to get out of your house for a few weeks and leave that whining little brother behind. > But you’ve never even shared your faith with someone before. It seems pretty frightening. You wouldn’t want to set yourself up for a big failure. Why on earth should you go? Perhaps because Christ commanded it?

Through obedience to Christ you will reap greater blessings than you can imagine. God promises to work for our good, therefore, all of his commands to us are for our good, even the command to be witnesses to the ends of the earth. There are many personal benefits to obeying God in the realm of short-term missions. According to Paul Borthwick here are “Five Reasons to Leave the Country:”

1. **Your view of God will explode.** “A Ugandan Christian leader, hosting a short-term mission team said, ‘We need to meet each other because without our cross-cultural fellowship, we both stay fixed in our own cultural views of God. When we meet and share our lives, we discover that God is greater than either of our cultures. He is not a tribal god or an ethnic god or a national god. He is the transcendent God of the universe!’ We are all instinctively ethnocentric. Deep in our core we believe that the world revolves around our country, our culture. That makes us prone to worship a God who looks like us, speaks our language, and appreciates the worship styles that we appreciate” (Borthwick 94). When you go on a short-term mission trip you will never look at God the same way again. You will understand more clearly who he really is—a God to all nations.
2. **You’ll view possessions differently.** “Confronting material poverty helps each of us recognize what really matters” (94). You will be confronted by the challenge of 1 John 3:17, “If anyone has material possessions and sees his brother in need but has no pity on him, how can the love of God be in him?” You will also see Christians who, although they possess fewer material things, have a stronger faith and more joy than you. You will realize that joy is less about possessions than you ever realized. Direct encounter with the poor will cause you to reevaluate your faith and lifestyle.
3. **Your perspective on hardship will change.** Depending on where you go you will see varying levels of hardship. Most likely the nationals in the country you visit will not have as many amenities, privileges, and freedoms as you experience every day in the United States. You will become annoyed at your own complaining spirit and realize how blessed you really are. When you compare your life to that of persecuted believers around the world you can have no other response but humble gratitude.

4. **You'll gain a new view of Heaven.** The church in Revelation 7:9 “portrays a multi-cultural, multi-ethnic church. In that day, people from every nation, every tribe, every people group, and every language worship Jesus in heaven” (95). This will be more real for you after worshipping with believers from the other side of the world in many different languages. You will learn from the spiritual vitality of people from other countries. Your anticipation of heavenly worship will be intensified by being with these believers.
5. **Your faith will stretch.** “Serving cross-culturally will put you into a “must trust” environment where you are no longer in control” (111). You will realize you cannot resolve the issues in your life without God’s deliverance and you will learn what it really means to depend on him alone.

Maybe you’re looking for a jumpstart in your spiritual growth. Be careful! Growth implies change and change is not comfortable. Remember—God is not interested in your comfort but in your character. He will take you to the other side of the world if that is where you will be most sanctified. You can look forward to uncomfortable situations knowing that you will learn to depend on God because he will be your only option.

Do I Have the Wrong Motivations for Participating in Missions?

People take part in missions because they have a desire to help people physically, want adventure themselves, or desire to grow in their own faith. These are all good reasons but should not take the place of the desire to further the kingdom of God by proclaiming his name among the nations from a heart full of thanksgiving.

So should you go? Are you ready for this kind of experience? You may be excited about this adventure, and you should be, but be careful. Are your motivations for going based on your love

for Jesus and your desire to share his salvation with others? Or are you simply looking for a good time? Maybe all of your friends are going and you don't want to miss out on the fun. Many have gone on short-term missions expecting a "European Vacation" and have ended up miserable and making others on their team wish they had been honest enough to stay at home. You might not be thrilled to find out you will be sleeping on the floor, eating liver-ball soup for dinner, and will only get one shower a week. Climbing eighteen flights of stairs with over-packed bags isn't much fun when you were expecting a vacation. "Short term missions are not for anybody we can talk into going, as is the case with many short-termers today. They are for those who can testify to God's unique call on their lives and see how God has prepared them to be effective in ministry" (Slater 456).

Mission trips are rewarding, but they are hard work. If you know you are not going for the right reasons, do your team and the missionaries on the field a favor and just stay home. Ask God to change your heart so that you will be prepared to go at the next opportunity with the right motivations.

“Here I Am LORD” – The Blessings of Obedience

So you've decided to sacrifice time and energy for the greatest opportunity of your life. You desire to learn, grow, and serve by offering yourself for the work of missions. Now you might be wondering if God can really use you. In the letter of Paul to the Corinthians we read:

“Think of what you were when you were called. Not many of you were wise by human standards; not many were influential; not many were of noble birth. But God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise; God chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong. He chose the lowly things of this world and the despised things—and the things that are not—to nullify the things that are, so that no one may boast before him. It is because of him that you are in Christ Jesus, who has become for us wisdom from God—that is, our righteousness, holiness and redemption. Therefore, as it is written: ‘Let him who boasts boast in the Lord’ ” (1 Cor. 1:27-31).

You realize that you are inadequate for the task and therefore you will have to trust in the Holy Spirit to do his work through you. If we had the strength in ourselves to go, God would not send us because he would not be glorified. God uses the weak things. He uses young people just like you to share the mystery of the gospel that has been revealed to you. “For God, who said, ‘Let light shine out of darkness,’ made his light shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ. But we have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us” (1 Cor. 4:6-7).

If you feel like the task is too big, GOOD! You will not try to do it alone. God has promised that wherever he sends us he will go along. When God called the young prophet Jeremiah into ministry he objected saying, “Sovereign Lord...I am only a child.” God responded saying, “Do not say, ‘I am only a child.’ You must go to everyone I send you to and say whatever I command you. Do not be afraid of them, for I am with you” (Jer. 1:6-7).

God has promised that people from all nations will trust him. He has already promised conversions. He is holding off the final judgment so that all of his chosen people will be called (inwardly and outwardly) and trust Christ for their salvation. Believing in the doctrine of election motivates Christians because we will not be failures. God is preparing the hearts of his people even now to hear the message we bring. “Mission in its essence is an outpouring of thanksgiving to God for what he has done in human lives. The psalmist sang:

*Give thanks to the Lord, call on his name;
make known among the nations what he has done.
Sing to him, sing praise to him;
tell of all his wonderful acts.
Glory in his holy name;
let the hearts of those who seek the Lord rejoice.*

Ps. 105:1-3

Those who praise God cannot refrain from speaking of him. Thus Paul writes that those who speak because they believe will ‘cause thanksgiving to overflow to the glory of God’ (2 Cor. 4:13-15)” (Van Rheenen 41). By the testimony of God’s grace in our own lives others will come to know him.

When you go on a short-term mission trip your knowledge of Christ’s work will be broadened. You will see the power of God displayed when he uses you—despite your weaknesses—to accomplish great things. You will see his power at work in a new country expanding your view of the kingdom of God. You will see the Holy Spirit actively pursuing the hearts of men, women, and children around the world. You will have the privilege of sharing the story of God’s faithfulness in your own life causing others to trust in him.

You will see people in difficult circumstances—poverty, illness, and suffering—and you will be challenged to believe the gospel—that God really is good—outside the safe boundaries of your comfortable life. You will see God through the eyes of a new culture. You will understand His power, his sufficiency, and his love in a whole new way. If all we know of Christ is based on our experience within the limited confines of one church, we end up with a knowledge that may be insufficient when we leave that familiar setting. Participating in a short-term mission project gives you a larger perspective of God and of life.

You will grow in your understanding of foreign cultures and in how you relate to people from other countries. You will eat new foods, speak in a new language (at least a few words), and take part in new customs. You will see that there is not just one way to do things: there is not just one “right” side of the road on which to drive and no one way to eat spaghetti.

You will have the opportunity to grow closer to the members of your team. Together you will confront language barriers, heat, sickness, and the fear of the unknown. You will learn to depend

on one another as you ultimately depend on God. You will encourage and take care of each other. Learning to live and work with other members of the body of Christ helps you understand how to live and work alongside the greater body of Christ.

As you experience God through the eyes of a new culture you will gain a deeper understanding of his work in the world. You have not been called as his child and given the blessing of salvation for no reason. Louis Hill says, “We are citizens of heaven sent to earth to tell citizens of earth how to become citizens of heaven.”

*“I will make you into a great nation and I will bless you;
I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing.
I will bless those who bless you,
And whoever curses you I will curse;
And all peoples on earth will be blessed through you.”*

~ Genesis 12:2-3 ~

Chapter Two

Biblical Foundations and Helpful Hints For Support Raising

“92% of all Christian workers experience fear of asking for money, and the other 8% are liars” (Sommer 9). Most would rather have a root canal. Some career missionaries are less afraid of being martyred than asking someone to support their ministry. Why are we afraid to ask for money? Why does it make us feel like helpless beggars? It is fundamentally from a misunderstanding about what support raising is all about. We who must raise support are asked to put our independent spirits aside and depend fully on God through the gifts of his people. This process can be fearfully humbling but extremely rewarding. The solution to fear is conviction about the cause.

“Contemporary cultures breed independence and self-sufficiency” (Barnett 12). However this is not a recent phenomenon. It is the same problem that caused Satan’s fall from heaven and Adam and Eve’s sin in the Garden of Eden. The desire to be independent is the key factor separating us from God. Not only does it make a relationship with Him impossible, it severely hinders our ability to work together as the body of Christ. Contrary to popular belief the Bible does not say, “God helps those who help themselves.”

A friend once told me, “You like being a one-man show. But you’re not very good at it.” In American culture the strong are respected. Those who are successful, who make a good living and don’t have to depend on anyone are considered worthy of admiration. However, “Many people throughout history have failed because of their strengths, rather than their weaknesses” (Barnett 12). We learn from the Apostle Paul in 2 Corinthians 12:7-10 that he was given a “thorn in his flesh” to keep him from boasting about his great accomplishments. He pleaded with the Lord three times to take it away from him, but the Lord did not. God wanted Paul to know that it

was not from his strength that he was doing these great things. He took away his strength so that Paul would know it was not he but the Lord who was powerful. 2 Cor. 12:9 says, “But he said to me, ‘My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.’”

In Ephesians 4 and 1 Cor. 12 we read about the body of Christ. This picture of a body communicates to us that we are not independent but interdependent. We need one another to function. “If the whole body were an eye, where would the sense of hearing be? If the whole body were an ear, where would the sense of smell be?” “The eye cannot say to the hand, ‘I don’t need you!’ And the head cannot say to the feet, ‘I don’t need you!’” (1 Cor.12:17, 21)

True strength comes only when we cry out according to Ephesians 3:20, “To him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine...” God provides support for his workers through his people. Therefore, “If one part [of the body] suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honored, every part rejoices with it” (1 Cor. 12:26).

Biblical Foundations for Support Raising

There are numerous examples from the Bible of the body of Christ providing for the needs of those who have been set apart for the full time work of God. In the Old Testament the tribe of the Levites was given no land of their own. They were to be supported by the tithes of other tribes. Each tribe was to give the first ten-percent of their resources to the Levites. They were set apart to be priests to the Lord. Their work would not allow them to work the fields and harvest the grain or raise cattle for food. They were busy with the work of the temple. In Numbers 18:21 we read, “I give to the Levites all the tithes in Israel as their inheritance in return for the work they do while serving at the Tent of Meeting.”

We are well aware of the fact that the church today would not survive without the support of its people. In the same way the church will not grow without the support of its people. When

Jesus sent out the twelve disciples he said to them, “Do not take along any gold or silver or copper in your belts; take no bag for the journey, or extra tunic, or sandals or a staff; for the worker is worth his keep” (Matt. 10:10). Jesus wants his disciples to rely on the people of God to provide for their needs. In Romans 15 Paul speaks of his plans to visit Rome. He is hoping that while he is there the people will assist him on his journey to Spain. He asked for their financial support so that he could go share the good news in Spain.

Not only do we have examples of Biblical ministers (Levites) and missionaries (Paul) asking for support, but we also have numerous commendations of those who give. The familiar story of the widow in Luke 21 putting her two copper coins in the offering plate teaches us that it is not the amount that we give but the attitude of our hearts behind the giving. In 2 Corinthians 8:1-15 those who give generously are commended. Paul says, “But just as you excel in everything—in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in complete earnestness and in your love for us—see that you also excel in this grace of giving” (2 Cor. 8:7). In Philippians 4:17-19 Paul explains the benefit that those who give will receive:

“Not that I am looking for a gift, but I am looking for what may be credited to your account. I have received full payment and even more; I am amply supplied, now that I have received from Epaphroditus the gifts you sent. They are a fragrant offering, an acceptable sacrifice, pleasing to God. And my God will meet all your needs according to his glorious riches in Christ Jesus.”

“Many Christians fail to realize that without their money, things won’t happen. They have the feeling that someone else will take care of it. Some even use the doctrine of God’s sovereignty as an excuse for their own materialism or even laziness” (Verwer 116). In Luke 6:38 we are reminded of God’s promise to provide for us when we give: “Give and it will be given to you; good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, they will pour into your lap. For by your standard of measure it will be measured to you in return.”

Often individuals will use the support raising process as their test of whether or not they are actually called to go on the mission. However, lack of funds can also be due to poor communication in the support raising process. People will not give if they are unaware of a need, and they will not be made aware unless the message is clear. It is clear from Scripture that those who give to the work of the Lord will be blessed abundantly. How can we communicate this blessing? How can we involve the whole body of Christ in the work of furthering his kingdom? You who are going on a short-term mission adventure have been given the opportunity to bless not only those who you meet but those who send you.

Why do people give to missions? People do not give because they can afford it. They do not give because your letter used state-of-the-art graphics or because you share great statistics about the numbers that have been converted because of you. People give for the following reasons:

1. **God moves them to give.** The Holy Spirit gives God's people the desire to give of their treasures for his work.
2. **Your ministry stands for a value personally important to your donor.** For example, they really care about the cause of orphans and you are going to work with an orphanage.
3. **Your work makes a difference in the lives of people.** Stories are always more powerful than statistics.
4. **People give to people.** Your donor knows you and wants to give to you.
5. **They are included and have a sense of ownership in the ministry.**

6. **They are asked.** People don't automatically know what we need. You have to ask specifically.
7. **The case for your ministry makes sense.** The donor sees this short-term mission has long term results. The work will continue when you leave. You are simply serving as a catalyst to the work of an established team.

You might not need financial assistance to participate on a short-term mission trip.

Perhaps your parents can pay for it or you had a good summer job last year and you have plenty of money left in your saving account. A young man who heard I was interested in missions proudly told me, "I've been on five mission trips, and I've never had to beg money off anyone." My only comment to him was, "If you have never had the privilege of raising support then you have missed out on one of the most faith-building adventures of the whole missionary experience." He completely missed the point of support raising. We don't do it because we cannot work for the money ourselves, we do it so that we may involve the whole body of Christ in the exciting work of furthering the Kingdom. "It is tempting to fund yourself if you have the means, but it is more biblical to stand before a missions committee or sit with a fellow Christian and ask for their guidance and support" (Sommer 195).

If you don't need financial assistance for a short-term trip I suggest two things: First, don't let your parents pay for the trip. They can be part of your support team, but you must be personally responsible to bring together the resources for this mission. Getting others involved in supporting you does not just have to be through financial means. You must develop a strong support team of prayer partners. If you involve no one outside your family in this missions experience there will be few people praying for you while you are gone. There will also be few people who are blessed by the privilege of sending you on this trip. You will deny others the joy

of taking part in the work of the Lord through you. If you simply do not need any financial assistance you should still send out a letter to your friends and family explaining what you are going to do and asking them to join you in prayer. Secondly, when participating in group fundraising projects tell your youth pastor that you have all the money you need and designate your portion to a team member that is having a difficult time raising support.

“Dear friends, if our hearts do not condemn us, we have confidence before God and receive from him anything we ask, because we obey his commands and do what pleases him.”

~ I John 3:21-22 ~

Helpful Hints for Support Raising

Part 1: Prayer

For the majority of short-term missionaries, support raising will be necessary. Although the prospect of asking for money seems intimidating, you must realize that this task is not finally up to you. God is the one who has his hand on the hearts and checkbooks of each person to whom you send a letter. We read in 2 Chron. 29:12 that “wealth and honor come from [God]; [he is] the ruler of all things. In [his] hands are strength and power to exalt and give strength to all.” The bottom line is this: “God owns the cattle on a thousand hills,” or as my mother says, “He owns the cows.” If God owns all the resources in the world, he can certainly provide you with \$1500 to go on a mission trip.

God’s sovereignty and human responsibility are both illustrated in the process of support raising. Depending on others for support does not negate us from all responsibility. For example, I will spend many hours putting together my list of people, writing my letter, addressing and stuffing envelopes, and corresponding with my supporters through thank-you notes and report letters. However, when I receive more than I even asked for I know that it was not my power of letter writing but God’s blessing on my work and the Holy Spirit moving in the hearts of those

who received my letter. If I had not gone to all that trouble I would not have received the money from those people. However, writing the most eloquent and attractive support letter will not guarantee the funds. God's blessing must be upon the work.

Therefore, the first and most important step to support raising is prayer. "Unless the Lord builds the house, its builders labor in vain. Unless the Lord watches over the city, the watchmen stand guard in vain" (Psalm 127:1). Pray with your team about the support raising process. Repent of your fears to God and ask him to give you a spirit of boldness. Ask you family and friends to pray for you as you begin this process. If you have never raised support before you will be amazed at the blessing that it can be. "Perhaps we need to remember O. Hallesby's words in his book on prayer: 'Prayer is work.' It may be that some of us prefer to avoid this" (Verwer 112).

As you pray about the support raising process and for your own attitude towards it, pray for the people to whom you will be sending your letter. Pray that their hearts will be opened and they will give generously out of the abundance that has been given them. It is important to remember that not all people "excel in the grace of giving" as the church in Corinth did. We often assume that those who have the most will give the most, but we see in story of the widow who gave two copper coins in Luke 21 this is not always true. I am still surprised when rich people give little or nothing at all and those who cannot afford to do so give generously. Do not be surprised when wealthy people do not give. Do not send someone a letter because they can afford to support you. It is those who give despite their meager resources that will astound you with their offerings and humble you through their generosity.

Part 2: “Friend-Raising” Developing your Support Network

The next step in the process of support raising is developing a strong support network. Many people often find this difficult. Maybe you think you shouldn't ask Uncle Bob because he gave you a really nice Christmas present and he might think you are ungrateful. You better not ask your grandparents because they've had a lot of medical bills lately. You really shouldn't ask that couple at your church that you babysit for because you know they don't make very much money. WRONG! All of these assumptions are very wrong. You must not ask, “Who will give me money,” but, “Who will care?” When you put it that way you realize that your grandparents really would want to know what you are up to. Uncle Bob might not give you any money, but you want him to know that he is someone you want to stay in touch with and, therefore, you'll keep him up to date on the exciting things that God is doing in your life. Who knows? Maybe his generosity might transcend Christmas gifts. He might be interested in the work of the Lord. The couple you baby-sit for will know first hand how good you are in working with children and might decide to help get you to Romania to work in that orphanage so you can be a blessing to children on the other side of the world.

“It is well known that the largest and most faithful financial support comes from personal friends and home church family. I believe that many of these people are ready and willing to give cheerfully to support you, but you will need to make certain that each one has the opportunity to do so” (Verwer 108). How many Christians do you know? That is how many people you should ask for support. The issue here is not, “Who will send me money,” but “Who wishes to know what I am doing and be involved in the work of the Lord?” Those who do not support you financially will most likely be willing to pray for your trip. This should not be seen as a lesser offering. The prayers of God's people are powerful. The money will simply get you to the field,

but it is the prayer of your supporters that will sustain you while you are there and make your ministry effective.

In the experience of many short-termers, thirty percent of the people will respond to your letter. This means that if you only send fifty or sixty letters you will only hear back from 15-20 of them. And some of those might not even send a check. Also, this might not be the only time you ever ask for support. If this is your first trip you might come home and want to go back next summer. If this is your second or third you know that short-term missions can be very habit-forming. The blessings are numerous. Taking part in God's work in a different culture is very exciting. You might want to go back. Therefore, you are not only support-raising, you are "friend-raising" (Barnett).

You will be developing a support base of people that you might ask over and over again to support you in missions. There is a possibility that you will decide after this trip or perhaps a few more that God might be calling you to longer terms of service on the mission field, perhaps even as a career. If you begin to build a base of supporters now when you only need one or two thousand dollars, those people will be thrilled to see their money invested in someone who is serious about missions and will be excited to support you in the future.

Part 3: User-Friendly Support System

Writing and Packaging your Letter

"Many people do not 'excel in the grace of giving' because they do not know what their money can do" (Verwer 115). The purpose of the letter will be first and foremost to communicate the opportunity you have been given and ask for prayers for your preparation, travel and time away from home. You *must* make it clear to them that you will not be able to go on this trip without the support of the body of Christ, but most importantly you will be sharing with them your desire to be apart of this mission. Send this letter to:

- Grandparents
- Aunts, uncles, & cousins
- People you have worked for (including babysitting)
- Fellow nursery workers or VBS workers
- Parents of classmates whom you have met
- Older believers who have an interest in you.
- Former donors or prayer partners for any short-term project you've done.
- Church members who are friends of your family.

If you have lived in a couple of different cities don't forget to send it to church members in those places. Even if you were only five years old when you moved away the people will remember your parents and be excited to hear that you are involved in God's work around the world.

You should be able to come up with at least one hundred names. While you are working on your letter you may think of more. Keep a pen and paper handy so you can write them down before you forget. Have your parents help you. They will know people that perhaps you don't know well who would love to hear from you. I received a check for \$500 once and asked my dad, "Who is this?" He explained that it was a lady from the church where they were married who has a heart for missions and has always loved our family. You might be surprised at how willing some people are to support you.

After you have made your list you should begin to write your letter. If your trip is in June you should send your letter out no later than March. This is important for two reasons: it gives people plenty of time to respond and pray over their giving. It also gives you three months to be in prayer over your supporters and your trip. You will most likely have other things to occupy your time such as schoolwork, sports practices, music lessons, etc. But it is important to focus on the magnitude of this two-week event. Participating in the work of God is not a summer vacation. You will be more challenged and stretched than ever before. Working on your letter and getting it sent out will get you thinking about your trip and will remind you to commit it to God daily.

It is possible that everyone who receives your letter will also receive ten to twenty other letters asking for support for similar short-term mission trips. Every spring most Christians will receive numerous wedding invitations, graduation announcements, and mission trip letters. What will make your letter stand out? What will stop them from putting it in the pile of things to read later—or not at all?

Mass-produced typed letters have only five seconds to catch the reader's attention. Colorful paper or graphics are always eye catching. A well-scanned photograph of yourself embedded in the body of the letter will draw the readers attention to the text as well as give your letter the feeling of a conversation more than a mass-mailing.

It is important to use accurate grammar and spelling when writing any letter, but very important in fund-raising. Something as small as a misspelled word or misplaced comma may distract the reader from the content of the letter. You want nothing to detract from the readability of your letter. Choose a clear, legible font at a reasonable size (usually 11-12pt type). Don't use a fancy font just to make the letter look pretty. You want the content of the letter to stand out, not the individual font characters. The words you use should not be fancy or long, usually no longer than five letters each. You are not trying to impress people with your eloquence. You are trying to communicate your opportunity for missions, your needs, your motivations and your desire for their participation in your trip financially and prayerfully.

Your letter should be personal. Address each letter to the recipient instead of writing, "Dear Friends." Explore the options on your computer and learn to use the mail merge command in your word processor that enables you to create form letters from a database. It is very simple in MS Word. This way each letter can be personalized saying, "Dear Mr. and Mrs. Anderson," etc. The letter should be concise. No one has time to read "Ashley's Epistle to Potential

Supporters.” Your letter should be no more than four or five short paragraphs. Here’s what it should include:

Paragraph 1: Introduce yourself and explain the purpose of the letter. For example:

“My name is Adam Taylor and I am a sophomore at Northside Christian School. This summer I have the opportunity to travel with my youth group to Belfast, Northern Ireland June 12-28 to work with a local church youth group. I am writing to ask you to join me in this exciting opportunity by supporting me through your prayers and finances.”

Paragraph 2: Explain the purpose of the trip and why you feel called to go. For example:

“Every summer my youth group goes to N. Ireland to help a local youth pastor with his ministry to Irish teenagers. Many of these teenagers see religion only as a political issue and have no idea what the gospel is about. My team will be participating in evangelism through drama, school presentations, and a community festival. I have never been on a mission trip before so I am excited to see how God is going to use me as well as to see how this trip will expand my view of the world and God’s work in it.

Paragraph 3: How much money will it cost and when do you need it? And ask for prayer. Prayer must be a priority over financial support. Remember, when money is our primary aim, everything we do in support raising is tinted with “the love of money” (Barnett 21).

For example:

“For this trip I must raise **\$1300**. My youth group will be participating in fundraising activities but the majority of my support will come from individual donations. These donations are tax deductible when checks are written to Christ Community Church. Not only do I need your financial assistance for this trip—I also need your prayers. I know that God works through his people’s prayers to accomplish his work around the world. By

praying for me and my team you will become part of the powerful ministry of the gospel.”

Paragraph 4: Opportunity to thank potential donors and provide a few preliminary prayer requests. For example:

“Thank you so much for praying about helping me get to N. Ireland. I am very excited to see what God will do through my team when we get there. Please begin to pray now for the people we will meet that God will soften their hearts and prepare them to hear the message of the gospel. Pray also for our team that as we prepare we would learn to serve one another selflessly.”

Along with your letter send a self-addressed return envelope. Your church might want you to have your supporters to send checks directly to the church. However, if your youth pastor allows, have your support checks written to your church but mailed to you. This way you will be able to write thank-you notes promptly. You may put a stamp on the return envelope but this is not necessary. If someone is going to support you they will not mind adding the cost of postage. Besides, if you are sending a hundred letters that would double the cost of postage making it quite expensive. You may end up spending a large amount of money on postage, paper, envelopes, printer cartridges, etc. Remember to save the receipts from everything you purchase. Your church may be willing to reimburse you if you end up raising more than you need for your trip.

Besides the letter and the return envelope, it is helpful to include a slip of paper or a card that the supporter sends back to you. This piece of paper should be a different color than the paper the letter is printed on and large enough that it will not get lost easily. It is helpful to summarize the trip on the front of the card (dates, country, task) and give the supporter the

information necessary to write a check and mail it to you. Include the address where the check is to be sent in case the return envelope is misplaced.

On the back of the card provide a place for the supporter to write you a personal note of encouragement. It is also helpful to have the supporter's name and address pre-printed on the card so when you receive it you can write a thank-you note immediately.

When you have sent your letters (including a support card and return envelope) your work has only just begun. You will soon receive responses. Writing thank-you notes for all responses is very important. Buy cheap thank-you cards or make your own and have them on hand, ready to send. Have stamps and envelopes at your desk so each day when the mail comes you can sit down and respond to each letter immediately. Write letters to everyone who responds even if they do not send a check. Keep records of all money that is sent and turn in checks to your youth pastor each week. Your youth pastor will keep financial records for the whole team but you should also have your own. This way you will know how close you are to meeting your goal.

Two weeks before you leave send out a prayer card with an itinerary to all of your supporters and prayer partners. Send this card also to friends and family who did not respond but whom you know will want to be praying for you. This card should be something that can be put on the refrigerator to remind people to pray. It should include your picture, the dates of your trip, specific prayer requests, and (if available) an itinerary of your team's daily activities. This enables your supporters to know how to pray specifically for you and reminds them to pray while you are gone.

Part 4: The Missionary Report Letter

When you return from your trip it is very important to send a report to your supporters and those who faithfully prayed for you. It is easy to forget that they stayed at home and prayed while you got to have all the fun of traveling. Start writing your report letter on the plane ride home when the events of the trip are fresh in your memory. Include the following in your report:

1. Specific stories of individuals with whom you had conversations.
2. What has God taught you through the trip? Do you see the world a bit differently now? ? What was a hard lesson that God taught you while you were away? How will this experience change your life? Cross-cultural experiences often lead individuals to reevaluate their priorities. Perhaps you saw true poverty for the first time. How will this affect the way you spend your own money? What was something you didn't expect? Were you able to do things you didn't know you could do i.e. share the gospel, act in a skit, work with children?
3. What did you ask your supporters to pray for? Were their prayers answered?
4. How has your perspective on the world and on missions changed as a result of this trip? Would you like to go again? Maybe you will listen closer to a visiting missionary's testimony or decide to support missions yourself. Remember that hundreds of missionaries live off of support for their entire lives.

Your supporters will be interested to hear about your trip, but follow the guidelines given for writing your support letter. Keep it concise and personal. Use pictures when possible. It is great to send a picture of you with the people you worked with in the foreign country. Remember to thank your supporters and other friends for praying for you while you were away. Ask them to continue to pray for you as God leads you to your next "mission field," i.e. school, work, etc.,

that you will continue to be an ambassador for Christ wherever you go. It is often easier to share our faith with strangers than with friends.

Throughout the support raising process you are Christ's ambassador. You are his mouthpiece to the world. Remember that by asking for financial support you giving others the opportunity to participate in the Great Commission through you. Do not be ashamed to ask for money. You should be humbled that God can and will use you in furthering his kingdom. Do not worry about raising support for ministry. Remember Hudson Taylor's words: "God's work, done in God's way, will never lack God's supplies" (Barnett 150).

*"Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine,
according to his power that is at work within us,
to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations,
for ever and ever! Amen."*

~ Ephesians 3:20-21 ~

“The World is a book. Those who do not travel only read one page.”

~ St. Augustine

Chapter Three

Preparing for a Cross-Cultural Experience

One of the most exciting but difficult parts of traveling to foreign countries is experiencing a new culture. You’ve probably heard that people in Great Britain drive on the left side of the road. That’s kind of cool, right? But cultural differences go much deeper than driving rules. For example, people from Latin countries have a different conception of time. Americans tend to have a high concern for schedules, deadlines, punctuality, etc. Being only five minutes late in the United States is considered very rude. In South America you might wait for thirty minutes or an hour before your friend meets you for lunch. It’s not considered rude at all. Event oriented people are much more concerned about *what* is happening than *when* it happens. They are more flexible to let things happen as they will.

Perhaps you will like the way your host culture does things more than the way you are accustomed to them. Maybe you’ve always wished you could eat with your hands but your mom wouldn’t let you. Now that you are in India it’s the only acceptable way. However, most people have no idea how the loss of the familiar can have a disorienting and even depressing effect. “Culture Shock is that realization of how inadequately your world fits with their world” (Stiles 93). Most of us can experience culture shock on a small scale without even leaving our own country. Moving to a new neighborhood or new city makes it necessary to form new friendships and adjust to new places. If you change churches you might have to get used to a new worship

style. People who move from the South to the North in the United States are “shocked” at the bluntness of Northerners. They are used to the cultural “grace” that gives most Southerners the ability to smile and be friendly even to the point of superficiality. Job or school changes, marriage, divorce, new births in the family, and adoptions are some examples of life changes that can cause a type of culture shock. “For the most part we cope with these different cultures almost imperceptibly and in ways that are understood by those around us. When it hits cross-culturally, the differences are so strong that they overwhelm our normal coping mechanisms. You can’t talk it through because they don’t speak your language...explaining how you do it in America only comes off as a putdown of their culture” (93).

Where did culture come from?

In Genesis 10 we are given a “Table of Nations” that refers to God dispersing tribes “according to their languages” (verses 4, 20, & 31).” No other ancient culture (Babylonian or Egyptian) has a table of nations. They weren’t interested in other nations, but God always has been. We are familiar with the story of the Tower of Babel from Genesis 11. The people said to one another, “Come, let us build ourselves a city, with a tower that reaches to the heavens, so that we may make a name for ourselves and not be scattered over the face of the whole earth” (Gen. 11:4). But in Genesis 2:28 we read the Cultural Mandate: “God blessed them and said to them, ‘Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it.’” It was God’s intent that the people be spread throughout the whole earth. God confused the language of the people so they could not understand each other and scattered them throughout the earth because it was his original intent for them to go into all the world.

The Table of Nations comes before the story of the Tower of Babel so it is clear that the spreading of nations and confusing of languages was not a curse or a punishment. The plan for

many nations was given first to show that it was God's desire that there be cultural diversity. The people did not frustrate God's plans. God used the situation to accomplish his original mandate the people had refused to obey. By bestowing his image upon us he has given us the ability to create. By creating culture we display the image of God.

It is possible to travel to a foreign country and not experience culture shock, but to do so is "to become a tourist who observes and enjoys the culture as a mere spectator. More comfortable, perhaps, but ultimately isolated from the culture" (Stiles 94). If you call yourself a Christian you are basically saying you are a "little Christ." How did Christ respond to the culture of his day? By studying how Jesus related to the people to whom he was sent we can learn how to deal with other cultures in a Christ-like manner.

God's Model for Human Relationships: The Incarnation

A missionary dealing with a Hindu student at an American campus was struggling to explain the concept of the incarnation (God becoming man). After discussing this topic with the missionary one afternoon the student left and was still confused. As he was taking a short-cut across campus to get to class he passed through a construction area where the ground was being cleared for a new building. As he walked by he noticed a very large anthill. He could see that in a few more passes the bulldozer would obliterate the anthill. As a Hindu his culture had taught him to revere even the smallest forms of life. Realizing this huge colony of ants would soon be annihilated the thought came into his mind, "How can I warn them about the impending doom that is coming?" He thought, "If I could only become one of them then I could tell them." That's when he realized what his Christian friend had been trying to tell him all along—that the Son of God became one of us to warn us of our impending doom and to save us from it.

Jesus left his home in Heaven with God the Father and the Spirit and all the heavenly hosts and came to earth—a dirty, stinky, sinful place to save us from death. Talk about a culture shock! John 1:14 says, “The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us.” What did it mean for the Son of God to become flesh?

“The first significant fact about the incarnation is that Jesus came as a helpless infant. He did not come as a fully developed adult, he did not come as an expert, he did not come as a ruler, or even as part of a ruling family or a dominant culture. He was an infant, born into a humble family in a conquered and subjugated land” (Lingenfelter 16). The second significant fact is that Jesus came as a learner. He learned language from his parents. He learned carpentry from his father. He studied the scriptures and worshiped in the same manner as did all young men of his time. “In Luke 2:46 we read that Mary and Joseph found Jesus in the temple, listening to the teachers of the law and asking them questions. This is a profound statement: the Son of God is sitting in the temple, listening and asking questions!” (16)

“Jesus studied the language, the culture and the lifestyles of his people for thirty years before he began his ministry” (17). He knew about their lives—their joys and their sorrows, their triumphs and their struggles. In Luke 2:52 we read that Jesus grew not only in favor with God but with man as well. From Philippians 2:6-7 we know that Jesus was “in very nature God.” Yet he “took the nature of a servant being made in human likeness. Being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself...” (Phil. 2:7-8). Jesus was not only human he was a completely legitimate Jew.

What kind of people should we be when we enter a new culture? In Philippians 2:5 Paul reminds us, “Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus” and Peter 2:21 states, “Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in his steps.” Therefore,

as Jesus sends us out into many different cultures we are to work to become incarnate. Without incarnation we will not be effective communicators of the gospel. Cultures are too complex. A friend of mine tried to ask the mother of his Ukrainian girlfriend for permission to marry her daughter. Instead of saying, “May I please marry your daughter?” his request came out as, “May I please milk your goat?” Language gives us a good example but cultural differences are more than just language, there are thousands of “contextual cues” that communicate more than words could ever accomplish. Lingenfelter explains:

“Communication requires effective use of contextual cues. When a Moslem removes his shoes as he enters the mosque, that is a cue that he intends to worship there. A cultural cue is a specific signal or sign that people use to communicate the meaning of their behavior. Each culture has literally thousands of cues that signal a change of context and a corresponding need to follow the rules appropriate to the new context” (18-19).

Are you ready to give up being an American for a time? To begin to learn as a child learns? If not, you are not ready for cross-cultural ministry.

Understanding Cross-Cultural Conflict

When taking part in short-term missions we should have a twofold goal in learning a new culture: 1) Learn to communicate effectively in the new culture so you can share the love of God with your new friends, and 2) Be prepared for and learn how to cope with culture shock so the effects are not debilitating. “With the proper preparation, culture shock probably will still occur, but it will not be as jarring, and we will be more able to focus on the ministries at hand” (Forward 131).

When Americans travel to another culture what they need most is to understand themselves better as Americans. All of us carry with us the “cultural baggage” we have accumulated throughout our lives. “How can you as an American direct your efforts toward learning, in the quickest, most cost-effective manner, how to function at your optimum capacity

in the non-American environment into which you are soon to be, quite literally, dropped?”

(Kohls 2) First you must understand how you, as an American, see the world, and how others perceive you.

The Ugly American

The 1950s novel, *The Ugly American*, “struck Americans like a thunderbolt. It came at a time when the nation was moving internationally into high gear. Americans were swarming about the world as never before. Tourists, diplomats, students, scholars, technical experts, business executives, and military advisers were spreading [a negative] image of Americans”

(13). You are not the first American to travel to any country. Your way has already been paved—probably with bad impressions.

“All over the world people think they know all about Americans. They’ve watched American tourists, American films, and American TV programs. Their radios have blared sensational news about the United States. They’ve heard incredible stories from friends and relatives who have visited the United States. The result has been, at best, and incomplete view of what Americans are like; at worst, a distorted one. Out of this incomplete or distorted information have emerged stereotypes—fixed, simplified impressions of what Americans are” (5).

The most popular American TV show around the world is *Baywatch*. Some people know nothing about Americans except what they see on television. You will often be confronted by stereotypes. People will judge you not on the basis of who you are but on the stereotypes they have given Americans long before you came to their country. You do the same thing. When you see an Arab or Muslim looking person, don’t you immediately think of terrorists? We are all guilty of stereotyping individuals based on our past experiences. You have stereotypes about the country you are going to. What are some of the stereotypes you have for people from communist or former communist countries? The poor? People living in less developed countries? It is

helpful to identify them before you go so you can begin to look more objectively at the individuals you meet, who may or may not be what you expect.

Some of the most common stereotypes of Americans can be found in the following list from L. Robert Kohls' book, *Survival Kit for Overseas Living*:

- Optimistic
- Outgoing, friendly
- Informal
- Loud, rude, boastful, immature
- Naïve
- Hardworking
- Aggressive
- Judgmental, moralistic
- Superficial
- Extravagant, wasteful
- Confident they have all the answers
- Politically naïve and/or uninformed
- Ignorant of other countries
- Disrespectful of authority
- Wealthy
- Generous
- Impatient, always in a hurry (9-10)

How many of these items are positive? Negative? You probably consider about five or six of them to be positive. However the ones you consider positive might not be that good in a different country. Informality is not generally respected in Japan. Outgoing, loud, boisterous Americans can be extremely annoying on a long plane flight. "The point is that what we think are positive values or admirable characteristics may not be considered so by others. Throughout the world there are many different ways of doing things, most of which are intrinsically neither better nor worse than our own. They are simply different" (10). When dealing with these stereotypes it is important to remember three things:

- 1) Resist becoming angry or defensive.
- 2) Avoid fitting negative stereotypes.

3) Listen and learn.

If “being yourself” fits one of the stereotypes then you’ve got a problem. It’s better to enter a culture with humility rather than communicating exactly who you are. You will learn more by listening than by talking anyway. Let others do the talking. Ask the nationals what they think. Ask them to explain their customs and behaviors to you. If you are curious and not confrontational, presenting yourself as a humble learner, you will be well-received and will gain vast amounts of new knowledge. If you show yourself to be a loving, humble person you will do much to break the negative stereotypes that people have of Americans. This will add to your own pleasure in traveling to foreign cultures as well as improve your testimony of the love of God. Instead of being a typical tourist take seriously your task of being an ambassador of God. You have a great opportunity but it is also a huge responsibility. Ask God to remind you daily of your own cultural biases and help you to look at others as people made in the image of God and not just as “foreigners.”

What is Culture Shock?

Culture shock can be defined as “the psychological disorientation that results from living or working in unfamiliar cultural environments” (Brand). What is the cause of culture shock? There are actually many causes that when combined can be overwhelming and almost unbearable. Here are a few:

- Unmet expectations
- Unrealistic expectations
- Cultural Ambiguity (discovery that I am being misunderstood)
- Wrong-headed attempts to achieve results
- Familiar values questioned
- Ignorance of cultural rules
- Selective perception (Brand)

“Culture shock also occurs when we miss what we have taken for granted: no hot water for showers, the sanitary conditions of cooking facilities, the frustration of not being able to understand–nor be understood” (Forward 132). The most effective way to deal with culture shock is to expect it and recognize it when it hits you.

You can’t assume anything will be like it was “back home.” Italian Pizza is nothing like American Pizza. Ukrainians never wear shoes inside the home. They change into slippers every time they walk in the door. In Chile, South America and in some Western European countries such as Spain and France people will greet you with a kiss on the cheek (or two or three). If you do not do the same you will be considered rude. Here are some other examples of cultural differences:

- In Arabic countries, never refuse the obligatory coffee offered by your hosts.
- In Islamic countries, men should never inquire about the health of another man’s wife or daughter.
- Travelers to the Middle East must refrain from crossing their legs and showing the soles of their shoes–it is a sign of disrespect.
- In Kenya, understand that the friendly hand-wave gesture means “Come here quickly!”
- Muslim and Hindu communities consider the left hand unclean, and you should avoid touching anyone or eating with that hand–even if you are normally left-handed.
- In India and Malaysia, the head is considered the residence of the person’s soul, and should never be touched–refrain from even patting the head of a child. (Forward 135-136)

These customs may seem completely strange to you. They are only a small sampling of the many cultural cues to which you will soon be exposed. It is extremely helpful to observe and listen to nationals and see how they relate to one another.

“Though I am free and belong to no man, I make myself a slave to everyone, to win as many as possible. To the Jews I became like a Jew, to win the Jews. To those under the law I became like one under the law (though I myself am not under the law), so as to win those under the law. To those not having the law I became like one not having the law (though I am not free from God’s law but am under Christ’s law), so as to win those not having the law. To the weak I became weak, to win the weak. I have become all things to all men so that by all possible means I might save some. I do all this for the sake of the gospel, that I may share in its blessings.”

~ 1 Corinthians 9:19-23 ~

How do I know I’m Experiencing Culture Shock?

There are generally three stages of culture shock. You may be in a country for such a short period of time that you only have a chance to experience the first or second stage. It is important to know how culture shock works in order to identify your particular stage and cope with it. These are the stages of culture shock:

- 1) **Initial Euphoria (Honeymoon stage)** – Everything is new and exciting. You are enthralled by the new scenery including different architecture, styles of dress, etc. The different food is exciting and you are enjoying meeting new people and learning a new language. The attitude of the traveler at this stage is: **“All is well.”**
- 2) **Irritability and Hostility** – The ants on your pillow are bothering you. You don’t like the borscht your Russian host serves at every single meal. You are sick of sleeping on the floor. You can’t stand the fact that no one understands you and you can’t even ask where the bathroom is. You begin to hate the host country and the nationals. You are edgy and prone to tears. At this stage you are thinking: **“All is Hell.”**

3) Adjustment – If you are only in a country for a short time you may never reach the point where you adjust to the cultural differences. If you stay long enough and commit to be a culture learner you will learn to blend your culture into the host culture. **“You’re in deep water but have learned how to float”** (Brand).

There are many symptoms that can warn you that you are entering Stage Two of culture shock. If you are not aware of this you might end up seriously harming relationships within your team, with host missionaries and with nationals. You are experiencing Stage Two of culture shock if you feel any of the following symptoms:

- Homesickness (loss of the familiar)
- Withdrawal (tourist tendencies)
- Excessive need for sleep
- Compulsive eating or drinking
- Irritability
- Exaggerated cleanliness
- Weeping
- Patronizing Nationals (spirit of superiority–Some call this symptom “a messiah complex. Any approach that sees only the need of others and not the need in ourselves is bound to fail” (Perkins 36).
- Stereotyping of nationals
- Hostility toward nationals
- Psychosomatic illness

What can I do about it?

This is the bad news: yes, all these things can happen to you as a result of crossing cultures. But there is good news–Stage Three is coming! The more you are aware of the process the better you will be able to cope as it happens to you. “Because our perceptions in other cultures are so often mistaken, we can easily respond negatively to something that is in truth an open door. If unchecked, this has a spiraling negative effect in two areas First, it alienates us from our hosts by tearing down trust; second, it causes us to withdraw from the culture and isolate ourselves” (Stiles 101). Here are some helpful suggestions for coping with culture shock:

- 1) **“Know thy host country.”** Know something about what your living conditions will be, the kinds of foods to expect, a few helpful phrases in the host language, and appropriate clothing styles *before* you go.
- 2) **Anticipate a positive and fruitful time.** You will have an exciting adventure if you approach the experience with a teachable spirit and an eagerness to learn.
- 3) **Ask the Holy Spirit to help you.** He will!
- 4) **Realize that some stress is normal.**
- 5) **Don’t let discernment become criticism.**
- 6) **Remember it is the little things that will push you over the edge** (such as sand in your shoes).
- 7) **Look for the logic.** It is there somewhere. >
- 8) **Suspend judgment.**
- 9) **Find a friend.**
- 10) **Take a step down.** Don’t just look humble—be humble.
- 11) **Learn to laugh at yourself.** (Brand)

“Coping with culture shock brings powerful rewards” (Stiles 95). Culture shock can be a blessing when you use it “as an opportunity to continue to build trust or to learn more about the culture” (102). It does take creativity. Criticizing the culture is the easy way out. You will be sanctified as you try to learn from your host culture. Most of my sanctification has taken place on foreign soil because that is where I am challenged the most to depend fully on God. Look forward to the experience of having nothing familiar and learning how much God really never leaves you nor forsakes you. He will go to this new country with you; in fact, he’s already there. We can learn practical steps to apply when confronted with cultural differences from Peter’s

example in Acts 10. Read the story to refresh your memory then examine the following examples from Peter's response that we can apply to ourselves:

- 1) *Peter was willing to see people through God's eyes and not his own.* God told Peter that he "accepts men from every nation who fear him and do what is right" (Acts 10:35).
- 2) *Peter was able to articulate how God had changed his heart.* You must be able to explain what you are feeling.
- 3) *Peter opened his eyes and observed.* What do you notice? How are people acting? Listen and observe.
- 4) *Peter asked questions.* Ask lots of questions. Make sure your questions are open ended and not condescending. Listen carefully to the answers and ask for more clarification. Seek many people's opinions, not just one host or one missionary.
- 5) *Peter went with a team, but he did not use the team to isolate himself.* Don't retreat to the comfort of your team. It's fun to go to McDonald's in Moscow or Nairobi, but don't let yourself retreat as a coping mechanism. Be willing to continually step outside that which is comfortable. (All italics from Stiles 103-104).

How do you say, "Jesus Loves You?"

One of the most challenging cultural barriers you will face is that of language. God's creativity really shows through the thousands of languages and dialects that exist throughout the world. Even if you are traveling to an "English" speaking country like Ireland, Australia, or England you will soon realize that their English is quite different from our "American" language. If you are traveling to a country where you are not fluent in the language you will probably be working with translators. It is easy to simply learn to let your words be repeated after you by the translator, but learn to communicate some phrases yourself. "One of the best ways to learn about

a culture, as well as to develop relationships while in the country, is to learn their language” (Forward 136). It is also a great way to communicate respect to the nationals of the country. You will show them that you really do care about them and are willing to work hard to communicate with them.

Learning a new language can be frustrating. Some will be better at it than others. Usually those who are musically inclined will have an easier time because their ears have been previously trained to listen for specific sounds. But for some people it can be a nightmare. It is embarrassing and isolating. Here are some suggestions for learning a new language from Chris Eaton’s book on short-term missions:

- 1) Don’t try to learn too much. Work on using proper pronunciation and feel confident with just a few phrases. The late Dr. Tom Brewster of Fuller Seminary encouraged his students to “learn a little, use it a lot.”
- 2) Don’t become frustrated if the language is more difficult for you than for others on the team. There is no need for comparison. The objective is for you to learn what you can.
- 3) Keep in mind the proper etiquette for speaking English with people who have very little English ability:
 - Speak slowly and clearly
 - Speaking louder will not help
 - Use common words—if the listener seems confused, think of an alternative word (60-61). Don’t use idioms or jokes from movies or commercials. They will alienate nationals and make them feel left out by your “inside jokes.”

There are certain phrases that are good to know before you get to a country. Most bookstores carry phrasebooks in almost any language that you will need. Berlitz is my favorite

publisher. Look through the different options and find something small enough to carry with you always that is easy to use. In them you can find helpful pronunciation guides, common phrases as well as dictionaries for words that are commonly used. Don't buy a bulky dictionary that will take up space in your suitcase. Chances are you won't get around to using it much in the two or three weeks you are gone. Learn useful phrases before you leave and continue to practice them while you are there. Here are some examples:

- Hello!
- My name is...
- I am (age) years old.
- I like your country. It is beautiful.
- Please.
- Thank you.
- Excuse me.
- I'm sorry.
- I don't understand.
- Please speak more slowly.
- Where is the bathroom?
- God bless you!
- Very good!
- I'm tired.
- I don't feel well
- I need a doctor.

Questions to ask Children (Eaton 67):

- Hello! What is your name?
- How old are you?
- Do you have brothers and sisters?

Questions to ask Adults:

- Hello! What is your name?
- Where do you live?
- What foods do you like?

Questions for Parents:

- How many children do you have?
- How old are they?

Learn to count to ten. Learn to sing a few choruses in your country's language. I recommend "Sing Hallelujah to the Lord." Hallelujah is the same in many languages so there are

few new words to learn. Try to learn one new phrase every day you are there. Learn from a native speaker so you can develop the right accent. Let the nationals laugh at your attempts and laugh with them. A Chinese girl who lived with my family would laugh every time my mom tried to say her name in Chinese. My mother finally asked why she was laughing. She explained, “My name means ‘beautiful princess,’ but when you say it you are saying, ‘roll up like a sleeping bag.’” Remember to keep the attitude of a learner as discussed earlier. Always be willing to humble yourself. Be teachable as Jesus was teachable and your hosts will be blessed by your attitude.

Chapter Four

Being an Informed Traveler

When traveling there is much that can save you a lot of headaches. Sometimes you won't truly learn a lesson until you have messed up. A lesson I had to learn the hard way was this: "never travel with more than you can carry yourself. There are no bell-hops on the mission field." There are many tips you can learn from experienced travelers who have learned things the hard way themselves. Here are some helpful traveling and packing tips.

What do I pack?

Pack less than you think you need—especially clothing. In most countries around the world people do not wear a different outfit everyday. In Ukraine, for example, the people highly value their appearance and dress very nicely. They cannot afford extravagant wardrobes so most people have one or two nice outfits and wear them *every day*! If you bring fourteen different outfits for a two-week trip you will end up feeling foolish because it will look like you are flaunting your wealth. Check the weather of the country you are going to and think through what you will be doing. Are you working on a construction site? Are girls allowed to wear shorts/pants? Will you need a dressy outfit for a church service? Find tops and bottoms that go together and mix and match them. Leave flashy clothing behind. Be creative in coming up with different outfits using the same few pieces of clothing. You might not have an iron on hand so plan ahead. Synthetic and knit materials tend not to wrinkle. Many Europeans view Americans as slob. Athletic wear is not considered everyday wear in most countries. Find out how the nationals dress and make an effort to blend in. (You really won't blend in at all. They will recognize you by your American looking backpack and camera. The goal is to not be a distraction—you can't help being an American.)

Carry on Items:

- Don't pack anything valuable in your checked baggage. Your luggage may get lost but you'll survive. Think through, "If I am separated from my suitcase for three days what will I need to have with me? Carry anything valuable with you at all times. Always keep close tabs on the location of your plane ticket, your passport, and your money. Leave anything that you don't want to lose at home (i.e. expensive jewelry.)
- Carry medications (in their original containers), contact solution, feminine products, an extra pair of underwear, and your toothbrush on the plane with you. Keep your carry-on baggage as light as possible. On South African Airways my team was required to keep our carry on bags under fifteen pounds. I realized after traveling for 14 ½ hours on the flight how glad I was that my backpack weighed only fifteen pounds. This is a good limit.

Packing your main suitcase:

- 1) Most airlines allow two-70 lb. bags per person. Only bring one suitcase. You won't be able to carry anything more. I had a friend who went to Europe for the entire summer and brought only one flight attendant sized suitcase and a backpack. She could easily carry everything with her on and off airplanes and trains. Make sure your bag fits nicely into the size requirements of the airline and that you can carry (or roll) it with no assistance.
- 2) Roll all of your clothes tightly into bundles. It is amazing how much more you can squeeze into tight places this way.
- 3) Wear your bulkiest clothes and shoes on the plane.
- 4) Bring toiletries in small containers. It is easy to find travel-sized anything nowadays including toothpaste, toothbrushes, deodorant, shampoo, etc. Check the travel section at Wal-

Mart. (Be careful. It's easy to spend \$100 buying things that cost less than a dollar each.

Always save leftover samples from hotel bathrooms. Look around your house before buying anything new.) "Never fill bottles completely. Leave space at the top and squeeze out the air as you affix the cap. This will result in a vacuum that serves to seal the bottle" (Forward 149).

- 5) Always package liquid items in zip-lock bags to protect other items against leakage.
- 6) If you are bringing hair dryers, curling irons, electric razors, or any other electronic appliances, be sure to check the voltage. American appliances operate on 120 volts. All other countries are different. Be sure your appliances are dual voltage or buy the proper converters from Wal-Mart, Target, or any travel store. You will also need plug adapters since outlets are not the same in other countries. A friend of mine missed one team meeting and didn't hear the information from our youth pastor concerning appliances. When she got to Ireland she plugged her normal curling iron into the wall and instead of curling her bangs, she burnt them off!
- 7) Bring some granola bars or other small food items to supplement meals. You might not be eating as frequently as you are accustomed and your refrigerator will not be close by. The space used for food will create space to bring home souvenirs when you return.
- 8) Take a small, battery powered, travel alarm clock.
- 9) If you will be sleeping on the floor purchase an inflatable swimming pool bed or camping mat. It can make all the difference to have a comfortable place to sleep at night.
- 10) Bring a small sewing kit with safety pins. You never know when you'll need them.

- 11) “If you carry detergent in your suitcase, buy a small packet and bring it in that original container. Should foreign customs open your bag to find white powder in a baggie, you may find your newfound language skills somewhat taxed! (149)
- 12) Bring a good, comfortable pair of shoes for walking.
- 13) Place your heaviest items on the bottom of your suitcase. Fill the edges with socks. Use available space in shoes to stuff smaller articles of clothing as well.
- 14) Pack a small, foldable duffel bag in case you end up with more souvenirs than you counted on.
- 15) Tie a very brightly colored piece of cloth to the handle of your suitcase. Most suitcases look alike. This will make yours stand out from miles away making it easy to identify at the baggage claim.
- 16) Bring a gift for your host family or host missionaries but do not wrap it. Airline security people have a right to open anything.
- 17) Take pictures of your family to show your new friends. Avoid bringing pictures of cars, houses, or anything that could display wealth.
- 18) Bring addresses of those to whom you wish to send postcards.
- 19) E-mail might be available but don’t count on it or give your friends the expectation of hearing from you. Your time will be better spent getting to know nationals than communicating with friends back home who you will see in a few days anyway. Don’t let people or events at home distract you from the task at hand.

In-Flight Comfort

- 1) If you are short offer your aisle seat to a tall member on your team. Short people have a great advantage in traveling. Practice your new selfless attitude by looking out for the members on your team.
- 2) Purchase an inflatable neck pillow at a discount store and carry it on the plane with you. Don't wait until you get to the airport and realize you need one. They are twice as expensive at airport stores.
- 3) "If you are prone to earache during take-off and landing try these tips: (1) keeping your lips closed, gently blow to relieve the pressure in your eustachian tubes; (2) try swallowing several times; (3) chew gum or suck on a lozenge or hard candy during takeoff and landing" (158).
- 4) "Airplanes are hollow tubes filled with people of disparate origin, many of whom are afflicted with coughs, colds, and worse. The germs they exhale are re-circulated and inhaled by the other passengers repeatedly for hours on end. Taking large doses of Vitamin C for three days before and after a flight can help build your immunity to the common ailments of others" (158).
- 5) "A jetliner's cabin air is drier than that over a desert. Use a moisturizer and saline eye drops several times during the flight. Drinking a glass of water or juice once each hour can restore moisture to your body and reduce travel fatigue. Flight attendants often circulate with water and other beverages several times during a flight; accept each offer" (159).

Dealing with Jet-Lag

Remember, jet-lag is essentially sleep deprivation. The more time zones you cross the worse it can be. Start the journey well rested. Here are some more tips (Forward 159-160):

- 1) If heading east, an extra couple of hours sleep for two or three days before your trip will be a good investment.
- 2) When flying west, go to bed later than normal for a day or two before you travel.
- 3) Set your watch ahead to the current time at your destination. The fact that you start thinking it is that time helps your mind and body to adjust.
- 4) Avoid drinking caffeine during the flight.
- 5) On night flights, try to sleep as much as possible. On flights that arrive late at night, try to stay awake so that you will be tired and then sleep when you arrive, during their nighttime.
- 6) When you arrive, try to conform to the local times as much as possible. If you take a mid-afternoon nap upon arrival, it will feel great, but you are just delaying your body's adjustment, and will then have trouble sleeping during the local nighttime.
- 7) For the first couple of days after traveling eat lots of proteins for breakfast and lunch and carbohydrates for dinner.
- 8) Write for the U.S. Department of Energy's free "Anti-Jet Lag Diet." It requires following a rather strict regimen for a few days before your flight, but it works! It is available free for a stamped, addressed envelope from: Argonne National Laboratory, 9700 So. Cass Avenue, Argonne, IL 60439 (telephone: 630-759-8901).

Remember when you are traveling with a team that everyone will be tired, hungry, and irritable. Try to look for the adventure in the situation and be an encourager to those on your

team who are discouraged. Look for ways to make someone else's trip more comfortable.

Looking out for the needs of others always leads to more joy than just being concerned with yourself.

“Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.”

~ Ephesians 4:2-3 ~

Conclusion

Writing this SIP has gotten me excited about completing the final project. As you can see from this paper there is much to teach a high school student before sending them to a foreign country. Some of it is theological, some is emotional, and some is very practical. It is all extremely important. The following pages contain a preliminary outline for the Twelve-Week Training Manual. If you have anything to add please let me know. I will be working to complete this book in the next year.

Heather C. Rantal

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*Indicates books not specifically cited in this paper but nonetheless used to form my overall opinions concerning the many aspects of short-term missions.

Week 1

I. The Theology of Mission

- A. Why do we participate in Missions?
- B. What is the purpose of short-term missions?
- C. Isn't it just too expensive?

II. Introduction to Trip

- A. Where are we going?
- B. Who are we working with/for?
- C. What will the team be doing?
- D. How much will this trip cost?

III. Explanations of

- A. Journal Assignments
- B. Team Presentation
- C. Importance of Scripture Memorization

IV. Journal Assignment – Why do I want to go on this trip?

Week 2

I. Being a child of God (and how that relates to missions).

- A. What is the gospel?
- B. What does that mean to me?
 - 1. Justification: Nothing to gain, lose, prove, fear)
 - 2. What is my responsibility toward others in light of this gospel? (Great Commission)

II. Motivations for Mission

- A. What's in it for me?
- B. Sure it's a great idea, but why me?
- C. Here I am Lord."

III. Support Raising 101

- A. Biblical Foundations for Support Raising
- B. Who would want to give me money?

IV. Journal Assignment – What is my testimony? Write out a preliminary draft.

V. Verses for Memorization

Week 3

I. Thinking through your Testimony

- A. I've never done drugs. Who would want to hear my testimony...it's boring.
- B. The not so boring testimony: Knowing how much to share.

II. TEAMWORK FACTOR – developing character for a strong team.

Teachable	Flexible
Encouraging	Agreeable
Appreciative	Cooperative
Motivated	Thoughtful
Willing	Obedient
Open	Relational
Refreshing	
Kindred Spirit	

III. Support Raising 102: User Friendly Support raising

- A. Writing the Letter
- B. Packaging the letter

IV. Journal Assignments

- A. Which TEAMWORK traits do I possess?
- B. Which ones do I lack?
- C. What do I need to do about that?

V. Verses for Memorization

Week 4

I. Sharing your Testimony

- A. Keeping it concise
- B. Using it as an opportunity to share the gospel
- C. Working with a translator

II. Cultural Personalities

- A. Cross-Cultural Conflicts
- B. Mayers' Basic Values Model

III. The Informed Traveler – What to know before you leave the country

IV. Team Presentation 1: History of Host Country

V. Journal Assignments – What have I learned about myself through the basic values model?

VI. Verses for Memorization

Week 5

I. Evangelism Part 1 – Sharing your faith

- A. Message
- B. Messenger
- C. Method

II. Three Stages of Culture Shock

- A. Initial Euphoria
- B. Misery
- C. Adjustment

III. Support Raising 103 – Thank you Notes

- A. Prompt
- B. Personal
- C. Prayerful

IV. Team Presentation 2: Politics of Host Country

- V. Journal Assignment – What do you think about sharing your faith? What are some fears you have?
- VI. Verses for Memorization

Week 6

I. Evangelism Part 2 – Essential Components

- A. God
- B. Man
- C. Sin
- D. Redemption

II. Being a Bridge Builder

III. Language Learning

- A. Resources
- B. Reasonable Expectations
- C. Attitude of the Learner
- D. Common Phrases

IV. Team Presentation 3: People of Host Country

(food, customs, language, religions)

- V. Journal Assignment – Write out the gospel in a way that would make sense to a non-believer.
- VI. Verses for Memorization

Week 7

I. Apologetics

- A. Recommended reading
- B. Humility (Again!)
- C. Partnership

II. Serving vs. Helping

- A. If you want to be great in God's kingdom...
- B. John 13:12-20
- C. Washing your brother's feet
- D. What can I do for you now mother?

III. Prayer Partners

- A. Developing a strong support system
- B. What do you want me to pray for?

IV. Team Presentation 4: Land/Climate of Host Country (what about this time of year?)

V. Journal Assignment

- A. How do you feel about being a servant?
- B. What are some prayer requests you could share with your prayer partners?

VI. Verses for Memorization

Week 8

I. When the Adversary Steps In

- A. Spiritual Warfare on the Mission Field
- B. The full armor of God (Ephesians 6)
- C. Being filled with the Spirit
- D. The gift of Repentance

II. Biblical Conflict Resolution

- A. Peacekeeping vs. Peacemaking
- B. Being Peacemakers
- C. Speaking the Truth in Love

III. Packing List: What do I take with me? What do I leave behind?

IV. Team Presentation 5: Economy

V. Journal Assignments

- A. What do I believe about spiritual warfare?
- B. What is a conflict you are currently involved in to which you could apply the principles learned above?

VI. Verses for Memorization

Week 9

- I. Sharing your Faith at Home
 - A. If not now then when?
 - B. Overcoming the fear factor.
- II. Fears, Frustrations, Failure
- III. Support Raising 104: Prayer Card/Itinerary
- IV. Team Presentation 6: Tourist Attractions
- V. Journal Assignment:
 - A. What scares me the most about going on this trip?
 - B. What am I most excited about?
- VI. Verses for Memorization

Week 10

- I. Do I really believe the Gospel is True?
 - A. What difference does it make in my life on a daily basis?
 - B. How would my life be different without it?
- II. When in Rome... The Ugly American
(Tourist vs. Ambassador)
- III. Preparing to Use your Gifts
 - A. Music
 - B. Drama
 - C. Sports
 - D. Art
- IV. Team Presentation 7: Perception of Americans
- V. Journal Assignment – What are my cultural biases?
- VI. Verses for Memorization

Week 11

- I. The Joys and Sacrifices of being Ambassadors for Christ
- II. Dealing with Homesickness
- III. Physical Sickness: Being Prepared
 - A. Physically
 - B. Emotionally
 - C. Spiritually
- IV. Team Presentation 7: History of Missions/Church in Host Country
- V. Journal Assignments:
 - A. How will I plan to be an encouragement to my team?
 - B. Is there one person on my team that I need to specifically encourage?
- VI. Verses for Memorization – Joy in Suffering

Week 12

- I. Reminder of the Purpose of the trip
- II. Final Packing Tips and Reminders
- III. Journal Assignment: How do I want God to work in my life while I am away?

School life is the best phase of every child as it plays a crucial role in moulding them for their future life. Considering its importance, a good teacher should come up with good tactics to help them utilize the best out of their study life. 7. Time management: Teaching them how to manage their time efficiently is the key to successful classroom learning. Give them time bounded activities so that they can challenge themselves to complete a task within the stipulated time frame. Through competitive games, students can challenge their peers to score higher and motivate each other. 10. Brainstorming: It is good to include some brain storming sessions in the classroom when students can challenge their thinking process. Find out which evidence based teaching strategies are the most effective in schools; and which are the top learning strategies for your pupils to know. The Most Effective Teaching Strategies To Use In Your School: Evidence Based And Proven To Work. April 6, 2021 | 18 min read. Anantha Anilkumar. Gather a room of teachers together and they will give you as many teaching strategies as there are topics in the primary curriculum. This article introduces the 13 most important teaching strategies you should be using – the ones that have been proven to work in schools like yours and the ones that we use every week with the 7000 pupils we teach in our one-to-one interventions. Our Mission is to provide high quality education and childcare in a safe, respectful and inclusive environment that builds a foundation for life-long learning. We aim to provide a safe learning environment with a welcoming atmosphere which creates a sense of belonging amongst the families. Best Primary and Elementary School Vision & Mission Statements. Our goal as a school is to equip our young people with the skills and mindset to thrive and then take on the world. We foster an enthusiastic, creative community of learners prepared to continue their intellectual, emotional, and physical development. Our school will continue to create a safe, effective learning environment that enables each individual to reach his or her greatest potential through ample opportunities to excel. Successful high school students don't disappear outside the walls of their classroom. They are also engaged members of their community. Get involved with issues that impact your student experience. Educate yourself about the issues facing your community and learn to use your voice productively so that people will listen to your ideas. Successful high school students are ones that are capable of speaking up and effecting change in a positive way. To learn more about this and how colleges evaluate your involvement in social issues, check out our post Community Service, Reimagined: MCC's Recommendations