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Welcome to the International Church Planting Cohort

We are extremely grateful to have you as a member of the International Church Planting Cohort. This unique community of Summit members will help equip you to love God, to love others, and specifically to love the world by preparing to be sent to the nations. Each year, we cover topics relevant to life and ministry overseas. The core topics are outlined in this guide with key questions, some next steps, and space to take notes. We have also provided a few additional topics and will continue to add to that as we gather resources to equip you to serve internationally. This will be a valuable tool that we use every month in our meetings, and we hope this can be a reference for you for years to come!

As you prepare for the task ahead, we are so excited for you. You are going to the nations, to plant churches, for the glory of God. You are going to be a part of The Summit Church's goal to see 1,000 churches planted in our generation, and most importantly be a part of the Bible's promise that the church will spread to every tribe, tongue, and nation. Being a missionary is a great privilege, as well as a great task. We hope the International Church Planting Cohort will be a great encouragement to you as you prepare for this task of taking the gospel to unreached places.

Thank you!

Chelsea Neal
International Missions Training Associate
The Summit Church

Cohort Objectives

Prepare candidates to be effective ambassadors for the gospel in cross-cultural contexts.
Learning how to share the gospel and make disciples in another culture comes with challenges. We will learn how to live and thrive in other cultures as well as how to effectively reach various cultures with the gospel. This involves learning to explain the Word simply and clearly and how the gospel affects everything.

Deepen habits of obedience in all areas of life (daily reading, prayer, and memorization).
The most important thing you can do to prepare to serve overseas is to walk closely with Jesus. Daily abiding in him is the first step in making him known.

Remain focused on sharing the gospel and making disciples.
We must be leaders in The Summit Church who are doing here what they are going to do there. We want to lead out in seeking the lost, sharing the gospel, and making disciples. We are not ready to move across the world to share the gospel with the unreached if we are not sharing the gospel with our neighbors, friends, and co-workers.

Assess and address relational health.
We will encourage each of you to examine your hearts and lives as you prepare to serve overseas. We will provide resources for you to grow in being a servant to the community you will have overseas. We will equip you to communicate and relate with others in cross-cultural contexts.

Set realistic expectations for life and ministry overseas.
We will do our best not to glamorize being a missionary. We want to talk openly about the struggles, dangers, and challenges of living overseas--all the while reminding you of the joy and privilege it is to participate in this work.

Community and encouragement from those who have gone and those who are going.
ICP cohort is a community of people all preparing to serve overseas. Although you may be going to various places and are at different stages of the process, you are all going through similar things. It is wonderful to get to process the transition with others. You also have the opportunity to be coached by someone who has experience serving overseas and can learn from their wisdom and experience.

Cohort Covenant

I commit myself during the course of this program to:

- ❑ Read and reflect on God's Word daily
- ❑ Rejoice in the gospel as I humbly submit myself to Him in obedience to His Word
- ❑ Fulfill any monthly activities with God's help
- ❑ Pray daily for myself and the unreached around me
- ❑ Faithful attendance to meetings and communicating monthly with my coach seeking their spiritual counsel and ministry guidance
- ❑ Arrive at the meetings prepared, being ready to contribute to the group and to receive and give encouraging, constructive feedback to all participants in my group
- ❑ Keep the missions team up to date about the status of my process and where I am likely to go
- ❑ Ongoing Summit small group involvement for more intimate accountability and discipleship
- ❑ Be faithful to share the gospel and make disciples where I am now, as I prepare to do the same overseas

Name_____

Date_____

Signature_____

You are sent:

To the nations,

to plant churches

for the glory of God.

Core Topic Guides and Notes

Gospel Centered Missions

The gospel is at the center of everything. This core value leads us to send people in response to what God has done in Christ to be part of long-term work that is specifically, intentionally, and strategically focused and centered on seeing the gospel of Jesus Christ proclaimed and demonstrated in places where it is not known. We go because Jesus came, died in our place, and rose again. Tim Keller said, "God directs his people not simply to worship but to sing his praises 'before the nations.' We are called not simply to communicate the gospel to non believers; we must also intentionally celebrate the gospel before them" (*Center* Church, 2012). So we joyfully and obediently "declare his glory among the nations, his marvelous deeds among all peoples" (Psalm 96:3 NIV).

Key Questions:

- What is included in gospel centered missions? What examples do you see of missions that are not gospel centered?
- Why is this so important and how do we keep our work as a missionary focused on the gospel?

Extra Resources:

- Read:
    - Let the Nations Be Glad by John Piper

Next Steps:

Discuss with a friend: are you focused on the gospel as you prepare to go?

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What is Church and How to Start One

The local church is God's "Plan A." All of our initiatives are sent from the local church to plant the local church where it doesn't exist and strengthen the local church where it does exist. C.S. Lewis said, "The church exists for nothing else but to draw men into Christ" (*Mere Christianity,* 1952). There are many ways God chooses to draw people to himself, but Scripture most often presents this happening through local churches. We see in Acts 2:36-47 how believers enjoyed fellowship and ministered together and many were saved.

What is a Church

The "Baptist Faith and Message" explicitly defines church, and the first paragraph below is a direct quotation from it. The Subsequent paragraphs and bullet points describe the implications of this definition for our international work.

A New Testament church of the Lord Jesus Christ is an autonomous local congregation of baptized believers, associated by covenant in the faith and fellowship of the gospel; observing the two ordinances of Christ, governed by His laws, exercising the gifts, rights, and privileges invested in them by His Word, and seeking to extend the gospel to the ends of the earth. Each congregation operates under the Lordship of Christ through democratic process. In such a congregation each member is responsible and accountable to Christ as Lord.[1]

We believe that every local church is autonomous under the Lordship of Jesus Christ and the authority of His inerrant word. This is as true overseas as it is in the United States. Some churches to which we relate overseas may make decisions in doctrine and practice which we would not choose. Nevertheless we are accountable to God for the foundation that we lay when we plant churches, for the teaching that we give when we train church leaders, and for the criteria that we use when we count churches. In our church planting and teaching ministries, we will seek to lay a foundation of beliefs and practices that are consistent with the BF&M, although local churches overseas may express those beliefs and practices in different ways according to the needs of their cultural settings. Flowing from the definition of a church given above and from the Scriptures for which this definition is derived, we will observe the following guidelines in church planting, leadership training and statistical reporting.

[1] Matthew 16:15-19; 18:15-20; Acts 2:41-42,47; 5:11-14;6:3-6; 13:1-3;14:23,27; 15:1-30; 16:5; 20:28; Romans 1:7; 1 Corinthians 1:2; 3:16; 5:4-5; 7:17; 9:13-14; 12; Ephesians 1:22-23; 2:19-22; 3:8-11,21; 5:22T32; Philippians 1:1; Colossians 1:18; 1 Timothy 2:9-14; 3:1-15; 4:14; Hebrews 11:39-40; 1 Peter 5:1-4; Revelation 2-3; 21:2-3.

1. A church is intentional about being a church. Members think of themselves as a church. They are committed to one another and to God (associated by covenant) in pursuing all that Scriptures requires of a church.
2. A church has an identifiable membership of baptized believers in Jesus Christ.
3. A church practices the baptism of believers only by immersing them in water.
4. A church observes the Lord's Supper on a regular basis.
5. Under the authority of the local church and its leadership, members may be assigned to carry out the ordinances.
6. A Church submits to the inerrant word of God as the ultimate authority for all that it believes and does.
7. A church meets regularly for worship, prayer, the study of God's word, and fellowship. Members of the church minister to one another's needs, hold each other accountable, and exercise church discipline as needed. Members encourage one another and build each other up in holiness, maturity in Christ, and love.
8. A church embraces its responsibility to fulfill the Great Commission, both locally and globally, from the beginning of its existence as a church.
9. A church is autonomous and self-governing under the Lordship of Jesus Christ and the authority of the Word.
10. A church has identifiable leaders, who are scrutinized and set apart according to the qualifications set forth in Scripture. A church recognizes two Biblical offices of church leadership: pastors/elders/overseers and deacons. While both men and women are gifted for service in the church, the office of pastor/elder/overseer is limited to men as qualified by Scripture.

As we make disciples among unreached peoples and places and they gather together in groups, these bodies of believers may not initially have all of the above characteristics of a church. Nevertheless, we identify these groups and intentionally work with them toward becoming churches through patient teaching, training, prayer, and guidance. In church planting among unreached peoples and places, almost all churches will pass through an initial phase as a group that is growing into a church.[2]

Key Questions:

- What is the definition of a church?
- How can we have a healthy church? What must be present?
- What are the most important things we should be doing to "get to church" and where do I start?

Extra Resources:

- Read:
  - Church Planting by the Book by Elbert Smith
  - Apostolic Church Planting by J.D. Payne

[2] Acts 14:21-23; Titus.

Next Steps:

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Healthy Marriage and Singleness

Living as a healthy married or single person is a vital part of living overseas long term. This is also one area where you will undoubtedly experience challenges and frustration. How can you prepare to honor God through a healthy marriage or singleness?

Key Questions:

- For Married:
  - How can you use your gift of marriage for the great commission? How can this be a witness where you are going?
  - How can you balance family and ministry? How can you do ministry as a family?
  - What are some ways you can grow in a healthy relationship with your spouse amidst the stresses and struggles of living overseas? For those with children, how can you nurture your child amidst the stresses of living overseas? (On this topic, also see the section on third culture kids).
- For Singles:
  - How can you use your gift of singleness for the great commission? How can this be a witness where you are going?
  - What are ways you can grow in trusting the Lord and purity as a single person in often lonely and isolated places or situations.
  - Do you know the opportunities available overseas for you to have community and meaningful relationships? If not, how do you plan to find that?
- For Both:
  - What steps do I/we need to take take now to prepare for long term success later?

Extra Resources:

- Watch:
  - Sermon by David Platt titled: "Marriage and Mission: How marriage and singleness connect to the Great Commission"
  - Emotionally Healthy Leader by Peter Scazzero

Next Steps:

Notes:

Effective Cross-Cultural Evangelism & Discipleship

Learning how to share the gospel and make disciples in the context in which you are going is essential to having an effective ministry overseas.

"*Discipleship means teaching others to read the Bible the way you read it, pray the way you pray, and tell people about Jesus the way you do. If you have Christian habits in your life worth imitating, you can be a disciple maker. It doesn't require years of training. You just teach others to follow Christ as you follow him.*" J.D. Greear, Gaining by Losing (137).

This is true, but we must also consider the unique challenges to cross cultural evangelism and discipleship and practice doing that here, before going overseas.

Key Questions:

- Define evangelism and discipleship.
- What are some unique aspects of sharing the gospel and making disciples in a cross cultural setting?
- In the culture you are going to, how could the culture influence the way you share the gospel and make disciples?
- What are some keys to effectively evangelize and disciple in a cross cultural setting?

Extra Resources:

- Read:
  - The Master Plan of Evangelism by Robert E. Coleman
  - Sharing Jesus without freaking out by Alvin Reid
  - Any-3: Anyone, Anywhere, Anytime by Mike Shipman

Next Steps:

- Spend time with someone from another culture. Learn about their worldview and discover the most effective way to share with them.
- Practice sharing the Gospel with someone from another culture at least once a month.

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Contextualization and Culture Shock

How are we to view culture as believers and remember that it is the gospel that shapes our worldview, not our culture? You want to not only learn to survive in your new culture but learn to thrive and enjoy things about where you are serving. This is a great step in learning to love the people you are serving.

Key Questions:

- What is culture shock and its various stages? How can you identify and deal with it in a way that honors God?
- How do you know when to ask for help?
- How do we effectively contextualize so that people can best understand the gospel?
- When has contextualization gone too far?

Extra Resources:

- Read:
  - Cross Cultural Servanthood by Duane Elmer
  - Foreign to Familiar by Sarah Lanier
  - Ministering Cross-Culturally by Sherwood G. Lingenfelter
  - First 30 Daze by Larry and Susan McCrary

Next Steps:

Research the culture you are going to and make a list of places you want to visit, activities to do, and foods you want to try. Make a list of questions you can ask someone from your new culture to learn about it, use this as a way to enter into relationships.

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Healthy Teaming and Conflict

Healthy teams are one of our greatest priorities. Our relationships with our teammates can be a blessing or burden. We must be aware of the struggles of those before us and remember that our teammates are never the enemy we are up against. It is important to learn how to love God, love others and love the nations as we seek to practice healthy missionary teams. **You are sent to serve, not be served - that starts with your team!**

Key Questions:

- What is a missionary team and why is it so important?
- Why is teaming one of the primary reasons people leave the field? How can we fight against this?
- How can we have a healthy missionary team? How can you learn to deal with conflict in a healthy way?
- What should I do now to prepare for being a good teammate?

Extra Resources:

- Read:
  - Article by Zane Pratt, "What is a Missionary Team and Why it is Important"
  - First 90 days (in resources).

Next Steps:

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Spiritual Warfare

You have an enemy who does not like the work you are preparing to do. We should be aware of the enemy we are fighting against and the attacks we may undergo, while remaining confident in Christ and his power at work within us.

Key Questions:

- What is spiritual warfare?
- What are some ways you could experience spiritual warfare?
- How can community be utilized to fight against the enemies attacks?
- How can you prepare now to fight against spiritual warfare on the field?

Extra Resources:

- Read:
  - An article by J.D. Greear. "How to Combat the Demonic"
  - Discipled Warriors by Chuck Lawless

Next Steps:

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Developing an International Field Strategy

You are going to the nations, to plant churches, for the glory of God. Having a clear and well thought out vision for the work you are going to do will help you to know and love your people well. It is helpful to learn how to develop and implement a strategy to reach the people you are going to, and we can do this by practicing here to learn from those who have gone before us.

Key Questions:

- How can you develop an International Field Strategy?
- How might your strategy look different depending on where you serve?
- How can we apply this in our communities here?

Extra Resources:

- Read:
  - Gaining by Losing by JD Greear
  - Let the Nations be Glad by John Piper
  - Church Planting in Hard Places by Mez McConnell and Mike McKinley

Next Steps:

- If or when you are paired with a church planting team, ask your supervisor or another missionary to explain their vision and strategy.
- Develop a ministry strategy for your neighborhood.

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Core Tasks of a Missionary

Jesus' one command to make disciples of all nations can be broken down into six tasks. First, we must engage the unreached with the gospel, finding ways to get to them, live among them and get to know them. Second, we must share the gospel in language they can understand and challenge them to repent and believe. Third, we must disciple new believers so that they grow to reflect and represent Christ. Fourth, we must plant healthy churches that continue the work of evangelizing their area and that reproduce and multiply. Fifth, we must train leaders for those churches, and we must train people who can keep training leaders whether we are there or not. Sixth, we must work ourselves out of a job and partner with these new churches to move on to other places and people groups that need the gospel.[3]

Entry

Key Questions:

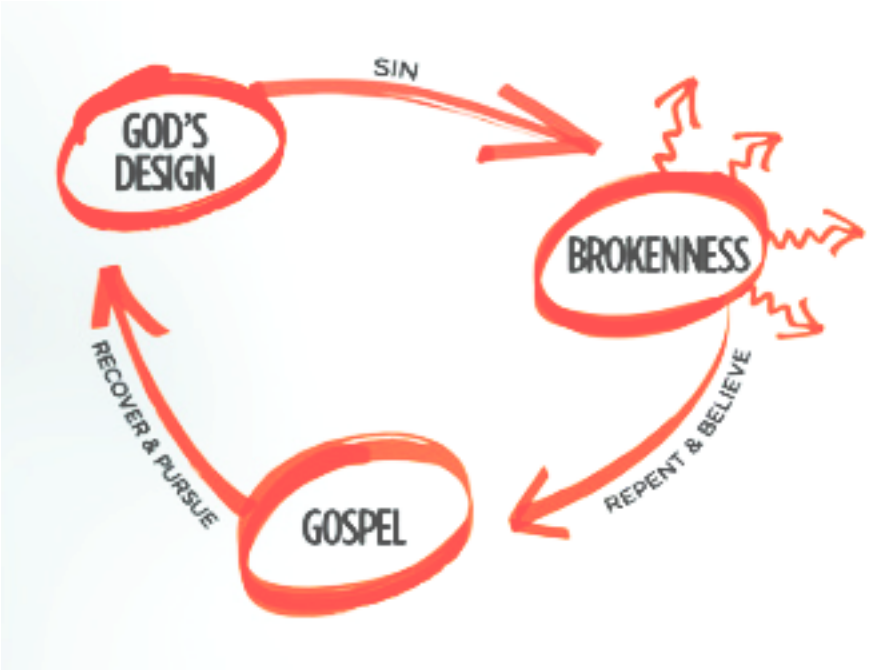
- Places I could go to intentionally engage people.
    1.
    2.
    3.

- People I could engage as I go.
    1.
    2.
    3.
    4.

Evangelism

Practice sharing the Gospel. There are many great methods of sharing. Some methods are tailored to share with people of different religions, education, etc. Be sure to share the Gospel and include the essential details. Here is one method called three circles:

[3] International Mission Board, Explore Missions Study, "Basic Missionary Tasks"



Discipleship

We want to teach others to obey everything that Christ has commanded. Here are some handouts on how to teach eight basic commands. These lessons are a great place to start for someone who has just believed.

- Repent and Believe
- Be Baptized
- Pray
- Go and Make Disciples
- Love
- Lord's Supper
- Give
- Be the Church

Healthy Church Formation

The Structure of the Church

The church does not need a building, so in that sense, it doesn't need to "look" like anything. If a new church does decide to get a building, it should do so with its own resources (foreign money has

consistently proven to be poison in the life of missionary churches), and the building should look local and not foreign.

The leadership should be local, although the cross-cultural worker may need to do a lot of coaching in the early weeks and months of the life of the church. The worship should contain the elements that are taught by Scripture, and none other: singing, reading Scripture, prayer, confession, giving, thanksgiving, teaching from Scripture, testimony, mutual encouragement and admonition, and the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper.

The style of the music should be local, and new believers who are musically gifted should be encouraged to produce Christian worship music in their own language and musical style. A good place to start is usually setting Scripture to music.

The seating patterns and general decoration of the place where they meet should feel natural to local people. If people in that culture usually sit on the floor, the church should sit on the floor, and if unrelated men and women usually do not sit together, they should not sit together in church.

There are two goals in designing and organizing the life of the church.

1. The church must be obedient to Scripture.
2. The church should be as much at home in the local culture as it can be without violating goal number one.

Churches in the New Testament were very different culturally from churches in modern North America. What we do is adapted (contextualized) for our cultural setting. Churches in other parts of the world do not need to look like us. They simply need to be faithful to the Bible.

The Mission of the Church

These churches also need to multiply. God never intended for any church to be a gospel dead end street. Churches should grow from the natural evangelism done by the ordinary disciples in the congregation.

By and large, fruitful evangelism in most places today will not happen from a "come and see" approach, where unbelievers are brought into the church to hear the gospel from the professionals up front. Fruitful evangelism happens from a "go and tell" model, where everyone in the church regards themselves as commissioned and sent to share the gospel in their neighborhoods, at work, and anywhere else that life takes them. This should lead the church to be in a constant mode of launching new churches that can take the gospel further than the original congregation could ever go.

Again, if church planting does not require buildings, money or paid staff, a church does not need to be wealthy to engage in ongoing church planting. No church is healthier than a church that is always in the process of birthing new churches.

Church planting is an essential part of biblical mission work. These churches need to be healthy and biblically sound, but they do not need to look like churches in North America. As much as possible, they should be financed and led locally, and they should engage in evangelism and church planting themselves from the very start of their existence.

They should also embrace a vision for the nations from the very beginning. They should be trained and encouraged to take their place with the rest of the global church in spreading the gospel to the ends of the earth, until there is no place left where Jesus is not known.[4]

Leadership Development

There is one element in the description of an elder/pastor/overseer that is unique to him, and that is the ability to teach (1 Timothy 3:2).

Paul spells out what this means in detail in his letter to Titus: "He must hold firm to the trustworthy word as taught, so that he may be able to give instruction in sound doctrine and also to rebuke those who contradict it" (Titus 1:9). This means that he must have been taught the trustworthy word, and he must be convinced that it is true. He cannot be a person with shaky convictions. He needs to know sound doctrine and be able to explain and apply it to others. He also needs to be able to refute false teaching.

This means that an elder/pastor/overseer needs to have solid biblical and theological training in order to fulfill his responsibility to God and to his congregation.[5]

Exit

We believe new churches have the responsibility to join in the spread of the gospel throughout the world. We look for churches that demonstrate multiple generations of disciple making and church growth and that are ready to send their own missionaries to proclaim the gospel among unreached peoples and places.

[4] International Mission Board, Explore Missions, "What Should the Church Look Like?
[5] International Mission Board, Explore Missions, "Training Leaders"

Next Steps:

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Resources:

Here are some additional resources to help you prepare to serve overseas.

Suggested Reading List

Here are a few recommended resources about International Missions as you seek God's direction about how he is calling you to join his global mission. You can find links to purchase each of these books from the suggested reading tab at www.summitrdu.com/international/

Missionary Biographies and Autobiographies

The Insanity of God by *Nik Ripken*
Hudson Taylor's Spiritual Secret by *Dr. Howard Taylor*
To the Golden Shore by *Courtney Anderson*
Sent by *Hilary Alan*
Servant on the Edge of History by *Sam James*
Filling Up the Afflictions of Christ by *John Piper*
Through the Gates of Splendor by Elisabeth Elliot

Leveraging your life

Let the Nations Be Glad by *John Piper* (get the first chapter free here)
Risk is Right by *John Piper*
Radical by *David Platt*
The Call: Finding and Fulfilling the Basic Purpose of Your Life by *Os Guinness*
The Cost of Discipleship by *Dietrich Bonhoeffer*
Follow Me by *David Platt*
Gaining By Losing by J.D. Greear

Personal and Relational Health

Instruments in the Redeemer's Hands by *Paul David Tripp*
Side By Side by *Ed Welch*
When People are Big and God is Small by *Ed Welch*
Disciples are Made Not Born by *Walter Henrichsen*
Spiritual Discipleship by *J. Oswald Sanders*
Crucial Conversations by *Kerry Patterson, Joseph Grenny, Ron McMillan, Al Switzler*

Planting Churches Overseas

T4T: A Discipleship Re-Revolution by *Steve Smith*
Church Planting Movements by David Garrison
A Holy Ambition by John Piper (free download)
Church Planting by the Book by Elbert Smith

Praying for the Nations

Operation World by Jason Mandryk
Joshua Project

Preparing to Go Cross Culturally

Cross-Cultural Servanthood by Duane Elmer
Discovering the Mission of God by Mike Barnett and Robin Martin
Missionary Methods by Roland Allen
Anthropological Insights for Missionaries by Paul G. Hiebert

Specific to Region or Religion

Death of a Guru by Rabi R. Maharaj
Breaking the Islam Code by J.D. Greear
Jesus Among Other Gods by Ravi Zacharias
Handbook of Today's Religions by Josh McDowell
A Global Gospel in a World of Religions (Secret Church Resources)
A Wind in the House of Islam by David Garrison
Seeking Allah, Finding Jesus by Nabeel Qureshi

Strategy

The Insanity of Obedience by *Nik Ripken*
When Helping Hurts by Steve Corbett & Brian Fikkert
Finish the Mission by John Piper
Poverty of Nations by Barry Asmus and Wayne Grudem
Movements that Change the World by Steve Addison
The Meeting of the Waters by Fritz Kling
The Master Plan of Evangelism by Robert E. Coleman

Resources for Families

The Jesus Storybook Bible by Sally Lloyd Jones
The Gospel Story Bible by Marty Machowski
The Garden, the Curtain and the Cross by Carl Laferton

Devotional Books For Before You Go and While You're Gone

Gospel Primer by Milton Vincent
New Morning Mercies by Paul David Tripp
Pilgrim's Progress by John Bunyan
Taste and See by John Piper
Valley of Vision by Arthur Bennett
Comforts from the Cross by Elyse Fitzpatrick

Missions History & Theology

From Jerusalem to Irian Jaya by Ruth A. Tucker
A History of Christian Missions by Stephen Neill
The Open Secret by Lesslie Newbigin

A Light to the Nations by Michael W. Goheen

Your First 90 Days on the Field

We want you to thrive as you go where God has called you. We know you are excited about what God had called you "do." We are excited about that too. We want to remind you that God is just as enamored with whom he has called you to "be" while you're on the field.

Honestly, how well you do at "*being who God has called you do be*" will directly impact how long you "*do what God has called you do*." That is why we developed this tool for you during your first 3 months on the field. We pray it does three things:

1. **Helps you bond with your team effectively.** *Missionaries need the church too.* You're not just called to plant church, but to be a part of the church. Don't ever forget this.
2. **Help you identify key self-care practices in a cross-cultural setting.** *You're not God's employee; you're his child.* God takes no delight when his children abuse themselves in the name of the family business. Burnout is not the Purple Heart of ministry.
3. **Help your advocate and pastoral team know to care for you best.** Those who know you best now will see you least after you move. This means the degree of intentionality in communication with them will need to be greater in order to provide a comparable level of care to what they've provided up until now.

During your first month, we encourage you to read and journal through *First 30 Daze* by Larry and Susan McCrary. Your first month on the field will be rich with so many first experiences that it would be easy to miss/forget them all. Larry and Susan have put together an excellent devotional and reflective guide to help you in your transition. Many of the things you'll want to share in the conversations we encourage below will be cultivated in these readings and reflections.

Several parts of the four tasks below will become part of your ongoing habits to ensure that you are physically, emotionally, relationally, and spiritually healthy as you seek to serve God well for the full tenure of time you are on the field.

Task One: Get to Know & Serve Your Team

Meet with *each* member of your team individually or as a couple. Have meaningful conversations around the following questions. This conversation might be a day of prayer walking through your city or a series of meal conversations.

- Discuss how each of you grew up, where you've lived, when you came to faith, and were called to the field.
- Ask your teammate to describe their time in your new city (highlights, lowlights, and general observations).
- Consider meeting at one of their favorite places in the city and ask why it has become their favorite.
- Share the insecurities and temptations that are most common for you and ask about theirs.
- Discuss, "What is most important to each of you in a good friend?"
- Discuss the key practices that contribute to your emotional health. What are your personal hobbies or interests?
- Discuss, "What is the best way to share new ideas or concerns on this team?"
- What have been the most difficult experiences in the history of this team? What would be the easiest ways that I might unintentionally aggravate or contribute to this history?
- What are the next anticipated transitions or key markers in the life of this team?

During your first 90 days on your team look for intentional ways to serve each team member. The conversations above should give you information about what would be most meaningful and beneficial for each team member. On a healthy team every team-member contributes to an other-minded, service-oriented culture on that team.

The intent of these conversations is threefold: (1) to build the quality of relationships that will help you feel less alone in a cross-cultural setting, (2) to cultivate the kind of community that will allow your team to be the church for you, and (3) to grow the level of trust that will allow you navigate conflict better – remember, team conflict is the #1 reason people return from the field early. Invest in the relationships early so you have the capital to navigate difficult things later.

From these conversations, identify the team member(s) that is the best-fit to meet with weekly for prayer, encouragement,

and accountability; share who this is with your advocate and pastoral support person.

Task Two: Monitor Your Body's Acclimation

Monitor when your sleeping and eating habits adapt to a healthy normal in your new setting. These are the strongest indicators that your body is feeling "at home" in its new cultural setting.

Once you've baselined your physical adaptation to the new setting, then (unless there is illness) you can allow changes in your eating or sleeping habits to serve as "yellow flags" that you are facing emotional or relational challenges that should be discussed with your closest team friend, advocate, and pastoral support person.

Share your progress and stability in these key areas:

- 7-8 hours of sleep each night
- Quality of appetite (neither loss of appetite, nor comfort eating)
- Time for a weekly prayer, encouragement, and accountability meeting with your closest team friend
- A few hours of engaging your personal interest each week; loss of pleasure in (or guilt about) things you normally enjoy is an early warning sign for either depression or burnout

Task Three: Hold the Rope Being Held

Talk to your advocate and pastoral support person at least three times during the first 90 days. Differences in time zones, acclimation to the new culture, and investing in your new can be a distraction from connecting with those who agreed to "hold the rope" at home.

If you neglect to stay regularly connected with your support team, then you are likely to feel more alone and less supported during a difficult time on the field. Letting your support team know about the incremental ups and downs of your transition is important for them to know how to adequately care or celebrates in the high-highs and low-lows that may come.

Task Four: Discovering Your (Actual) Job Description

Write out your team role like a job description. Each time your role changes update this document. Allow this document to be a reference point to ensure that role is clear, satisfying, and sustainable. Share how it changes (because it will) with your advocate and pastoral support person each time you speak.

Note: Your team leader should have to the opportunity to speak into and offer feedback on this job description (initially and with each adaptation) before you share it with your advocate and pastoral support person.

With each adaptation ask support people to ask you:

- What part of these changes are you most excited about?
- What part of these changes did you accept for the betterment of the team?
- Is there a positive balanced in your role between what you enjoy and where you're sacrificing?
- Is there adequate time for rest, devotion, friendship, and personal interests?
- Are these any tensions from these changes, which if unaddressed, with jeopardize the unity of the team?
- How can I be praying for fruitfulness in these changes?

As your role on the team forms and adapts, these are crucial seasons in your satisfaction on the field. Generating self-awareness through healthy conversation about the initial formation of your role and changes is an essential part of protecting team unity and maintaining a high personal morale.

Task Five: Live in Ongoing Community

Complete the "Community" evaluation (which examines at how balanced your one another life is) at least monthly during your first three months on the field. Share these results with your closest team friend, advocate, and pastoral support person. If there other areas of balanced Christian living where you need accountability and these evaluations prove to be and effective ways for you to initiate meaningful conversations with your support team, then decide which ones and what what interval will be part of your ongoing care plan.

Summit Long-term Sending Commitment

This is the commitment form between you and your sending church. This will remind you of what The Summit Church has committed to do for you as well as the commitment we expect from you as a missionary from The Summit Church.

Sending Church Commitment

As your sending church, with the help of God, this is our commitment to you:

We commit to ongoing prayer for you.
Prayer is our primary strategy for mobilization and mission and it is our primary strategy for ongoing support of our missionaries. This includes but is not limited to: personal prayer of missions team members, boiler room prayer at each campus, weekly missions team prayer meetings and weekly Summit staff prayer gatherings.

We will provide pastoral counsel and support.
In addition to the ongoing support of your Advocate, the Summit Church staff commits to providing you with pastoral support. Understanding the limitations of distance and time, we will do all we can to be available for counsel, encouragement and accountability. You should feel free to contact any missions staff member at any time, and we commit to check in with you regularly.

We will send short-term teams to love on you and work with you.
Our goal is to send one short-term team per year to every team or unit that desires to receive one. Our highest aim with these teams is to love and support our missionaries and that is how we coach them throughout the training process.

We will recruit Summit members to join you for mid and long-term stints.
You have our permission to approach Summit members and invite them to consider joining your work. In addition, we will keep your work especially in mind as we counsel Summit members considering pursuing missions. We hope that this ongoing conversation between you, the missions team and church members will draw out more qualified workers well suited to your context whom we might also send and support.

We will assist in meeting special needs as we are able whether it be financial, volunteer needs, etc.
Obviously financial or other limitations may not allow us to meet any and every need. But it is our intent that our posture toward you will be biased toward trusting you and supporting you in any ways that we can. We hope that you will be bold in letting us know about needs, and understanding of factors that may limit our responses to any particular request.

Summit Long-Term Missionary Commitment

By entering into this commitment, the candidate acknowledges The Summit Church to be his or her sending church. Here are our expectations of field personnel:

Church Involvement

We believe that the local church is God's "plan A" and expect all team members to be involved in a local church. For some, that will be an established Christian body of believers that meets in a public building for worship and ministry. It is recommended that the candidate is a part of a church that is predominantly indigenous believers whenever possible to allow additional access to the people you are serving and to promote and encourage national pastors and leaders. For others, the local church will be an underground house church, whose meetings cannot be public and require stringent protection. The expectation for participation and involvement is the same, regardless of how "church" is defined in your cultural context.

Relationships on the Field

Your Team

You are doing ministry alongside a group of believers who are far more than your teammates. While you may attend different "churches" on the weekend, your team is similar to a first-century church and body of believers. You should be growing and developing spiritually—as an individual and as a team. Your team must be diligent to build community. Like a small group, you should hold each other accountable, worship together, and go deep into the Word. Above all, you should pray together regularly. Team disunity is the Enemy's number one weapon against those who serve overseas, and it is difficult to hold a grudge against someone you pray with regularly.

Your relationship with your team can be one of the biggest contributors to your ministry success. Conflict should be resolved quickly. Always assume the best in others. Team conflict is not necessarily a bad thing. It can be a great conduit for what God is doing in you and others as long as you handle it in a biblical way. Don't be afraid to ask the hard questions and don't avoid the difficult issues. Hold each other accountable—personally and spiritually. Your supervisor and others will ask questions about your ministry successes, but you need to be held accountable for your personal, emotional, and spiritual well-being. And you need to hold others accountable. Your team members are often in the best position to do that.

Your Supervisor

You must strive for a relationship of respect with your field partner and/or supervisor. No one likes their boss all the time, but your servant role on this team requires that you grant your supervisor respect at all times, especially when you disagree. Discuss issues or areas of concern directly with him or her, but remember that

you are under your supervisor's authority while serving on the field.

Relationship with the Summit

The Summit is your sending church and we want to hear from you! We desire to be involved in your life and the work God has called you to do. We expect that you will include us on any ministry updates you send out to keep us updated on how we can be praying for you, your family, and your ministry. We definitely want to be involved in your "multitude of counselors" (Proverbs 15:22) when you are making big personal or ministry decisions.

We care about you personally. You can expect us to ask how you are doing emotionally and spiritually. We will ask about your personal challenges and your ministry challenges. We will ask about your relationships and about your time with the Lord. We want to be sure you are continually strengthened in the Word and with other believers as you strive to accomplish the task of sharing the gospel.

Other expectations:

- *Correspond regularly with the International missions staff.*
- *Provide your most recent prayer card in print and digital form so we can keep it in front of the congregation here.*
- *Keep in constant contact with your Advocate, including at least a monthly call.*
- *Participate in quarterly conference calls (for all overseas personnel).*
- *Send your monthly updates to cpstories@gmail.com.*
- *Complete yearly reports that the Summit missions team will send to you.*
- *Prioritize spending time with the Summit during stateside visits.*

Name: _____

Date: _____

Signed by The Summit Church

Additional Topics

How to Raise Support

While this will only scratch the surface of all the support raising can and will entail, here is a little information to get you started.

As daunting as the task of raising support may seem, here are some things to remember:

- ❑ The mission of God is a worthy investment, for those who are going and supporting.
- ❑ Raising support will require much planning and praying.
- ❑ Raising support is an important aspect of your call to go to the nations. Raising support means building a team of people to invest in a specific work with you.
- ❑ Support raising requires faith and trust in God that he will provide.
- ❑ You need a support system of people that will be invested in the ministry you are a part of. This includes both financial and prayer support.
- ❑ Raising support will require a lot of effort and can seem very overwhelming. It may even seem like a sacrifice. Remember why you are raising support.
- ❑ Jim Elliot says, "He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep to gain what he cannot lose." This include our lives, money, time, etc. Remind your supporters of what they are a part of often.
- ❑ The goal of support raising is for many people to know the salvation they can have through Jesus, "so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Philippians 2:10)

Raising Financial Support:

<u>Getting Started</u>:

- ❑ Enlist prayer partners
- ❑ Understand and write down your call. (What are you doing? Why are you doing it? How will this happen?)
- ❑ Create your budget. (Do this in partnership with the organization you are going with)
- ❑ Create your support letter. (Include who you are, the opportunity you have, the vision for why you are going, the need you have (include the total or monthly amount you have to raise), and make the ask).
- ❑ Namestorm. Make a list of everyone you will ask.
- ❑ Gather contact info for people you will ask. (Addresses, phone numbers, emails).
- ❑ Create a document/system for scheduling meetings, tracking support, etc.

Ask:

- ❑ Send support letters (by mail, email, facebook, etc.)
- ❑ Make follow up phone calls
- ❑ Schedule and have face to face meetings. (Share your calling, need, make an ask, go over logistics of how to give).
- ❑ Follow up with people
- ❑ Be thankful. Your supporters believe in what you are doing and the work you are going to be a part of. Keep them updated on what God is doing and remind them that they are a part of his work among the nations

Prayer Support

Even more important than securing our financial support, is having prayer support. Scripture reminds us in John 15 that apart from Christ we can do nothing. Your belief in this truth will grow as you serve overseas and as you raise support. Apart from Christ you can do nothing.

Andrew Murray says, " The man who mobilizes the Christian church to pray will make the greatest contribution to world evangelization in history." You have the opportunity to do more than simply ask people to pray for you, you are asking them to join you in being obedient to seeing the gospel spread throughout the nations.

Ways to enlist prayer support:

- ❑ Share "16 Ways to Pray for Missionaries" (url below) with them.
- ❑ Use Blogs, Video Blogs, Facebook Groups, etc. to keep your supporters up to date on your life and things they can pray for.
- ❑ Use a system like Mailchimp that allows you to send out newsletters to groups easily, and helps you to make them look great!
- ❑ Make sure they know about the people you are working with. (what religion do they follow, what is their culture like, are they receptive to the gospel etc).
- ❑ Equip them to pray specifically for the unreached people groups you are working with. (send a list and ask them to commit to one)
- ❑ Do your best to not lose touch with your supporters, keep in contact at least monthly.

Resources:

- Read: "The God Ask" by Steve Shadrach
- Read: Article: "16 Ways to Pray for Missionaries" by David Platt. https://www.imb.org/2016/11/08/16-ways-to-pray-for-missionaries/
- Read: Article from The Traveling Team "Obstacles to Mission Support Raising" http://www.thetravelingteam.org/articles/support-raising

Raising a Family Overseas

We know that living overseas has a unique set of difficulties and challenges that may vary from place to place. As a parent, you must not only prepare yourself spiritually, emotionally, culturally, etc. but you have the responsibility for preparing your children for the transition to live overseas. Your children will soon be Third Culture Kids. "A Third Culture Kid (TCK) is a person who has spent a significant part of his or her developmental years outside the parents' culture. The TCK builds relationships to all of the cultures, while not having full ownership in any. Although elements from each culture are assimilated into the TCK's life experience, the sense of belonging is in relationship to others of similar background." (David C. Pollock).

Here are some things to focus on as you prepare your children to live and serve overseas:

- Love Jesus:
  - Teach them to know Jesus and know him well. Teach them to pray and pray with them about their fears and worries about moving overseas.
- Say Goodbye Well:
  - Be sure to make the time to allow your children to have meaningful goodbyes with their friends and loved ones.
  - Teach them to value others by reminding them what they mean to them and reconciling with anyone they may need to.
- Acknowledge their Feelings:
  - Talk about what they are thinking and feeling. Acknowledge that there are sad, happy, scary and exciting things about moving overseas.

Resources:

- Explore:
  - Website: iamatriangle.com
  - Website: michelephoenix.com
- Read:
  - Third Culture Kids by David C. Pollok
  - Misunderstood: The impact of growing up overseas in the 21st Century by Tanya Crossman
  - Article: https://www.imb.org/2017/09/27/third-culture-kids-conundrum-home/
  - https://www.imb.org/2016/09/05/reading-list-missional-parents-raising-globally-minded-kids/

How to Host a Short Term Team

At the Summit Church we desire short term teams to be a blessing to you personally and to your ministry overseas. They are one of the greatest discipleship tools that we have as a church, and a beautiful way for The Summit Church to continue to be a part of what God is doing in your life and ministry.

Here are some tips on how to host teams and use them to their full potential:

Before they come:

- Communicate well with them ahead of time. This will directly correspond to the level of success of the team.
- Cast vision. Why should they come and be a part of your work? Write a purpose statement for the trip about what you hope you for the team to be apart of as well as what you hope for the team to gain.
- If possible, send them a daily schedule.
- Require the team to read cultural or historical information about your country or people group. Let them know what you would like them to do to prepare to visit the culture. (We highly recommend requiring *Cross-Cultural Servanthood* for all team members.)
- Tell them exactly what you want them to bring (or leave behind).
- Try to answer emails quickly.
- Send any evangelistic or training materials you would like the team to be familiar with and challenge them to practice ahead of time.

While they are there:

- Let them know your strategy.
- Develop some creative ways to help them know your city.
- Provide them with some hands on training, and then release them.
- Think through and anticipate what questions or issues might arise and prepare to answer them before hand.
- Have fun with them.
    - We want these teams to be a blessing to you personally as well as your ministry.
    - Show them things you love about your city. Allow them to see how you work hard, but also how you rest and play.

As they return:

- Give them guidance to know how to proceed with those they share with.
- Give good feedback.
- Be sure to let us know how the trip went! We want to know the ways the team was a blessing to you as well as how we can do better.

Things to Remember:

- Use the team in ways that will support the long term goals.
- Focus on the good that Short Term Teams have to offer.
- Hosting a Short Term Trip is an incredible opportunity to impact a group of people from your church.

Resources:

- See IMB article: **Volunteer Teams as Partners in Ministry**: https://www.imb.org/2017/08/09/volunteer-teams-partners-ministry/

More ideas for hosting a short term team:

Self-Assessment/Accountability Questions

- ❑ What is God teaching me? Am I prioritizing walking with him through prayer, Bible study, and meditating on scripture?

- ❑ Am I currently sharing the Gospel with non-believers? Am I being intentional about being around lost people so that I can share with them?

- ❑ Am I living a life of purity? Have I looked at pornography or been consumed by lust?

- ❑ Do I have a significant amount of debt that would make it difficult to move overseas? Am I seeking to honor God with my finances?

- ❑ Are there any significant traumatic or emotional experiences that I have not properly dealt with? Am I struggling with anxiety or depression?

- ❑ Is there any unresolved conflict or unforgiveness in any relationships? If so, what do I need to do to see healing/forgiveness?