



# MISSION TRIP GUIDE

“AND YOU WILL BE MY WITNESSES IN JERUSALEM, IN JUDEA,  
IN SAMARIA, AND TO THE ENDS OF THE EARTH.” ACTS 1.8



lookout valley  
baptist church

# INTRODUCTION

So you want to go on a mission trip! Great! But how and where do you start preparing to GO on mission with the gospel? Hopefully this guide will be of some help.

We are excited that you are thinking about going on a mission trip with us at Lookout Valley Baptist! As a church, we desire to actively fulfill the Great Commission locally, /nationally, and internationally. There are many trips planned this year, and we hope to continue furthering our partnerships with missionaries scattered around the world.

This guide will help prepare you for your trip, as well as give you some tips in raising the necessary funds for those trips. Mission trips are expensive, but do not let the financial cost be a hindrance for you to go on a trip. “The earth is the Lord’s and all that fills it” declares the Psalmist. If God is leading you to Go on mission, then he will provide the necessary resources for you to go.

Please use this guide to prepare and pray for your upcoming trip. If you have any questions or concerns, please speak to one of the staff, elders, or deacons of missions. We would love to talk with you more about upcoming opportunities, or any concerns you might have.

## Contents

INTRODUCTION.....	2
WHAT’S THE PURPOSE? .....	3
PRAYER STRATEGY -YOUR FIRST PRIORITY .....	4
Understanding The Armor of God .....	6
BIBLICAL PRINCIPLES FOR FUNDING CHRISTIAN MINISTRY .....	7
FINANCIAL SUPPORT GUIDELINES.....	9
HOW TO FUND YOUR MISSION TRIP .....	11
Sample Letters.....	14
SPIRITUAL READINESS .....	18
PRACTIAL READINESS.....	20
Packing Tips .....	20

2015. Lookout Valley Baptist Church

## WHAT'S THE PURPOSE?

What's the focus? What's the direction? Are we going to win the lost to Christ? Yes, but that will not be our focus. Are we going to push back Satan's dark territory by exposing it to the Light? You bet we are, but that's not going to be our focus. Encourage the missionaries? Make new relationships with each other and our brothers and sisters who live outside of Lookout Valley? Obey the Great Commission? Explore a new culture? See great sights? Buy some cool stuff? All are answered with a 'yes', but none are going to be the primary focus of this mission trip.

The main purpose of this mission trip will be walking with Christ. We will take the ministry we do very seriously, but let us individually realize that this is about how close we can draw to the Lord. That will be the measure of our success.

This is the verse under which this mission team will travel and minister in Honduras:

***“You will seek me and find me,  
when you search for me with all your heart.”***

***Jeremiah 29:13***

This will be about walking with our Father. The ministry will be covered in the Holy Spirit's presence. God is sending us. He will equip us. The victory will be won. I believe it is assured. However, man's idea of success is not our goal. This walk is about trusting Him. He is asking us to put our hand in His. He is taking us down a dark path, but He is lighting that path with His Glory and calming our hearts with His presence. He is our “Abba Father”. He is our Daddy. He will be found if we search for Him with all our heart.

## PRAYER STRATEGY -YOUR FIRST PRIORITY

By far, prayer is the most important support you will receive, and it will be the foundation on which other support is built. Prayer will be your greatest need and your greatest blessing.

LVBC expects every team member to recruit and develop a prayer team of at least 5 people who will support you before and during your trip. You may be thinking, "How do you do that?"

Well, here's how...

**Step 1—Pray.** Begin praying for the trip yourself, and ask God to lead you as you seek out specific people to commit to pray for you. Consider the following verses in reference to prayer and commit yourself to the daily task of communication with God.

1. "I sought the Lord, and He answered me, and delivered me from all my fears."  
*Psalms 34:4*
2. "Devote yourselves to prayer, keeping alert in it with an attitude of thanksgiving."  
*Colossians 4:2*
3. "With all prayer and petition pray at all times in the Spirit, and with this in view, be on alert with all perseverance and petition for all the saints." *Ephesians 6:18*
4. "Therefore, confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another so that you may be healed. The effective prayer of a righteous man can accomplish much." *James 5:16*
5. "O Lord, I call to you; come quickly to me. Hear my voice when I call to you. May my prayer be set before you like incense; may the lifting up of my hands be like the evening sacrifice." *Psalms 141:1-2*

**Step 2—Ask.** Personally ask people for a commitment to pray for you.

**Step 3—Lead.** Lead your prayer team by providing them with specific information about the place you will be going, the people you will be serving, and the ministry with which you will be involved. Your team leader will be able to provide you with this information. Other general suggestions for prayer may include the following:

1. Pray for the witness of believers in the area, for boldness and encouragement.
2. Pray for churches in the area to reach out to people and their needs.
3. Pray that lost people will become open to hearing about Jesus and then believe in Him as their Lord and Savior.
4. Pray for those in positions of leadership within the country – for their salvation and witness.
5. Pray for the Lord to intervene where evil forces are at work.

6. Pray for families to be united through the Holy Spirit.
7. Praise the Lord for what He has done in you.
8. Pray for team unity, encouragement, and edification.
9. Pray for God to provide opportunities for you to share His salvation with locals and that you will take hold of those opportunities.
10. Pray for God to be glorified among those people.
11. Pray for vehicles, roads, checkpoints, markets, police, government officials, aircraft, airline employees, etc...basically all things and people with which we will come in contact. God controls details.
12. Pray through the Armor of God (Ephesians 6) each morning as your prepare and when you are on the field.

## Understanding The Armor of God

**The Belt of Truth:** We need to "provide for honest things not only in the sight of the Lord, but also in the sight of men." (II Corinthians 8:21). Yes, we need to be truthful concerning all things; but we also need to stand on the "truth" of the Bible. When we face trials and tribulations, we need to "tighten" our belt while standing on truths written in the Word of God. What we know in the good times, we need to hang on to in the troublesome times. We might just end up tightening our belt a notch or two. However, the good news is that "God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted (whether it be doubting or giving up) above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it." (I Corinthians 10:13)

**The Breastplate of Righteousness:** Although our "righteousness is of filthy rags" according to Isaiah 64:6, we are justified and made righteous in God's eyes because of our faith (Habakkuk 2:4) in His Son - Jesus Christ. Through the work of Christ in our life we have been regenerated, we are covered by the blood of Jesus. Therefore, God no longer sees our sin but rather the blood of Jesus which cover us. Thus God looks upon us as pure and holy vessels because we no longer belong to the world but belong to Jesus.

**The Sandals of Peace:** We need to "preach the word and be instant in season, and out of season" (II Timothy 4:2) and we must be obedient to the Lord's command in Mark 16:15 to "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." Yet we are sent forth "as sheep in the midst of wolves; so we must be wise as serpents and harmless as doves."(Matthew 10:15).

**The Shield of Faith:** In Romans 10:17 Paul writes: "Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God." Thus we increase our faith by reading the Bible. Faith works in love (Galatians 5:6) and "perfect love casteth out all fear." (I John 1:18 ). Therefore, Faith (Forsaking All In Trusting Him) casts out fear (False Evidence Appearing Real). Thus if you want to live a life without fear you need to read, study, and meditate on the Word of God.

**The Helmet of Salvation** guards our minds, for the battle against the enemy is in the mind. The helmet of salvation also assures us of two things: We will have eternal life in heaven. God has a special plan for us.

**The Sword of the Spirit** is the Word of God breathed from our spirits and released from our mouths, mingled with and energized by the breath or Spirit of God, causing it to be filled with His divine life and ability.

The written Word (graphe) was given by the inspiration of God (II Timothy 3:16-17, II Peter 1:21). The Living Word (logos) is Jesus. (John 1:1-3, Luke 1:35, Hebrews 4:12) Jesus said in John 6:63 "the words that I speak (rhema) unto you, they are spirit, and they are life." By speaking the Word, your words become energized (zoe). (Hebrews 4:12).

John writes in Revelation 1:16: "And He (Jesus) had in his right hand seven stars; and out of his mouth went a sharp two-edged sword; and his countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength." Thus Jesus, who is the Word (logos) according to John 1:1, speaks (rhema) forth His Word which is sharper than a two-edged sword (Hebrews 4:12); His Word shall not return unto Him void, but it shall accomplish that which He pleases according to Isaiah 55:11. Therefore by speaking and praying the Word of God (our sword of the spirit), strongholds are broken down in the heavenlies.

Just as Jesus the living Word (logos) defeated Satan at Calvary, the spoken word (rhema) now enforces that victory. Remember, it is not the Sword of the Spirit until you speak it!

# BIBLICAL PRINCIPLES FOR FUNDING CHRISTIAN MINISTRY

The Bible identifies three ways in which a Christian ministry can be supported financially.

These principles apply to support for either an individual or an organization.

## 1. LOOKING TO GOD ALONE

We should first consider the principle of looking to God alone. This means making your needs known to no one but God. While there seems to be no text specifically describing this method, we do have His promise of provision.

*“And my God will supply every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus.”  
Philippians 3.19*

## 2. SELF-SUPPORT

There is the principle of self-support by using the personal means that God has provided to you and your family. When David was buying a field to offer sacrifices to the Lord, he was offered the field at no cost from the owner. In response, David refused the gift, and said,

*“I will not offer burnt offerings to the Lord my God that cost me nothing” (2 Samuel 24.24).*

There were times in Paul’s ministry when he provided for his own financial needs by making tents. In Acts, 1 Corinthians, and in 1 and 2 Thessalonians we are told that Paul labored to support his own ministry.

*“And because he was a tentmaker as they were, he stayed and worked with them.”  
Acts 18:3*

*“For you recall, brethren, our labor and hardship, how working night and day so as not to be a burden to any of you, we proclaimed to you the gospel of God.”*

*1 Thessalonians 2:9*

## 3. MAKING NEEDS KNOWN

Making needs known to others has both Old Testament and New Testament examples. Making needs known to others means sharing the vision and ministry with family and friends and asking them to prayerfully consider supporting the ministry financially. You should make needs known to your immediate family and friends first, and then work outwardly from there.

Some Biblical examples of making needs known are:

- a. In Exodus 25:2, God commanded Moses to build a tabernacle and instructed Moses to ask the people of Israel to contribute the necessary building materials. “Tell the sons of Israel to raise a contribution for Me; from every man whose heart moves him you shall raise My contribution”. In Exodus 35:21, Moses had presented the need, and the response was more than enough! “Everyone whose heart stirred him and everyone whose spirit moved him came and brought the Lord’s contribution for the work of the tent of meeting and for all its service and for the holy garments”.
- b. In 1 Kings 17 the Lord instructed Elijah to make his needs known to a widow living at Zarephath. As a result, she provided food and lodging for Elijah for as long as he needed it.
- c. In Acts 11:28-29, a prophet by the name of Agabus came making a need known in a manner that prompted the following response. “The disciples, each according to his ability, decided to provide help for the brothers living in Judea.”
- d. It seems the Corinthians had at some point made a financial commitment to give toward a specific need (2 Corinthians 9:5). In chapters eight and nine, Paul writes, encouraging them to follow through with their commitment. He also sent Titus to ensure that they would follow through. It seems Paul is very aggressive in this fundraising.

# FINANCIAL SUPPORT GUIDELINES

## *PROCEDURES FOR FUNDRAISING*

1. Each team member is responsible for raising the entire amount of money to go toward the total cost of the mission project in which they are participating.
2. People who give money are technically giving to Lookout Valley Baptist Church Missions with the understanding that "you" are the mission volunteer for whom their gift is designated in order to meet "your" financial needs.
3. Money is usually non-refundable; therefore, be sure you are going before you raise the funds. If you do not go on the trip, funds may be applied to another trip in the same calendar year if trip purchases have not already been made. If trip purchases have been made, then those funds will go to offset those trip costs, and/or applied to other members of that team.
4. Every contribution to your trip (including your own) is tax-deductible. The church office keeps accurate records of all contributions.
5. Once the money is deposited, the team leader is given a check to cover costs while on the mission project. The team is a "family" and all "family needs" will be met from the team money.
6. Please keep in mind, many times the actual cost of the mission trip exceeds the actual amount of individual dollars raised.
7. Extra money will be dealt with in the following ways:
  - a. It may be applied to another member's account on your team.
  - b. It may be applied to someone else's account on another team.
  - c. It may be applied to general expenses, such as building and evangelism materials, for your trip or for another trip.
  - d. Please note: It may NOT be used to reimburse you for passport expenses, immunization, or other necessary items for the mission trip. Also, funds cannot be withdrawn for film, souvenirs, or spending money. (This is not simply an LVBC policy but rather compliance with IRS guidelines).
8. Expenditures of funds are carefully screened to ensure good stewardship of those funds.
9. Have all checks made payable to "Lookout Valley Baptist Church".
10. Procedures:
  - a. Start with your personal funds (2 Samuel 24:24).
  - b. Secondly, ask your immediate and extended family.
  - c. Thirdly, ask your church family. In asking for the prayer and financial support of your church family, we ask that all requests be made one on one. Specifically,

please do not make any requests in any small group meeting from Lookout Valley Baptist Church.

- d. Lastly, send letters to friends, acquaintances, co-workers, etc. See "How to Fund Your Mission Trip" for help (See Below).

### *INVOLVING OTHERS IN MISSIONS THROUGH GIVING*

1. Understand that money is merely a resource, among many resources, which will enable you to share the gospel with people in another place and another culture.
2. Emphasize the opportunity to share in the work of evangelism rather than simply your need for money.
3. See "How to Fund Your Mission Trip" (see below) or sample support letter, and then write your own expressing your own thoughts and plans.
4. Plan ahead for extra expenses, and start saving and contacting people early.
5. Send thank you cards and also a report of your mission experience after you return home.

**The Bottom Line: God has plenty of money. If He is leading you to go on a trip, He will provide the resources! Be diligent, but don't worry.**

# HOW TO FUND YOUR MISSION TRIP

## Ministry Partner Development

### *Step 1: Name-Storm a List of Prospective Ministry Partners*

Who are you going to ask to support you on your trip? Good question! To develop a list of potential ministry partners requires a lot of thought. You will use a process similar to brainstorming in developing this list. It is called name storming.

Brainstorming is the process by which you list all ideas without evaluation. Evaluation of the ideas comes after brainstorming. Name-storming is a similar process where you list all the people you can think of. The objective is to come up with as many people as possible before any evaluation is done. No name is unqualified, but give precedent to those who are Christians. The rule of thumb is to not make a decision for an individual whether or not he or she is interested. That is their decision to make. If you limit yourself to those you feel will or can give, you may be prematurely disqualifying those God wants to become your ministry partners. After the list is assembled, the names are prioritized by whom you contact first. Pray each day that the Lord will bring to your attention names of individuals whom you should contact.

Put an initial contact list together by name-storming everyone you can think of. To begin this process, write down all the spheres of influence with which you have been involved, such as family, close friends, Small Groups, Bible studies, prayer groups, recreation teams, etc.

Write down names that come to mind. This list can later be divided into groups. Don't count anyone out. The average person knows hundreds of people. Everyone is a candidate!

Think of potential contacts, and begin praying for those you plan to contact. You may be thinking you could never generate more than a handful of names, but research has shown the average individual has a personal network of at least 400 friends and acquaintances.

After you have finished name storming, you will need to prioritize the names and begin to contact them accordingly.

### *Step 2: Contact Strategy*

If at all possible, meet with those individuals or families face-to-face in order to explain the upcoming trip and share the needs you have. This will allow the individual to ask any questions they may have, and allow you to share information easily with them explaining details and purpose of the upcoming trip.

How do you contact people who live in locations that you will not be able to personally visit? The Letter/Telephone Strategy is an excellent tool for you to use to "meet" with people when it is not possible to travel to their cities.

There are three parts to this strategy:

1. Sending the letter
2. Following up with a phone call
3. Thanking them

To make this strategy the most effective, it is important that you follow up the letter with a phone call within 7-10 days from the time you mail the letter. The follow-up call is a critical aspect of the strategy. The phone call enables you to accomplish two things. First, it enables you to build a relationship with the person through conversation. And secondly, it brings up the matter of urgency for getting a decision for your support.

#### *How the Letter Should Look (See Samples)*

- The letter should have the look of a personal letter. Use Times New Roman (or similar), 12 point, as your font. This is the easiest to read.
- Your name and address should be in the heading.
- Do not use an inside address (the addressee's address).
- Always give your letter a specific date.
- The greeting should have the name of the person to whom you are writing and use a comma after the salutation rather than a colon. Try not to use a form letter.
- Use correct grammar, but write in an easy-flowing, conversational manner.
- Keep typewritten paragraphs to six lines. Shorter paragraphs enhance the readability of the copy.
- Double-space between paragraphs.
- Indent paragraphs for greater readability and personalization.
- Keep sentence structure simple and uncomplicated. Guard against using incomplete sentences.
- Use correct spelling – spell check!
- Keep letter to a maximum of 1 page. If you have a second page, divide the sentence at the end of page one, such that the reader will have to turn to page two to finish reading the sentence.

#### *Content of the Letter*

- Write the letter as if you were writing to one person.
- Explain how and why you are being led to go on the mission trip
- Give a brief explanation of the trip and what you will be doing
- Mention your total need for support in a dollar amount.
- Ask for their financial support, specifying requested amounts.
- Mention you will call them for their decision.
- Close the letter.
- Handwrite a P.S. or include pictures/map of where you are going.

- Never apologize for writing or calling a person whom you wish to involve in helping you meet a need. When you apologize, you end up appearing to be a beggar rather than a child of the King sent out on His mission!
- You are providing them with an opportunity to be involved in a spiritual ministry through their personal resources. Remember, we should desire their prayers and spiritual support more than mere financial giving. "Not that I seek the gift itself, but I seek for the profit which increases to your account" (Philippians 4:17).

### *Preparing to Mail Your Letters*

Get those stamps and envelopes! There should be a return envelope in the letter that is already stamped and addressed. You are asking people to support you on this trip; you need to make it as easy as possible for them to get this support back to you! Statistically, research on support raising shows that the easier you make the process for the potential supporter, the higher the initial response rate. Print your letters at home, making sure to change the name for each supporter.

Remember: Don't mail all your letters the same week unless you can contact every person that following week. It is best to mail them out in increments of 25 at least every other day, or every few days.

## Sample Letters

February 1, 2013

Dear Homer and Marge,

Hello from Chattanooga, Tennessee! I hope you both are doing well, I really miss spending time with you and the kids, I hope I might have a chance to see you all again when I am back home sometime next year.

I wanted to bring you up to date on my plans for this summer. As you probably know, I have joined a new church recently that is focused on missions. I am enjoying our new town and new church family. God is teaching me a great deal about reaching people in other cultures and the biblical foundation for missions.

Recently I have signed up for a summer mission project in Concepcion, Chile. The trip is sponsored by our church, Lookout Valley Baptist, in conjunction with the International Mission Board. On this trip we will focus on church planting and will be doing research on un-reached people groups. The trip will be challenging, but I am looking forward to being on the field and allowing God to use me while in Chile.

I am looking forward to this trip and can't wait for June to come. I am writing this letter to you because I need your help! I am writing to ask for your partnership in order for me to participate in this trip to Chile. I need to raise \$3,000 to cover the cost of my portion for the trip. In order to meet this need, I'm asking people to consider becoming a partner with me in this outreach in Chile in two ways: one is by praying for me regularly, and two, by supporting me financially.

Homer and Marge, would you prayerfully consider being a partner with me in ministry this summer by praying and giving financially? I'm trusting that God will raise up partners who will support me with \$50, \$75, \$100, or more by my support deadline of May 1st. I know that not everyone can give those amounts, so really any amount is appreciated. I am trusting God to speak to people's hearts to be involved in my ministry this summer.

If you would let me know your decision soon regarding either prayer, or financial support, I'd greatly appreciate it. I have enclosed a return envelope that you may use to mail in your response. Because my support deadline is quickly approaching, I will give you a call to see what you are thinking if I don't hear from you by February 25th.

Thanks again, it has been a blessing to know you and your family these past several years.

Serving Christ with you,

Millhouse  
October 23, 2011

Howdy Fred & Wilma,

I hope you are doing well. Things here in Tennessee are moving rapidly as I approach the last month of school. Yes, after six years, I will be graduating from UTC. This final semester has been stressful with nine hours of class, tutoring and teaching high school students, applying for jobs, and serving at the church. I am ready for the final stretch, awaiting Thanksgiving and graduation. The Lord has not shown me where he is leading me after graduation, but I trust and know his plan will come together.

Until then, I will remain faithful to finish the semester strong, teach a bible study at church, and focus on the Lord as he reveals his plans for my life in the near future. Moreover, the Lord has opened an opportunity to return to Guatemala this June. I know many of you partnered with me last year as I traveled with a group of men from our church here in Chattanooga. I am writing again to ask you to partner with me as we return to the same village, continuing our ministry among the Achi people of Pacux, Guatemala.

This trip will focus on physical repairs to homes in the village, door-to-door ministry, working with people in the city dump, and the possibility to backpack into remote village in the mountains. Our church has five trips to Guatemala planned for 2011, as we have built an incredible relationship with the people there in the village and in the city dump.

The cost of this trip will be upwards of \$1500, and as many of you know with most students, funds are tight. The Lord has been teaching me to rely upon Him daily, to not try and do everything myself. He is also teaching me to rely upon other friends and believers – to swallow my pride and realize that this is a *partnership* – this is what the church is called to do. I may be the one on the field, but you are the one's enabling me to get there.

I'll keep you updated on how the trip develops, but at the very least, put me on your prayer list for the next few months. My address, along with the church's address, are below if you feel led to partner with me in this new adventure. This would make an incredible graduation present! Thanks for all that you will do, and for what you all mean to me!

Hope to hear from you soon!

In Christ,

Barney

### *Step 3: Following up the Letter with a Phone Call to Get a Firm Decision*

The purpose of your letter is to prepare the way for your phone call. The phone call is the most critical factor in the whole process. Because we place a strong emphasis upon cultivating our relationships with our ministry partners, calling a person back provides the best follow through for a letter. It enables two things to happen.

First, and foremost, is that you will be able to use that time to build a relationship with that potential ministry partner. People want to know that you are interested in them. Second, you will be able to get their decision. Within 7-10 days from the time you sent the letter, call for a decision. Calling him at home or in the office is appropriate.

#### What to do when making a follow-up phone call

- Identify yourself and chat briefly (3-5 minutes) with the individual. Ask a sincere question like
- "How are you and your family doing?" Be sure to listen and respond as needed.
- Ask if he received your letter. You will need to be ready to respond appropriately. The following could happen:
  1. He hasn't received it.
  2. He received it but hasn't read it.
  3. He looked it over, but can't remember the details.
  4. He has read it and has come to a decision.
- If the person you are calling answers with one of the first three responses above, you will need to be prepared to share the need over the phone. **DO NOT SAY, "I will send you another letter."** Be bold and ask over the phone. In some cases, you may need to call back for the decision. But, in most cases, the decision will be made while you are on the phone.
- Be sure to try to get an exact amount, as this will confirm the commitment in his mind and it will help you in your planning process.
- When it is appropriate, ask for prayer requests.
- Be sure to thank them for any decision. If they cannot become a ministry partner at this time, thank them for their prayerful consideration

#### Wimp Junction

- The most difficult part of the follow up phone call is the time when you have asked them if they would like to support you, and you are awaiting a response. This time is called "wimp junction" because it is easy to wimp out and speak before you have gotten a response.
- Example: "Hi Marge, I was wondering if you received my letter. You did? Well I was wondering if you and Homer had decided whether or not you were going to support me." Pause for 1 second. "But if you can't support me, I totally understand, I know you have kids in school right now and probably a lot of other things going on, so it's okay if you need to say no".
- Just be QUIET – and WAIT – give the person an opportunity to respond without interjecting or apologizing! Remember, you don't want to say no for people – let them

say no for themselves if they can't support! Many times we think we know what the answer, or even the amount will be, but it is often surprising just who supports and how much.

#### *Step 4: Follow Up and Thank You*

- If you have not been able to get a hold of someone you sent a letter to, it is appropriate to try contacting that person three times. You should not leave a message the first two times, and the third time you may leave a message. This is not something that is set in stone, but rather a strategy designed to keep the burden of follow up on you, and not the potential ministry partner.
- It is easy to leave a message and then feel relieved, thinking you no longer have to call the person back.

#### Saying Thank You

- A written thank you note after you have been notified of support is absolutely crucial. You must be disciplined and send out a thank you note within 24 hours of finding out about support.
- There are two reasons for such a quick turnaround:
  - It shows respect and thankfulness, the quicker you respond the more important their gift to you seems.
  - It is easy to forget – days and even weeks can slip by until you question whether or not you ever sent a thank you, and could forget to send one all together.

#### After the Trip

- Saying thank you does not stop after the check comes in! After your trip it is important to send a follow up letter that explains what happened on the trip and thanking the partner again for their financial contribution.
- When people give you financial support, they have a vested interest in what happened, so tell them about it! This is a great way to help people share in the mission and vision of the trip without ever having actually gone.
- Following up after the trip will also help you create a support base for your next trip! Make sure to include pictures or stories from the trip in your return thank you letter!
- Note: A great way to ensure that you will send out return thank you letters is to prepare the envelopes and stamp them prior to going on the trip. When you return, all you will have to do is write your letter and stuff the envelopes!

## SPIRITUAL READINESS

You are not only going into another culture to talk about Christ; you are going to be Christ. The people in the country where you serve will associate your behavior, attitude and character with that of Jesus. It is not simply enough to talk about Christ; you need to imitate Him. Becoming like Christ—being conformed to Him in mind, in faith and in action—will not happen during a Bible-study cram session the week before your trip. It takes time, discipline, and your willingness to allow the Holy Spirit to search your heart and shape you into the image of Christ.

If you don't already have a consistent time during the day when you meet with God, commit yourself now to daily Bible study and prayer. As you spend time reading the Word of God and seeking the face of God in prayer, intimacy will follow. Find an accountability partner that will take you to task when you miss your time with God. Realize that while church attendance and involvement in a Small Group are vital to your spiritual growth, they will not adequately prepare you for your mission. You must learn to meet with God individually as well as corporately.

Life on the mission field is demanding physically, spiritually, and emotionally. While you are in the United States you have several support systems—your family, your friends, your church, your faith—to lean on when your emotional and physical reserves are spent. You can't pack up your family and friends and take them with you to the mission field. You can't run to them when you've had a rough day on the job, when you disagree with your supervisor, when you are baffled by cultural differences, when you are frustrated by another team member. But you can lean on Christ.

Begin depending on Christ now. He should be the first support you lean on, not the last. His strength is sufficient to meet every need you have, however deep, however immediate. Remember Zechariah 4:6 "'Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit,' says the Lord Almighty" (NIV).

### *Topics for spiritual preparation*

Spiritual Renewal for Service.....	Psalm 51
Taking Time to Pray.....	Mark 1:35-45
The Word and the Way .....	Psalm 119
The Power to Serve .....	Acts 1:1-12
Christian Depression .....	1 Kings 19:1-18

Here I Am, Let Me Go! .....	Isaiah 6:1-12
Fit to Serve .....	Ephesians 5:1-17
Availability Plus Christ .....	John 6:1-14
Commissioned to Serve .....	Matthew 28:19-20
Empowered to Serve .....	Matthew 28:16-18
The Unlikely Witness .....	John 4:1-42
The Expected Result .....	John 4:1-42
Making the Ordinary Extraordinary .....	Acts 4:1-19
Revive Us Again .....	Psalms 85
Overcoming Difficulties.....	Numbers 13:25-33
Removing the Stones.....	John 11:39-40
The True Measure of Greatness.....	Matthew 20:20-28
Differences Between Good Missionaries .....	Acts 15:36-41
When You Cannot Finish the Task .....	Luke 10:25-35
Acting Like What You Are .....	Matt 21:18-19; Gal 5:22-23
Overcoming Prejudices .....	Jonah 1:1-3; 3:1-20; 4:1-3
Serve with Gladness .....	Psalms 100
Serve with Gratitude .....	Psalms 103
Serve with Compassion .....	Jonah 4
Serve with Urgency .....	John 9:1-7
Serve with Inner Strength .....	John 15:1-16
Serve with Love .....	John 21:15-23
Serve with Team Spirit .....	Romans 12
Serve with Common Purposes .....	1 Corinthians 1:23-31; 2:1
Proclaiming Liberty to the Poor .....	Isaiah 61:1-6

## PRACTIAL READINESS

1. Pray, pray, pray.
  - a. Being praying for yourself and your team (see above)
  - b. Recruit your prayer partner team!
2. Apply for your Passport (if applicable) if you haven't already done so. It usually takes 4-6 weeks after submitting your application to receive your passport.
3. Go to or call your physician explaining your upcoming trip. Have a physical checkup as needed. Request a prescription for a general anti-biotic or gastrointestinal medicine.
4. If your trip involves a great deal of travel or physical labor, start exercising or training to be in good physical shape.
5. Research the area where you will be traveling through the US State Department website. Determine if there are any necessary vaccinations for your area of travel. (Hepatitis A and B, Tetnus, Typhoid, Yellow Fever etc...). Your team leader will have a better idea of what you may need.

### Packing Tips

#### *PACK SMART*

Keep three things in mind when you pack:

- The climate of your assigned country
- The culture of your assigned country
- Your project assignment

A few basic guidelines for dress:

- Modest, rather than shocking clothing
- Comfortable, but not sloppy outfits
- Low-maintenance clothes in basic colors
- Washable fabrics, no dry-clean only

#### *PACK LIGHT*

Take it literally. Pack only what you can carry. You may be dashing to catch connecting flights, chasing trains pulling away from stations, hanging on for dear life from buses pulling away from the curb. You should be able to run without being burdened by your luggage. Pack only what you need.

A word to the women: The prospect of having to wear the same thing twice in a week may be painful to you, but we promise that no one will be scandalized if you do. Pack sensibly. Take a few tops and a few bottoms that mix and match. Go for the minimalist look!

### *THE ESSENTIALS: WHAT NOT TO FORGET*

#### Carry-on bag

- Airplane tickets
- Passport/visa—DO NOT PACK YOUR PASSPORT IN YOUR CHECKED LUGGAGE
- Cash/credit cards
- Contact information of your supervisor and other important contact information for emergencies. Keep these with your passport, and have extra copies for each piece of luggage.
- Reading material
- Bible (If your country is Security Code 3, check with your supervisor)
- Extra eyeglasses, especially if you wear contacts
- Travel-size toiletry items: shampoo, soap, cleansers, toothbrush, toothpaste, comb or brush, antibacterial hand sanitizer. (Please remember that you cannot carry-on more than 3oz. of liquid and it has to be in a Zip-loc type bag) \*
- Prescription medications in the original containers
- OTC Meds: Aleve, Pepto-Bismol, Imodium, band-aids, Benadryl, eye drops, antacids, mosquito repellent with Deet
- Underwear (a few extra sets)
- One extra set of clothes in carry-on bag in case your luggage is lost or arrives late.

#### Checked Baggage

- Photocopy of your passport and visa (include in each bag you check)
- Clothing (remember climate, culture, and your project assignment)
- Bedding and Pillow (if necessary)
- Comfortable shoes for walking long distances
- Rubber sandals to wear in the shower
- Sunglasses & Hat for protection from the sun
- Flash Light
- Water Bottles
- Bug Spray with DEET
- First-aid items
- Sunscreen/lip balm with sunscreen

- Baby wipes/Wet wipes/tissues/antibacterial soap (these are a must!)
- Feminine products
- Ministry related materials
- Zip-lock bags (use them to pack shampoo, body lotion, soap)
- Gift for host/hostess or missionaries
- Postcards showing pictures of your state and family
- Razor with plenty of blades
- Crocodile repellent for river baptisms

*THE NONESSENTIALS: WHAT TO LEAVE BEHIND:*

- Jewelry- It is risky to travel with and wear jewelry in many countries.
- Hair dryer/curling iron- Your appliances aren't likely to work. You will not only need an adapter, but also a transformer just to use your hair dryer.
- Most of your makeup- Take only what you absolutely can't live without.
- Most electronics. Many don't work in foreign countries and are easily lost.

*ONE CHECKED BAG ONLY IS HIGHLY RECOMMENDED*

The theme of packing for mission trips is: "Less is more"