

MISSIONS: MINISTERING BEYOND OUR BORDERS

WHAT “MISSIONS” MEANS
FOR THE MISSIONARY



**WALKING IN THE WORD
MINISTRIES**

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Missions: Ministering Beyond Our Borders (Missionary Edition)
What “Missions” Means for the Missionary
by Missionary/Pastor Jeremy Markle

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**I wish to lovingly dedicate this book
to my wife, Laura,
who has faithfully joined me
in every aspect of my life and ministry.**

**I also wish to dedicate this book
to my three children,
Jeremiah, Juliana, and Joshua,
who are an integral part of our ministry
as my wife and I enjoy training them
for the glory of God.**

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PREFACE

This book has been written to provide insight into the physical, emotional, and spiritual adjustments a missionary faces as he begins his new life and ministry. Throughout its pages you will find spiritual encouragements for the missionary and helpful hints for his family and friends who desire to support him in his service to their Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

The “Letter to the Reader” expresses a personal caution for the reader to be open-minded and kind-hearted as he reads about the real struggles that missionaries encounter. It encourages the reader, whether missionary or missionary supporter, to be gracious as the physical and spiritual struggles of missions are openly illustrated and discussed with the goal of revealing Biblical comfort and counsel for each topic.

The “Introduction” encourages the reader to balance the physical and emotional realities of missionary work with the spiritual joy of harvesting God’s reward.

Each chapter presents its subject matter by considering four progressive points of view of a missionary’s life and circumstances: The Missionary Experience, The Biblical Example, The Actual Events, and The Biblical Exhortation.

“The Missionary Experience” provides a brief synopsis of what a missionary may experience as he pursues God’s call for his life. This brief introduction to the subject matter is based on real experiences missionaries have faced and is provided as an explanation of the importance of the specific subject of that chapter.

“The Biblical Example” seeks to help the reader understand that his experiences are not new. They have been faced by others who have followed God’s will for their lives and ministries throughout the Scriptures. By considering these examples, the missionary will have the opportunity to see examples of both correct and incorrect responses, as well as their results. It will also give the reader a 20/20 perspective of how God has used similar situations not to destroy His

servants but rather to enhance their usability and bless their obedience in the end.

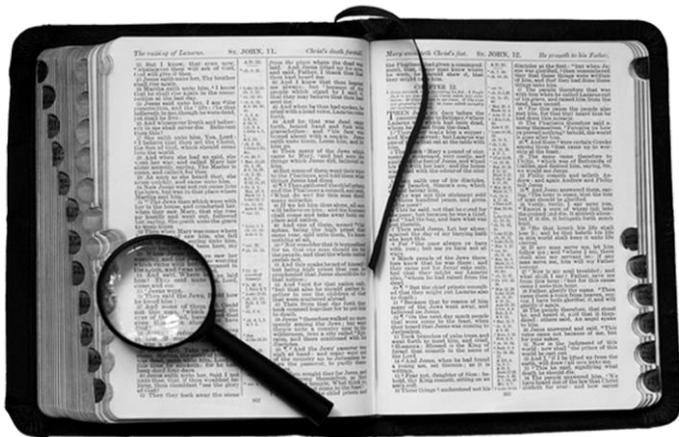
“The Actual Events” is an opportunity for the author to share his personal experience or those of fellow missionaries he knows in order to help the reader understand that he is not alone. It also provides the opportunity to present specific spiritual lessons learned as he or others he knows have experienced the subject first hand.

“The Biblical Exhortation” concludes the chapter by giving specific verses and passages of Scripture to direct the reader in the days and weeks that follow. The exhortation has a two-fold purpose: first, to provide the reader with clear Biblical instruction as to how he must follow God’s Word and will in his life, and second, to provide a spiritual pep talk for those who are growing weary in the work.

As each chapter concludes, three extra resources are provided. First, practical advice is given for each of the three different participants in the ministry of missions: the missionary candidate, the missionary’s supporters, and the missionary in service. Second, extra passages of Scripture are included to help build the faith of those missionaries who are facing the specific trial or situations that have been addressed. Third, extra examples of Biblical characters who faced similar circumstances is provided, along with the passage reference so that further Biblical study can be made.

The missionary’s edition of the book includes an appendix that gives outlines and tips to help the missionary begin his new life and ministry on his field of service. Although each field of service is different, these outlines and tips are presented in such a way as to provide both detailed suggestions as well as general principles in directing the missionary to make wise choices in many of his tough decisions. The subject matter includes, but is not limited to, language learning, health concerns, housing arrangements, and church facilities.

The Missionary's Life, A Life of Faith



Faith or Foolishness

Hebrews 11:1

*Now faith is the substance of things hoped for,
the evidence of things not seen.*

*Faith is based on Facts
and produces Fidelity*

*Foolishness is based on Fiction
and produces Failure*

Romans 10:17

*So then faith cometh by hearing,
and hearing by the word of God.*

*Place your faith
in the truths of the Scriptures
and in the God that they reveal!*

Hebrews 11:6

*But without faith it is impossible to please him:
for he that cometh to God must believe that he is,
and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.*

Letter to the Reader

CAUTION, HANDLE WITH CARE

Dear Friend,

As I begin sharing with you some of the often alluded to, but rarely specified nor properly prepared for, effects of “culture shock” and ministry pressure in the first years of a missionary’s life and ministry on the foreign field, I find myself thinking of these words: “CAUTION, HANDLE WITH CARE.” The subject on which we are about to embark is similar to much of the medication of our day. Medication can provide strength and healing; or, when applied incorrectly, it can destroy and even bring death. And so it is with the realities of missions.

The Apostle Paul was concerned that his burdens in ministry for the believers in Ephesus would cause them to be discouraged and spiritually faint. For this reason he said, “*Wherefore I desire that ye faint not at my tribulations for you, which is your glory*” (Ephesians 3:13). He then continues by sharing his desired outcome for them, knowing about the realities of his ministry, as he reveals his prayer to God for them. “*For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man; That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, May be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God*” (Ephesians 4:14-19). He finishes by sharing his confidence in the power of God to provide such awesome strength and the knowledge of His presence and love for the



them by saying, “*Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen*” (Ephesians 3:20-21).

And so we come to the reason for taking time to honestly evaluate the many struggles which God’s servants face as they follow His will in the life and work of missions. It is not that we become overwhelmed with fear and shrink back from the task at hand, nor that we wallow in self-pity, but that we find God’s strength and presence on a daily basis to continue to accomplish His will for His Glory, and that we might pause to sincerely consider, personally prepare for, and readily come alongside others to uplift them as we all face these realities while sacrificially serving our King!. Our hearts must be awakened so that we are realistically alert to the level of dedication we must have to fulfill a life of discipleship. In the words of Jesus Christ, “*For which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost, whether he have sufficient to finish it? Lest haply, after he hath laid the foundation, and is not able to finish it, all that behold it begin to mock him, Saying, This man began to build, and was not able to finish*” (Luke 14:28-30). Believers must “count the cost”!

We cannot ignore nor cover up the true cost of being a disciple of Christ. We must personally accept and publicly teach to the present and future generations that “*ye [we] are not your [our] own? For ye [we] are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your [our] body, and in your [our] spirit, which are God’s*” (I Corinthians 6:19-20). Each believer must be willing to “*present your [their] bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your [their] reasonable service*” (Romans 12:1).

For many missionaries, the presenting of their physical body on the altar of martyrdom is a reality that may not be avoided and carries with it a sense of heroism. Many believers declare to Jesus, as Peter did, “*I will lay down my life for thy sake*” (John 13:37). But sadly, they also follow Peter’s example of discouragement and ultimate desertion when they are



not called upon to die but rather to live a life of death (death to personal ambitions, dreams, accomplishments, etc.).

In Romans 12:1 Paul was not asking for believers to be a dead sacrifice but rather a **“living sacrifice.”** He was teaching a daily sacrifice of deliberate death to self while still living in this physical world. Paul proclaimed his dedication to this type of sacrifice by stating, **“I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me”** (Galatians 2:20). Paul also exemplified this type of sacrifice in II Corinthians 1:8-9 as he said, **“For we would not, brethren, have you ignorant of our trouble which came to us in Asia, that we were pressed out of measure, above strength, insomuch that we despaired even of life: But we had the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God which raiseth the dead.”**

Paul, through the pressure and persecutions of ministry, had lost all hope of life. But he continued living in God’s strength and had faith in His providential plan. Paul did not wish that his fellow believers were ignorant of these burdens. He did not believe that they should be hidden behind cliches and anecdotes. But rather, later in the same letter, he specifies the very trials that he had endured as a minister of Christ. In II Corinthians 11:21-33 he writes, **“I speak as concerning reproach, as though we had been weak. Howbeit whereinsoever any is bold, (I speak foolishly,) I am bold also. Are they Hebrews? so am I. Are they Israelites? so am I. Are they the seed of Abraham? so am I. Are they ministers of Christ? (I speak as a fool) I am more; in labours more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft. Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep; In journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; In weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness. Beside those things that**



are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches. . . . In Damascus the governor under Aretas the king kept the city of the Damascenes with a garrison, desirous to apprehend me: And through a window in a basket was I let down by the wall, and escaped his hands.” However, in the midst of Paul’s honest presentation of his difficulties he never asked for pity, nor did he display a “victim” mentality. He declared boldly, *“Who is weak, and I am not weak? who is offended, and I burn not? If I must needs glory, I will glory of the things which concern mine infirmities. The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which is blessed for evermore, knoweth that I lie not”* (II Corinthians 11:29-31).

The secret to Paul’s ability to be a “*living sacrifice*” is found in the first few verses of this letter where he presents his view of God and his ministry for God to fellow believers. II Corinthians 1:3-7 says, *“Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort; Who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God. For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ. And whether we be afflicted, it is for your consolation and salvation, which is effectual in the enduring of the same sufferings which we also suffer: or whether we be comforted, it is for your consolation and salvation. And our hope of you is stedfast, knowing, that as ye are partakers of the sufferings, so shall ye be also of the consolation.”* Paul viewed God as his personal comforter for every one of life’s and ministry’s tribulations. He also viewed his sacrifice as service for others. He desired to provide consolation (comfort) and salvation to others, even at the cost of his own personal comfort.

Paul, while writing to the believers at Philippi says, *“According to my earnest expectation and my hope, that in nothing I shall be ashamed, but that with all boldness, as always, so now also Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether it be by life, or by death. For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. But if I live in the flesh, this is the fruit of my labour: yet what I shall choose I wot not. For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is*



far better: Nevertheless to abide in the flesh is more needful for you” (Philippians 1:20-24). The sacrifices of this life are real for any servant of God. For the missionary, these sacrifices are magnified by the very nature of the work. He is called to prove his commitment to be Jesus’s disciple not by His words but by His actions.

Jesus, while speaking to a multitude that was following Him, said in Luke 14:26-27, *“If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple. And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple.”* And Matthew 10:37-39 clarifies Jesus’s discipleship qualifications by saying, *“He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me. He that findeth his life shall lose it: and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it.”* He was sharing with those following Him on that day that the price of being His follower is the sacrifice of everything and everyone in their life for the love of Him. And because He did not desire the masses to unwittingly declare their commitment, He continues in Luke 14:28-33, *“For which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost, whether he have sufficient to finish it? Lest haply, after he hath laid the foundation, and is not able to finish it, all that behold it begin to mock him, Saying, This man began to build, and was not able to finish. Or what king, going to make war against another king, sitteth not down first, and consulteth whether he be able with ten thousand to meet him that cometh against him with twenty thousand? Or else, while the other is yet a great way off, he sendeth an ambassage, and desireth conditions of peace. So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple.”*

Each believer must seriously count the cost of service. The next generation must be taught that, as good soldiers of the King of kings and Lord of lords, there is a price to be paid. The price is high, it is personal, it is financial, it is physical, and yet it is nothing in comparison to the price of *“the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and*



without spot,” which He paid on Calvary for our soul (I Peter 1:18). Each believer must say with confident faith, “For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us” (Romans 8:18).

Please understand that the call to missionary work is not to be exalted nor glorified. Missionaries are simple servants. They are neither to be pitied nor pampered. However, the day to day challenges and changes that a missionary and his family face must be prepared for and prayed about by the missionary as well as fellow believers. There is no reason that missionaries and their personal testimonies and sacrifices should cause damage to the cause of Christ. On the contrary, if the subject of missions is handled with care by applying the truths of Scripture and a true faith in the all-wise and all-loving God, we will see the ministry of world-wide missions grow in strength and numbers in the generations to come.

*My desire is that you may consider what role God has for you in the ministry of missions and dedicate yourself to be a faithful disciple of Jesus Christ as you are a “**living sacrifice**” to God (Romans 12:1).*



I Thessalonians 3:1-8

- 1 Wherefore when we could no longer forbear,
we thought it good to be left at Athens alone;*
- 2 And sent Timotheus, our brother, and minister of God,
and our fellowlabourer in the gospel of Christ,
to establish you, and to comfort you concerning your faith:*
- 3 That no man should be moved by these afflictions:
for yourselves know that we are appointed thereunto.*
- 4 For verily, when we were with you,
we told you before that we should suffer tribulation;
even as it came to pass, and ye know.*
- 5 For this cause, when I could no longer forbear,
I sent to know your faith,
lest by some means the tempter have tempted you,
and our labour be in vain.*
- 6 But now when Timotheus came from you unto us,
and brought us good tidings of your faith and charity,
and that ye have good remembrance of us always,
desiring greatly to see us, as we also to see you:*
- 7 Therefore, brethren,
we were comforted over you in all our affliction
and distress by your faith:*
- 8 For now we live, if ye stand fast in the Lord.*



Proverbs 22:3-4

***3 A prudent man foreseeth the evil, and hideth himself:
but the simple pass on, and are punished.***

***4 By humility and the fear of the LORD are
riches, and honour, and life.***

Introduction

MISSIONS: THE JOYFUL HARVEST

Psalm 126:5-6

*They that sow in tears shall reap in joy.
He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed,
shall doubtless come again with rejoicing,
bringing his sheaves with him.*

The ministry of missions provides many opportunities for rejoicing both on earth and in heaven. However, because many of God's laborers become "*weary in well doing*," they often do not enjoy the "*season*" of joyful harvest (Galatians 6:9). One of the primary goals of this book is to help those who desire to participate in the ministry of missions to be accurately informed and adequately prepared for the labor they are entering.

In order for a farmer to enjoy his dream of a plentiful harvest, he must carefully prepare himself for the work that he must complete. Most importantly, he must choose the crop he wants to harvest. Then he must choose the proper seed, prepare his equipment, and prepare the soil by adding nutrition, irrigating, and plowing. When the time is right, he must carefully plant the chosen seed in the prepared soil. Finally, he must wait, wait, and wait some more as he carefully watches over and attends to the needs of his seeds by regular watering, weeding, etc. All the work that the farmer does to make sure that the little seed can produce the desired crop is hard and requires an extreme amount of patience, but when the harvest day comes and the plants are full of ripe fruit, the farmer experiences the joy of his investment. The farmer knows that this harvest was not produced overnight, nor did it develop on its own. The harvest



required his investment through personal sacrifice and dedication, but it was worth it all.

The apostle Paul uses farming as a specific illustration for his ministry when he said ***“I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase. . . . Now he that planteth and he that watereth are one: and every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labour”*** (I Corinthians 3:6-8). Paul recognized that although he had planted the spiritual seed of God’s Word in Corinth, time and sacrifice by himself and others were needed before that seed could produce its spiritual fruit through God’s divine power. The ministry of missions is the same today, but sadly some missionaries never see the fruit of their sacrifice because they become discouraged and quit before the harvest is ready. Many of those who quit do so not because they did not have a true heart for God, nor because they did not have the correct goals in mind as they began, but because they simply did not realize the level of physical, emotional, and spiritual sacrifice that would be required and the length of time it would take before the harvest would be ready. For most missionaries, their first term is a time of preparing the soil and planting the seed. It is not until their second or third term that they truly enjoy the opportunity to ***“come again with rejoicing, bringing his [their] sheaves with him [them]”*** (Psalm 126:6).

The ministry of missions, whereby the ***“precious seed”*** of the Gospel of Jesus Christ is spread across the globe, is a great undertaking. When accomplished correctly and faithfully, it provides an overwhelming joy as the spiritual fruit is harvested for the glory of God (Psalm 126:5, Matthew 13:1-23). And every missionary can experience the same joys the Apostle Paul experienced—the joys of God’s presence, God’s promises, God’s power, God’s protection, God’s purpose, and God’s people.

The Joy of God’s Presence

God’s faithful minister can enjoy the constant presence of his Lord and Savior as he seeks to fulfill Jesus’s command to ***“Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to***



observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you” (Matthew 28:19-20). Jesus concludes by promising, “Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen” (Matthew 28:20).

He can serve God in any situation or location with the knowledge that God has said, *“I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me”* (Hebrews 13:5-6). As he finds himself in difficult situations, he can remember the Apostle Paul’s experiences found in Acts 18:9-10, where God said to him, *“Be not afraid, but speak, and hold not thy peace: For I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to hurt thee: for I have much people in this city.”* On those occasions when he has no human companions in the ministry, the missionary can say with the Apostle Paul, *“no man stood with me, but all men forsook me,”* and then conclude by saying, *“Notwithstanding the Lord stood with me, and strengthened me; that by me the preaching might be fully known, and that all the Gentiles might hear: and I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion. And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto his heavenly kingdom: to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen”* (II Timothy 4:16-18).

The Joy of God’s Promises

God’s faithful minister can joyfully anticipate the fulfillment of God’s promises of both earthly and heavenly rewards for his labor. He can expectantly trust God’s promise that when His Word *“goeth forth . . . it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it. For ye shall go out with joy, and be led forth with peace”* (Isaiah 55:11-12). He can say with the Apostle Paul, *“For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us”* (Romans 8:18). And through the difficulties of ministry he can declare, *“But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God”* (Acts 20:24). Then as he comes to the end of his life and



ministry, he can say, *“I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith”* (II Timothy 4:7). He can confidently serve God knowing that in heaven *“there is laid up for me [him] a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me [him] at that day: and not to me [him] only, but unto all them also that love his appearing”* (II Timothy 4:7-8).

The Joy of God’s Power

God’s faithful minister can enjoy the limitless power of his Almighty God in his life and ministry. Just as Jesus Christ promised, *“Ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth”* (Acts 1:8). He can regularly depend on the Word of God, which *“is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart”* (Hebrews 4:12). He can confidently say with the Apostle Paul, *“For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek”* (Romans 1:16). As he faithfully presents the Gospel of Christ to the lost around him, he can see the power of God *“to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me”* (Acts 26:18). Daily in his own personal life he can experience the *“exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power”* (Ephesians 1:19).

The Joy of God’s Protection

God’s faithful minister can face each event in his life with the joyful confidence of God’s personal protection. He can go about his life and ministry with the same confidence that the Apostle Paul had when he said, *“But thou hast fully known my doctrine, manner of*



life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, charity, patience, persecutions, afflictions, which came unto me at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra; what persecutions I endured: but out of them all the Lord delivered me” (II Timothy 3:10-11). He can face each danger in complete confidence that all the power of Satan and his angels will never touch him without God’s specific and limited permission, because God has “*made an hedge about him*” (Job 1:8-12). By doing so he will obey Jesus’s command to “*fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell*” (Matthew 10:26-28).

The Joy of God’s People

God’s faithful minister has the joy of working with and ministering to God’s children, who are also his spiritual brothers and sisters. He has the opportunity to rejoice as their lives are changed and matured to be more like Christ through his ministry (II Corinthians 2:3, 7:4, 13). He also has the opportunity to encourage them to stay faithful to God as he shares with them the joy they are producing in his life, just as the Apostle Paul indicated to the believers in Philippi, “*Therefore, my brethren dearly beloved and longed for, my joy and crown, so stand fast in the Lord, my dearly beloved*” (Philippians 4:1). He can say, as the Apostle Paul did to the believers in Thessalonica, “*For ye are our glory and joy*” (I Thessalonians 1:20). He will anticipate the future joy of continued ministry with them and to them by saying, “*For what thanks can we render to God again for you, for all the joy wherewith we joy for your sakes before our God*” (I Thessalonians 3:9, III John 1:4).

The Joy of God’s Purpose

God’s faithful minister can experience the joy of knowing that he is fulfilling his created purpose. I Corinthians 5:17 says, “*Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.*” And verse 20 provides the purpose for each new creature’s life by adding, “*now then we are ambassadors for Christ.*” A faithful minister of God has the



opportunity to have the most purposeful life possible as he continues the work for the Lord Jesus Christ by being “*the light of the world,*” by distributing the light of the Gospel to those who live in darkness (Matthew 5:14). As he patiently serves God through trials and temptations, he has the blessed privilege of saying with the Apostle Paul, “*But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God*” (Acts 20:24).

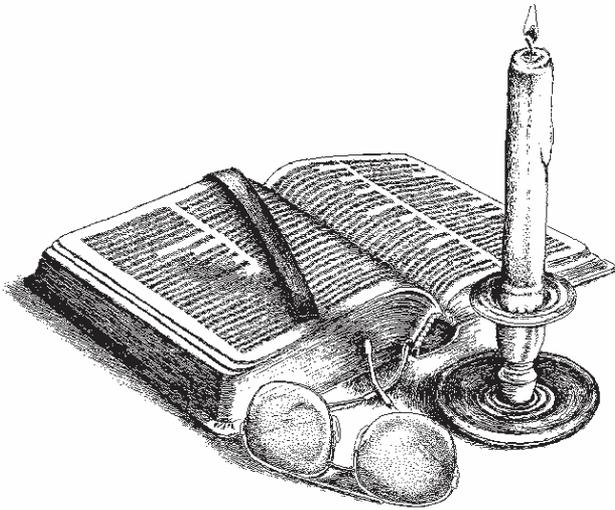
Now that we have explored some of the joys of a faithful missionary’s life, let us follow Jesus’s example of self-sacrificial faithfulness as we minister, by always “*looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God*” (Hebrews 12:1). Let us remember that “*no man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God*” (Luke 9:62). Let us be wise to count “*the cost*” of the ministry so that we may be properly prepared for the personal sacrifice that will be required and remember that it is an investment that produces the future joy of a God-blessed harvest (Luke 14:25-33).



II Corinthians 4:1-5

- 1 Therefore seeing we have this ministry,
as we have received mercy, we faint not;*
- 2 But have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty,
not walking in craftiness,
nor handling the word of God deceitfully;
but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves
to every man's conscience in the sight of God.*
- 3 But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost:*
- 4 In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds
of them which believe not,
lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ,
who is the image of God, should shine unto them.*
- 5 For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord;
and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake.*
- 16 For which cause we faint not;
but though our outward man perish,
yet the inward man is renewed day by day.*
- 17 For our light affliction, which is but for a moment,
worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory;*
- 18 While we look not at the things which are seen,
but at the things which are not seen:
for the things which are seen are temporal;
but the things which are not seen are eternal.*

*The Missionary's Comfort and Counsel
As He Adjusts
To His New Life and Ministry*



A realistic view
of the missionary experience
and the Biblical truths needed
to stay faithful in the ministry

Chapter 1

ARE YOU SURE?



Acts 21:12-14

*And when we heard these things,
both we, and they of that place,
besought him not to go up to Jerusalem.
Then Paul answered,
What mean ye to weep and to break mine heart?
for I am ready not to be bound only,
but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus.
And when he would not be persuaded, we ceased, saying,
The will of the Lord be done.*

The Missionary's Experience

The spiritual battle against a missionary preparing for service starts long before he ever lands on foreign soil. From the very moment that he recognizes God's call upon his life, he is faced with constant attacks from Satan with the direct purpose of distracting or discouraging him from being a faithful steward "*of the mysteries of God*" (I Corinthians 4:1).

One of the most effective and devastating attacks from Satan against the missionary is often found in the "loving" words and counsel of others. It is not uncommon for a preparing missionary to share his passion and dedication to leave all for the cause of Christ, only to receive doubt-filled responses like: "Are you sure?" or "Well, I'm behind you if you really think that is what God wants" or "Wow,



that is a big sacrifice!” What is even more devastating are the comments made behind his back, such as: “I think someone should talk to him about that” or “I’m not sure he’s cut out for that type of life” or “Does he know what he is getting himself into?” These devastating detractors from the will of God have eliminated many missionaries from ever getting to the field. They have also been part of Satan’s arsenal of fiery darts of doubt to destroy many missionaries after they arrive on their field of service and begin to face difficult times. Perhaps the missionary’s greatest burden is not the comments themselves but rather that they are being shared by the very people who should “know” and “love” him most. The preparing missionary may even come to realize that these human concerns are logically legitimate and that, although these reactions are contrary to his plans, they are being shared in “human love” for him. Therefore, he comes to the great crossroads of choosing human reasoning or divine enablement.

Biblical Examples

Dear servant of God, the Apostle Paul faced similar concerns and comments from fellow believers and friends as they “**besought him not to go up to Jerusalem**” (Acts 21:12). In Acts 21:8-11, Agabus prophesies about the result of Paul’s determination to minister in Jerusalem. Therefore, with great love for Paul, his fellow travel companions, as well as the believers in Caesarea, began to plead with him to not fulfill his ministry plans (Acts 21:12). The loving evaluations and concerns of fellow believers for Paul were legitimate, but Paul would not be distracted or discouraged from obeying God’s calling. Paul’s response: “**What mean ye to weep and to break mine heart?**” displays that Paul did not ignore the loving concerns of others, nor was he in denial of the realities he was facing (Acts 21:13). His heart was breaking because of their sorrow, but he still declared, “**I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus**” (Acts 21:13). But Satan knows the devastating effect of the tears and words of others. He knows that our heart and spirit can be broken quickly through human counsel that does not take into account either the will or greatness of



God. Moses and the children of Israel are a clear example of such discouragement when they received reports about the Promised Land from the twelve spies. God had promised them great blessings, and the children of Israel had physical evidence of great rewards provided by the spies as *“they came unto the brook of Eshcol, and cut down from thence a branch with one cluster of grapes, and they bare it between two upon a staff; and they brought of the pomegranates, and of the figs”* (Numbers 13:23). Even the initial accounting of their investigation verified what God had promised as they said, *“We came unto the land whither thou sentest us, and surely it floweth with milk and honey; and this is the fruit of it”* (Numbers 13:27). But the limited view of man’s logic quickly destroyed the greatness of God’s provision, as the ten spies continued, *“Nevertheless the people be strong that dwell in the land, and the cities are walled, and very great: and moreover we saw the children of Anak there. The Amalekites dwell in the land of the south: and the Hittites, and the Jebusites, and the Amorites, dwell in the mountains: and the Canaanites dwell by the sea, and by the coast of Jordan”* (Numbers 13:28-29). Although *“Caleb stilled the people before Moses, and said, Let us go up at once, and possess it; for we are well able to overcome it,”* he could not regain the confidence that the doubt-filled reports had destroyed (Numbers 13:30).

And as the ten spies continued to share their *“evil report,”* they said, *“We be not able to go up against the people; for they are stronger than we. . . . The land, through which we have gone to search it, is a land that eateth up the inhabitants thereof; and all the people that we saw in it are men of a great stature. And there we saw the giants, the sons of Anak, which come of the giants: and we were in our own sight as grasshoppers, and so we were in their sight”* (Numbers 13:31-33). Following such counsel, *“all the congregation lifted up their voice, and cried; and the people wept that night. And all the children of Israel murmured against Moses and against Aaron: and the whole congregation said unto them, Would God that we had died in the land of Egypt! or would God we had died in this wilderness! And wherefore hath the LORD brought us unto this land, to fall by the sword, that our wives and our children should be a prey? were it not better for us to return*



into Egypt? And they said one to another, Let us make a captain, and let us return into Egypt” (Numbers 14:1-3). The heart and spirit of the children of Israel were devastated, and they wanted to return to the place from which they had come—a place of slavery and torture, but at least a place in which they did not need to trust in God. They had all the promises of God’s blessing if they would only obey in faith, but due to a few discouraging comments, they were ready to quit. Thankfully, Paul nor his companions maintained the same spirit. Paul declared his dedication to obey God at any cost, and with tears in their eyes but strength in their heart they “*ceased*” trying to prevent Paul from his ministry and said, “*The will of the Lord be done*” (Acts 21:14).

Actual Events

Each prospective missionary faces doubtful comments to different degrees and for different reasons. I am very thankful for my Christian family and for their focus on full-time Christian ministry. I am also very grateful for a supportive sending pastor and church. But these privileges did not eliminate the funny looks and doubtful comments. Some comments were made by extended family who simply did not understand and did not want to see us leave, while others came from fellow believers who simply looked at some of the outward appearances and situations.

I can recall one common subject of doubt in reference to my age (not my actual age but my appearance of age). I had even been advised to wait a few more years before stepping into missions, not to gain more experience in ministry, but simply so that I would appear older and more mature. And as I considered these concerns that God permitted me to hear, I found comfort in God’s personal knowledge of me, my age, and my ministry calling through the example of Jeremiah. “*Then said I, Ah, Lord GOD! behold, I cannot speak: for I am a child. But the LORD said unto me, Say not, I am a child: for thou shalt go to all that I shall send thee, and whatsoever I command thee thou shalt speak. Be not afraid of their faces: for I am with thee to deliver thee, saith the LORD. Then the LORD put forth his hand, and touched my mouth. And the LORD*



said unto me, Behold, I have put my words in thy mouth. See, I have this day set thee over the nations and over the kingdoms, to root out, and to pull down, and to destroy, and to throw down, to build, and to plant” (Jeremiah 1:6-10). I also recall comments and concerned looks about our needed budget in order to fulfill our ministry purpose. And yet God provided guiding comfort through His command to “*seek ye the kingdom of God*” with his promise that “*all these things shall be added unto you*” (Matthew 6:33).

Biblical Exhortation

Dear servant of God, you must never permit Satan to discourage you through the doubt-filled comments of others. You must constantly guard yourself from destructive human reasoning, which discounts God’s will and power in your life and ministry. At the same time, you must ask God to provide you with wise counsel, which will provide a realistic understanding of yourself and your plans as you step out by faith (Proverbs 24:6). As God permits you to receive both counsel and criticism, you must say with David, “*Is there not a cause?*” as you set your heart and actions upon obedience no matter the outcome (I Samuel 17:29).



Practical Participation

✎ **Missionary Candidate** - **Please prepare** for those doubt-filled darts of Satan that will come at you as you seek to obey God. Please know that many of these doubts are simply well-meaning expressions of concern from those who love you and believe they are seeking what is best for your life and safety. Do not become discouraged, but rather turn to God more earnestly to truly know His will and strength through the knowledge of and obedience to His Word.

✎ **Missionary's Supporter** - **Please pray** for the prospective missionary as he interacts with those who may discourage him from fulfilling God's will for his life. Pray that he will constantly be reminded of God's presence and power to fulfill each and every part of God's will for his life, no matter the price. **Please provide** him with encouraging words of Scripture and godly counsel as he seeks to evaluate the criticisms and concerns he receives. Provide him with constant assurance of your support as he seeks to obey God, no matter the consequences.

✎ **Missionary in Service** - **Please press on.** Do not allow the present or past doubts of others distract you from the perfect will of God for your life. Look to God for His counsel and trust Him to be the supplier of every need. Be assured that no matter what you may face, you are always safest and most blessed as you stay in the center of God's will.



Increase Your Faith

Jeremiah 32:27

*27 Behold, I am the LORD, the God of all flesh:
is there any thing too hard for me?*

Philippians 4:12-13

*12 I know both how to be abased,
and I know how to abound:
every where and in all things I am instructed
both to be full and to be hungry,
both to abound and to suffer need.*

*13 I can do all things through Christ
which strengtheneth me.*

Romans 8:37

*37 Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors
through him that loved us.*

Mark 10:27

*27 And Jesus looking upon them saith,
With men it is impossible, but not with God:
for with God all things are possible.*

II Corinthians 4:7

*7 But we have this treasure in earthen vessels,
that the excellency of the power may be of God,
and not of us.*

Romans 10:17

*So then faith cometh by hearing,
and hearing by the word of God.*



Examples of Like Faith

David
I Samuel 17:22-58

Nehemiah
Nehemiah 4:1-23

Jesus
John 7:1-10, Mark 3:21

Romans 15:4
For whatsoever things were written aforetime
were written for our learning,
that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures
might have hope.

APPENDIX

THE MISSIONARY'S BASIC SETUP AND SURVIVAL GUIDE



Biblical teaching and practical tips
for getting started and
staying on the mission field

Outline #1

CULTURE SHOCK



THE PURPOSES FOR STUDYING THE EFFECT OF “CULTURE SHOCK” IN THE LIFE OF THE MISSIONARY

II Corinthians 1:3-11

- ❖ To grow in our understanding and dependence on God’s comfort while serving Him as a missionary (3-4a, 5)
- ❖ To share the comfort that we have received from God with those in need because of the pressure of the missionary’s life (4b, 6-7)
- ❖ To communicate honestly about the true circumstances in the missionary’s life (8)
- ❖ To trust the power and provision of God to live the missionary’s life (9-10)
- ❖ To co-labor by prayer with others while they are affected by the changes of the missionary’s life (11a)
- ❖ To give thanks for the victories that God provides through the missionary’s life (11b)



Romans 15:4

*4 For whatsoever things were written aforetime
were written for our learning,
that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures
might have hope.*



**THE REQUIREMENT OF BEING
A SERVANT AND A STUDENT
ON THE MISSION FIELD**

I Corinthians 9:19-23

- ❖ The servant of all for the purpose of ministering to the most possible (19)

- ❖ The student of all for the purpose of knowing how to serve the most possible (20-23)
 - A student of the culture of the people
“I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some.”
 - Observe their language (accent, sayings, jokes, etc.)
 - Observe their living conditions
 - Observe their interests and disinterests
 - Observe their habits
 - Observe their form of government and system of business
 - A student of the commandments of God
“(being not without law to God, but under the law to Christ,)”
 - Maintain a daily personal Bible study (Psalm 1)
 - Maintain a dependence in the Word of God for every area of life and ministry (II Peter 1:2-4)



**THE MOTIVATIONS
FOR BEING A SERVANT AND A STUDENT
ON THE MISSION FIELD**

Matthew 22:36-40

II Corinthians 4:5

- ❖ Love God by better knowing His commandments and depending on His help by studying His Word and communicating with Him through prayer
- ❖ Love others by better knowing their needs through studying their life by observing them and communicating with them



☞ The definitions

- ✎ Shock - “To disturb the mind or emotions of; affect with great surprise, distress, disgust, etc.” (Webster’s New World Dictionary, Third College Edition, 1994)
- ✎ Culture - “The ideas, customs, skills, arts, etc. of a people or group, that are transferred, communicated, or passed along, as in or to succeeding generations” (Webster’s New World Dictionary, Third College Edition, 1994)

Culture Shock

The personal conflict produced when one finds himself in a different culture from his own, which causes an inability to function without mental distraction or emotional concern because of the feeling of confusion, loneliness, and frustration while fulfilling his daily responsibilities.



I. Some considerations about culture

- A. The culture reflects the people's belief; therefore, the religion has a lot of influence on many areas of the culture
 - *Because the culture is established by the majority of people, and because the majority of people are unbelievers, the culture will often reflect much carnality
- B. The culture represents the customs established over time but that can be changed by new influences
- C. The culture is what people understand to be the “normal life” they practice without thinking
 - *It is impossible to teach effectively against the carnality of culture without God’s standards being received by the heart



**“I will honor the culture
when the culture honors God!”**

II. Examples of honoring the culture

*II Corinthians 4:1-6

*An example of dishonoring the culture by burning the cultural and worldly books - Acts 19:18-20

- A. Paul started preaching in the synagogues (the place for religious instruction in public) (Acts 13:5, 14, 14:1, 17:1, 10, 17, 18:4, 19, 19:9)
- B. Paul waited for the invitation to preach on “Mars Hill,” and he used the altar “TO THE UNKNOWN GOD” to present the Gospel (Acts 17:16-34)
- C. Paul circumcised Timothy (Acts 16:1-3)
- D. Paul shaved his head as part of a vow (Acts 18:18)
- E. Paul honored the laws of Israel for purification (Acts 21:17-26, 24:10-13)

**The goal of a missionary is not to
introduce his culture to a new country but to
introduce his Christ to new people!**

III. Culture shock is real

*Numbers 11:4-6, Psalm 137:1-4

*Cultural shock is similar to the effects of caffeine: some people are not affected at all by having some, some people are benefitted by having some, while others cannot have any because its effects are detrimental. Therefore, nobody can declare that the effects of caffeine do not exist according to their limited personal experience. Like caffeine, culture shock is real and has its effect on those who experience it.





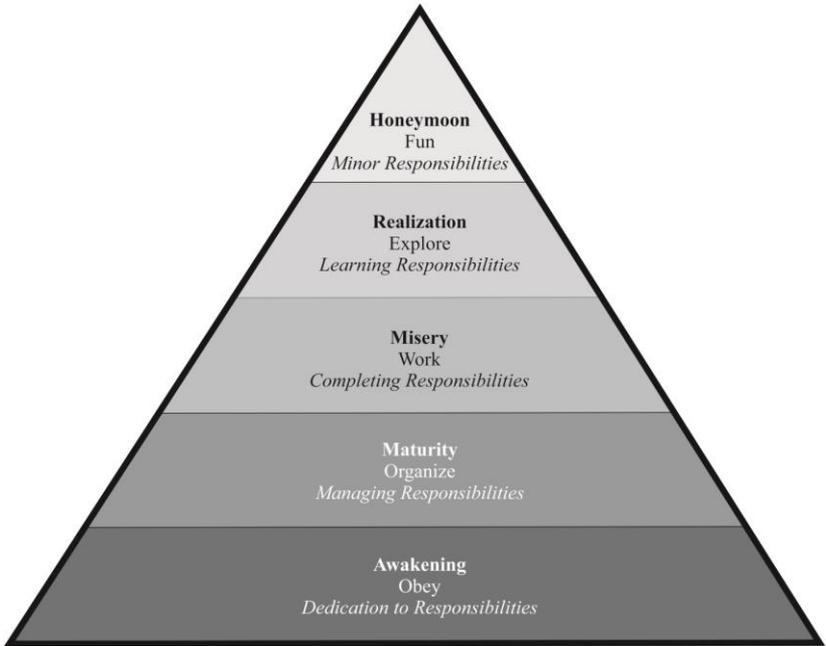
- A. Some people are not affected by the new culture.
- B. Some people enjoy and grow in their personal and spiritual life because of the new culture.
- C. Some people are destroyed by the new culture.
- D. Culture shock affects each person in the family differently.
 - 1. The husband suffers because of the difficulty in providing for his family and not being able to complete the ministry.
*The suffering can pass quickly for him, because he can become busy about his ministry and other things.
 - 2. The wife suffers from missing her family and friendships while trying to maintain the home, all without the resources she is accustomed to having, while worrying about her children and their safety and adjustment.
*The suffering lasts longer and returns more frequently because she is often alone in the home while her husband is occupied by the ministry and because she is accustomed to having time and contact with her loved ones.
 - 3. The children suffer because their world is destroyed as they do not have their friends, do not have familiar places, and do not have the ability to mentally prepare themselves.
*The suffering depends more than anything on the reaction and care of their parents. If the parents are always speaking poorly about the new situations, the children will think that they deserve better and will become angry with God. But if the parents use these opportunities to teach their children about the privilege of serving the Lord in a special place and communicate an attitude of contentment, the children will enjoy their new life and the security and comfort of their parents.
- E. The level of effect depends on . . .
 - 1. Past experiences
 - 2. Age
 - 3. Personality
 - 4. Dedication to personal habits
 - 5. Ability for flexibility
 - 6. Interest in exploration
 - 7. Understanding of people
 - 8. Health



- IV. The duration of culture shock
- A. It can pass quickly (days/months)
 - B. It can last for a long time (years)
 - C. It can touch some areas and not others
 - D. It can return at any moment
 - E. It can be caused by little things
 - F. **It can be experienced in reverse, when returning to the original culture**
- V. The progression of culture shock
- A. Enjoy with excitement the novelty
 - B. Investigate with anticipation the differences and their meanings
 - C. Be irritated and frustrated by the necessity of living with the differences and limitations
 - D. Understand with patience the differences and limitations
 - E. Accept and live calmly with the new norms



5 Stages of Accepting New Things



*Adapted from materials presented in the Christian Family class,
Dr. Wynne Kimbrough, NBBC, 1996, pages 38-39.

VI. Catalysts of culture shock

A. The religion

*Religion is the most fundamental influence in the culture, because people live according to their belief.

B. The wickedness of sin

C. The language (accent, words, sayings, etc.)

*Most confusion and cultural shock is connected to the language, because without the language there is no way to understand people and to love their souls so that the missionary can complete his purpose of sharing the Gospel of Jesus Christ.



- D. The climate
- E. Nature (vegetation, animals, insects)
- F. Structures (homes, buildings, etc.)
- G. Traffic
- H. Food
- I. Characteristics of the people (physical, attitudes, habits, etc.)
- J. Way of thinking (value system and problem solving)
- K. Social statuses
 - 1. Man/Woman
 - 2. Poor/Rich
 - 3. Adult/Child
- L. Mode of confrontation
- M. Clothing
- N. Money and manner of purchasing
- O. Stores and the products available
- P. Cleanliness
- Q. Value of time
- R. Greetings and hospitality
- S. Dangers
- T. Government
- U. Rejection by the people
- V. Lack of family and friends
- W. Any little things that build one on top of the other

VII. Symptoms of culture shock

- A. Fatigue
- B. Desire to hide
- C. Constant insecurity and doubt
- D. Personality change
- E. Headaches, muscle weakness and pain, stomach, etc.
- F. Lack of concentration and memory loss
- G. Frequent comparison to the previous way of life
- H. Irritation and lack of patience
- I. Depression
- J. Loneliness



VIII. Counsel to manage culture shock

- A. **Study** the Word of God in order to know Him better and find His promises (II Peter 1:3-4)
- B. **Remember** the presence of God (Philippians 4:11, Hebrews 13:5)
- C. **Permit** the love of God to encourage you in accomplishing His commission and will (Matthew 28:18-20, II Corinthians 5:14-21)
- D. **Determine** to be faithful as a soldier of God (II Timothy 2:3-4)
- E. **Calculate** the reward for sacrifice (Mark 10:28-31, Romans 8:18)
- F. **Consider** yourself a pilgrim in this world (Hebrews 11:13)
- G. **Accept** and **look** for opportunities to start new relationships with new people by participating in social activities (Mark 10:28-31)
- H. **Learn** to be content with God's provision (I Timothy 6:5-8)
*Do not make comparisons with others (II Corinthians 10:12, Hebrews 13:5)
- I. **Dedicate** yourself to learn and use the language as often as possible (Daniel 1:4-5)
- J. **Depend** on the comfort of God, and permit Him to provide it through other believers (II Corinthians 1:3-6)
- K. **Share** your burdens with other believers (with a good attitude) so that they can help you and pray for you (II Corinthians 1:8-11)
- L. **Maintain** an attitude of loving sacrifice and service for others (II Corinthians 4:5, 12:15)
- M. **Forget** your old life and its benefits, and replace the memories with the anticipation of a new life (Hebrews 11:14-16)



PREPARATION FOR DEPARTURE

- ❖ Complete some Bible studies about the commands and promises of God.
- ❖ Read books, which can help in spiritual preparation for the sacrifices and blessing of ministry (biographies, devotionals, etc.).
- ❖ Memorize verses, which can build your faith during difficulties.
- ❖ Write an account of how God has revealed His will and provision to guide you to this point of life and ministry.
- ❖ Gather as much information as possible about your mission field by making trips, studies, and interviews with other missionaries.
- ❖ Study the language and start to practice it as soon as possible
- ❖ Plan and prepare as well as possible for the first needs after arriving in the new country.
 - *If the missionary has a family, it is advised that the husband make a trip one month before he arrives with his family so that he can look for adequate housing, transportation, etc., and get acclimated to the area.
 - *If you cannot visit, communicate with other missionaries in order to verify that all is ready:
 - Housing
 - Transportation
 - Food and basic needs
- ❖ Wait to leave for the mission field until God has provided all that is needed and has made it clear that it is the correct time.



PREPARATION FOR THE FIRST DAYS

- ❖ Take specific time to study the Scriptures in personal devotions.
- ❖ Read books about God, His love, and His presence.
- ❖ Pray regularly and maintain a list of requests and praises.
- ❖ Have two or three faithful Christians who can provide wise counsel, kind comfort, and constant prayer and to whom you can communicate about any difficulties or fear.
- ❖ Ask for and accept help and counsel from other missionaries and nationals in order to find the things necessary for life and ministry:
 - Doctors, dentists, etc.
 - Stores, barbers, etc.
 - Mechanics, plumbers, etc.
 - Taxes, laws, etc.
- ❖ Know that the difficulties faced and feelings experienced are real and normal and that you are not alone.
 - *Others throughout the Scriptures and missionaries, both in the past and present, have kept the faith and have received their rewards of blessings from God.
- ❖ Take specific time to be with your family in order to encourage and provide security in the love of God and family.
 - *Be prepared to provide Biblical counsel and examples of others who have sacrificed for God for each member of the family (including the children) so that they do not become discouraged.