



VOLUNTEERS IN MISSIONS
INTERNATIONAL

PREPARATION GUIDE



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Never the Same

"I saw the most hideous face I had ever seen," said Southern Baptist volunteer Jack Hinton on a missions trip to the Caribbean island of Tobago. He was leading music for a worship service at a leper colony.

Rather than selecting hymns himself, the pastor from New Bern, N.C., asked the lepers to request their favorite songs. When the time came for one last song, a woman who had been sitting with her back toward the pulpit turned around.

The woman's nose and ears were entirely gone. Her lips had almost rotted away.

"She lifted a fingerless hand in the air and asked, 'Can we sing Count Your Many Blessings?'"

Overcome with emotion, Hinton had to leave the service. Another volunteer followed him out to console him. "Jack," he said, "I guess you'll never be able to sing that song again, will you?"

"Oh yes I will," Hinton responded. "But I'll never sing it the same way again."



Top left: Pastor Jack Hinton in his study at Tabernacle Baptist Church in New Bern, N.C. Top right: The hand of a leper during a worship service at a leper colony. Above: Church leader Abraham Ibitoye continues his fan-making craft while visiting with Cecilia Oybola, whose mother is also a victim of Hansen's disease—better known as leprosy.

Your volunteer experience may not be quite this dramatic. But just like Jack Hinton, you, too, will never be the same again. You will be changed because of what you experience. You will see the world as it is—the needs, the heartache, the pain—and as it can be through the hope and love of Jesus Christ.

Other members of your church will never be the same again, either. Their eyes will be opened to the world around them through your missions trip. They will have ownership in your experience because they invested so much of themselves in supporting you. Your excitement will become their excitement! Your love of missions will become their love of missions.

In recent years more than 15,000 short-term volunteers like you have gone overseas annually

through the International Mission Board, formerly known as the Foreign Mission Board. Volunteers, according to a recent IMB annual report, “take part in partnership evangelism and missions, evangelistic crusades and ministries. They work in community health, hunger and relief projects and disaster response. They construct churches, dig wells, cook meals, repair Baptist facilities and equipment and serve as jacks-of-all-trades. They perform as physicians, nurses, dentists, veterinarians, agriculturists, medical educators and paramedics. They teach English. They help with discipleship training, leadership conferences, stewardship promotion, church planting and preaching.”

You have responded to the challenge of volunteering overseas, like those who have gone before you. Congratulations! You won’t regret it!



Ginger Brown, a Southern Baptist dental hygienist, volunteers her services to clean the teeth of a young patient in Punto Fijo, Venezuela.

Doing Your Part

Now let's take a minute to talk about your part in missions. God loves all people and wants them to know Jesus Christ as their personal Savior. Jesus gave the Great Commission to His apostles in Matthew 28:18-20 (NIV). "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

The Great Commission was not given only to the apostles. It was given to every believer and every church. It was given to you! You have the responsibility to tell others about your faith, to share with them how Jesus Christ is working in your life. Your denomination and mission boards serve only as the channel through which missionaries and volunteers like yourself can be sent and supported.

Jerry Rankin, president of the International Mission Board*, says, "We are grateful for the faithful, cooperative support of Southern Baptists who work together so that almost 4,200 missionaries are able to fulfill God's call through the International Mission Board. They are sustained by cooperative prayer support. They are able to proclaim the gospel in the whole world because of the financial support provided through cooperative giving. They (volunteers) go, more than 15,000 strong, to cooperate in volunteer projects each year."

But volunteers will never replace the career missionary. Volunteers like yourself simply enhance the effectiveness of the career missionary by serving as a vital part of the missionary's field strategy. Many times volunteers provide a platform for the missionary to penetrate a new people group or new level of the society in which he's working. Volunteers respond to God's activity around the world. They are "called" and "specially equipped" to perform the task at hand.



Southern Baptist volunteer Lillian Granberry helps to fit a young patient with his new glasses.

*The Foreign Mission Board's name was changed to International Mission Board in 1997 as part of the Southern Baptist Convention's restructuring plan.

The Big Picture

Your missionaries have lived and ministered overseas, in some cases, for decades. They understand the “big picture” of missions. Every project, every ministry, every person, every relationship is a small piece of the missions picture. Those small pieces then fit together in just the right way to form the big picture.

Your overseas experience will be one important piece of that picture. Your role is to serve and work alongside the missionaries and nationals in the country where you go. You will be a support piece in that overall picture of missions. Your project will support the overall strategy that has been prayerfully developed by the career missionaries with whom you will serve.

Now that you understand how you fit into the “big picture,” let’s talk about your expectations. Ministry overseas does not work the same as ministry here in the United States. “Church” overseas

does not operate like your church. Even the worship experience is different. In fact, don’t expect anything to be like the United States. Every culture is different, requiring different ways of going about ministry. As you adjust to differences overseas, remember not to be critical of others or the way they do things. A critical attitude can interfere with the work of the Holy Spirit. Keep an open mind—you just might pick up some great ministry ideas yourself. Flexibility and a cooperative attitude are your keys to a successful missions experience.

As you prepare for your volunteer trip, whatever it may be, remember that you have an important role in the body of believers. God has uniquely gifted you to serve Him. “Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God’s grace in its various forms” (1 Peter 4:10, NIV). As you go forth in His power, sharing your faith and serving others, you will bring glory and honor to Him.



Southern Baptist Fayaz Ammar helps an eye patient with new glasses during his volunteer trip to Punto Fijo, Venezuela.

The word indigenous means existing naturally in a country or simply “home grown.” So the indigenous principle of missions simply means the gospel should be a natural element in any cultural setting. The gospel challenges and transforms a culture, but it does not replace it with a foreign one.

An indigenous church uses thoughts and actions which reflect the local environment.

The gospel is practiced and communicated in ways understood by that society because the language and structures are familiar. An indigenous church is autonomous; it's not dependent upon outside leadership and funds. Stated briefly, indigenous churches are reproducible by local believers, which is essential to a church planting movement. Here's the explanation:

- Believers, living under the Lordship of Jesus Christ and led by the Holy Spirit, shape the discipleship and discipline.
- Local congregations decide whether or not to have a paid leader or a building.
- Leaders emerge from the local group and learn from doing.
- Believers are more likely to focus on church planting/growth.
- Natural witness by the whole membership is more likely.
- Witness and growth follow natural networks of family, village and clan.
- Church plants/growth follow a reproducible pattern.

Great missions leaders say indigenous churches view themselves as church—self-functioning, self-determining, self-supporting, self-propagating and self-giving. They are Christ's churches—free to follow what the Holy Spirit and the Scriptures direct them to do.

Planting indigenous churches requires great faith and trust in the power of God the Father, the sufficiency of the redeeming work of Jesus Christ and the powerful leadership of the indwelling Holy Spirit in the life of the new believers. The indigenous principle also places great demands upon missionaries; they must be competent in their cross-cultural communication, and they must understand the worldview of the people to whom they minister.

Volunteers in Missions and the Indigenous Method

As a volunteer, you can be utilized effectively on the mission field. There are opportunities for Southern Baptists to be on mission with God throughout the world. Even strategies using volunteers, like yourself, should follow the indigenous principle so churches will survive and flourish in their own way within their own environment and on the basis of their own financial resources.

Many times local believers will request help from volunteers who then respond compassionately and emotionally. This response encourages local believers to depend on outside help and undermines the growth of strong indigenous work. Direct gifts and subsidy can create jealousy, erode local stewardship and undermine local priorities.

When these believers look to the Lord's provision through local resources they are more likely to develop strong churches that reproduce themselves.

Let's be partners in facilitating a church planting movement, a rapid multiplication of indigenous churches within a people group, by planting churches in a way that is reproducible by local believers.



The indigenous church on mission with God in the culture where it has been planted.

Let's take a few minutes to talk about the support you'll need for your volunteer experience overseas. Your church, family and friends can all support you spiritually, financially and emotionally.

They can support you spiritually by praying. Prayer, by far, is the most important support you will receive. It will become the foundation on which other support is built. Prayer will be your greatest need ... and your greatest blessing.

Paul and Peggy Grossman are retired Southern Baptist international missionaries to Burkina Faso, Senegal and Liberia. Here they share some personal examples of the power of prayer.

On April 13, 1984, I was sleeping outside and was bitten by a deadly poisonous

snake. A volunteer nurse administered the anti-venom within 10 minutes while other volunteers prayed.

About two weeks later I received a letter from our son. During prayer meeting on April 11, his pastor suddenly closed his Bible, turned to Paul Jr. and said, "We must pray for your father!" They prayed even before the accident because this pastor, who I'd never met, was led by the Holy Spirit to pray for me.—Paul

I was going to Ghana from Senegal ... when one of the two engines of the plane caught fire. It looked as though we were going to crash land. At the very last minute, God straightened that plane out and we landed without incident.



A group of faithful pray-ers — those who will lift up your entire missions effort to the Lord — will be your greatest asset.

About three weeks later, I received a letter from a WMU (Woman's Missionary Union) group in Michigan, none of whom I had ever met. They explained that at a meeting on September 3, someone had just read about the literacy work I was doing and brought my name up. The letter said, "We just couldn't get away from the need to pray for you that day. Your name just kept 'popping up' in discussion and prayer.

We'd like to know if you had a specific need that day." That was the day the plane was on fire!—Peggy

Your missionaries constantly tell of their experiences with the power of prayer. Thank God for those "back home" who faithfully uplift the missions effort through prayer.

You will want to enlist a group of those faithful pray-ers who will bathe your entire missions experience in prayer. In fact, the preparation process needs prayer just as much as the trip itself!

You're probably thinking, "Okay, where do I start?" Well, when you think about the power of prayer and the commitment to prayer, who in your church comes to mind? Who seems to know God intimately and walk with Him daily? Who are the most godly men and women in your church? Those people need to be part of your prayer support team.

Before you go any further, stop what you're doing and really think about these questions. Ask the Lord to bring to your mind those people who should make up your prayer team. Then contact them right away. Don't delay the power of prayer!

In addition to prayer, your church, family and friends also are sources of emotional support. They can encourage you every step of the way. Don't hesitate to call on them as needs arise. Let your pastor, church family and friends know specific ways they can support you.



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Give your church, family and friends the privilege of supporting you by joining their hands in prayer — the foundation on which all other support is built. Choose faithful pray-ers to be part of your prayer support team.

10 WAYS YOUR CHURCH, FAMILY AND FRIENDS CAN SUPPORT YOU

1. Provide for some of your personal expenses
2. Provide supplies for your trip
3. Form a prayer support team
4. Hold a commissioning service* to bless and encourage you before the trip
5. Write notes of encouragement which you will open each day of your trip
6. Go with you to the airport to see you off
7. Hold a short prayer just before you board the plane
8. Give you a small package filled with items of encouragement — bookmarks, tapes, poems, notes, special Scriptures, etc.
9. Welcome you home with banners and signs when you arrive at the airport
10. Allow you to share your experience

* A sample commissioning service is available from Customer Services at the International Mission Board. Call (800) 866-3621.

You must be spiritually prepared for the experience ahead of you. Do you talk with the Lord daily and spend time listening to Him? Have you thought about His desires for your trip ... or are you focusing only on what you want? You cannot know what He wants unless you spend quality time with Him.

Commit yourself to the spiritual disciplines of church attendance, Bible study and prayer. Spend time with the Lord daily if you are not already doing so. This process should begin at least one month before you go overseas and should include prayer, reading God's Word and then listening to Him. You may want to purchase a daily devotional guide to help you with this discipline. Devotional guides usually deal with a particular Scripture each day.

As you pray, remember to praise the Lord. Then confess your sins, repent and ask His forgiveness. Thank Him for His blessings and the way He is working in your life. Then express your needs to Him, asking Him to prepare you for this missions experience. He will reveal to you His desires for your trip. He also will help you see through His eyes and understand through His heart. And finally, remember to listen to Him. Focus on that still, small voice inside you, realizing that your desires may not be His desires.

You also may want to keep a journal to record your thoughts and experiences. A journal can help you keep track of your spiritual growth.

Spiritual preparation takes time. Don't wait until the last minute. Once you arrive on the field, you will begin feeling the shock of strange food and smells, different customs and languages, limited



A devotional guide, such as *Open Windows*, can help you develop the spiritual disciplines of Bible study and prayer.

TIPS FOR SPIRITUAL READINESS

1. Maintain a growing, personal relationship with Jesus Christ.
2. Practice the disciplines of church attendance, Bible study and prayer.
3. Pray about every aspect of your missions experience.
4. Ask another person or group to pray for you and your trip.
5. Keep a journal of your thoughts and experiences to map your spiritual journey.
6. Keep your eyes, ears and heart open to what God may be showing you.
7. Remain open to any type of missions work — even here at home.

Charting Your Course is an excellent spiritual preparation for your missions project.

bathroom facilities, lack of privacy, varying worship styles and ways of ministry. In some countries you will have to deal with extreme heat, insects, unpredictable weather, lack of pure drinking water, poor roads and undesirable accommodations. If you are spiritually prepared, you will handle these situations with His joy and His peace.

“Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit,” says the Lord Almighty” (Zech 4:6, NIV). Depend on God and work in His Spirit as you go overseas. Don’t trust in your own strength and abilities. It is only through the Holy Spirit that anything of lasting value can be accomplished.

30-DAY SPIRITUAL PREPARATION

1	Spiritual Renewal for Service	Psalms 51	17	The True Measure of Greatness	Matthew 20:20-28
2	Taking Time to Pray	Mark 1:35-45	18	Differences Between Good Missionaries	Acts 15:36-41
3	The Word and the Way	Psalms 119:2, 19, 105, 165	19	When You Cannot Finish the Task	Luke 10:25-35
4	The Power to Serve	Acts 1:1-12	20	Acting Like What You Are	Matthew 21:18-19 Galatians 5:22-23
5	Christian Depression	1 Kings 19:1-18	21	Overcoming Prejudices	Jonah 1:1-3; 3:1-20; 4:1-3
6	Here I Am, Let Me Go!	Isaiah 6:1-12	22	Serve With Gladness	Psalms 100
7	Fit to Serve	Ephesians 5:1-17	23	Serve With Gratitude	Psalms 103
8	Availability Plus Christ	John 6:1-14	24	Serve With Compassion	Jonah 4
9	Commissioned to Serve	Matthew 28:19-20	25	Serve With Urgency	John 9:1-7
10	Empowered to Serve	Matthew 28:16-18	26	Serve With Inner Strength	John 15:1-16
11	The Unlikely Witness	John 4:1-42	27	Serve With Love	John 21:15-23
12	The Expected Result	John 4:1-42	28	Serve With a Team Spirit	Romans 12
13	Making the Ordinary Extraordinary	Acts 4:1-19	29	Serve for Common Purposes	1 Corinthians 1:23-31; 2:1
14	Revive Us Again	Psalms 85	30	Proclaiming Liberty to the Poor	Isaiah 61:1-6
15	Overcoming Difficulties	Numbers 13:25-33			
16	Removing the Stones	John 11:39-40			

In recent years God has been calling out prayer intercessors like yourself to walk the neighborhoods of your towns, as well as the sidewalks and paths of the world. This activity called prayer walking enables you to see, hear and touch the very objects of your intercession.

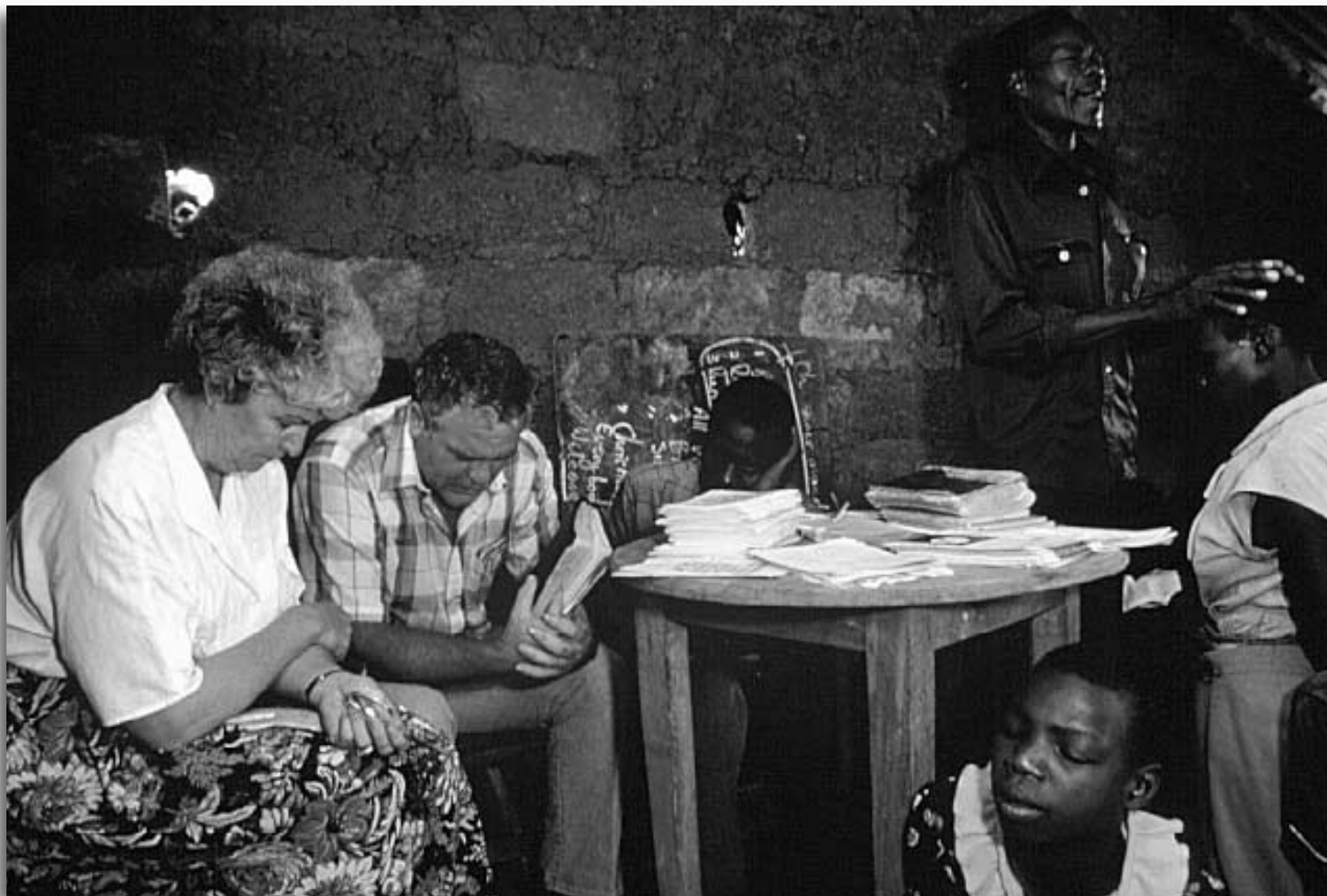
As a prayer walker, you're an on-site intercessor — someone who prays without ceasing as Paul tells us in 1 Thessalonians. Prayer just becomes a part of you. You will have an attitude of prayer in everything you do.

Prayer walking arose spontaneously in the mid-1970s and has steadily expanded across the evangelical scene, according to Steve Hawthorne and Graham Kendrick, authors of *Prayerwalking* (Creation House, Lake Mary, Fla., 1993). Whether

you're a parent praying for your children's schools or a factory worker interceding for your work place, you are joining with Christians all around the world who have heard God calling them to "pray on-site with insight."

Hawthorne and Kendrick offer three suggestions as you prayer walk for the first time:

1. **Pray with others.** Teaming up in twos or threes and praying opens an important dimension of intercession.
2. **Start near home.** Agree on the general area to cover, but pick an unfamiliar neighborhood for starters. You may find stored-up memories get in the way of intercession for near neighborhoods.



Use any opportunity available to pray for the country and the people where you are serving. Be aware of prayer needs all around you as God calls you to "pray on-site with insight."



Praying with others can help prepare you for prayer walking at home and overseas. The Lord will help you develop an attitude of prayer as you notice specific needs around you throughout the day.

- 3. Allow time.** Try one hour for the first prayer walk. Refresh your relationship with God and your prayer partners before starting. Discuss developments and concerns afterward.

Use these suggestions to begin prayer walking at home before your volunteer trip. Ask the Lord to help you develop an attitude of prayer. Be alert to your surroundings each day, using them as opportunities for prayer. Pray for your children as you're packing their lunches for school. Pray for their teachers and friends. Pray for your community and government leaders while you're running errands at the post office and grocery store. Pray for co-workers and your employers while at work. Pray for

your church and its leaders. Pray for employees wherever you go — the grocery store, doctor's office, post office or local mall. Pray continually.

After you have developed an attitude of prayer and have practiced prayer walking in your community, you will be better prepared for prayer walking overseas. You will see yourself as a pray-er, an intercessor, regardless of your volunteer assignment.

Make it a priority to prayer walk in your specific country. You should already be familiar with some of the historical, cultural and spiritual background of the country which can help you pray specifically.

Your team should have a time of prayer together before beginning a prayer walk. Ask the Holy Spirit to guide your steps and your prayers as you prepare to walk. Then choose partners for the walk

— groups of two or three are best. If your team is large, you will break into smaller groups which will each have an assigned area so no overlap occurs. Then agree on a time to return and share your experience with the large group.

During your prayer walk, be alert to your surroundings. God will bring you into contact with people, places and happenings for which you can pray. You can walk and pray anywhere — tourist areas, residential areas, campuses, around monuments and shrines, in market places, homes and offices.

Then be prepared for what prayer walking will do for you. You will begin to see through God's eyes ... and you will become burdened for the people and the country. Open your eyes and your heart to His power. Remember, whether you're at home or overseas, prayer produces eternal results. The church building you constructed will eventually deteriorate with age, but your intercession for people and cities around the world will have eternal results.

Walking the streets of a city where Jesus' name isn't even known was a real "eye-opener" for Joan Dick, a member of First Baptist Church in Fairlea, W.Va. She was part of a six-member prayer team that visited Bangkok, Thailand, and Thimphu, Bhutan.

Seeing the Buddhist temples and smelling the incense moved her deeply.

"We saw people bowing down before these idols and wondered how they can worship something that isn't even real," Joan said. "We saw little boys going into monasteries to become monks and stay



Prayer walker Kim Penrod prays for Buddhist monks in India as they meditate and chant mantras.

SUGGESTIONS FOR PRAYER

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 accepting 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 and worship Him as you walk.
8. Give honor and glory to the Lord for your participation in this prayer walk.



there for life. There was such sadness in the children's eyes. They seemed to be in such bondage."

Joan's group walked the streets of the cities and visited government buildings and holy sites. Everywhere they went they prayed for the salvation of the people they saw. When providence let them enter a temple usually closed to outsiders, they walked around the Buddha statue and prayed that the light of the gospel would break through that country's darkness.

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In Morocco, prayer walkers pause to pray for their host country near the Hassan II Mosque, the second-largest Islamic mosque in the world.

PRAYER WALKING RESOURCES

- *Prayerwalking*, by Steve Hawthorne and Graham Kendrick (Creation House, Lake Mary, Fla., 1993).
- *Prayer Journeys: A Leader's How-To Manual* is available from the Caleb Project, 10 West Dry Creek Circle, Littleton, CO 80120.
- Contact Customer Services at the International Mission Board, (800) 866-3621.
- Contact the International Mission Board electronically at www.imb.org

Your spiritual preparation would be incomplete without a personal testimony — the simple story of how you became a Christian and the difference it is making in your life. We'll take the next few minutes to give you some suggestions on preparing your testimony.

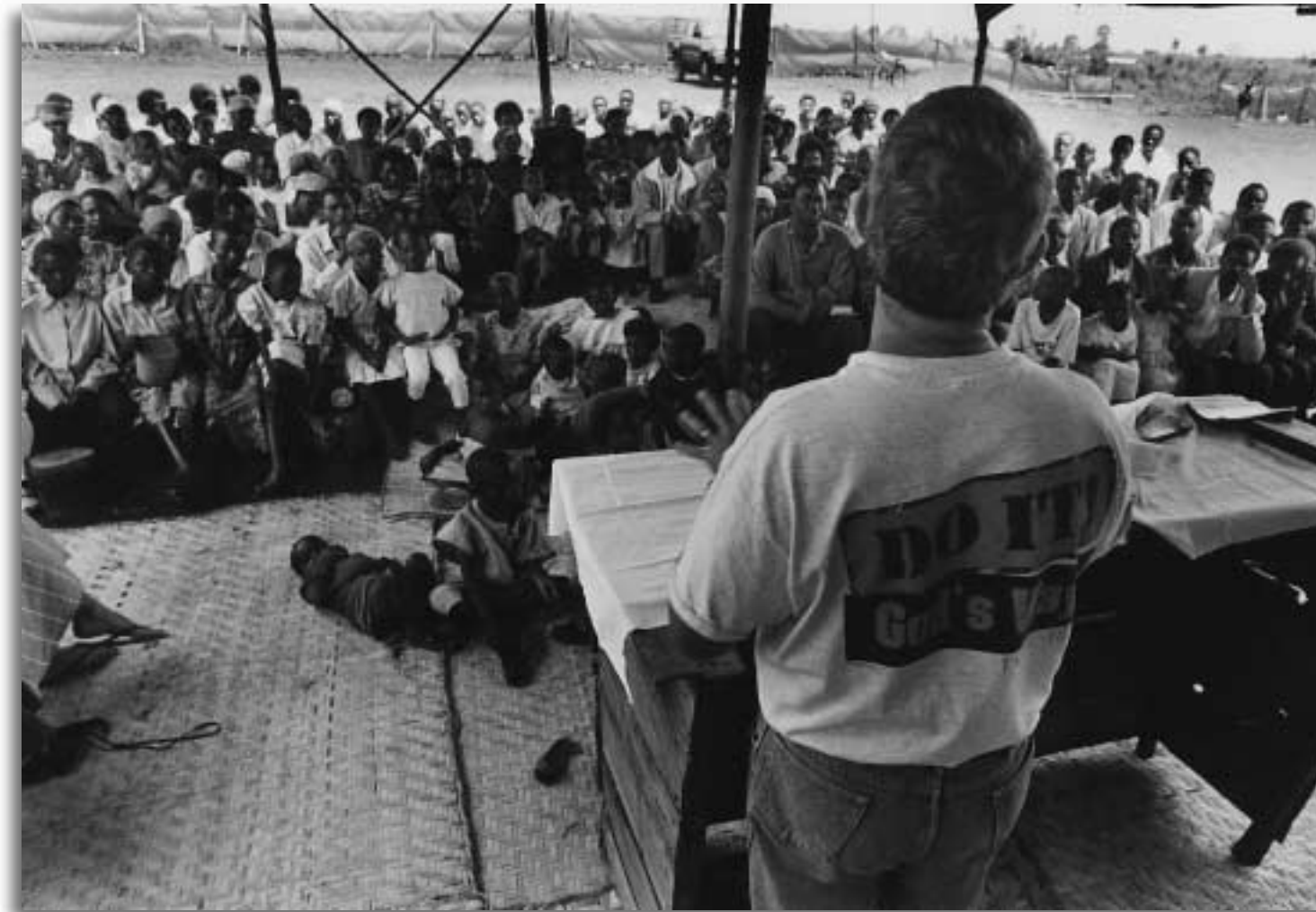
Remember to keep it short and simple so it can be translated and shared with the nationals in your country. Don't use long words, jokes and idioms. They don't translate easily. Stay away from such topics as divorce, smoking and drinking which many nationals view as inappropriate and offensive behavior. Also stay away from the topic of money. It's okay to say that God provided all the money for your trip. Just don't refer to specific dol-

lar amounts. The cost of your trip may be much more than the annual income of many people overseas.

Keep your testimony short — no more than one typed page. Begin by telling about yourself: your name, where you live, your job and why you're in that country.

Next tell a little about your life before becoming a Christian. Then share how you became a Christian — what your life was like after accepting Him as your personal Savior. Use Scriptures which are meaningful to you here.

Then explain what being a Christian means to you today. How does it make your life different? How do you live each day? What does it mean to you personally?



Sharing your personal testimony — how you became a Christian and the difference it's making in your life — can help lead others to Jesus Christ.

SHARING YOUR TESTIMONY

DO'S

1. Share your:
 - Name
 - Where you live
 - Your profession
 - Why you came
2. Share what being a Christian means to you:
 - Your life before Christ
 - Your life after Christ
3. Share how you became a Christian:
 - Why you did
4. Share how someone else can become a Christian:
 - Allow them to respond
5. Express your thanks for being able to share your testimony.

DON'TS

1. Don't talk about:
 - Divorce
 - Smoking
 - Drinking
2. Don't talk about money:
 - How much the trip cost
 - How God provided
3. Don't be long winded.
4. Don't use religious jargon.
5. Don't tell jokes.

Finally, explain how others can have a similar experience. You need to clearly and simply present the steps to salvation and a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. Those who are listening to or reading your testimony should have opportunity to respond. Then remember to thank them for allowing you to share.

Remember, you are going overseas to build relationships with new friends which will enable

you to share your testimony with them. Your testimony is uniquely your own. No one can share it but you. You can help others see that Christ can make a difference in their lives, too.

Why don't you stop what you're doing now and take time to work through your testimony. If you've never shared your testimony before, ask your pastor to go over what you have written.

HELPFUL RESOURCES

- *Continuing Witness Training*, published by the North American Mission Board.
- *People Sharing Jesus*, published by the North American Mission Board.

Money: Where Will It Come From?

Now let's talk about another important need for your volunteer missions experience — money. How will you cover the expense of your trip? Where will the money come from?

God used a North Carolina woman to help when the Southern Baptist missionaries in Chile had an urgent need for someone to teach their children. They had asked for 10 to 12 volunteers to work with the MKs (missionary kids) during their annual mission meeting, and only three people had responded.

Nanci Singer, a member of Matthews (N.C.) Baptist Church, found out about the opportunity only two weeks before the mis-

sion meeting. She was willing to go but needed funds to finance her trip.

The members of Matthews church began to pray. A third of the \$1,600 cost of the trip was raised in three days. Help from another friend, along with a bonus Nanci received at work, finished out the amount. Still another friend donated all the craft supplies she needed for the children.

Nanci didn't worry about how funds would be provided or how her family would get along without her. "You just have to be available, and God will take care of you," she said.

You made yourself available, like Nanci, and now God will take care of the rest. That doesn't mean He



God will meet all your needs — even the financial ones. Just remember that financial help often comes from unexpected people ... and places. He has called you and He will enable you.

WAYS TO MAKE YOUR FINANCIAL NEEDS KNOWN

- Church newsletter
- Letters to family and friends
- Personal phone calls
- Speak to church/community groups about trip
- Personal contact with businesses which may have special interest in your trip
- Church prayer meetings/business meetings

Next, be clear about the goal of your trip when sharing with others. People will want to know exactly how their money will be used. It's important to remember that any financial gift, no matter how big or small, deserves a timely "thank you." Maintain contact with those who support you. Keep them informed about your trip, and pray for them as they are praying for you. Finally, contact them when you return home so they can hear about your experience. After all, you may not have been able to go overseas without their financial support.

will do all the work. It simply means He will honor your efforts. When He calls you, He also enables you.

You still need to come up with your own financial support which, quite frankly, can be overwhelming. Just the idea itself brings all kinds of negative emotions: dread, fear, uncertainty, rejection and failure.

The thought of raising your own support doesn't need to scare or embarrass you. Tremendous blessings can result, both for you and for those who support you. Those who help you financially will be blessed by their unique role in your ministry. You, too, will be blessed as you humbly accept the gifts ... and the love ... of others.

"The share of the man who stayed with the supplies is to be the same as that of him who went down to the battle" 1 Sam. 30:24 (NIV). Remember, you would be unable to volunteer overseas without the support services of others.

Financial help often comes from unexpected people and places. So your first step in finding financial support is to make sure others are aware of your needs. They can't help if they don't know about it. Let your church, family, friends and co-workers know about your financial needs. You don't necessarily need to ask them for money. Just let them know the need exists. Remember that God is the source of everything you will receive, so give Him the honor and glory throughout this experience.

As a volunteer serving in an overseas ministry under the auspices of the International Mission Board, you may be able to claim your out-of-pocket expenses related to the ministry as deductions for U.S. tax purposes. This includes transportation to and from the field, as well as food and lodging while performing your volunteer duties. Please refer to IRS Publication 526 and consult your tax adviser for specific information.

IDEAS FOR FINANCIAL SUPPORT

- Yard sales
- Rent yourself out for yard work, house work and errands
- Take orders for any homemade items you can sell
- Speak to groups in your community who may want to help
- Speak to Sunday School classes and missions groups in your church
- Challenge the children and youth of your church to contribute supplies for your trip and speak to them about the country you will be visiting
- Ask businesses to donate supplies

Remember these are just suggestions. You may come up with other ideas which fit your circumstances. You made yourself available to go overseas, and now God will honor your efforts in getting there. Cling to the words of Paul in Philippians 4:19 (NIV), "And my God will meet all your needs according to his glorious riches in Christ Jesus."

Preparing for your overseas trip can be exhausting and confusing. That's why it's important to secure a good travel agent who can help with all the details. Your travel agent can tell you exactly what you'll need and how to get it. Also check with the International Mission Board (IMB). The associate director of the Volunteers in Missions Department can give you specific information about your passport, visa and immunizations.

Passport

Always travel with a current passport. Obtaining a passport is simple but will take a little time. Passport agencies are located in courthouses and some post offices. You will need to apply in person if this is your first application for a passport. You also will need to take the following documents with you:

1. **Proof of U.S. Citizenship:** Your old passport, certified birth certificate or naturalization papers are needed.
2. **Proof of Identity:** You'll need a document with a photo and signature such as a valid driver's license.
3. **Photographs:** You'll need two identical photos, two-inches square, full-face view, taken within six months of your application. At least six copies of the photo will be needed for visas and the International Mission Board application. It's also good to take two additional copies of the photo (kept separate from your passport) in case you need to replace your passport.
4. **Passport Application Form and Fee:** You can obtain the form and requirement information from the Clerk or Deputy Clerk of a Federal Court of Record, certain post offices or a passport office. Check with your travel agent for the passport office nearest you. Allow at least one month for processing your passport application. (Photocopy your passport pages and carry them separately.)

Visa

A visa is permission to enter any given country which is granted by the government of that country. The visa may be a stamp in your passport or it could be a special certificate. EACH COUNTRY IS DIFFERENT. Your travel agent will know what you need.

Many countries will not require a visa. Check with your travel agent and the Volunteers in Missions Department at the International Mission



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Apply for your passport well in advance of your departure date. The application process is simple but time-consuming. Your travel agent will help you with the details. And be sure to carry it with you at all time while you're overseas.



Your visa, granted by the government of the country you will enter, may be only a stamp in your passport or it may be a special certificate.

Board for visa information. They will give you the requirements for entry into your country.

Be sure to answer all questions when you complete the visa application. When asked about the purpose of your visit, remember to indicate "tourist" or "visit." Don't say that you're going as a missionary — it could cause your application to be delayed or declined. In fact, it can help if your entire team fills out the visa application just alike in those areas.

Immunizations

All your current travel immunizations should be recorded in the booklet issued by the World

Health Organization. This booklet is accepted as the approved format by all members of the United Nations and should be carried with your passport.

You will receive from the IMB a list of required/suggested immunizations for your assigned country. It also is recommended that you receive the following basic immunizations regardless of the country where you're traveling:

1. **Tetanus-Td.** Booster every 10 years.
2. **Poliomyelitis.** One booster as an adult. Booster every 10 years in heavily endemic areas.
3. **Typhoid Vaccine.** Advisable for trips lasting more than six weeks in all Third World

countries. Two injections four weeks apart. Single booster every two years if vaccinated previously. An oral vaccine also is available with boosters every five years.

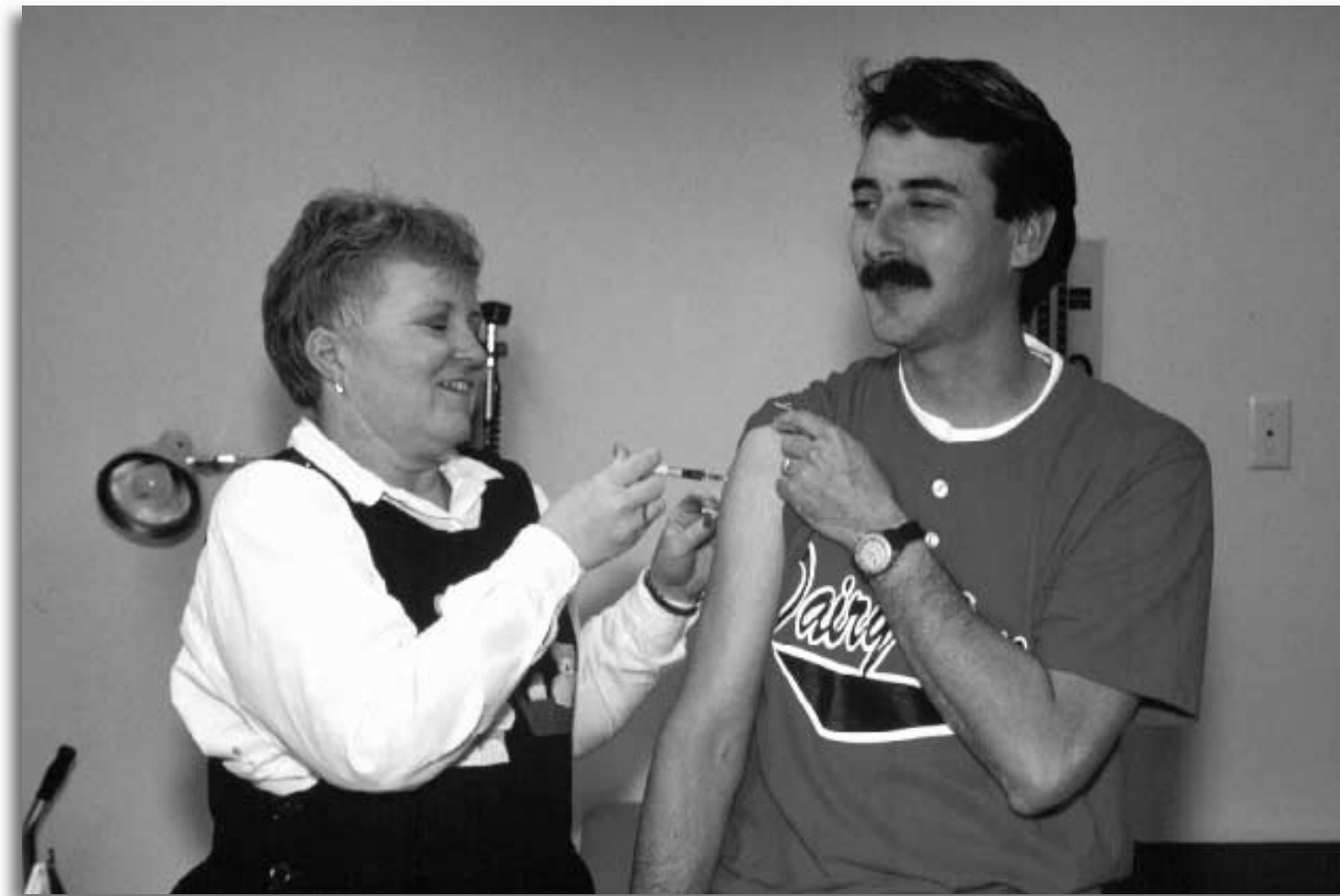
4. **Hepatitis A Protection.** Advisable for all Third World countries for only one trip. Immune Globulin is less expensive. Injection according to body weight a few days before travel. But for multiple trips, Hepatitis A vaccine (Havrix) is recommended. The first injection is preferable two to four weeks before travel. Following a booster six to 12 months later, protection continues for at least 10 years.
5. **Other Vaccinations.** Others such as yellow fever or cholera may be required in

certain countries. If not required, the cholera vaccine is not recommended as it has limited effectiveness and the risk of contagion is very low for travelers from the United States, even during epidemics.

6. **Hepatitis B, Rabies Vaccine, Meningococcus Vaccine.** Needed in some countries.

Specific immunizations depend on the country where you're serving. Contact your doctor or your local health department for up-to-date information on inoculations needed for your country. Consult your doctor before taking any inoculations.

Where do you get the shots? Well, remember to shop around for prices. Your local health department may be less expensive than your personal



Avoid taking your shots all at once by starting your immunization process early. You'll need time to recover before you go overseas.

Believe it or not, overseas volunteers like yourself often arrive on the field without a toothbrush, not to mention other important items. That's why you should know all you can about the country you'll be visiting — the type of work site, the weather, church atmosphere and other information concerning the culture.

What you wear overseas does make a difference. Make sure your clothing is modest in all circumstances. As you're packing, remember you'll need some basic types of clothing: travel, work, church and sight-seeing. For travel days you'll want to be comfortable (especially your feet) but not sloppy. Try to blend with the nationals of the country. The way you dress makes a statement about your views of the country you're entering. At the work site dress modestly also. Jeans are usually appropriate for work. However, in some countries jeans would not be appropriate for women to wear. If you're in doubt, though, a long, full skirt would work well too. Dress casually for social events with local church members. Women should not wear pants to church events. You don't need a suit or fancy dress for Sunday worship though. Men should wear nice slacks and a shirt, shoes and a tie. A jacket would be nice for men who are speaking. Women should wear a casual dress or a skirt and blouse (with sleeves) and dress shoes. You may need to walk long distances so avoid high heels. Sensible, modest dress is appropriate for sight-seeing. If you're ever in doubt in a particular situation, just ask.

It's also important to remember that in North America, the way we dress reflects our opinion of ourselves. But in many other cultures, the way we dress also reflects our opinion of others. So don't overdress, but at the same time don't underdress. For example, you may be tempted to wear jeans and tennis



WHAT TO PACK

These are just suggestions. Your particular trip may require other items.

- Bible
- Passport/visa
- Airplane tickets
- Basic clothing (keep weather in mind)
- Towels and washcloths
- Hat (protection from sun)
- Camera and film
- First-aid items
- Toilet tissue
- Insect repellent
- Flashlight/penlight
- Watch (Leave valuable jewelry at home.)
- Feminine products
- Blow dryer (may not be able to use it)
- Medicines: prescription and over-the-counter including anti-diarrhea medication, laxatives, and motion-sickness medications (Take all medications you need. You probably can't buy them in the country.)
- Journal/pen for quiet times
- Itinerary
- Work-related clothing
- Comfortable shoes
- Toiletry items
- Sunscreen/lip balm with sunscreen
- Wet wipes
- Tissues
- Plastic grocery bags (to pack dirty clothes for return trip)
- Electrical current adapter
- Gifts for host/hostess
- Reading material for travel time
- Visa or American Express credit cards (At times you cannot change money but credit cards will be accepted.)
- Extra eye glasses, especially if you wear contacts

shoes to church. This type of dressing down can send a negative statement to the nationals who know Americans have better clothing. Nationals in other countries often put on their best clothes even to go to the airport.

Keep in mind the airline baggage allowance as you pack. You will have to pay if you have too many luggage pieces or if each luggage piece goes over the weight limit. *Remember, don't take more than you can carry. (More than likely, there will not be any bell boys to help you!) Also, some missionaries might ask you to bring materials for your project which may exceed your baggage allowance.

Discuss the cost with the Volunteers in Missions Department before your trip.

It's also a good idea to have an extra set of clothing (including underwear) and any medications in your carry-on bag. Your luggage may get lost, and you'll arrive at your destination with nothing but your carry-on bag. Prepare for the unexpected! Also remember to have enough money on hand for "tipping" those who help you along your travel route.

*For international travel, baggage is limited to two pieces with a combined weight of 44 pounds (20 kilos). Clear it with your travel agent here if you will be taking more.



Remember airline baggage allowances as you pack for your trip, and don't take more than you can carry. Be flexible since you never know what situations you'll encounter while traveling.

Be hospitable toward missionaries and nationals in the country where you're serving. It's easier to show care, attention and concern toward others if you plan ahead.

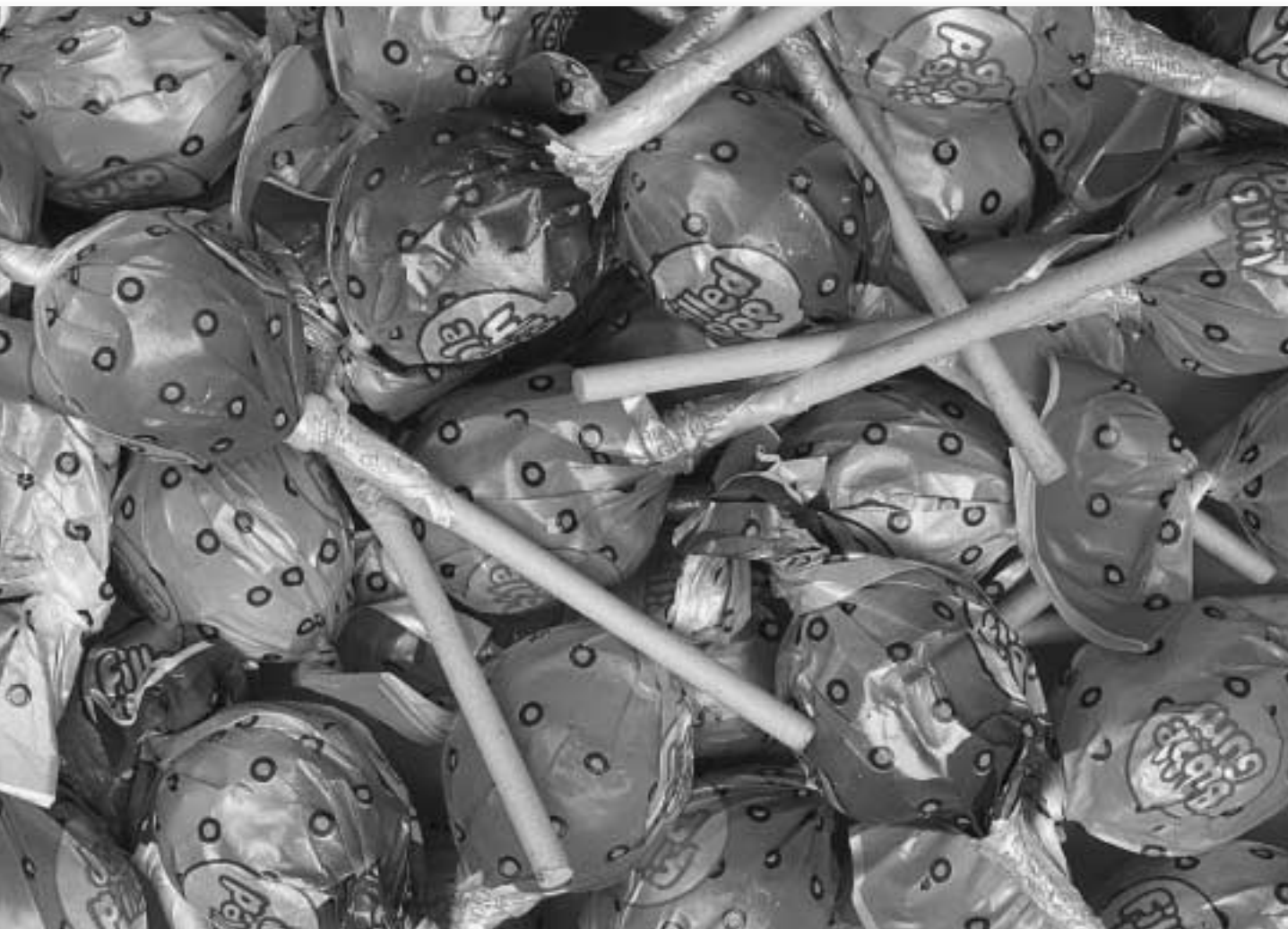
Through the Volunteers in Missions Department, you could contact missionaries with which you'll be working before you leave home. Ask if they need or would like to have some particular items which you bring to them. Also remember small gifts for the nationals you'll be meeting. Missionaries also can help you with gift ideas for nationals. Hard candy is a hit with many people, especially children.

Let others get to know you. Think of ways you can help them understand a little about yourself and your country. Collect postcards from your city or state to take with you. Other useful items may be newspapers, tasteful magazines and greeting cards. Photos of you, your family and home also help others learn about you.

Remember to be open and share with others. You're learning about them and their culture, and they will want to learn about you and your culture too.



Postcards from your city or state can help nationals get to know a little about you and the United States.



Candy and bubble gum are a big hit with most people — especially children. Other ideas for kids include jars of bubbles and brightly colored paper or markers.

GIFT IDEAS FOR MISSIONARIES

- | | | | |
|-----------------|------------------|-------------|----------------------|
| ■ Peanut butter | ■ Magazines | ■ Popcorn | ■ Craft supplies |
| ■ Candy | ■ Chocolate bars | ■ New books | ■ Current Newspapers |

Note: The need or desire for certain items will vary depending upon the country you're visiting. Check with your missionaries before you go.

You'll be so excited when that plane finally lands in the country where you'll be serving — new sights, sounds, and smells. You'll be living, working and worshipping in a new culture. What a great experience!

But don't get so caught up in the excitement of the moment that you forget the reason you are there — to share Jesus Christ with others. Make sure you include the Lord in everything you do. After all, He called you to serve, empowered you and helped you with financial support.

It's important to include spiritual time in your schedule for both yourself and your team. You may want to spend time with the Lord each morning.

Ask Him to guide your day and to work through you in all circumstances. Then spend some quiet time listening to Him. The evening is a great time to reflect on your day: what did the Lord teach you about yourself and others? Keep track of these thoughts in a journal. It only takes a few minutes each day, and you'll be able to read about your own spiritual journey.

It's also important for your team to spend time together each day to develop a spiritual bond. The evening is usually a great time for a team meeting. Reflect on the day, encourage one another and pray together. Remember to give God the glory and honor for all that happens.



Remember to schedule spiritual time for yourself daily. Reading the Bible and praying each morning will help prepare you for the day ahead. Evenings can be used to reflect on the day by writing in your "spiritual" journal.



Learn all you can about your country, the customs and even the missionaries ahead of time.



Be ready for anything! Flexibility is the key to a successful volunteer experience.



Volunteering overseas can be rewarding ... and exhausting! Set aside enough time each day to encourage and uplift one another in prayer.

Safety is an important issue when traveling overseas. You can never take too many precautions. It's helpful to think of common sense reminders ahead of time. Be prepared!

When you first arrive in your country, listen to what the missionaries tell you about changing your money over to the currency of that country. No two countries do it the same way. You may want to cash only what is necessary for your immediate needs. Never carry large amounts of money with you, and keep it secure — close to your body. Money bags and belts work best. If you need to carry a purse, make sure it has a long strap so you can put it over your head and across your body. Never keep it unzipped or hanging loosely at your

hip. Purses and jewelry on unsuspecting travelers are prime targets for most thieves.

Also be careful when traveling in taxis. Keep the windows up, doors locked and move valuables to the middle of the car. And never go out alone. Always have at least one other person with you.

Try your best to blend in with other people rather than drawing attention to yourself. The less noticeable you are, the less likely you are to have a problem.



You can never be too safe when traveling overseas so use your common sense, and think through situations ahead of time. Anything can happen! Pay close attention to everything around you. Be prepared — anything can happen!

STREET-SMART TIPS

Do's

1. Always carry your passport and guard it!
2. Use a money belt.
3. Always go out with a friend.
4. Keep your doors locked.
5. Keep car/taxi windows closed
6. Put identification tags on all your bags.
7. Carry a card the taxi driver can read to get you back to the place you're staying.
8. Carry Traveler's Checks (American Express only)

DON'TS

1. Don't exchange money on the street.
2. Don't wear flashy jewelry even if it's costume.
3. Don't put all your money in one place.
4. Don't go out alone.
5. Don't flash wads of money.
6. Don't carry a lot of cash.
7. Don't carry a purse.
8. Don't promise anything, not even to write a letter to someone, if you cannot follow through with your promise.
9. Don't carry your wallet in your rear pocket.



Listen to your missionaries when you're ready to exchange currency — each country handles the process differently. Exchange the least amount of money necessary.

Culture refers to the total way of life for a particular group of people — their ideas, customs, traditions, language, belief system, social structure and norms. You'll find many differences in the country where you'll be serving. The stress from those differences can cause problems which impact the effectiveness of your volunteer project.

The best way to overcome that potential problem is to prepare yourself for those differences before you go. Find out whatever you can about the culture where you'll be working. There are general cultural issues you need to think about ahead of time, but you'll also find specific issues in the country information from the International Mission Board.

There will be times when you'll be uncomfortable due to cultural differences. Remain calm.



Learn all you can about the culture in which you're visiting. God made us all uniquely different!



When it comes to other cultures, remember different is not necessarily bad — just different. Prepare yourself for the differences before you go. You'll be less uncomfortable with the cultural differences if you know about them ahead of time.

Flexibility is the key in another culture. Remember, different is not necessarily bad — just different.

You'll probably find differences, for example, related to privacy, worship styles and meal times. Privacy, or lack of, can be a stumbling block if you aren't prepared. Bathroom facilities in other coun-



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Be prepared for a different view of “privacy” in most other cultures. You’ll find you can endure almost any differences for such a short time.

tries will be very different in some circumstances. Most are not private but shared. The style of toilet can be very different, and there may be no toilet paper available to you. Always carry toilet paper or tissues with you (as well as feminine products).

Worship is a big event in many cultures. You may be sitting on a hard bench for several hours or under a tree during the heat of the day. Be prepared for anything.

Meal time in other countries can be an event in itself, often lasting several hours. Don’t be impatient; it’s part of the culture and should be enjoyed. Remember, it may be rude to turn food away, but follow the lead of your missionary host. If you notice him avoiding a food, you’d be wise to do



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Learn all you can about the weather in your country. Extreme weather conditions can greatly affect you, and your work, if you aren’t prepared for them.

the same! Smoking and drinking, as well, are often seen as rude and offensive behavior in many countries. It’s a good idea to follow the leadership of your missionary host when it comes to these cultural differences.

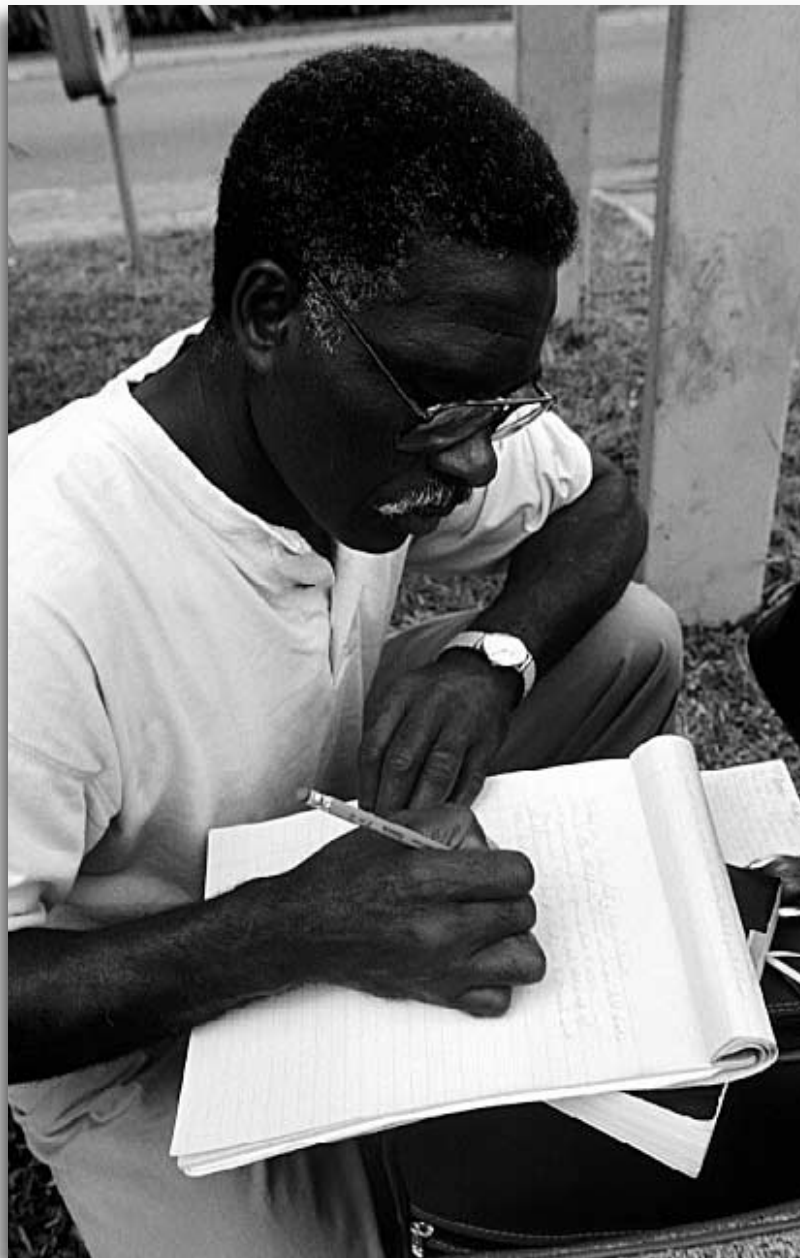
The missionary you relate to overseas will help you understand the culture. Missionaries see the “big picture.” They understand how everything relates or fits together in their country. Just remember you are a support person who will work and serve alongside the missionaries and nationals. Don’t be critical of the differences you see because a critical attitude can interfere with the work of the Holy Spirit. You’ll have a successful missions experience if you have a cooperative attitude and remain flexible.

Your trip home will be full of mixed emotions. You'll be excited, wanting to share your experience with everyone whether they want to hear it or not. You may also be sad, feeling the let-down of going back to the routine of daily living.

Soon after returning home, take some time to reflect on your trip. Ask yourself questions and write the answers in a journal to help you process what you've experienced. What was the highlight of your trip, and how do you feel about it? What was the low point? What were your goals for the trip and did you meet them? What do you think God wanted for you? Is it different from what you wanted? How did you



You'll feel both the excitement and the "let-down" of returning home so process what you've experienced by sharing with others. Someone else may feel the call to missions as you share.



Journaling can help you process your experience after you've returned home. It's an important step in sharing your spiritual journey with others.

grow spiritually? What happens now? It's important to think about each of these questions.

Equally as important is what you do with the experience now that you're home. You'll want to work on a "reverse" testimony. Think about the questions that helped you process your experience. Then create a short testimony to share what happened to



Remember to tell folks about the “special” people you met during your trip and what made them special to you.

you spiritually. How did God change you? What is different about you as a result of your experience? What happens now ... what will you do with that volunteer experience? Is God possibly calling you into full-time Christian service?

When you’ve finished your testimony, share it



New friendships and cherished memories forever link you with those who shared your experience on a volunteer trip.

with others. Give them the opportunity to learn about another culture and what God is doing there. Allow them to see what God has done in your life. As you share, others may feel called to missions service. What a blessing it would be for you to encourage and nurture others for missions!

WAYS YOU CAN SHARE WITH OTHERS

1. Speak to Sunday School classes
2. Share with youth groups
3. Speak to civic organizations
4. Share information with school groups
5. Show photos or slides as well as any items you bought which show something of the culture
6. Speak during a worship service, encouraging an openness to missions involvement
7. Challenge others to go overseas
8. Share with classes during Vacation Bible School
9. Share with your church during Wednesday night study time
10. Write an article for the church newsletter