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**Training to Consider Long-Term Missions**

Is it possible that God is preparing you for a life of service in missions? If you are open to God’s perfect will and committed to do whatever He wants you to do, then here are several steps to **discover God’s will** regarding missions.

1. **Wait on the Lord** – Spend much time in the Word and in prayer. Develop your devotion to Christ and your submission to His leadership. Pursue personal purity. Be sensitive to the promptings of the Holy Spirit and let Him form Christ in you (Gal. 4:19; 5:16, 22-26; Matt. 5:3-12).
2. **Serve in the Local Church** – Be faithful in worship, service, and stewardship. Discover and develop your spiritual gifts. Learn effectiveness in soul-winning and discipling. Get experience in every possible aspect of church ministry. Establish a strong testimony of dedication and spiritual fruitfulness.
3. **Seek Godly Counsel** – Ask your pastor for guidance in seeking God’s purpose for your future. Meet with him regularly for evaluation and instruction. Seek parents, Christian teachers, and wise associates for help with direction and motivation.
4. **Develop a Concern for Missions** – Read missions books and missionary biographies. Attend mission conferences. Talk with missionaries. Study needs and opportunities around the globe. Write to mission boards for literature and information.
5. **Pursue Proper Training** – If the above steps seem to be leading in the direction of vocational missionary service, lay the appropriate foundation. Thorough training in Bible doctrine and missions is essential. Talk to mission representatives for further counsel regarding your future goals and personal development and preparation for the mission field.
6. **Initiate Application to a Mission Board** – If all the arrows continue to point toward foreign missionary service, let your pastor help you contact a mission board recommended by your home church. The screening process to follow will help determine God’s direction.

Oftentimes we fail to understand the need for training when it comes to long-term missions. What secular career would you step into without proper training? There may have been times when this has been the case and you’ve “figured it out”, but we can all agree that proper training is necessary to be successful in our careers. “Those who return from mission service prematurely usually do so not for lack of Bible knowledge or inadequate vocational skills, but from lack of preparation for the unique challenges of mission service.

**The Local Church as a Training Ground**

Some of the best preparation for "the field" is exercising your gifts and ministering in your local church and community. Seize opportunities to disciple, share your faith, and teach the Word of God. Ministering at your local church gives you experience working with the Body of Christ and a frame of reference for when you are planting churches or working with national pastors. Leading or being part of a small group geared towards discipling new believers can give you broad exposure and experience with the kinds of things you may be involved with serving overseas. If your church doesn't have such a small group or Bible study, consider working with church leadership to start one.

**Build a Solid Biblical Base**

Some mission agencies require formal Biblical training others do not. Regardless, knowing God's Word and how to teach from His Word are critical to most missionary tasks. You can get this kind of training through short-term Bible schools or formal accredited universities.

**Short-Term Bible Schools**

There are many good short term Bible schools available. For a fairly comprehensive list of correspondence, online, or residential Bible training of this type visit MissionFinder.org.

**Formal Bible Training**

If you are seeking a formal education and degree program, you should seek an accredited four year college.

**Learn Mission Strategies, Current Trends, and History**

**Missions 101**

* Perspectives on the World Christian Movement
* The Traveling Team - Twelve Lessons

**Books**

* The Art of Crossing Cultures; Craig Storti (2007, InterCultural Press)
* Cross-Cultural Conflict: Building Relationship for Effective Ministry; Duane Elmer (1993, InterVaristy Press)
* Cross-Cultural Dialogues: 74 Brief Encounters with Cultural Difference; Craig Storti (1994, InterCultural Press)
* Cross-Cultural Servanthood: Serving the World in Christlike Humility; Duane Elmer (2006, InterVarsity Press)
* Foreign to Familiar; Sarah Lanier (2000, McDougal Publishing)
* On Being a Missionary; Thomas Hale (1995, William Carey Library)
* Send Me!:Your Journey To The Nations; Steve Hoke, Bill Taylor (1999, World Evangelical Fellowship)

**Transition Training**

Residential training for living and working in another culture. The course is designed to enhance the participants' knowledge in Biblical and missiological reflection by providing practical competency development to facilitate an effective transition to another cultural setting.

**Missions Degrees**

(Equivalant degress include: Intercultural Studies or Cross-Cultural Services)

**Support Raising**

Whether you hate it, love it, or fear it--support raising will become a regular part of your life if you are going to be a missionary. Do yourself a favor and take some time to gather input about the process, the approach others have taken, and most importantly what the Bible teaches about it. You can read books on the topic or attend a hands-on training seminar. Once you join a mission agency, they are liable to give you training in this area as well.

**Training Seminars**

The Body Builders - Boot Camp for Personal Support Raising

An intense two day training seminar to help Christian workers get to their ministry assignment quickly and fully funded. Learn to avoid pitfalls and put to rest your doubts, fears, and questions.

People Raising Conferences

A two-day conference that helps you learn how to significantly reduce the time it takes (as much as half) for you, your staff or organization to raise financial support.  Discover how to effectively move beyond the fear of raising funds.

**Books**

* Funding Your Ministry Whether You're Gifted or Not by Scott Morton, Dawson Media
* People Raising by William P. Dillon, Moody Press
* Getting Sent by Pete Sommer, Intervarsity Press
* Friend Raising by Betty Barnett, Youth With A Mission Publishing

**Articles**

* The Five Keys to Raising Your Personal Support by Steve Shadrach