



Woodstock
MISSIONS

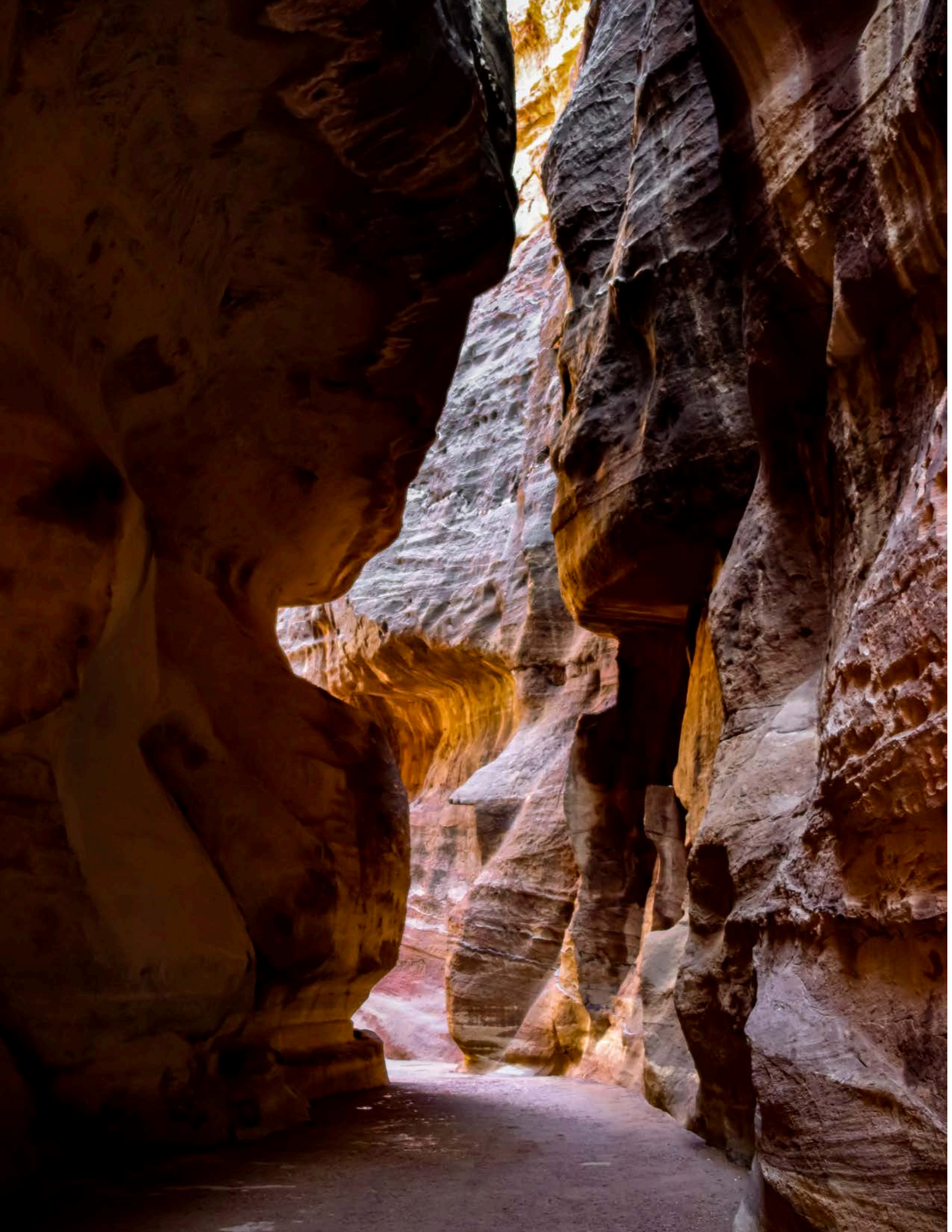
Short-Term Project Team Member Training

Woodstock
MISSIONS

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A Note from Pastor Jonah

Thank you for considering a short-term mission project with First Baptist Woodstock. This is more than a project. You are part of something big: helping to fulfill a promise given to Jesus and, by extension, given to First Baptist Woodstock. We boldly ask God to give us the promise he made to Jesus in Psalm 2:8: "Ask of me, and I will give you the nations as your inheritance" (NIV). You are part of the answer to that prayer.

A lifelong commitment to a mission often starts with a short-term project. It certainly did for me. As we often say, **before God can work through us, He first needs to work in us.** You're going to experience firsthand what that looks like. This project will be the vehicle through which the Holy Spirit gives you a vision of the gospel you've never imagined, as you witness what God is doing in the most unreached parts of the world. God will fill your heart with compassion and open your eyes to spiritual gifts you didn't even realize you had.

However, this isn't solely about transforming you. Our short-term projects also serve an essential role in missions. Our sent missionaries and partners cannot accomplish this work alone; they often need teams of people to support them in various ways.

Your presence, no matter how brief or imperfect, enhances their efforts and rejuvenates them as they continue in their calling. Each team we send is crucial to God's mission.

Remember, as you go, you follow the God who came to us as a servant. You will pick up a towel and "wash feet," as Jesus did for his disciples — as he did for you and me.

Thank you for taking this courageous step to follow God as He spreads the gospel to the ends of the earth. I pray that God will work in and through you. I'm also excited for you because you won't be the same.



Pastor Jonah Easley
Global Missions Pastor



Get the Vision

Biblical and Global Realities

As followers of Jesus, we were created to impact all nations for His glory. From Genesis to Revelation, Scripture shows that we are meant to enjoy God's grace and extend His glory to the ends of the earth. In Matthew 28:19, Jesus commands us to "go and make disciples of all nations." Too often, we separate God's blessings from His purpose, leading to a self-focused view of faith. We remember, "Be still and know that I am God," but forget the rest of Psalm 46:10: "I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in all the earth."

God blesses His people so that His ways and salvation may be known among all nations (Psalm 67:1-2). His plan is for the gospel to reach every people group, bringing Him the greatest glory as all nations worship Him.

Throughout history, God has been forming a new people—His Church—from every tribe, language, and nation. Revelation 5:9-10 declares that Jesus, through His blood, has purchased people from every nation to be a kingdom of priests who serve and reign with God.

The Church, empowered by the Holy Spirit and under the authority of Jesus, is the primary means to fulfill the Great Commission and make God's glory known to all peoples.

The local church must remain central in global missions. This requires a shift from asking, "Which missionaries or agencies do we support?" to "What specific role will our church take in making disciples of all nations?"

Too often, missions has become a spectator sport—we watch while others do the work. But God has called the Church, not just mission organizations, to lead the way. Ephesians 1:22-23 reminds us that Christ is the head of the Church, His body. Acts 1:8 shows the Church empowered by the Spirit to reach the nations, and 1 Corinthians 12 teaches that every believer is gifted for ministry.

Every member has a role in God's mission. The whole Church must be mobilized to make disciples of all nations.

Our Role

The ultimate goal of the Church is worship, not missions. Missions exists because worship doesn't—yet. We long to see people from every nation, tribe, and tongue become worshipers of the one true God, and in turn, make more disciples. True discipleship is disciplined worship—evangelizing the lost, baptizing them in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, teaching them to obey everything Christ commanded, and gathering them into healthy, multiplying churches.

As you go, remember: you are part of something much bigger than this project. The best context for making and growing disciples is the local church, and that will always remain central to our mission strategy. Whether meeting professionals in a café, teaching students in a classroom, or serving families in a slum, our aim never changes: to evangelize, baptize, and teach obedience so that worshipers are multiplied.

We partner with and support those who share this vision—missionaries, pastors, and local believers who are committed to seeing disciples made and churches established. Even in moments when visible fruit seems absent—such as prayer walking through unfamiliar streets in the rain—we trust God to work. We pray for Him to raise up disciples who will be baptized, taught, and sent out, resulting in new churches and lasting gospel impact for generations to come.

Three Goals for Your Project

As you prepare, go, and return, we want you and your team to:

1 - Learn to be with Jesus daily

Mark 3:14 says Jesus appointed the twelve "so that they might be with him and that he might send them out." Success is measured first by whether you and your team are learning to walk closely with Jesus each day.

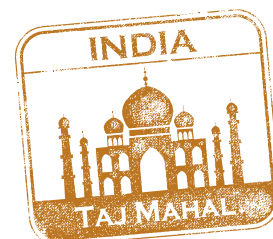
2 - Learn to serve one another

Just as Christ has served us, we are called to serve others. As a team leader, lead by example—asking daily:

- "How can I serve my team today?"
- "How can I help my teammates succeed more than me?"

3 - Learn to serve the nations

Get to know your field partners before the trip and lead your team to support and serve them well in their ongoing ministry.



On the Ground

While on the field, regularly ask: “How can I support and serve in a way that strengthens this ministry long after I’m gone?” Communicate with your field partners early and often.

Also, learn about the city where you’ll serve—understanding the context helps your team serve more effectively.

- Equip and disciple mission project participants with a vision of God’s heart for the nations.
- Develop leaders within First Baptist Woodstock.
- Lead the members of First Baptist Woodstock to consider their long-term involvement in the mission of God.

Plumblines for Missions

These core values guide all of our mission efforts, including short-term projects:

- The gospel of Jesus Christ is at the center of everything.
- The local church is God’s “Plan A.”
- People are the mission, not programs.

Why We Do Short-Term Projects

- To proclaim the gospel among the nations.
- To glorify God by serving others in response to Christ’s love.
- Encourage long-term missionaries by participating in ministry with them.
- Partner with and empower local churches around the world.



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Getting Started

Deadlines

120 days from trip departure:

- Once you are accepted to the team, a non-refundable, non-transferable deposit—equal to 10% of your total trip cost—is required to secure your spot.
- Passport
 - Do you have one?
 - When is the expiration date? Is it six months beyond your return date?
 - Upload a copy of your passport page to Managed Missions (managedmissions.com).
 - Read through “How to Raise Support” (page 19).
 - For more info, go to travel.state.gov/passport.
- Begin praying for your team, our on-field partners, and the work.
- Be in the Word daily.
 - You will have six mandatory team meetings.

90 days from trip departure (or before first meeting):

- Read and work through “Preparing to Share.”
- 25% of your funding should be in

70 days from trip departure:

- The majority of funds are due, and airline tickets need to be purchased as soon as possible. Team members must meet this goal before tickets can be purchased. Airline tickets will not be ordered for those who miss this deadline.
 - Immunizations
 - Check with cdc.gov/vaccines and get recommendations from the field partner.

14 days from trip departure:

- The full cost of the trip is due for all participants.



Logistics

This section of your participant guide is designed to provide everything you need to be fully prepared—practically and personally—for your upcoming mission project. From passports and immunizations to packing lists and emergency contacts, this is your go-to hub for all things logistics.

Your trip leader will walk through each part of this section during team meetings, ensuring you have the most accurate and up-to-date information for your specific project. Here you'll find important details such as:

- **Team member responsibilities**
- **Passport and immunization requirements**
- **Key deadlines and action items**
- **Emergency contact procedures**
- **Airport meeting points and transportation plans**
- **Baggage guidelines and travel tips**

Be sure to review this section carefully and keep it handy. Staying informed and organized will help ensure a smooth and focused experience as you prepare to serve on the field.

Tasks for Team Members

- Team Member Responsibilities (app.managedmissions.com)
- Deadlines and Tasks

Documents

- It is never too early to begin the paperwork that precedes any organized journey overseas. We recommend that you start soon to complete the items and procedures to ensure a smooth trip logistically.
 - Background checks? Release forms?
- **Passport and Visa**
 - All travel outside the U.S. requires a valid passport. **If you do not have a passport**, you should apply for one as soon as possible, as the process can take several weeks. You can apply for a passport at most post offices or online at travel.state.gov/passport.
 - **If you do have a passport, please check the expiration date to make sure it will be valid for at least six months after your return date. If your passport is scheduled to expire within six months following your return date, you will need to renew it before the trip.**
 - In addition, make sure your passport is in good condition and has empty pages for passport stamps (two empty pages are needed for trips requiring visas). We also recommend that you carry two photocopies of your passport with you on the trip.
 - Check with your team leader about specific visa requirements for your country of service.

Immunizations

- Helpful general immunization information is available on the website for the Centers for Disease Control, cdc.gov/travel.
- You can also contact Passport Health at passporthealthusa.com or call 888-499-PASS to schedule immunizations or locate a local agency that administers them. We recommend that you carry any available inoculation records with you during your trip.

Travel Information

- Travel Insurance. As a part of your trip, traveler's insurance will be included.
- Emergency Contact Information
 - Name:
 - Phone number:
 - Address:
 - Email:
- Airport Transportation Plan
- Luggage Restrictions
 - Number of checked bags:
 - Weight restrictions for checked bags:
 - Carry-on weight and size:



Team Covenant

Mission projects are team efforts. While each person brings unique backgrounds and skills, we must operate as a unified body with a shared purpose. Unity is essential and requires intentionality from every team member.

This covenant outlines our mutual commitment to God, one another, and those we serve. It is rooted in:

- Philippians 2:1-5 – Put others first, be humble, and work together with one purpose.
- John 13:34-35 – Love one another as Christ loved us, so the world will know we are His disciples.

Our purpose is to glorify God and demonstrate His love as we serve together on mission.

1. Flexibility

I will be adaptable in attitude, actions, and plans, trusting God to work through changing circumstances.

2. Accountability

I am ultimately accountable to God, and I will also be accountable to team leaders and teammates. I will encourage others and seek to build them up. (Hebrews 10:24)

3. Responsibility

I will complete assignments with excellence and steward all ministry resources—including support-raising efforts—with integrity and care.

4. Punctuality

I will honor others by being on time. If delays arise, I will communicate clearly and promptly.

5. Cultural Respect

I will enter each culture as a learner, refraining from judgment and seeking to live in a way that honors our hosts and reflects Christ's love.

6. Conduct

I will abstain from alcohol, tobacco, illegal drugs, and any behavior that could hinder our witness.

7. Travel Protocol

I will stay with the group unless given permission by the leader to separate, and I will never be alone—whether with a child or with a member of the opposite sex.

8. Conflict Resolution

If conflict arises, I will pray, reflect, and humbly pursue peace directly with the person involved—avoiding gossip or division.

9. Team Unity

I will honor the unique gifts of each teammate, foster community, and support others in their growth. (Romans 12:4-6)

10. Speech

I will speak words that build up and reflect Christ. I will avoid gossip, slander, and negativity. (James 3:9-11)

11. Emergencies

In any crisis:

- We stay together.
- The team leader will coordinate the next steps with local leaders.
- A designated contact will communicate with families.

12. Spiritual Focus

I will prioritize personal time with God and serve with humility, love, and dependence on the Holy Spirit. (Luke 10:27)

13. Relationships

- I will put others first, listen well, and show respect. (Ephesians 5:21)
- I will serve our hosts with a teachable heart. (1 Peter 4:8-10)
- I will maintain non-romantic relationships with team members and nationals.
- I will respect and support team leaders with prayer, honesty, and grace.

14. Prioritize Team Meetings and Preparation

With the limited time we have to prepare before serving together, it's essential to make every effort to participate in each training and team-building opportunity.

Final Commitment

As a short-term missionary, I represent Christ, my church, and my country. I commit to living above reproach, by the grace of God.

If my behavior becomes a problem, team leaders or hosts have the right to send me home at my own expense.

Team Member Name:

Signature:

Date:





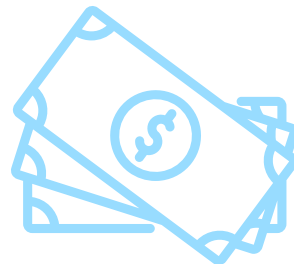
Support Raising

As you prepare for your short-term mission project with First Baptist Woodstock, remember—this is more than just your trip. It's a God-given opportunity to invite others into His work among the nations. While many people in your life may never board the plane with you, they can still join the mission in powerful ways—through **prayer**, **encouragement**, and **financial** partnership.

Support letters are not simply a way to fund your travel; they are an invitation for others to step into the story God is writing. When you ask someone to give or pray, you are offering them the privilege of participating in the Great Commission. Your letter might awaken a heart for missions in someone who has never considered going. It could inspire a deeper generosity, spark a passion for prayer, or even lead someone to take their own first step toward the nations.

A strong support team expands the reach of your obedience. As you go, they go with you—sharing in the joys, challenges, and eternal fruit of what God does on the field. Their prayers cover you, their giving equips you, and their encouragement sustains you.

So write with courage and clarity. Invite with joy and expectation. Trust God to surround you with people who will link arms with you for His glory. And as the mission unfolds, remember this truth: you may be the one who boards the plane, but together, you are all going into the harvest.



How to Raise Support

Raising support is an act of faith, trusting God to provide. Start early after being accepted to the project and don't procrastinate. There are various ways to raise funds, so begin as soon as possible.

Support Letters

Why? We recommend sending support letters to raise both financial support and prayer partners. The goal is to build a team of people invested in what God is doing in your life, not just asking for money. Your letter can also bless and inspire others to get involved in global missions in deeper ways.

How Many? We suggest sending personalized letters to 30-60 people for most projects.

Who? Ask God for guidance in creating your support list. Don't hesitate to reach out to family, friends, coworkers, extended family, non-believers, or anyone who might be interested in supporting your mission. Your letter could also serve as an opportunity to share the gospel with non-believers. Trust God to provide and don't assume anyone will say "no."

How? Once your application is approved and the deposit paid, write your letters and send them out. Have someone proofread your letter for spelling and grammar. Avoid using a generic form letter—personalize the greeting and an opening or closing comment for each recipient. Keep the letter to no more than two pages. Sample letters are provided to guide you, but be sure to customize them to fit your project.

Use an easy-to-read font (12 or 14 point) and include the following:

- **Your Call and Motivation:** Explain why you are going and what motivates you.
- **When and Where:** Mention the dates and location (use non-specific terms for closed countries).
- **What You'll Be Doing:** Describe your activities and the people you will serve.
- **What You Want from Recipients:**
 - **Prayer:** Provide specific prayer requests for you and those you'll be serving.
 - **Financial Help:** Mention your financial deadlines.
 - **Gift Details:**
 - State the amount needed.
 - Explain how to give online or by check (ensure participants' names aren't on checks).
 - Highlight that contributions are tax-deductible.
- **Thank Them:** Show gratitude for their prayer and support.
- **Phone Calls:** Consider calling before sending the letter to personally share your excitement. Follow up with calls about 10 days after mailing to keep the conversation going and ensure your supporters remember your project. If you aren't making calls, you aren't raising support!

Other Fundraising Ideas

Since First Baptist Woodstock cannot host or advertise fundraisers on campus, church websites, or social media, here are a few other ways to raise funds:

- **Host a Coffee and Dessert party:** Hosting a small gathering with friends and family is a great way to share your vision, answer questions, and invite support.
- **Odd Jobs:** Offer services like lawn mowing, babysitting, or other creative ways to earn money.
- **Personal Sacrifice:** Cut back on expenses (e.g., cancel cable, pack lunch, drink water) and save the money for your project.
- **Yard Sale:** Host a team-wide yard sale. Ask friends and family to donate items, and split the proceeds among the team.
- **Make Something:** Use your skills to create items for sale and find a creative place to sell them.

Common Misconceptions About Support Raising

- **MYTH:** Asking friends for money will harm your relationships.
- **TRUTH:** The Body of Christ supports one another, and most friends will be happy to contribute.

- **MYTH:** You should only ask for prayer, not financial support.

- **TRUTH:** While asking for prayer is important, you should also invite others to give to God's mission through your project.

- **MYTH:** If you have the money, you should pay for your project.

- **TRUTH:** While it's important to contribute yourself, not raising support deprives others of the opportunity to invest in what God is doing through you and globally!

- **MYTH:** You should only ask people who can afford it.

- **TRUTH:** It's not about the amount someone gives, but about their participation in God's mission. You'll be amazed at how God uses your request to draw others deeper into His global mission.

- **MYTH:** You can't ask the same people for money again.

- **TRUTH:** Support raising is about building a team of prayer partners, encouragers, and financial supporters. It's perfectly fine to ask people for support as you take part in different mission opportunities.

Sample Support Letter 1

Dear _____ ,

First Baptist Woodstock has been sending teams to serve alongside missionaries and church planters around the world for many years. Each time, God has used these trips to refresh field workers and reach surrounding communities with the gospel. This year, I'm excited to be part of a team traveling to South Asia from July 31-August 10, 20xx, to work with our church-planting partner in the nation's largest city and nearby areas.

Our primary goal is to partner with a local church in an impoverished neighborhood—encouraging them, strengthening their ministry, and helping them reach their community with the good news of Jesus Christ. We'll lead Backyard Bible Clubs for children (including Bible stories, games, and gospel presentations), provide training for national workers, prayer walk through various parts of the city, and minister to refugees, many of whom are Hindu.

Would you prayerfully consider partnering with me? The total cost of the trip is \$2,300. Most of my support is due by April 30, with the remainder by June 1. Any amount—large or small—will make a difference and help us bring the hope of Christ to South Asia. You can give online at (provided QR code), or by check made payable to First Baptist Woodstock (please do not write my name in the memo line). Mail contributions to:

First Baptist Woodstock
Global Missions Office
11905 GA-92
Woodstock, GA 30188



Most importantly, I ask for your prayers—prayers for our team's preparation, for the local church and partners we'll serve, and for open hearts among those who hear the gospel. Pray that I will follow the Holy Spirit's leading and that God will do "immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine" (Ephesians 3:20).

Thank you for considering how you might join me in this mission through your prayers and support. With gratitude,

Bill Smith

(Please return this portion with any donations.)

Donor's email address: _____

_____ Enclosed is a check for: ___ \$25 ___ \$50 ___ \$75 ___ \$100 ___ \$500 _____ \$ other

All contributions are tax deductible and nonrefundable. To be tax deductible you must.

1. Please return all donations to me so I can submit them through the team treasurer.
2. Make check payable to First Baptist Church Woodstock (FBCW), not an individual.
3. Include the following on the memo line of the check: Acct # & personal code
4. You may also give online at: <https://app.securegive.com/fbcw/mission-trips/donate/category>

Sample Support Letter 2

Dear Friends and Family,

I hope you're doing well! It's hard to believe I'm entering my second year as a homeowner, third year of marriage, and third year of teaching. Since college, God has taught me that life isn't about me—it's about loving Him and others. This December 14–22, John and I have the privilege of putting that into action on a short-term mission trip to Central Asia.

First Baptist Woodstock has helped plant multiple churches worldwide, including one in Central Asia led by members from our congregation. Our team will encourage these church planters and host community outreaches. As a teacher, I may even have the opportunity to visit local schools. Our desire is simple: to share the greatest gift of all—Jesus Christ.

You can partner with me in two ways:

1. **Prayer** – Pray that God prepares hearts to receive the gospel, strengthens our team, and works powerfully through every conversation (Ephesians 3:14–21).
2. **Financial Support** – The total cost of my trip is \$2,500, with the largest portion due July 20. Any amount is deeply appreciated. Give online at (included QR code) or by check payable to First Baptist Woodstock (please do not write my name in the memo). Mail to:

First Baptist Woodstock – Global Missions Office
11905 GA-92
Woodstock, GA 30188

Thank you for your friendship, prayers, and support. I'd love to hear how you're doing and share more about this trip!

With gratitude,

Sarah James



(Please return this portion with any donations.)

Donor's email address: _____

_____ Enclosed is a check for: ___\$25___\$50___\$75___\$100___\$500_____ \$ other

All contributions are tax deductible and nonrefundable. To be tax deductible you must.

- Please return all donations to me so I can submit them through the team treasurer.
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Preparing to Share

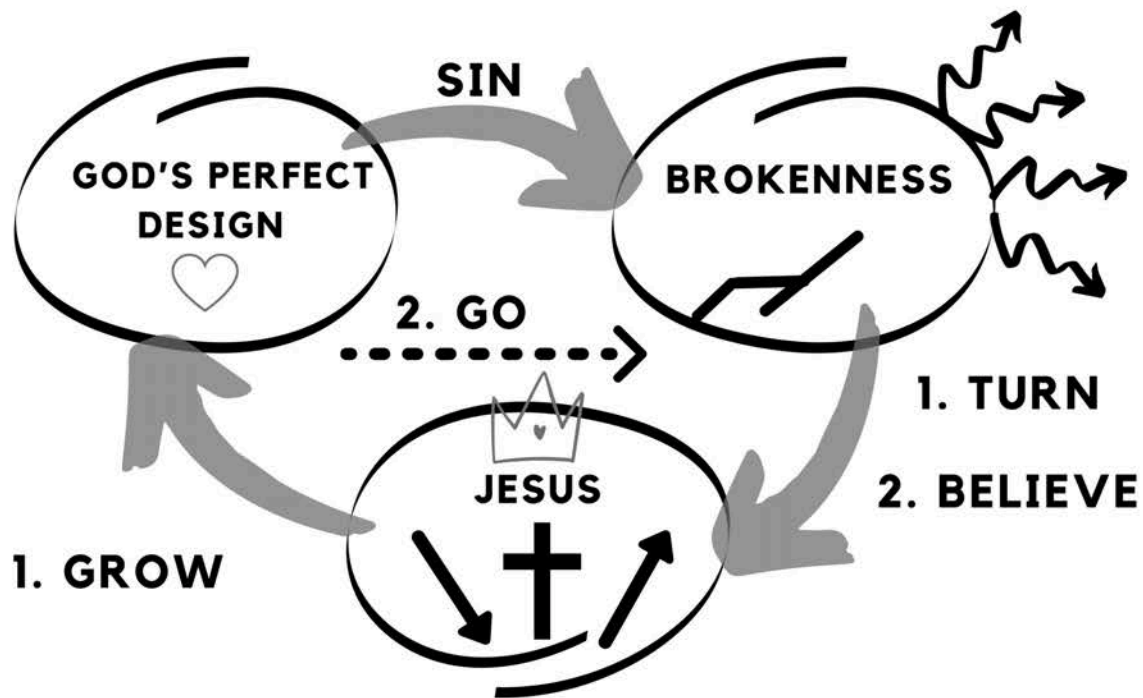
One of the most important ways you can prepare for your mission project is by learning to clearly and confidently share the gospel. As a team member, you'll have opportunities to engage in conversations that matter—whether through intentional ministry or everyday encounters. Our goal is to help you recognize those moments, listen well, and guide conversations toward the hope of Jesus.

At the heart of your witness is your personal story. The greatest evidence of the gospel is a changed life—your life. When paired with a clear gospel presentation, your testimony becomes a powerful tool that God can use to draw others to Himself.

In this section, we'll equip you with a simple, effective way to share the gospel called **"The 3 Circles."** This method will help you explain the core message of the gospel in a way that's easy to remember, natural in conversation, and rooted in Scripture.

Be mindful that the field you're serving may use methods other than "The 3 Circles" that your team should adopt. Rely on your field partner for these specifics. Remember, this is more than a mission project—it's a discipleship opportunity for life. Our goal is to develop soul-winning followers of Jesus.

THREE CIRCLES: A GOSPEL VISUAL



OBJECTIVE

The "Three Circles: A Gospel Visual" is a tool to equip followers of Jesus to know and articulate the gospel message to the world.

TRAINING OVERVIEW

The material created can be used for a one-time gospel training session or several weeks for a discipleship study.

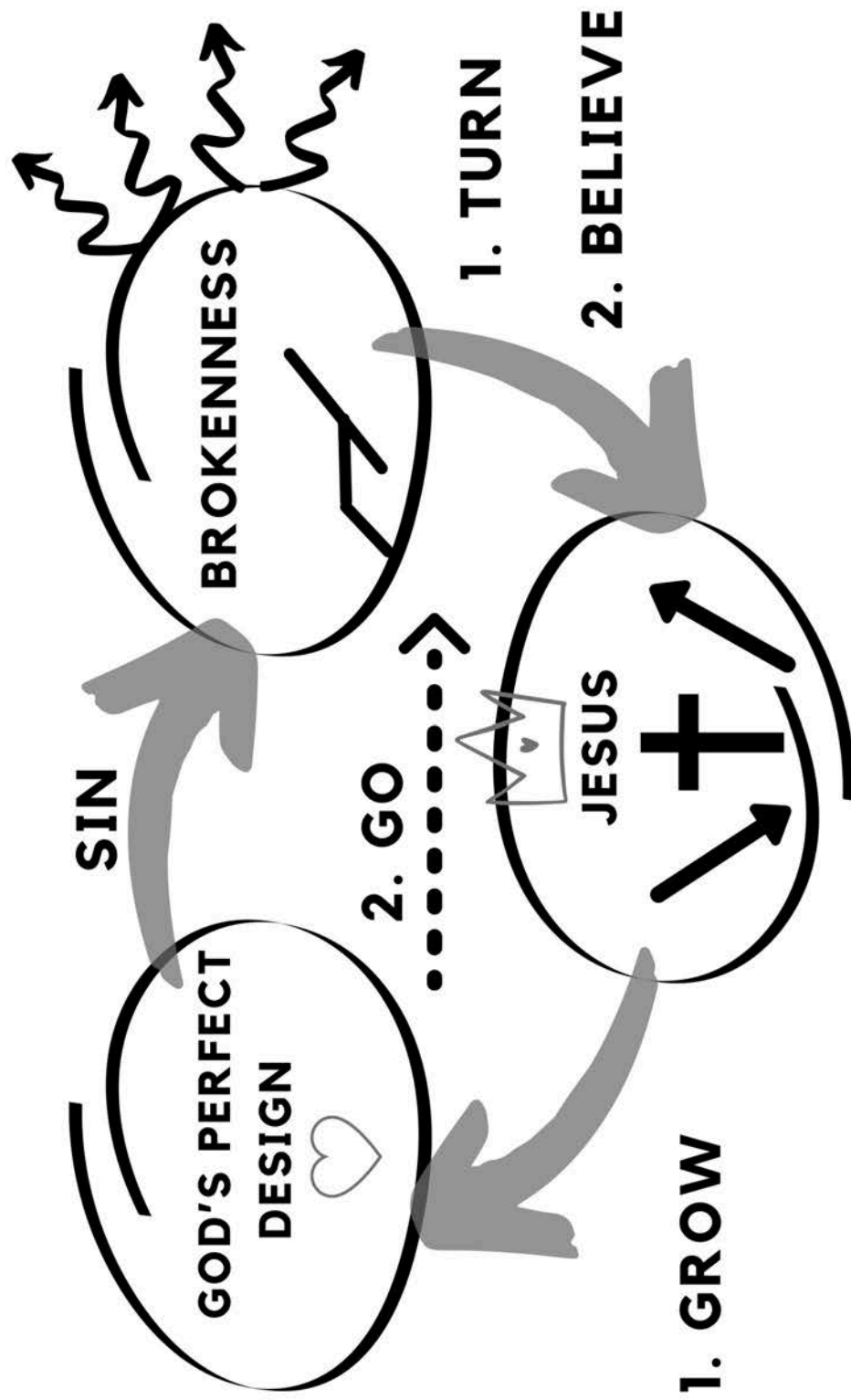
TRAINING GOALS

There are two main goals to the training.

1. Believer Growth – followers of Christ will become more confident in their beliefs and articulate the gospel in a simple yet effective method (1 Peter 3:15)
2. Kingdom Growth– as followers of Christ have more confidence to share the gospel, the kingdom of God will grow because more people will have the opportunity to respond to the gift of salvation (Romans 10:14-15)

TRAINING METHODS

- Teach the visual to the group or individual, and have them draw the model as you explain.
- Next, allow the participant(s) time to practice the method by pairing them up to draw and explain the visual to their partner. Allow them the assistance of their partner if they forget parts. *People remember what they have learned when they immediately practice. Do not skip this crucial step in the training.*
- Use the Scripture Support & Scripture Study handouts for additional discipleship learning. While the visual is a great tool to know and share the gospel, followers of Jesus need to understand why they believe what they believe. You can create a several-week study using these scriptures or giving them to your trainees for individual discovery.



TEACH THE VISUAL

BELOW IS A SCRIPT FOR THE THREE CIRCLES GOSPEL VISUAL. YOU DO NOT NEED TO MEMORIZE THE STORY WORD-FOR-WORD, BUT YOU SHOULD KEEP THE STORY INTACT THE BEST YOU CAN. YOU CAN SEARCH FOR YOUTUBE EXAMPLES TO HELP YOU UNDERSTAND THE CONNECTION BETWEEN THE PICTURE AND SCRIPT EVEN BETTER.

Circle on Right (Brokenness): We live in a broken world, where everyone is affected by sin. Brokenness is not hard to see. Everywhere you look, people are hurting. People hurt each other, get sick, feel a void in their lives, natural disasters occur, etc.

Circle on Left (God's Perfect Design): But brokenness was not a part of human life at the beginning of time. God had a perfect design in mind, and people once had a pure relationship with God and with each other; there was no shame, and every need they had, was supplied.

The Arrow from Left to Right Circle (Sin): Unfortunately, our world did not stay perfect. The first people chose to rebel (sin) from God's goodness. Now you and I live in brokenness and separation from God because of our sin.

The Squiggly Arrows from Right Circle: Since no one wants to be in pain or brokenness, humans try to escape it by attempting to work hard to become highly successful; they attempt to perform good deeds or become religious. Some people even try to numb the pain through media or drugs and alcohol. However, none of these methods work for long or at all.

TEACH THE VISUAL CONTINUED

Circle on Bottom (Jesus): Yet, God loves you so much that He sent His one and only Son, Jesus, to live perfectly on earth, something none of us can do. Jesus then took the penalty for your sins by dying on the cross and defeating death by rising from the dead three days later.

The Arrow from Right to the Bottom Circle (Turn & Believe): The Bible tells you that if you turn from your sins to Jesus, believing in your heart what He did on the cross for you, and confess Him as Lord of your life, you will be saved.

The Arrow from Bottom to the Left Circle (Grow & Go): When you turn to Jesus and believe in Him, something incredible happens! God restores you into His perfect design and pours out His Spirit into you. You then have a new purpose: to grow in your relationship with God and go back into the brokenness to tell others about Him and His plan for salvation.

Possible Closing Questions:

- Have you ever heard this message before?
- Where do you think you would fit into the visual? Why?
- What questions do you have about this?
- Do you want to follow Jesus?
- Are you plugged into a local church? If not, can I help you get involved with one?
- How can I pray for you?

SCRIPTURE SUPPORT

Sharing the Three Circles with supporting Scripture can be powerful, even if you don't quote the passages in full. The following verses provide biblical support for the Three Circles and will equip disciples to make disciples.

- **God's Perfect Design:** Genesis 1-2
- **Sin:** Genesis 3; Romans 3:23
- **Brokenness:** Romans 1:18-32; Ephesians 2:1-3
- **Jesus:** Ephesians 2:4-7; 1 Cor. 15:1-11
- **Turn:** Acts 2:22-41
- **Believe:** Romans 10:9-13; Luke 9:23-27 (follow Jesus)
- **Grow:** 2 Timothy 3:12-17 (read); Luke 11:1-12 (pray)
- **Go:** Matthew 28:16-20; Acts 1:6-11; 2 Cor. 5:11-21

**TIP: CONSIDER
USING THE STUDY
THE SCRIPTURES
HANDOUTS WHEN
READING THE
PASSAGES.**

STUDY THE SCRIPTURES

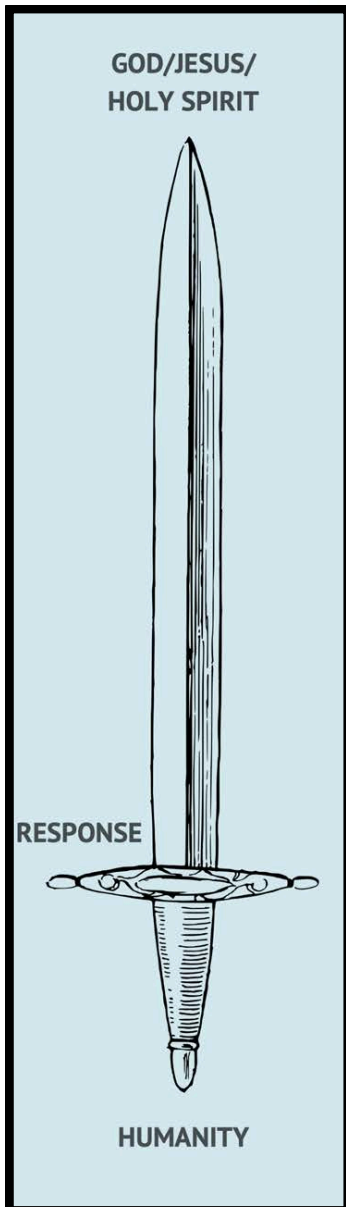
DISCOVERY BIBLE STUDY: THE SWORD QUESTIONS

“For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart.”

Hebrews 4:12

Scripture refers to the Word of God as a double-edged sword. As you see in the visual to the left, there is a sword with three labels: God/Jesus/Holy Spirit, Humanity, Response. These labels represent the three big discovery questions you should ask when reading scripture.

- Since the tip of the sword points to Heaven (toward God), you ask the first question: **“What do I learn about God/Jesus/Holy Spirit?”**
- The handle is held by people and should remind you of the second question: **“What do I learn about humanity?”**
- The guard connects the handle to the blade, just as you are connected to God and should remind you to ask the third question: **“How is God calling me to respond?”**



TEACHING TIP

TO HELP PARTICIPANTS MEMORIZE THE SWORD QUESTIONS, HAVE THEM STAND UP AND IMAGINE THEIR BODY IS A SWORD. THEN INSTRUCT THEM TO REPEAT THE THREE QUESTIONS AS THEY “ACT” OUT THE DIFFERENT PARTS OF THE SWORD (EX. POINT WITH ARMS TO SKY = BLADE = QUESTION ABOUT GOD)

STUDY THE SCRIPTURES

DISCOVERY BIBLE STUDY: THE THREE BIG QUESTIONS

The following is a detailed list of questions to ask after reading a portion of scripture. The questions are under three main categories: About, Learn, Apply.



1

1. About

- What are the main characters doing in this passage?
- Which points seem most important?
- Setting: Where is the story taking place? What is the significance?
- How would you summarize the passage in one sentence?



2

2. Learn

- What does the passage reveal about God? About people?
- What promises, commands, or warnings do you see?
- What's a key truth you see in these verses?
- What new, encouraging, or challenging points stand out to you?



3

3. Apply

- How does this relate to your life right now?
- How do you think you should respond to what you learned?
- What do you think you should pray for based on this passage?
- Does your thinking and behavior line up with what the passage teaches?
- What change would you like to implement in your life based on these verses?



Overview of Team Meetings

This training will help you develop a biblical perspective, make the most of your time in the field, and experience lasting personal and spiritual growth. While plans and locations may change, being spiritually ready will help you adapt and respond in a way that honors God. Each session will include 15–20 minutes of spiritual preparation, focusing on the biblical mandate and global realities. You'll be encouraged to engage with Scripture daily—especially in the weeks leading up to the trip—and to take part in devotionals with time to respond. These will be tailored to our destination, ministry focus, and the unique needs of our team.

Meeting 1: Big Picture Vision - God's Heart and the Gospel

God's heart for the nations throughout the entirety of the Bible.

Meeting 2: God's World

Who the unreached are: the people who have never heard the story of Jesus and do not have access to the gospel.

Meeting 3: God's Work

The roles of a World Christian (goer, center, welcome, mobilizer, prayer).

Meeting 4: Abiding in Christ

The importance of abiding in Christ for cross-cultural work as well as in everyday life.

Meeting 5: Going Well - Mindset of a Learner

The value of approaching a new culture as a learner and the humility required to do so.

Meeting 6: Team Dynamics

The need to grow trust among team members and healthy ways to handle conflict.

Suggested Meeting Format

While this packet provides a suggested format to guide your preparation, you are encouraged to adapt it to your own context and needs. Think of it as a starting point to help you plan well, stay focused, and make the most of your mission experience.

- Start by gathering everyone together and **opening in prayer**.
- Share the “**Big Picture Vision**” in a way that resonates with your group. This could include reading from the guide, creating a PowerPoint, or sharing personal stories that connect to the content. Remember, stories and testimonies are a powerful way to engage and connect.
- **Learn, review, and practice the “Three Circles” in each meeting.** Beginning in the second meeting, have someone different share with the team. Real-world practice should be included in each meeting’s homework and should be reported back at the following meeting.
- Lead the group through the **Large Group Discussion**, including any scriptures, demonstrations, or activities provided.
- Split into small groups to dive deeper into the “**Deeper Discussion**” questions.
- Bring everyone back together for the **Large Group Wrap-Up Discussion** to reflect on what was shared.
- Provide any additional resources or **logistical information** needed for the group.
- Conclude with **prayer**.

Whenever possible, we’ll have different team members lead portions of our time together. This helps keep things fresh and engaging, while also giving each of us opportunities to grow in leadership.

Meeting Breakdown (1.5 - 2 hours):

- **Prayer**
- **Big picture vision** (shared by group leader)
- **Large group discussion**
- **Deeper discussion** (small groups)
- **Large group wrap-up discussion**
- **Next steps/prayer**

NOTE: Praying in pairs fosters team relationships and helps members truly know and care for one another.

If you don't have time to complete the full content during the meeting, you can instruct the group to think through the "deeper discussion" sections on their own as homework.

Team Meeting 1

The first team meeting introduces members, casts vision, reviews logistics, and begins spiritual preparation.

Introductions and Vision

Begin the meeting with simple introductions describing a previous project experience, expectations, and motivations for going. **If all members are present, take a team photo.** Explain the overall vision for the project, including why you are going, who you will be working with (field partner bio), and what you hope to see accomplished through the project.

Logistics

Take time to review the critical logistical information below.

- **Review deadlines** as outlined in Managed Missions.
- **Go over the "How to Raise Support"** process to ensure understanding and set goals if needed.
- **Emphasize the importance of prayer** support and encourage intentional prayer for the team.
- Confirm that everyone has the necessary **passports, visas**, and vaccinations.
- **Upload your insurance card and passport** to Managed Missions.
- **Assign team member roles.**
- If possible, **arrange for your field partner to be introduced** through a video or live Zoom call.

TEAM MEMBER ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Within the first two meetings, request volunteers or make assignments to the various leadership roles of the team.

TEAM LEADER:

Lead and disciple the team before, during, and after the project.

ASSISTANT TEAM LEADER:

Assist the Project Leader and assume responsibility for the team if the Team Leader cannot complete the project.

TEAM TREASURER:

Work directly with the mission's bookkeeper, team leader, and team members to oversee the fundraising and allocation of funds. Responsible for tracking and reporting all team expenses.

PRAYER CAPTAIN:

Assist the Team Leader in implementing the team's prayer strategy and provide the storyteller with updates to report from the field.

LUGGAGE COORDINATOR:

Pick up and distribute bag tags, confirm luggage limitations, weigh all team equipment and bags, attach bag tags, and complete the bag assignment list.

TEAM STORY TELLER:

Collect and document project stories with videos, photos, etc. Take caution using pictures of field partners and locals who are engaged. Refer to the field partners' safety instructions.



Passports: Every team member traveling outside the U.S. must have a passport, regardless of age. If a team member doesn't have one, they should apply promptly, allowing 4–6 weeks for processing (though it may take as little as two weeks). The global missions team recommends applying for a passport upon project registration. Passports are valid for 10 years, and most countries require at least six months' validity upon entry. If a passport is expiring, it should be renewed before the project. Let the global missions team know if anyone on your team has a non-U.S. passport. For more details, visit travel.state.gov/passport.

Entry Visas: Some countries allow entry visas upon arrival, while others require pre-departure applications. Check with your field partners and refer to the country's embassy website or the U.S. Department of State's site (travel.state.gov/travel) for entry and exit requirements and fees.

Vaccinations: Team leaders should be aware of the CDC's vaccination recommendations for international travelers and communicate them clearly to team members. Country-specific information is available on the CDC website at cdc.gov/travel.

Some countries, or the U.S., may require proof of vaccination for entry. Check with field partners to confirm what's needed. Each team member, in consultation with their physician, is responsible for deciding which vaccinations are required. The team leader can provide CDC recommendations, but the decision is up to the individual. Note: Vaccinations are not included in the project cost and may not be covered by insurance.

Lesson 1: The Big Picture

God's Heart & The Gospel

From Genesis to Revelation, the thread of God's mission runs throughout Scripture. In fact, over 1,600 verses speak directly to His desire for all nations to know Him. God's passion for missions did not begin with the Great Commission in Matthew 28—it began in the Garden of Eden, immediately after humanity's fall. In Genesis 3:15, God promised the coming of a Redeemer who would crush the serpent and restore what was broken. This was not an afterthought; it was His plan from the very beginning.

Throughout the Old Testament, God continually reveals His heart for the nations. He calls Abram in Genesis 12, promising that "all the families of the earth shall be blessed" through him. The Psalms proclaim God's glory among the nations (Psalm 67; Psalm 96). The prophets point to a coming day when all peoples will worship the Lord (Isaiah 49:6; Malachi 1:11). The New Testament then reveals the fulfillment of these promises in Jesus Christ—the One who came not only for Israel but as the Savior of the world.

The Great Commission is not the starting point of missions but the continuation of God's eternal purpose. It is the Church's marching orders to join Him in His work, making disciples of all nations until the vision of Revelation 7:9-10 becomes reality—a multitude from every nation, tribe, people, and language worshiping before the throne.

Missions is not a program—it's God's heart, the Church's mission, and His unstoppable plan to redeem people from every nation.

Large Group Discussion

Read the following verses aloud in one sitting. Then answer the discussion questions together in a large group.

- Genesis 12:1-3
- Psalm 46:10
- Matthew 24:14
- Revelation 7:9-10

Optional additional verses: Genesis 1:28, Exodus 9:15-16, 1 Samuel 17:45-46, 1 Chronicles 16:24, Psalm 67:1-7, Isaiah 49:6, Acts 1:8, 1 John 2:2

Discussion Questions

- What surprised you most when reading these verses all at once?
- What are these verses communicating about God's global purpose and passion?
- If God's main purpose and passion is about spreading the gospel to all people, how does this change your purpose and passion?

Deeper Discussion

In small groups, discuss each of the following passages and answer the questions together.

Genesis 12:1-3

1. What did God promise to Abram in this passage?
2. What was God's purpose in this promise to Abram?
3. Who is the ultimate fulfillment of this promise?
4. How does this passage apply to Gentile Christians?

Psalms 46:10

1. How do people usually apply this passage?
2. What is the big picture implication of this verse?
3. How is our peace tied to God's greater promise of God being exalted in all the earth?

Matthew 24:14

- What must first happen before the end comes?
- How does this verse change the way you view the end times?
- How does it change the way we view our ministry priorities?

Revelation 7:9-10

1. Who will be present in the throne room in this passage?
2. How does this passage give you hope in our mission's efforts?
3. How does this passage change your perspective on your purpose and vision for your life?

Large Group Wrap-Up Discussion

1. How has this lesson impacted the way you view God's global purpose and passion?
2. After hearing that the Bible has one common theme and thread, how does that impact the way you view evangelism, missions, and your purpose and calling?
3. What is one action step you can take this week in light of what we have learned?

POTENTIAL ACTION STEPS AND ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- Commit to praying before you read your Bible each day, asking God to reveal verses that highlight His heart for the nations and His global love. This practice will transform the way you read Scripture.
- Share what surprised you in this lesson with one person you know.
- Memorize a verse from this lesson that impacted you.

Lesson 2: God's World

As believers, we are blessed with the hope that one day every knee will bow before Jesus, and people from every tribe, nation, and language will worship Him together. What a glorious day that will be! Thanks to modern technology and resources, we can track the progress we've made in sharing the gospel. After 2,000 years since Jesus walked the earth and with the internet reaching almost everywhere, it might seem like we're close to fulfilling Matthew 24:14, which says, "The gospel will be preached to all nations, and then the end will come." However, we're not there yet.

Did you know that over three billion people still have never heard the story of Jesus? In Matthew 28, Jesus commands us to go to all nations and spread the gospel. The Greek word for "nations" in this passage, *ethne*, refers to "people groups." According to the Joshua Project, a people group is the largest group within which the gospel can spread without facing significant barriers to understanding or acceptance.

Today, there are over 16,000 people groups, but only about 7,000 have been reached with the gospel. The majority of unreached people groups live in the 10/40 window—the area between the 10th and 40th parallels. Shockingly, even though billions of people in this region lack the hope of Christ, less than 10% of all missionaries are focused on this area. Additionally, American Christians spend more on Halloween costumes for their pets than on supporting missions to the unreached.

The difference between unreached people and the non-believers you may know is not that they are "more lost," but that they don't have access to the gospel. If someone in the U.S. is curious about Christianity, they can attend a church or talk to a Christian friend. But if someone in an unreached group has a dream about Jesus, they may have no pastors, missionaries, or even a Bible in their language to guide them.

The good news is that the Global Church has the resources to finish the task that God has entrusted to us. Imagine how quickly we could fulfill God's call to reach all nations if we strategically pooled our resources, skills, and passions to bring the gospel to the ends of the earth!

Large Group Demonstration

DEMONSTRATION #1 - MAKE-UP OF THE WORLD

In a large group, select 10 team members to volunteer for the demonstration. If there are fewer than 10, set up three tables labeled "Christians," "Non-Christian Reached," and "Unreached" to represent each group.

Materials: Bible, stuffed animal bunny, Christmas decoration, and sunglasses.

Note: The following statistics reflect general trends in churches and are not specific to First Baptist Woodstock

Group 1 (Christians):

Have 3 volunteers stand together. Give one a Bible, one a stuffed bunny, and one a Christmas decoration. Explain: "**One-third of the world (33%) has said yes to Jesus.** About 10% of them are evangelical Christians (one volunteer), while the other 20% are nominal Christians or occasional church-goers (two volunteers)."

Group 2 (Non-Christian Reached):

Have 4 volunteers stand near the first group. Give all of them sunglasses. Explain: "**Over one-third of the world (38%) has said no to Jesus.** They have access to Bibles, churches, Christian friends, and resources, but they are blind to the gospel (tell them to put on their sunglasses)."

Group 3 (Unreached):

Have 3 volunteers stand across the room from the other two groups. Explain: "**One-third of the world (29%) has never heard the gospel.** They have no access to a Bible in their language, no churches nearby, and no missionaries or pastors working among their people. They are unreached because they have no access to the gospel, unlike group 2, who have the choice whether or not to follow Jesus."

DEMONSTRATION #2 - MISSIONARY DISTRIBUTION

Have the 10 volunteers remain standing in the front of the room.

Materials: Use 100 of any small item (candy works well) to show the distribution of missionaries across the world. Make sure to measure them out beforehand!

Explain out loud: "**72% of all missionaries are going to reached people groups or places where there is already access to the gospel.** This means there are churches all around, plenty of pastors and believers, and a Bible in their language." Give 72 pieces of candy (count this out beforehand) to Group 1 (the 3 Christians).

Explain out loud: "**25% of all missionaries are going to places where there is some access to the gospel.**" Give 25 pieces of candy to Group 2 (the 4 non-Christians).

Explain out loud: "**Only 3% of all missionaries sent out in the world are going to places with no access to the gospel or the places where missionaries are needed the most.**"

Give 3 remaining pieces of candy to Group 3 (the 3 unreached people on the other side of the room).

DEMONSTRATION #3 - GIVING DISTRIBUTION

Have the 10 volunteers remain standing in the front of the room.

Materials: Use either 100 one-dollar bills or 100 fake dollar bills (search and print "dollar bill clip art images") to demonstrate money given to missions by the Church.

Explain out loud: "**87% of all the money given to missions by the Church goes to areas with a significant Christian presence.**" Spread \$87 among Group 1 (the 3 Christians).

Explain out loud: "**About 12% of all the money given to missions by the Church goes to reached areas of non-believers.**" Spread \$12 among Group 1 (the 4 non-Christians).

Explain out loud: "**Less than 1% of all the money given to missions by the Church goes to the unreached.**" Give \$1 to one of the 3 people in Group 3 (the 3 unreached people).

In the large or small group setting, answer the following discussion questions together after completing the demonstration.

Discussion Questions

- What are your initial thoughts & reactions when you hear this information?
- Have you ever heard these statistics before?
- How is this settling on your heart as you think about missions in the world?
- What do you find most challenging about this?

Deeper Discussion

In small groups, look over the following picture of the 10/40 window and the THUMB acronym and answer the discussion questions together. [Visual from Radical.com]



T Tribal

161 million unreached people in 704 people groups
60 cross-cultural workers for every 1 million tribal people

H Hindu

860 million unreached people in 1,843 people groups
2 workers for every 1 million Hindus

U Unreligious

121 million unreached people in 15 people groups
12 workers for every 1 million unreligious

M Muslim

1.3 billion unreached people in 1,344 people groups
6 workers for every 1 million Muslims

B Buddhist

275 million unreached people in 227 people groups
13 workers for every 1 million Buddhists

Over three billion people who are unreached with the gospel live in the 10/40 window. An easy way to remember the main blocs of unreached people is the THUMB acronym.

Discussion Questions

1. Why do you think the 10/40 window is the most unreached geographical region in the world?
2. What types of spiritual strongholds does the enemy have in this region?
3. What surprised you the most while reading THUMB acronym?

Large Group Wrap-Up Questions

1. How has this lesson impacted the way your view of missions, the state of the world, and the task remaining?
2. After hearing that 3.1 billion people are still living and dying without access to the gospel, how does that impact the way you view missions and your individual purpose?
3. What is one action step you can take this week in light of what we have learned?
3. Begin praying daily or weekly for the unreached as part of your normal routine. Set an alarm on your phone for 10:40 AM every day or commit time before a meal or before bed to praying for an unreached people group.
4. Share about the 10/40 window or the THUMB acronym with one person you know.

POTENTIAL ACTION STEPS AND ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

1. Check out websites about the unreached like
 - a. joshuaproject.net
 - b. operationworld.org
 - c. peoplegroups.org
 - d. and prayercast.com
 - e. Specifically, look at the THUMB prayer videos at joshuaproject.net/resources/prayer_videos.
2. Watch the "GFM 101" videos to learn more about topics such as the Biblical basis of missions, the state of the world, and more by visiting <https://www.globalfrontiermissions.org/missions-101>.



Lesson 3: God's Work

All believers share the responsibility and calling to participate in His work of redeeming humanity. While crossing cultures as a missionary is one way to engage, there are many other ways to join in God's mission. Just as a soldier on a battlefield depends on many behind-the-scenes supporters, missionaries need the Church to support the work on the field in specific ways.

"World Christians" are believers who recognize their unique role in God's mission. They dedicate their time, resources, skills, careers, and dreams to fulfill the purpose God has for them. These individuals use the most important aspects of their lives strategically to reach the nations, because they believe, as God's Word teaches, that His glory among the nations is worth any sacrifice. When we place our faith in Christ, we are not only brought into God's family but also called to participate in His redemptive work. As children of God, we are called to a purpose—a purpose that aligns with God's overarching mission to redeem all of humanity. The Bible tells one continuous story: God's mission to bring all people to Himself.

Practically, this looks like five key practices for World Christians:

1. **Praying for the nations**
2. **Going to the nations**
3. **Sending workers to the nations**
4. **Welcoming the nations**
5. **Mobilizing others for the nations**

These practices are accessible to every believer, enabling them to play a role in God's global redemptive work.

WORLD CHRISTIAN PRACTICES ACTIVITY

Divide your team into five groups. If your team is less than five, you can present one of the world Christian practices. Assign a world Christian practice to each group. Each group will then take a couple of minutes to read about their respective practice from their participant handout and research their respective questions. Then the group will present their world Christian practice and their findings to the rest of the team.



PRAY



GO



SEND



WELCOME



MOBILIZE

PRAYING FOR THE NATIONS

Oftentimes, prayer is our back-burner strategy. We employ all our well-crafted ideas and strive until we have nothing left to give. It is when we come to the end of ourselves, unfortunately, that we turn to prayer.

What if prayer was our FIRST priority – our #1 item in our tool belt? We know Jesus commanded us to pray, but He also tells us that "apart from Me you are able to do nothing" (John 15:5). Prayer is the most important and foundational practice for a World Christian. Without prayer and God's power, our efforts are meaningless.

Instructions for Participants: Explore JoshuaProject.com. Look up the country you are visiting. Learn about their culture, the dominant religion, etc. See how you can pray for the country/ and or people group. Spend some time praying together as a group. Then, when you share your world christian practice, share your practice, present your findings, and share what you prayed for in your small group.

GOING TO THE NATIONS

There are still 3 billion unreached people in the world. Although not all are called to go, many are called to leverage their careers, dreams, and talents to live cross-culturally and preach the gospel. Going short-term to support long-term efforts is an extremely important part of being a World Christian.

Instructions for Participants: Spend the next few minutes exploring our church's website reading about the organizations and missionaries we support. Spend some time praying together as a group for the missionaries or region of the world your church supports or that the Lord would raise up missionaries to be sent from your church. Then, when you share your world christian practice, present your findings, and share what you prayed for in your small group.

SENDING TO THE NATIONS

"And how shall they preach unless they are sent?" Romans 10:15. Senders leverage their money, time, resources, and encouragement to send missionaries to the field. Jesus calls us to be generous with our money and sacrifice joyfully to build his kingdom in all nations. If we can't go, why not leverage the blessings God has given us as World Christians to be a part of His global plan of redemption?

Instructions for Participants: Spend the next few minutes reading the biography cards of the missionaries your church supports. Write an encouraging letter or card to one of those workers and pray over their ministry after you write it! Then, when you share your world Christian practice, present your findings, and share what you prayed for in your small group.

WELCOMING THE NATIONS

Over 800,000 international students are studying in the U.S each year. 80% of those students never step foot in an American's home while they're here. God is bringing the nations to our backyard. Let's be strategic in welcoming them and sharing the gospel with them! As World Christians, we are often able to reach the unreached without even having to leave our neighborhood. Let's join God in this amazing opportunity in such a time as this.

Instructions for Participants: Research local universities—especially those where our international student ministry at First Baptist Woodstock is active—and consider how you could engage with international students. Our team regularly connects with students at several major area universities. You can also explore local ethnic restaurants and invite friends to join you after church to experience another culture together.

Talk with Daniel George to learn how to get involved in our international student ministry. Our weekly on-campus ESL program offers opportunities to engage people from many nations—consider serving by teaching, building friendships, or offering hospitality.

Finally, pray and ask God to lead you to an international friend you can begin building a relationship with—perhaps inviting them to your home for a meal. When you share your World Christian practice in your small group, present what you discovered, describe your experience, and share what you prayed for.

MOBILIZING TO THE NATIONS

With the understanding of God's global purpose, imagine how much more effective the Church could be if it were awakened to these truths and worked together to act on them. If God's redemptive plan for the nations has moved you, you have the power to rally others and mobilize your church! As a World Christian, mobilizing is much like evangelism—sharing God's heart for the nations is both a joy and a strategic mission. The more people who know, the faster the gospel will spread across the earth!

Instructions for Participants: Brainstorm ideas that you could mobilize people in your church.

A prayer night? A small group bible study about God's heart for the nations? Talking about God's heart for the nations with your kids? Whatever it looks like for your season of life! Spend some time praying that God would give you the strength to take next steps with boldness! Then, when you share your world Christian practice, share your practice, present your mobilization ideas, and share what you prayed for in your small group.

DEEPER DISCUSSION

In small groups, reflect on the World Christian Practices activity together and answer the following questions.

1. What difference does it make for you to consider that we all have a part to play in the Great Commission, even if we never live overseas as a traditional missionary?
2. How does that affect the way that you view your role in the Great Commission?
3. Of the five practices from the activity, which of these do you feel strongest in already?
4. Of the five practices from the activity, which of these do you want to grow in?

LARGE GROUP WRAP-UP DISCUSSION

1. How has this lesson impacted the way you view God's Work for His Church and you specifically as a World Christian?
2. After hearing that every person is called to a role in the Great Commission, how does that impact the way you view missions and your role in reaching the nations?
3. What is one action step you can take this week in light of what we have learned?

POTENTIAL ACTION STEPS AND ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

1. Check out the resource “101 Ways to Impact the World” for a comprehensive list of ways you can join God's Work in the Great Commission as a World Christian in each of the five categories: praying, giving/sending, welcoming, going, and mobilizing!
2. Spend time in prayer this week asking God what role He wants you to play in this season of your life as a World Christian.
3. Share about the five practices of a World Christian with a friend or family member.



Notes

Lesson 4: Mindset of a Learner

LARGE GROUP DISCUSSION

The best approach to a cross-cultural experience is to go as a learner.

Consider the example of a missionary who has been living and serving overseas for over 20 years. Each year, she hosts three or four teams that come to serve at the children's home she founded. One year, she hosted a team where nine out of ten members had never traveled outside the country. Initially, she was concerned about how difficult it might be, but the team turned out to be outstanding. Because they had no prior experience, they were **eager to learn, open to new ideas, and willing to be stretched so God could teach them what He desired.**

That same summer, she also hosted another team of experienced world travelers, many of whom had attended Bible college and seminary. They were confident in their knowledge, but one of the children observed, "All they did was talk, talk, talk."

When approaching a new culture, it's crucial not to expect everything to adapt to us. Instead, we must adjust to the culture, not in a way that compromises our faith, but in a way that shows respect. This requires humility and a willingness to learn. We must recognize that even our understanding of Scripture is influenced by our own cultural lens. By adopting the posture of a learner, we open ourselves to a deeper understanding of God and His Word through the perspective of another culture. This will enrich our relationship with the Lord and allow us to build more meaningful connections as we learn from our hosts about what matters to them.

- **How would you define culture?**

- **With the definition of culture in mind, why do you think being a learner is important? Especially in a cross-cultural setting?**

Deeper Discussion

In small groups, read Philippians 2:1-11 aloud and discuss the following questions.

*Leader's Note: Responses are provided for a few of the questions to add to the responses from the group as needed.

- **What does the example of Jesus teach us?**
- **What do you think will be hard about humbling yourself in a cross-cultural context?**
- **Just as Jesus gave up so much to come to earth for our sakes, what are some things you may have to give up as you go into a new culture?**
- **What are some practical ways to be a learner in a cross-cultural environment?**

LARGE GROUP WRAP-UP

A good statement to consider as you are learning about a new culture: ***"It's not wrong, it's just different."*** If you can keep the perspective of a learner, it will help as you face culture shock.

Culture shock happens when you enter a new, unfamiliar culture. You may feel disorientation, frustrated, confused, tense, or embarrassed. How you approach these inevitably will determine the type of experience you will have.

If you approach culture shock with the heart of a learner, with openness, acceptance, and trust, if you are willing to listen, observe, and ask questions, you will likely build rapport and understanding with those around you.

If you approach it with fear, pride, suspicion, or prejudice, if you criticize, rationalize, or withdraw, you will likely find yourself alienated or isolated.

Everyone experiences culture shock to varying degrees. It is helpful to be aware of it and be able to recognize it when you find yourself experiencing some of the inevitables. Lean on the Lord. Lean on your team. Open your heart to learn.

Lesson 5: Team Dynamics

Suggested Activity

Before this team meeting, have the team members do a personality assessment and/or a spiritual gifts inventory. This can provide a great topic of discussion as team members share what they may have realized about themselves, how they are unique, and how their different personalities will complement each other...but may also provide some potential for conflict.

Healthy teams share key characteristics: trust, open communication, mutual commitment, and a clear purpose. While this can be utilized on long-term mission teams, these traits are also vital for short-term teams. Building these characteristics requires effort, and one goal of our mission team meetings is to give teams time to develop for maximum effectiveness during the mission trip. This lesson will focus on building trust and fostering open communication. Trust grows as we get to know each other, appreciate our differences, and recognize both strengths and weaknesses. By acknowledging our weaknesses and leaning on one another, trust deepens.

LARGE GROUP DISCUSSION

Because this meeting focuses on team dynamics, the entire team will remain together for the entire meeting (rather than having portions of the meeting done in smaller discussion groups).

TEAM GIFTS, STRENGTHS, AND WEAKNESSES

Have someone in the group read 1 Corinthians 12:12-27 out loud. As is clear in this passage, we each make up a unique part of the body of Christ—every part is needed. You are an important part of this team. Each team member is unique and is a beautiful expression of the body of Christ. Spend some time discussing this as a team.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Using the 'Shape Test' results from each team member, walk through the following questions together.

- 1. What gifts do you bring to this team?**
- 2. What gifts have you started to see in one another?** (This provides a great opportunity for the team to affirm the gifts they see in each person.)
- 3. What strengths do you have and/or have you seen in your team members?**
- 4. What weaknesses do you have?**
What would you like your team to know about these areas?

5. **How do you anticipate being able to use your gifts, strengths, AND weaknesses during the trip?** (This will be a great question to return to during the trip to see how this might have changed in practice.)

As the team begins to know one another and develop trust through the discussion above, hopefully, each will realize the value of open communication and the value of being willing to be honest with one another. This open communication is great both for encouraging one another and for dealing with conflict healthily.

OPEN COMMUNICATION AND HEALTHY CONFLICT

Even when we are aware of the truth of 1 Corinthians 12, when a group of people spend a significant amount of time together, usually some level of conflict is inevitable. This is true even on the mission field. Ultimately, the goal is not absence of conflict, but healthy conflict. Conflict in and of itself is not bad. In fact, a total absence of conflict is a sign of unhealthy team conflict. This comes through open dialogue and a commitment to some healthy practices among the team.

These questions can help the team leader gauge the team member's experience with conflict and help them become more self-aware. Choose 2-3 of the questions to spark discussion.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What is your experience with conflict?
2. When you hear that word, what does that do to you? Fear, excitement?
3. How did your family handle conflict growing up?
4. What's a story that you have of when you experienced conflict?
5. What team environments have you been a part of in the past?
6. What was positive and/or challenging about these team dynamics?
7. Think about a time when you were on a team. What was your role?

Have someone in the group read Matthew 18:15-17 out loud.

15 "If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault, between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have gained your brother. 16 But if he does not listen, take one or two others along with you, that every charge may be established by the evidence of two or three witnesses. 17 If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church. And if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector. (ESV)

What does this say to you about how to deal with conflict healthily?

PRACTICAL STEPS TO ADDRESS CONFLICT

1. If you have a conflict with someone, **go to them FIRST** and focus on the issue. Do NOT go to your other teammates and tell them you are having issues with another teammate. This is not honoring to any of your teammates.
2. **Go at an appropriate time.** It is not wise, after the end of a hot, tired day, when you are crammed in a taxi, to tell your teammate that you are having issues with them. Remember the Golden Rule: Treat others the way you want to be treated. Would you like to be confronted at that time and in that manner? Remember to honor and respect your teammates.
3. **Wait** until you are ready to go to the person if emotions are high.
4. Be willing to **face up to your own wrongdoing.**
5. **Go to them in private** when you both are in a good emotional place to talk. It is helpful to ask them in private if they would be willing to talk with you at a later time if now is not a good time. Don't make them feel trapped and that they have to hash it all out right then and there. Again, honor your teammates.
6. Speak without casting blame: "When you do _____ I feel _____" is much healthier than "I hate it when you do _____, so stop it."
7. **Listen carefully and hear well.** Repeat back what you're hearing, if necessary, to make sure you're understanding them completely.
8. If your teammate will not listen to you, and the conflict continues, **talk to your team leader** and not to other team members if you need to process the conflict. Take ownership to deal with what's going on internally, then go to a mentor.

GOOD STANDARDS TO LIVE BY WITH YOUR TEAMMATES

1. Beware of the three "Cs": No comparing, criticizing, or complaining.
2. Be careful to avoid sarcasm, eye-rolling, or expressions that convey you think your teammate is less than a child of God.
3. Pray with and for one another.
4. Begin writing one blessing a day in your journal and ask God to help you see many more each day than just one. We are born with a sinful nature and need no help being negative — we need His help to be positive often! Seek ways to actively serve each other.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What else would you add to this list?
2. Which of the "practical how-to's" and "good standards" catch your attention? What is significant about that to you?
3. What is one action step you can take this week in light of what we have learned?

Lesson 6: Abiding in Christ

- **ABIDE IN CHRIST**
- **REMAIN IN THE VINE**
- **BE VERSUS DO**

These are all common phrases and important things to consider in the life of a follower of Jesus. We desire to be effective for the Lord, to bear fruit. Too often, our pursuit of bearing fruit looks like trying harder or doing more when Scripture tells us that fruit is produced when we abide in Christ. Even more fruit is produced when we are pruned—something we usually don't like to experience.

However, if we embrace the pruning and develop a lifestyle of abiding in Christ, we will get to see the Lord produce fruit in our daily lives and in the unique opportunities that He provides for us to serve people around the world

Learning to abide in Christ is foundational both for our day-to-day walk with Jesus. When we step out into new experiences, especially those that carry us outside our comfort zone, we do so under His authority and in His power.

To grow in our understanding of abiding in Christ, we will spend some time learning about this together.

LARGE GROUP DISCUSSION

Have someone in the group read John 15:1–8 out loud.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What catches your attention the most about this passage? What makes that phrase/verse/word significant to you?
2. What do you know or have you learned about pruning (as it relates to actual grape vines)? How do you see this applying to what Jesus says in these verses about pruning in our lives?

DEEPER DISCUSSION

Gather in small groups to prepare for further discussion time together.

1. What does abiding in Christ look like in your life?
2. When were times that you felt like you truly abided in Christ? What difference did you see that making in your life?
3. When have you walked through times of pruning? What was the result?
4. What is challenging to you about abiding in Christ?
5. How do you think abiding in Christ relates to having a heart for the nations?

LARGE GROUP WRAP-UP DISCUSSION

Spiritual disciplines are one way to learn to abide in Christ. What do you already know about spiritual disciplines?

**Leader's note: See the resources below for a list of a few spiritual disciplines. It may be helpful to be prepared to provide some information about each, depending on the needs of your team.*

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 1.What spiritual disciplines have you practiced? What difference have you seen this make in your life?
- 2.How can we spur one another toward the abiding life?
- 3.What is one action step you can take this week in light of what we have learned?

POTENTIAL ACTION STEPS AND ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

1. Practice a new spiritual discipline that you have never tried before and allow the Lord to meet you in that practice.
2. Find a quiet place, sit still with the Lord, and ask him to share what he thinks about you. Record what you sense he is communicating to you in a journal, through art, poetry, etc. – however you feel best expresses God's heart for you.

LIST OF SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES

1. Bible Reading/Study/Memorization
2. Meditation
3. Prayer
4. Fasting
5. Simplicity
6. Service
7. Confession
8. Worship
9. Fellowship
10. Solitude/Silence



Additional Resources

Fundraising

- The God Ask by Steve Shadrach
- 5 Keys to Personal Support Raising by Steve Shadrach (condensed version of God Ask)

Lesson 1: Big Picture Vision: God's Heart & The Gospel

- GFM Video: Biblical Basis of Missions
<https://www.globalfrontiermissions.org/missions-101>

Lesson 2: God's World

- *GFM Videos: What is a UPG? and State of the World.
<https://www.globalfrontiermissions.org/missions-101>
- The Insanity of God by Nik Ripken

Lesson 3: God's Work

- Explore: Discover God's Word, God's World, and God's Work

Lesson 4: Going Well: Mindset of a Learner

- Cross Cultural Servanthood by Dwayne Elmer

Lesson 5: Team Dynamics

- Knowing God to Make Him Known: "Chapter 6 Adjusting to Team," by Ed Scheuerman

Lesson 6: Abiding in Christ

- Habits of Grace: Enjoying Jesus through the Spiritual Disciplines by David Mathis
- Spiritual Disciplines of the Christian Life by Donald S. Whitney





Mission Project Packing List

As you get ready for your mission project, remember: this isn't just about packing your bags—it's about preparing your heart. Every step matters. Pack with purpose and prayer, not panic. Last-minute packing adds stress and distraction. Instead, give yourself space to focus on what truly matters: joining God in His work with a ready and willing spirit.

Travel Essentials

In Your Carry-On:

- Passport & Visa (if applicable)
- Trip Itinerary (flight details, lodging addresses)
- Driver's License
- Credit/Debit Card (notify bank of travel)
- Cell phone
- Charger & Portable Power Bank
- Snacks (protein bars, trail mix, jerky)
- Reusable Water Bottle
- A change of clothes
- Headphones & Earplugs
- Sanitizing wipes and hand sanitizer
- Photocopies of ID and important documents

On Your Person:

- Comfortable travel clothes
- Under-clothing wallet for valuables
- Small crossbody or daypack

In Your Checked Bag:

- Casual, modest clothing appropriate to the culture
- Nice outfit for church or special events
- Rain jacket or light outerwear
- Swimsuit (if appropriate for location)
- Hat & sunglasses
- Sturdy walking shoes
- Flip-flops (for shower use)
- Compression socks (helpful for long travel days)
- Travel-size laundry detergent or soap sheets
- TSA-approved luggage lock
- Power converter (if needed)

Toiletries

- Toothbrush & Toothpaste
- Shampoo & Soap
- Quick-dry Towel & Washcloth
- Deodorant
- Travel-size Toilet Paper or Tissue Packs

- Feminine Hygiene Products
- Sunscreen & Bug Spray (Picaridin-based recommended)

Health & Safety

- Over-the-counter pain relievers
- Anti-diarrheal tablets (Imodium, Pepto-Bismol chewables)
- Cold medicine
- Non-drowsy Dramamine (for travel days)
- Any prescription medications (in original containers)
- First Aid Kit (band-aids, antiseptic, etc.)
- Small flashlight and extra batteries
- Multi-tool (pack in checked luggage)

Comfort & Encouragement

- Something from home for comfort (e.g., small photo, favorite snack)
- Blank pages for journaling, sketching, or prayer prompts
- Earplugs or eye mask for better rest

Pro Tips from the Global Missions

Team

- Label your bags with your name and team name.
- Bring a generous spirit, a flexible mindset, and a teachable heart. "Blessed are the flexible, they shall not break."
- Take time to journal each day—your future self will thank you.
- Expect God to work in and through you—and be ready to share your story!

Leave at home

- "Serve me" attitude



Notes

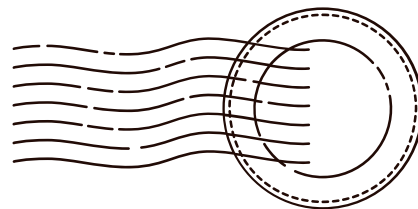


Blessing Field Partners

Our field partners are either members of our church who have sacrificed greatly to live and serve among the nations or people we have strategically partnered with in the expansion of God's Kingdom. They may be facing culture shock, trials, or discouragement. As fellow members of the Body of Christ, we want to bless—not pity—they. Below are some practical ways to encourage and support our church planters and their families. This list isn't exhaustive, so be sure to check with them directly to learn how you can best meet their specific needs.

BEFORE YOU GO: WAYS TO BLESS FIELD PARTNERS

- **Write Encouraging Notes.** Ask your small group to write personal notes to each member of the missionary family. Even if you don't know them well, a thoughtful message from their home church can bring powerful encouragement.
- **Bring American Treats.** Check with the family to see what American foods they miss—like Oreos, flavored coffee creamers, or snacks they can't find locally.
- **Support Their Kids.** Ask if they need school supplies or homeschool materials. If a birthday is coming up, bring a small, age-appropriate gift.
- **Surprise Them with Something Personal.** Find out what they enjoy—sports teams, hobbies, books—and bring a small, thoughtful gift that says, "We see you, and we care."



While on the Ground: How to Serve and Encourage Field Partners

- Be humble and trust their leadership.
- Bless them with a meal – Cook for them or treat them to dinner.
- Offer to babysit so they can enjoy a night out.
- Look for ways to serve – Help with cooking, cleaning, or household tasks.
- Love their kids – Play with them, speak life over them, and show genuine care.
- Encourage them – Your words matter. Speak truth, hope, and blessing.
- Share Scripture wisely – Ask God for the right verses to uplift them.
- After You Return: Stay Connected. Friend them on social media.
- Send a quick email reply to their updates – even a few sentences mean a lot.
- Be their advocate – or help connect them to one for ongoing support.





Keeping a Journal

One of the best ways to remember your trip and grow through the experience is by journaling. After sending many teams—and going ourselves—we’ve seen how powerful journaling can be. We encourage you to write down your thoughts, prayers, observations, and reflections each day. Your journal includes guided sections to help prepare and encourage you, along with space for personal entries. The more you engage with your journal, the more meaningful your journey will become. You won’t regret it—and it may impact your life in ways you didn’t expect.

First Day Questions:

1. What did you feel?

2. What did you see?

3. What did you hear?

4. What did you smell?

5. What did you taste?

6. If you had to describe your day in one word, what would it be?

7. What are your thoughts and what are you anxious, excited, or nervous about as you begin this adventure?

8. Pray that God would enable you to see as he sees and to love as he loves. Ask him to fill you with the fruit of the Spirit and to embolden you to proclaim his gospel.

Daily Reflection Questions

1. What did you see that was new today?

2. What did you learn:

- About the culture?

- In their language?

- About Jesus?

3. How did you learn to serve today?

4. How did you serve the on-field partners?

5. What did you do today?



In-Country Debrief

Before you leave the field, you'll meet with your team to reflect on the trip and celebrate all that God has done. This is a meaningful opportunity to process what you've experienced and consider how it will shape your life back home. During this time, you'll also prepare and share your "Coming Home" story. This will help you think about how to communicate your experience to friends, family, and supporters.

1. How have you learned to be with Jesus?

2. How have you learned to serve one another?

3. How have you learned to serve the nations?
4. How has your view of God and the world changed as a result of this trip?
5. In what ways have you grown spiritually through this process?
6. What do you believe is the greatest barrier to people coming to Christ in this culture?
7. How would you bridge this barrier if you lived here long-term?
8. Who do you know from home that you think should get involved in the ministry here?
9. How are you burdened to pray specifically for the on-field partners and their ministry?

10. Who is a national you met while here that you'll continue to pray for once you are back home?

11. What was the most humorous moment for you?

12. Overall, what is the biggest thing you are taking home with you? How will this trip change your life at home?

Work through "Coming Home" to prepare to share your story, and then share your it.



Coming Home

As you travel home, take time to review your journal and in-country debrief. We pray that God has used you and taught you much during this trip. The questions below are meant to help you reflect and share what God did through you and what He is doing in you. Remember—God wants to use this experience to impact your life at home, at work, and in your small group. Let Him continue the work He started in you on this trip.

1. What was the strategy of the field partner?
2. What did you do as part of this strategy?
3. What moments do you never want to forget? What moments broke your heart?
What moments made you smile?
4. In what ways are you different today than when you began this journey?

5. What is one story or interaction that shows: a) what you learned, b) what you did, and c) how people can pray and join in the work?

6. Lastly, what was the funniest moment or story?

To help you process your experience, use the questions provided to clarify what you did and what you're learning. As you reflect, work on creating a 1-3 minute "elevator speech" that communicates:

- **What you did**
- **Why it matters**
- **How others can pray or get involved**

Most people will want a summary, and a clear, meaningful response can have a big impact.

To help people connect:

- Start with a light, funny story from your trip to draw them in.
- Then, share your elevator speech with clarity and purpose.
- Keep a few key photos on your phone that illustrate your story—this helps people engage visually, emotionally, and spiritually with what God is doing.

Re-entry Stress: What It Is

Re-entry stress is similar to culture shock, but in reverse. While culture shock involves adjusting to a new environment, re-entry stress happens when you return home expecting things to feel normal, only to find they don't.

What once felt familiar now seems different or uncomfortable. Often, it's not just your surroundings that have changed—it's you. You may feel out of sync with your own culture and experience emotions like confusion, disappointment, disillusionment, or even frustration. Thoughts like "Things aren't the way they used to be," "No one seems to care," or "No one understands" are common.

Why It Happens

Re-entry stress is often caused by:

- Being unprepared for change – You expect things to be the same, but aren't ready for how different they feel.

- Value conflict – Your time on the field may have reshaped your values, priorities, and responses, which now seem out of place in your home culture.
- Personal transformation – Changes in your thinking and behavior may not be obvious until you return home and feel the tension between who you were and who you are now.

Recognizing this is normal—and part of the growth process—can help you navigate re-entry with grace and purpose.

Common Symptoms and Effects of Re-entry Stress

1. **Disorientation** – Feeling out of place or like you no longer fit in
2. **Loneliness or isolation** – Even in a crowd, you may feel alone
3. **Restlessness** – A strong desire to escape from those who don't understand
4. **Feeling misunderstood or overlooked** – Believing others don't care or "get it"
5. **Fatigue** – Feeling tired, unmotivated, or emotionally drained
6. **Critical attitude** – Frustration with your home culture's waste or values
7. **Loss of identity** – Feeling like just another face in the crowd
8. **Communication challenges** – Struggling to explain what you experienced
9. **Sense of superiority** – Feeling distant from others because of your trip
10. **Dissatisfaction** – Feeling unsettled or unhappy with life at home
11. **Defensiveness** – Easily irritated or quick to justify your feelings

12. **Withdrawal** – Avoiding people or disengaging from your normal routines
13. **Awkward reactions** – Feeling uncomfortable in situations that used to feel normal
14. **Internal conflict** – Struggling to reconcile new values with old ones
15. **Avoidance** – Wanting to ignore or forget your overseas experience

These symptoms are common and often temporary. Recognizing them can help you navigate the transition with awareness and grace.

Re-entry Coping Styles

People respond to re-entry stress in different ways. Here are three common coping styles:

A. Isolate and Be Alienated

This person withdraws and struggles to reintegrate. They may:

1. Avoid stress by isolating or only spending time with other returnees
2. Still identify with home culture, but react negatively toward it
3. Judge the values and lifestyle of their church, family, or community
4. Feel guilty about the materialism and comfort of their culture
5. Frequently daydream about their mission experience
6. Be unaware of how to impact their home culture for Christ

What They Need:

Support from someone who has experienced re-entry stress to help them process and explore healthy ways to engage back home.

B. Imitate and Be Re-Socialized

This person quickly blends back into the home culture and tries to move on. They may:

1. Revert to old habits and norms as if nothing happened
2. Ignore the impact of their mission experience
3. Seek acceptance from peers over living out new convictions
4. Fear of standing out or being different

What They Need:

Encouragement from mission-minded believers to reflect on their experience and live it out meaningfully.

C. Integrate and Be Proactive

This person embraces both cultures and grows from the experience. They:

1. Acknowledge the reality of living between two cultures
2. Stay connected to home culture without abandoning new values
3. Understand they've changed through the mission experience
4. Intentionally live out a lifestyle that blends old and new

What They Need:

Ongoing support and community with others who share a mission-minded lifestyle.

Tips for Dealing with Re-entry Stress

You can prepare for re-entry stress before you even leave. Expect it. After serving cross-culturally, you may never feel completely “at home” again, because your heart now belongs to more than one place. That’s part of the beauty and the cost of loving people across cultures.

Here are some helpful ways to navigate re-entry:

1. **Expect it—it’s normal.** Be patient with yourself and others as you adjust.
2. **Keep your sense of humor.** Laugh often and don’t take everything too seriously.
3. **Be thankful.** Reflect on what God did and the privilege of being part of it.
4. **Don’t try to return to the “old normal.”** Instead, integrate new values into your life.
5. **Find community.** Connect with others who have served overseas and can relate to your journey.
6. **Engage locally with the nations.** Build relationships with international students, refugees, or others from the region where you served.
7. **Prepare for shallow responses.** Some people will ask, “How was your trip?” but won’t want a full answer. Be ready with a short response that still reflects God’s work, and seek out those who genuinely want to hear more.
8. **Serve your church and community.** Match your experiences and gifts to local opportunities, or help create new ones.
9. **Be a blessing to others.** Your friends and family may also be facing challenges—care for them even as you receive care.

10. **Keep seeking God.** He is just as present and at work here as He was there. Stay faithful and make the most of every opportunity.

Adapted from the International Missions Training Institute Team Leader Handbook (IMB, 1997/1999).





Team Debrief

When you return home from a short-term mission trip, it's easy for everyday life to cause you to forget the experience. But one of the main goals of these trips is lasting impact—living each day with purpose by serving others, sharing Christ, and making disciples. Though the trip may represent just 2% of your year, it should influence the other 98%.

Gathering for a post-trip social is a great way to stay connected, encourage one another, and pray together. While there may not be a parade waiting for you, some celebration and reflection are definitely in order.

This time isn't just for sharing stories—it's a chance to debrief and focus on what it means to live sent back home.

Things to do before we meet:

- Schedule a debrief meeting with your team within 30 days of returning.
- Create a fun, casual environment in which to gather your team.
- Work through the "Coming Home" section, and be prepared to share what God is teaching you and what you think he might be leading you to do.
- Pray for one another.
- Pray for the work you did and that continues to go on.
- Who have you shared your story with?
- Who have you shared the gospel with since returning home?
- Plumbline: "Do what you do well."



Coming Down the Mountain: Processing Your Return Home

Like Moses in Exodus, you've just returned from an encounter with God on mission. Moses spent over 40 days on the mountain, receiving divine instruction and experiencing God's presence in profound ways. When he returned, he had to face a world that hadn't stood still while he was gone—and neither will you.

Just as Moses had to deal with a people who lost sight of God's work, you may return to family, friends, or routines that feel disconnected from what you just experienced. That's okay. This is part of your journey, and God is still at work.

Reflect on the Emotions

Take time to identify what you're feeling. What emotions have surfaced as you've returned from the field? Joy? Confusion? Loneliness? Frustration? Fulfillment?

How might these align with what Moses may have felt as he came down the mountain and found the people worshipping a golden calf (Exodus 32:1-7)?

Why People May Not Understand

- **They Haven't Been Where You've Been.** Your friends and family haven't experienced what you have. While you were on mission, they were at work, at school, and going about life as usual. Your growth and change may not be obvious to them—and that's okay.
- **You Can't Fully Explain It.**

- Like trying to describe an amazing movie to someone who hasn't seen it, your experience may be hard to put into words. This doesn't mean it wasn't real or impactful—it just means it was yours. Celebrate it with God, and be patient with others.
- **Some People Won't Seem to Care.** Sadly, not everyone will be excited or even interested in your experience. Don't let that discourage you. God is still calling you forward.

Moses' Response: Lessons for Us

- **He Interceded for the People** (Exodus 32:7-14)

Moses didn't withdraw in frustration—he prayed for the people. You're still called to love, serve, and pray for those around you, even when they don't fully understand your journey.

- **He Reconnected with a Spiritual Leader** (Exodus 32:19-22)

Moses went to Aaron to get clarity. You should also reconnect with a pastor, mentor, or small group leader to help process your experience and find direction for what's next.

- **He Reassessed His Relationships** (Exodus 32:23-28)

Moses had to draw a line between those pursuing God and those who weren't. You may find that some relationships need to shift in this season. That's not about judgment—it's about alignment and health.

- **He Stayed Close to God**

Moses didn't run from God after a spiritual high. He pressed in. As you return home, keep pursuing God. He has more for you—this trip was just a part of a bigger story.

Don't Miss the Main Event

Don't mistake the trip for the whole journey. The mission project was the beginning—but God has more ahead. Jesus said, "I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly" (John 10:10). So don't settle—keep pressing in!

What's Next? Moving from Trip to Transformation

It's time to turn this experience into a long-term impact. Here are some next steps to consider—and discuss with your team:

- **Join or Start a Small Group.** The relationships built on the field are special. Stay connected. If you're not in a small group, now is the time. Form one with your team or join an existing one to stay grounded in community.
- **Take a Step Toward Membership.** If you're not yet a member at First Baptist Woodstock, consider attending Starting Point. Membership isn't just a formality—it's about belonging and serving as part of the church body.

- **Engage in Local Missions.** Don't wait for the next trip to live on mission. Find ways to serve in local ministries—refugee support, community outreach, ESL, student ministry, or other opportunities through First Woodstock. Let the mission continue at home.

- **Explore Long-Term Calling.** Meet with the global missions team to discuss your next steps. Maybe God is calling you to go again—or go longer. Explore what that could look like.
- **Consider Leadership.** Did someone on your team show strong leadership? Is that someone you? If so, talk to the global missions team about opportunities to lead future mission teams.

Next Week Plan

Take a moment to pray and write out a few practical steps you can take this week:

- Who do I need to reconnect with spiritually?
- Where can I start serving?
- How will I stay accountable to what God showed me?
- What's one step I can take today to keep living on mission?

Final Encouragement

God is not finished with you. The mission project wasn't the end—it was the beginning. Let your experience launch a new way of living every day with purpose. Don't miss the main event.

"Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain."
—1 Corinthians 15:58

Notes

Dear World Traveler,

On behalf of the Global Missions Team at First Baptist Woodstock, we want to sincerely thank you for stepping out in faith and serving among the nations. Your willingness to go—to leave the comforts of home and join God's work around the world—means more than you may ever fully know.

We believe that the Church is God's "Plan A" for reaching the nations with the gospel, and we hold fast to a vision of seeing lives transformed and churches planted across every people group, tribe, and tongue. Your recent mission project wasn't just a trip—it was a vital part of this global vision. By encouraging on-field workers, supporting local believers, and participating in the work of the gospel, you played a meaningful role in God's redemptive story.

As you return home, we want to encourage you in three specific ways:

1. Share Your Story

You now carry with you a story of what God is doing in the world—and people need to hear it. Many around you may never have considered the realities of global missions, and you may be the only connection they have to it.

Take time to think through a clear and concise way to share:

- Why you went
- What you did
- What God taught you
- Prepare a 1-3 minute version of your story, but also be ready to go deeper with those who want to listen more. A funny memory or impactful photo can open the door to meaningful conversations. Let your story point people to Jesus and to His heart for the nations.

2. Keep Praying

The mission isn't over—it continues. One of the most powerful ways you can stay involved is through faithful prayer.

- Pray for the field partners you served alongside.
- Pray for the local believers and communities you encountered.
- Pray for unreached people to come to know Christ.

Don't just pray alone—invite others to join you. Lead your small group, family, or friends to pray intentionally for the places and people you served. Your prayer could be the spark that moves someone else to go.

3. Ask God, “What’s Next?”

Your mission experience was not meant to be a one-time event—it was a launching point. God may be inviting you to serve locally in a new way, to go again, to give, to send, or even to pursue a longer-term calling. Ask Him to show you your next step—and be ready to say “yes” again.

Remember: God doesn’t just use people on the field; He uses people who live sent every day.

We are so grateful for your obedience, your sacrifice, and your heart to serve. You are part of a growing community of believers who are passionate about seeing God’s glory known in every corner of the world. Thank you for playing your part.

Let us not grow weary in doing good—for in due time, we will reap a harvest if we do not give up (Galatians 6:9). Let’s continue to spur one another on in love and good works, trusting that every step of obedience matters.

May God continue to mold, use, and send you—for His glory and the joy of all peoples.
Sincerely in Christ,

The Global Missions Staff
First Baptist Woodstock

Notes

