

ABSEIL

A TEAM WORKBOOK FOCUSED
ON THE WHY OF SHORT-TERM
MISSIONS

**TEAM MEMBERS
BOOK POST-FIELD**

SOLO COMPRE
SUS TIKETES EN
TAQUILLA

INTRODUCTION

Quite often, participants on short-term mission trips describe their time serving as a "mountain-top experience." They are exhilarated from everything they have seen, tasted, and done as well as the relationships they have formed. However, when they return to their "normal" life routines, they often feel a sense of loss and disappointment. They wonder how they can come to terms with the juxtaposition of their STMT experience and their daily first-world life. But truly, this tension, this sense of everything being slightly off-balance, is a fantastic sign of growth and a tremendous opportunity for the Lord to continue to develop His heart for the nations within you!

To abseil is to descend a steep rock face...to return from the mountain top. When climbers are faced with the need to descend from the sheer mountainsides they have climbed, they need certain tools to help them have a successful journey. You, too, may need some tools to help with your return. This booklet, along with the guidance of your team leader and several post-trip debrief sessions, are tools we trust you will take advantage of during your transition home.

It is our sincere hope that this guide and the accompanying devotional journal, Anchor, will help you not only in your immediate transition home but will also help transform your thoughts and actions so that in all things, daily life included, you will continue to grow towards a missional way of living and bring glory to God with your life.



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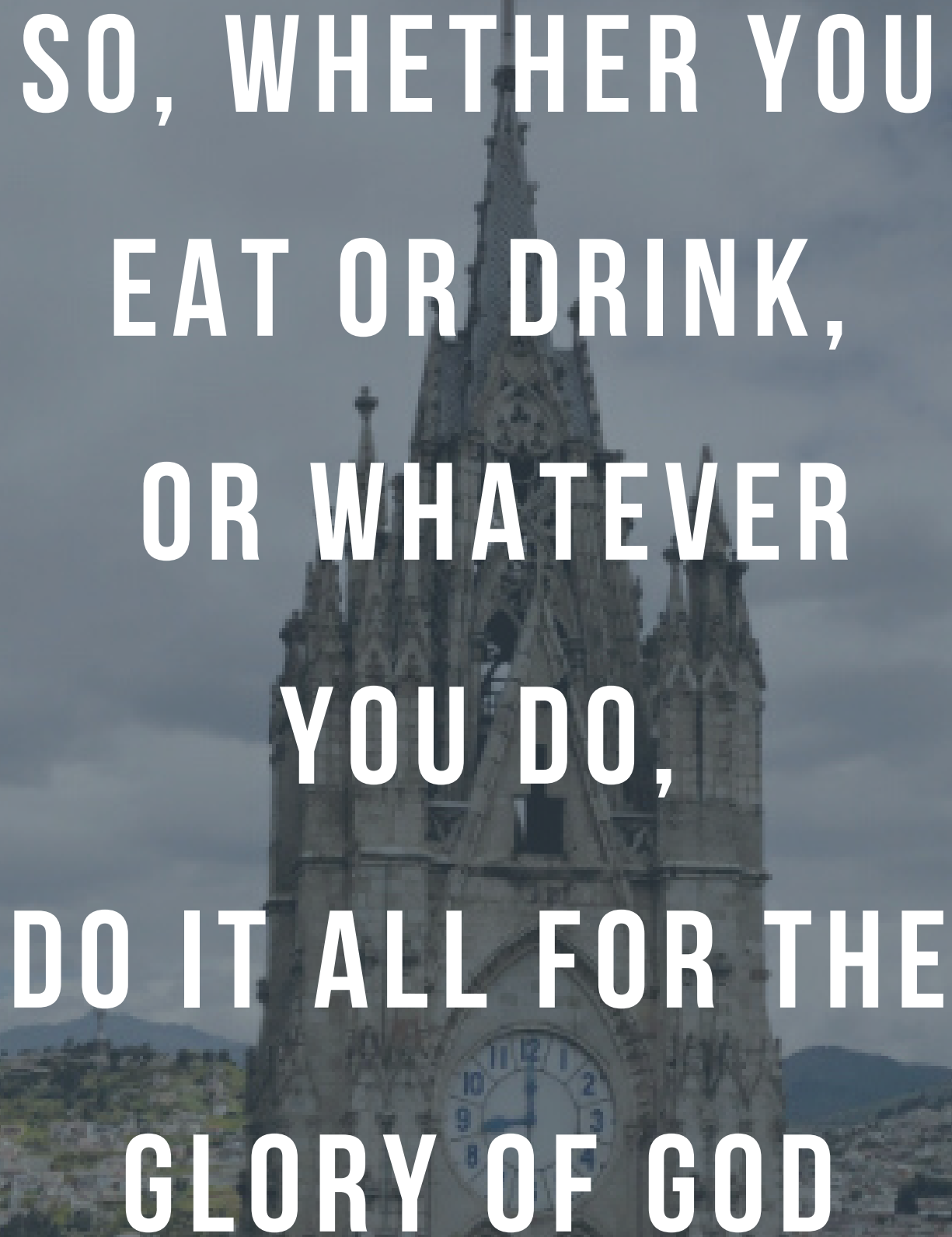
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HIS GLORY

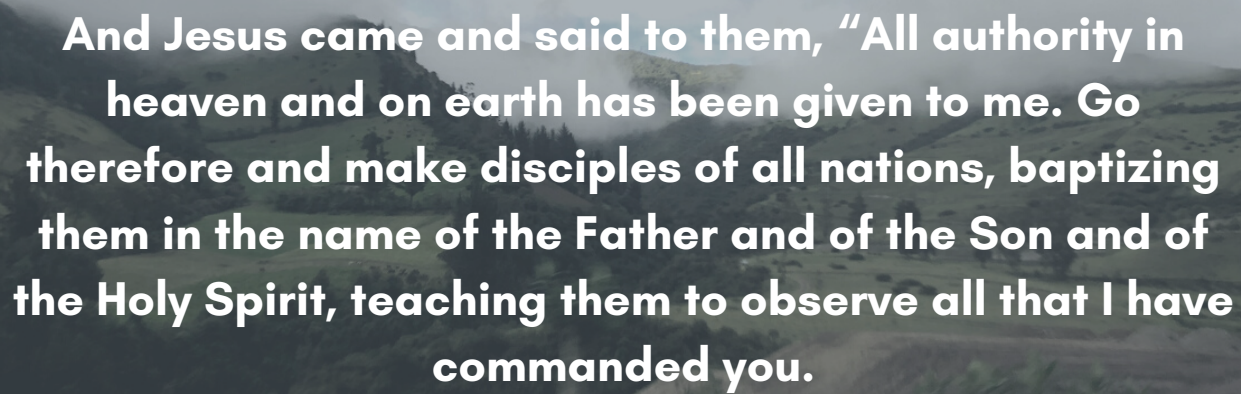




**SO, WHETHER YOU
EAT OR DRINK,
OR WHATEVER
YOU DO,
DO IT ALL FOR THE
GLORY OF GOD**

1 CORINTHIANS 10:31
ESV





And Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you.

**Matthew 28:18-20
ESV**

LESSON 1: RE-INTEGRATION - TO BE DONE SHORTLY AFTER RETURNING HOME PRIOR TO FIRST TEAM MEETING

(Adapted from *Exercises to Help You Process Re-Entry Shock* by Lisa Espneli Chinn)

You may not be the same person who left home a few weeks ago. In the days ahead, you may well find yourself responding to everyday events in ways you never responded to before. Ordinary things may provoke an uncommon response or perhaps a very different set of thoughts and feelings. These moments reveal ways you have changed, and you may now feel a degree of “re-entry shock.”

Most individuals will go through a few phases of reentry. These are commonly referred to as the 5 “Fs,” Having Fun (honeymoon), Flee (avoidance), Fight (anger, criticism), Fit In (tolerance of differences), Be Fruitful (creative engagement). These are not in order but something that can happen randomly, and without warning, a memory creates a reaction, or a thought enters your mind. Here are the five phases explained. Remember, not everyone will go through all of these phases or in order, but you may, and knowing where you are emotionally is very important.

Fun “I can’t wait for a hot shower,” “I really missed you,” “I never thought a hamburger would taste so good!” You’re glad to be home. It’s great looking at pictures of your trip. You feel changed in your life, your relationship with God, and your vision of the world. You’re ready to do things differently.



Flee “Everyone here is so busy. Life seems so fast,” “I hate the freeways,” “No one seems to be interested in my experience. They only ask me, ‘How was your trip?’” You’re discouraged by how materialistic, impersonal and busy life seems to be. You feel alone and miss the community you experienced with your team. People seem preoccupied with petty concerns and easily depressed by silly issues compared to the faith in God, joy, and community you witnessed on your trip. You wish you could return. Somehow life felt more real, more solid, more significant there than it does here. Because you can’t, you find yourself spending lots of time reliving memories, looking at pictures, trying to make contact with your team members. However, even that is hard because you (and they) are being swept up in the pressure and busyness of life at home.

Fight “People seem to take their faith so much more seriously over there,” “My church service seems so passionless,” “People are more interested in expanding their savings account than in saving the lost.” You find yourself actually feeling depressed about life here. People seem indifferent to the real issues in life. Even the church seems to foster a self-indulgent, self-preoccupied spirituality. Money dominates everything. You’re becoming highly critical of life in the US and speak out against what you see. When you’re silent, you find yourself feeling spiritually superior, as if you understand better than others.

Fit In “I can’t live here like people do there. I tried to live differently, but it’s impossible,” “The cost of living is so much higher here. I have to accept it,” “I’m losing all my friends because they view me as a ‘mission fanatic.’” Now you find yourself simply seeking to fit in. The pressure of responsibilities has taken hold, and it’s simply too hard to keep focused on your experience over there. The memories are beginning to fade, and you haven’t been able to find ways to live differently in light of what you’ve experienced. You promised to write the people you were with but barely had time to send a postcard. You find yourself longing to go on another STM trip. Maybe that will help you recapture the feeling of your life, counting for the Kingdom that you experienced before. That might stimulate your spiritual growth and draw you back into a sense of community. Unfortunately, many people stop here. This ends their re-entry process. Their trip remains a distant memory.

Fruit It should be your goal from the moment you begin the process of preparing for STM to work toward this stage in the re-entry process. How is your life going to be different for having gone on STM? What is God working on in you through this experience that will change how you live for the Kingdom afterward? How are you glorifying God in everything you do.





These different stages of re entry do not happen in a particular order or in a specified amount of time. Each person is also unique and may experience these at their own rate. The most important factor, however, is that you continually, and daily work towards moving into the fruit stage. As we have already discussed the goal of any STMT is to bring glory to God. One practical way to do this is to produce fruit from the trip. Over the next few lessons we will examine different kinds of fruit and how these can be expressed.

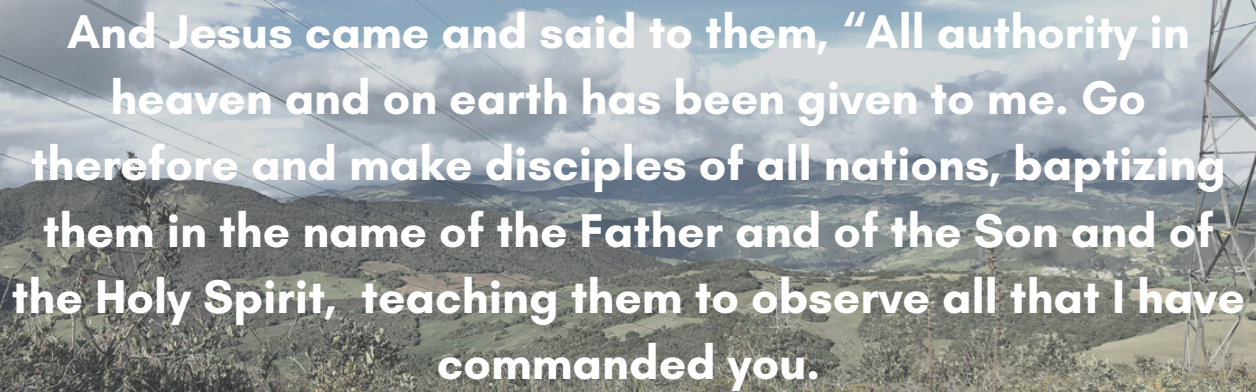
If you had to guess, what stage have you been in today?

Fit in stage is the most dangerous, what would get you stuck in the *fit in* stage?

What are some ways you can move forward into the fruit stage?

Next time you see a team member ask them, "What stage are you in?" and share your stage.





And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you.

**Matthew 28:18-20
ESV**

LESSON 2: FORWARD TO FRUIT - DONE ON YOUR OWN

In case you have not come to realize it yet, your ability to go on your STMT was a gift. As with any gift that God has given us, he trusts us with that gift and asks us to be good stewards of that gift. But what does it mean to be a good steward? The verse below, Matthew 25:14-30, is commonly used to teach or explain the importance of handling money well and being a good investor. However, let's examine the verse for the prospective of a gift, something we have been given and being asked to be good stewards of.

"For it will be like a man going on a journey, who called his servants[a] and entrusted to them his property. To one, he gave five talents, to another two, to another one, to each according to his ability. Then he went away. He who had received the five talents went at once and traded with them, and he made five talents more. So also he who had the two talents made two talents more. But he who had received the one talent went and dug in the ground and hid his master's money.

Now after a long time, the master of those servants came and settled accounts with them. And he who had received the five talents came forward, bringing five talents more, saying, 'Master, you delivered to me five talents; here, I have made five talents more.' His master said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your master.' And he also who had the two talents came forward, saying, 'Master, you delivered to me two talents; here, I have made two talents more.'



His master said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your master.' He also who had received the one talent came forward, saying, 'Master, I knew you to be a hard man, reaping where you did not sow, and gathering where you scattered no seed, so I was afraid, and I went and hid your talent in the ground. Here, you have what is yours.' But his master answered him, 'You wicked and slothful servant! You knew that I reap where I have not sown and gather where I scattered no seed? Then you ought to have invested my money with the bankers, and at my coming, I should have received what was my own with interest. So take the talent from him and give it to him, who has the ten talents. For to everyone who has will more be given, and he will have an abundance. But from the one who has not, even what he has will be taken away. And cast the worthless servant into the outer darkness. In that place, there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'"

This is a strong piece of Scripture! It starts with each one of these servants being given a wonderful gift from their master. Each servant chooses to take that gift and use it in a way that they see fit. Two of the servants take that gift and, through it, expand their master's kingdom; the third, however, ruins his opportunity and hides the gift away, doing nothing, and wasting the gift.

Let's take a moment and imagine that our STMT, the experience, the work, the things we saw and learned are the talents or gifts from this parable. God gave us this amazing opportunity, one which most of the world is unable to take, and he is waiting to see what we do with it. As we have seen and hopefully experienced, our STMT should be about God's glory. The big question is; How will you expand His kingdom now that you have been given this gift?

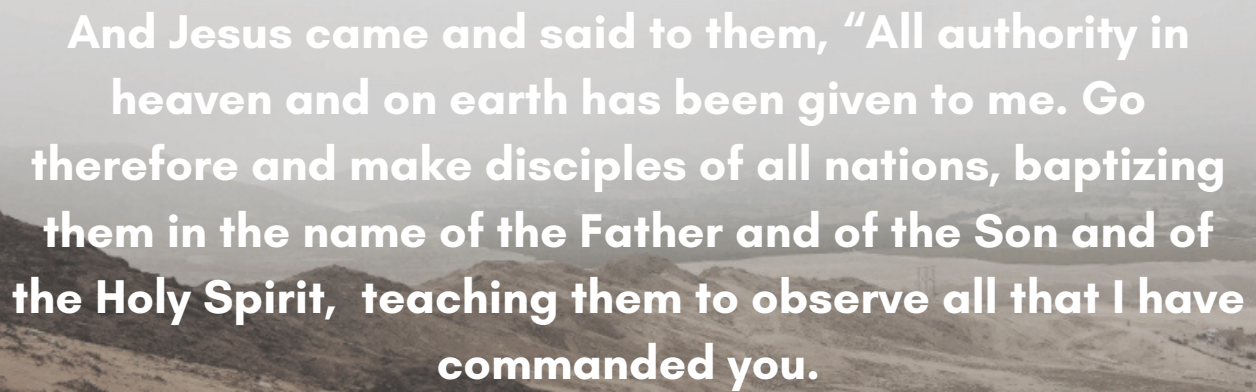
It may be helpful to evaluate what you have been given. Take the next page of this workbook and try to describe the gift of your STMT. What did you see, learn, experience? How did you see brothers and sisters living out their faith? What did you learn about yourself? What did you learn about God? What did you learn about his church? What will you start to do? What will you change?





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And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you.

**Matthew 28:18-20
ESV**

LESSON 3: PRAYER FOR THE NATIONS - DONE ON YOUR OWN

Did you know that over 4.5 billion people in this world have yet to meet the Lord Jesus? 4.5 billion people living in darkness. What can we do with such a large unimaginable number?

As you return from your STMT, you may be feeling a burden for the lost and forgotten people of this world. You may have met some incredible people who are working day in and day out to be the hands and feet of Jesus. Now that you are home, how can you impact these people, the ministries, and the 4.5 billion people who do not know Jesus. PRAYER! This incredible tool has been given to the Church, all the believers across the globe, to be used daily for the glory of God. In Matthew 9, Jesus is looking out on the crowds, and "he had compassion for them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd." (VS 36 ESV). He then called his disciples into action, but not into service. The first thing he wanted his disciples to do was "pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest" (VS 38 ESV). Jesus instructed his disciples to pray for the Church.

This leads to another question, what is the Church? Who is Jesus asking us to pray for?

More often than not, we think about church as our local congregation, maybe a building or a denomination. However, when Christ speaks of HIS Church, he is talking about the global body of believers. Note the capital "C" in the word Church. The global Church is every believer from the whole world, living and praying in unity.



So, Christ is asking us to pray earnestly to the Lord for the Church to grow and make disciples who will go and make disciples. This is not a nice suggestion but rather a command from our savior. What would it look like if you took 2, 5, 10 minutes every day and prayed for the Church, for missionaries, for God's glory for the lost 4.5 billion people still waiting to know Jesus. We can take Matthew 9:36-38 very seriously and daily lift our prayers to the Lord.

Set a reminder on your phone to go off every day at 9:36 and pray for the harvest as Jesus commanded in Matthew.

Who did you meet on your STMT that you can pray for by name?

What would it mean for God's Kingdom if everyone prayed earnestly for the Church?

What gets in your way of praying daily, earnestly?

What do you need to do to make prayer a daily part of your relationship with God.



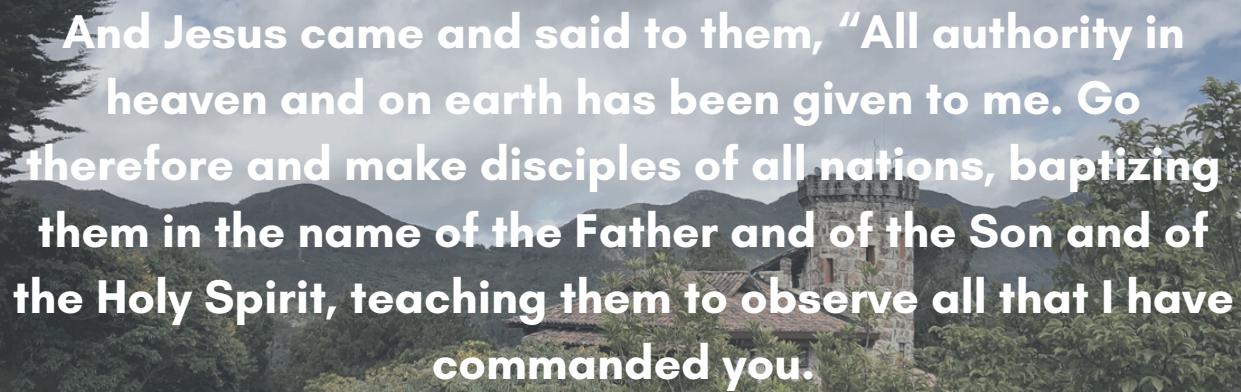
If you are looking for other resources or ideas on how you can pray daily, let us suggest *Operation World*. Operation World is a non-profit organization committed to the power of prayer for the Church. Every year they come out with a daily prayer book that has you pray for a different country, the national church, and the spiritual needs of the people. Operation World also has a free app that will send you daily reminders to pray and give you a clear direction on what to pray for. On the app, you can also see the number of people around the world who at that moment are joining you in prayer to lift up the Church. Check out Operation World at <https://www.operationworld.org/> or in the app store.

What would it mean to God's Kingdom if you committed to daily prayer for a year?

What would it mean for your own personal walk?

I commit to pray daily for:





And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you.

Matthew 28:18-20

ESV

LESSON 4: LIFE ON MISSION - DONE ON YOUR OWN

This one can be really tough to live out. When you pray, you can do so in the quiet of your home; no one needs to know. You can financially give to missions or ministries, and only your bank account will see the change. However, if you take what you learned on your STMT and apply it to how you live and how you love people, others will notice. People will see your impact.

For most North Americans, this is a really scary and troublesome activity. We, collective North Americans, feel that our faith is a very personal and private affair. That for the most part, we do not want to impose our faith and beliefs on others; this can be viewed as an invasion of privacy. However, Jesus calls us to something else, something bigger, scarier, and ultimately God-glorifying. He calls us to live a life on mission. A life that in everything we do, we make God's name known, and His name is glorified. Through this lifestyle, people around us will see and come to know God.

What does this practically look like for most of us? Most of us are not pastors or church leaders; we are students, business people, artists, kids, parents, and so on. This is exactly how God planned it. He does not need an entire Church of pastors but needs a church of diverse individuals committed to seeing His kingdom grow. So if you are a student or employee, the question is how are you using your platform to glorify God? 1 Corinthians 10:31 "So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God." As a student, are you respecting your teachers? Are you viewing your schoolwork as a way to glorify God through academic faithfulness? Are you loving the student who is marginalized and overlooked? In business, do you always treat people fairly, make ethical choices, pay appropriate wages?



What does it mean to you to live on mission?

What are some ways you have not been living your life on mission?

How did you see people living their life on mission during your STMT?

What are some really practical steps you could take to live your life on mission?

What are you going to do today to live on mission?



If you recall the pre-field training, lesson 4 discussed the different kinds of poverty and asked us to re-assess how we view and define poverty. It explored the 4 kinds of poverty;

- Poverty of Spirit
- Poverty of Being
- Poverty of Community
- Poverty of Stewardship

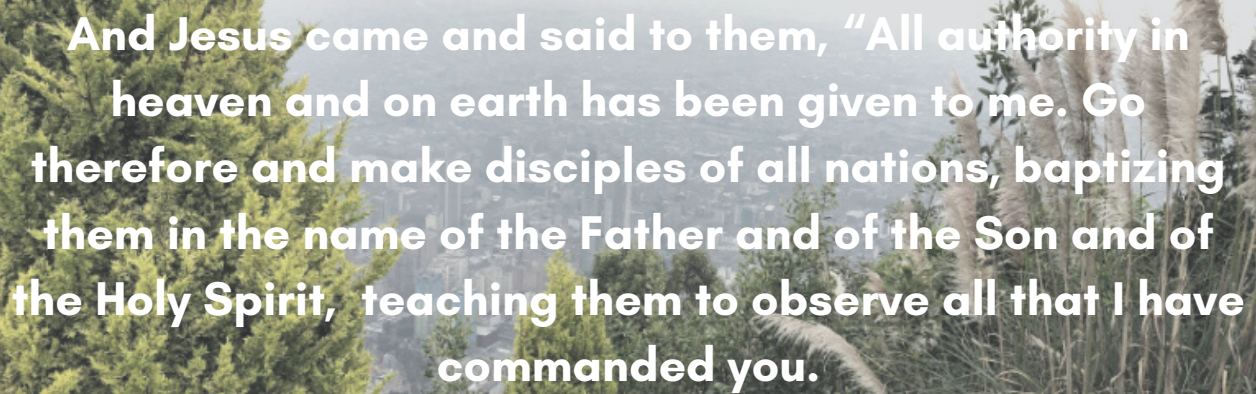
Each one of these forms has a major impact on everyone's life. If we desire to live a life on mission, a great place to start is to evaluate the poverty in our own lives and be aware of those living in different forms of poverty around us. Take some time and think through which forms of poverty you may be living in. Revisit the pre-field workbook to see your answers prior to your STMT. Here are some practical examples of addressing different forms of poverty in your community and ways to live on mission:

Poverty of Community: A new person moves into your community; they know no one and spend their time mostly alone. They are feeling a lack of friendship and community. An easy way to address this is inviting them over for dinner, stopping and talking with them on your walk, hosting a block party so they can get to know more people. Friendship is the best way to get to know someone and a great avenue for them to come to know Jesus.

Poverty of Stewardship: God gives great gifts to us and asks us to care for them well. The park near you is trashed and neglected. The natural beauty is being overtaken by human error and neglect. You get a team together to clean the park, plant new trees, build birdhouses, and participate in creation care.

How can you address different forms of poverty in your community? What are you going to do about it?





And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you.

**Matthew 28:18-20
ESV**

LESSON 5: DIVERSE CONTEXTS - DONE ON YOUR OWN

Did you know that most people spend the majority of their lives in their own culture. In the United States, this can even be found in the divides in racial and ethnic diversity. Hopefully, coming home from a STMT, you have seen the value and benefits of being in a context that is not typical for you. Any time we get to learn from someone outside of our cultural norms, it provides us an opportunity to grow and learn. The trouble is, a lot of the time, we are happy to go on a STMT and help out another country or people group, but we will not reach across our own town to someone a little different than ourselves. Most churches are guilty of this trend.

In an interesting book, *United by Faith: The Multiracial Congregation As an Answer to the Problem of Race*, the authors conducted a study and found that 92.5% of Catholic and Protestant churches in the United States are "monoracial." To be a monoracial church means that 80% or more of the attendees are from one ethnicity or race. Basically, this means that only 7.5% of churches have any level of cultural, ethnic, or racial diversity. This should be a shocking statistic to you.

Ideally, you are returning from your STMT, and you found great joy in being exposed to another culture and seeing how brothers and sisters around the globe are expanding the kingdom. However, as we read the statistic above, most of you will return to a community that is just like you. As we think through what it means to be fruitful from our STMT, a clear understanding that how "we" do things is not the only way of doing things and sometimes might not be the best way is crucial.



Make an honest evaluation of the diverse contexts in your life:

In my neighborhood:

In my school or work:

In my church:

In my friend group:

With this evaluation in hand, think through the next few questions and how it can impact your worldview, how you treat others, and how you see who God is.

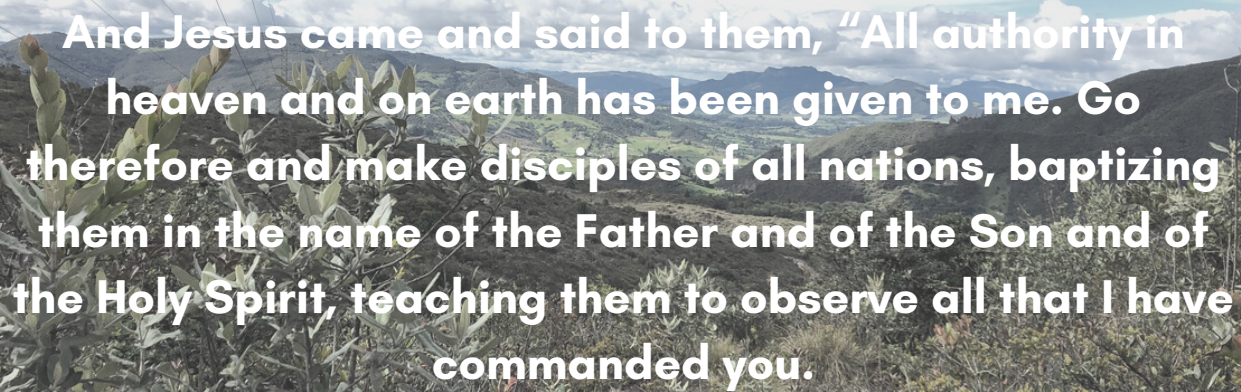
How is my worldview expanded or hindered by the diversity or lack of in my life?

How could my understanding of the Church grow if I worshiped in a diverse setting?

What does diversity have to do with how you see and understand God?

What can I do today, this week, this year to spend time in a context, not like my norm?





And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you.

Matthew 28:18-20
ESV

LESSON 6: GIVING SACRIFICIALLY

"I am afraid that the only safe rule is to give more than we can spare...If our charities (our giving) do not at all pinch or hamper us, I should say they are too small" C. S. Lewis

Money, giving, tithing are always carefully explained and sometimes dangerous words in the church. It seems that when these topics are brought up, it is either because there is not enough money coming in to support the church's ministries or it is to guilt you into giving. What would it look like if we viewed giving differently and put more energy into *how* and *why* we give.

In Luke 21, Jesus points out the faithfulness of a widow who placed just a few coins in the offering plate. He praises her for the gift and the faithfulness of her actions. What she put in the offering that day was. In no way financially more than what other people put in, but it was the most generous gift in terms of Kingdom value. Jesus shares that she gave out of her heart and out of her poverty.

The incredible thing about this woman was she gave what she had because she wanted to. It had nothing to do with rules and regulations, not about tithing or old testament mentality. She gave because she loved the Father and wanted to be part of the work GOD was doing.



What would it look like if the Church started to take their direction in giving from this woman? What would it look like if we gave because we wanted to? Gave willingly? Gave out of obedience to God and not out of a rule or regulation? The Lord asks that we give every aspect of our lives to him, including our finances and giving.

The quick question that arises is, if we do not need to follow a rule then how much should we be giving? If we look back at the widow in Luke 21, we can take our cue from her. When we give to the Lord and we give like the widow, we give to affect our lifestyle. Scott Morton says "Let your giving affect your living."

Hopefully you met some amazing ministries and missionaries on your STMT, what would it mean for you to support one of them?
What would it mean to you?

What could it mean to them?

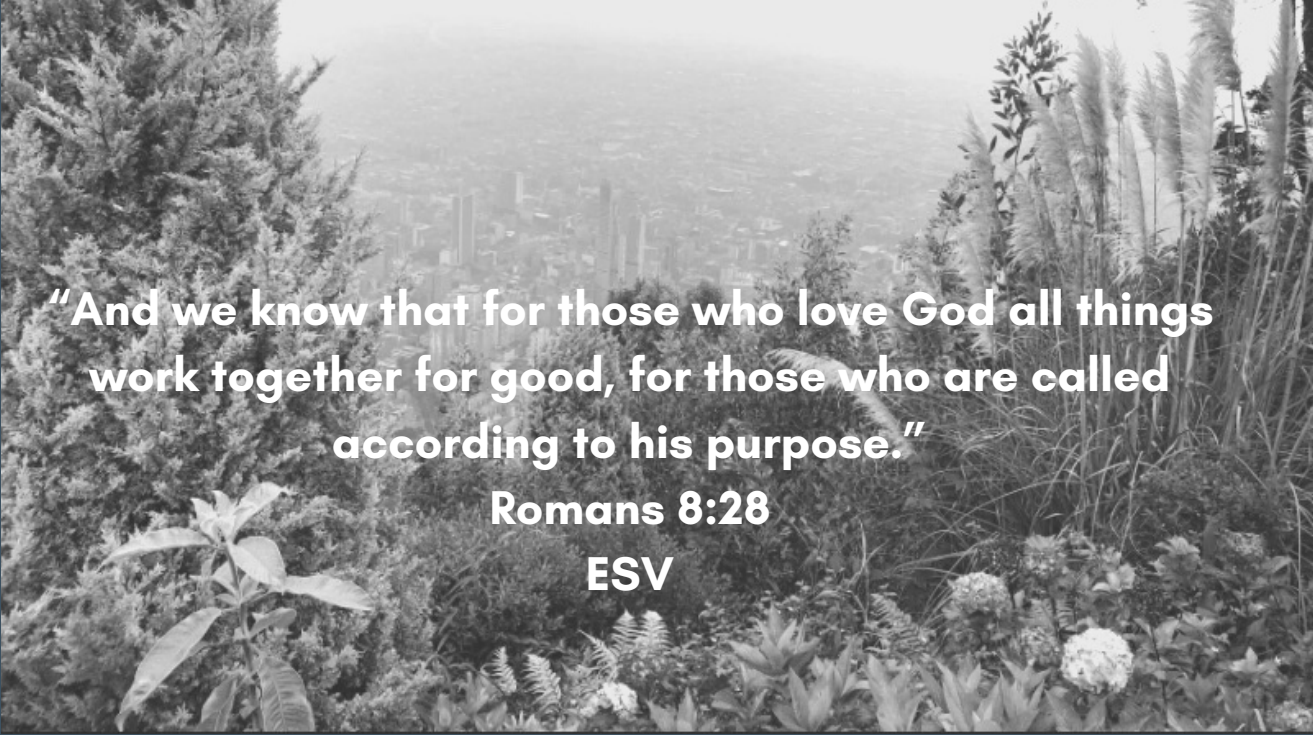
What could you change today that would impact your lifestyle and impact your giving?

How do you view giving? Is it a joy to give to the Lord or something you just do because your told to?

What do you need to change about how you view your giving?

What goal can you set about giving over the next year?





"And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose."

Romans 8:28

ESV

LESSON 7: AS TIME PASSES - TO BE DONE BEFORE SECOND TEAM MEETING

Now that you have been home for a time, it may be good to stop and reflect on the experiences you have had during your STMT. The good, the bad, and everything in between, and if we are honest, most trips, on a personal level, have a little bit of each. The truth is that we each bring our own personalities, experiences, and physiological characteristics with us wherever we go. As a result, we may find ourselves at ease in one situation and highly stressed in another. The key is to be able to use the strengths God has given us to develop in areas that can be challenging for us.

Take some time to think about your overall experience on your STMT, then reflect on each day's struggles and joys. You may want to go back and re-read any journal entries you made during the trip as you reflect.

What types of struggles did you have? Were they physical, emotional, intellectual, or spiritual? Take a moment to think about it.

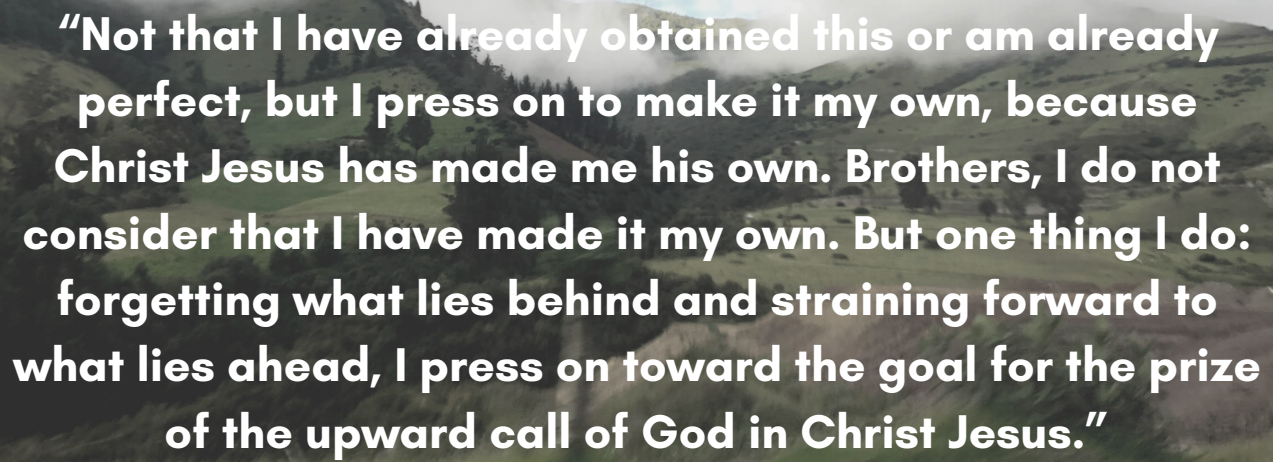
Now, what types of things brought you great joy or excitement or gave you a sense of peace or contentment? Take a moment to think about it.

Brainstorm a list of your experiences, good and bad, you've had in the process of participating in and in returning from your STMT. Write them down in this book using the chart or in your journal, then classify your listed experiences as positive, negative, or both by marking them with a "P," "N," or "B." During your next group session, you will use this list to help you think about your role in glorifying God and having the heart of a server and the mind of a learner.



Positive Negative Both	Describe the Experience
P N B	
P N B	
P N B	
P N B	
P N B	
P N B	
P N B	
P N B	
P N B	
P N B	





"Not that I have already obtained this or am already perfect, but I press on to make it my own, because Christ Jesus has made me his own. Brothers, I do not consider that I have made it my own. But one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus."

Philippians 3:12-14

ESV

LESSON 8: GOALS - TO BE DONE BEFORE THIRD TEAM MEETING

In your last meeting, you were challenged to develop a goal for personal growth based on your experiences during your trip. Record the goal you decided upon for developing in an area related to your negative experiences.

My Goal:

Now, identify 2-3 steps to take during the next two weeks toward achieving your goal.

Think about steps you can take toward achieving your goal during the next 6-12 months, record them here:

Over the next several weeks, implement the steps you've identified above. Keep track of them in your journal and reflect on the impact/outcomes of these steps at regular intervals. You will have an opportunity to share your experiences during the next meeting.





"Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for thereby some have entertained angels unawares."

Hebrews 13:12

"Contribute to the needs of the saints and seek to show hospitality."

Romans 12:13

ESV

A WORD ON HOSPITALITY

Practicing hospitality may perhaps be the most accessible and achievable way of living a missional lifestyle and extending the love of Christ to others. Hospitality can be a simple gesture, such as taking a gift to a new neighbor, or a well-planned event, such as hosting a block party to welcome that same new neighbor, but as noticed in the two verses above, hospitality is something that should be extended to strangers and the known, alike. Simply Mobilizing International has noted that since 1990 global migration has increased by 65%, and one in seven people alive today are migrants. With this new era of globalization in mind, a new opportunity for cross-cultural missions is "near-neighbor missions," and reaching out with hospitality is a powerful tool for sharing the Gospel. (The Unfinished Story, p.17)

So what are some practical examples of sharing hospitality with others? Here are a few examples:

- Invite people into your home for a shared meal, holiday experience, birthday, activity.
- Share baked goods, meals, handicrafts, etc., with neighbors, the sick, the elderly, refugees.
- Arrange play dates with your children and those new to your child's school
- Arrange to buy and deliver groceries, meals, rides to appointments to community members without cars
- Help with yard work, auto maintenance, housework, etc.
- Offer cooking, baking, sewing, crafting, painting, etc. "events" in your home.
- Invite young moms/dads, single parents, over for support and guidance
- Inviting the new student to sit with you at lunch, etc.
- Offer tutoring, English language lessons, homework help



What role do you think hospitality plays in living a missional lifestyle and sharing the Gospel?

How have you experienced hospitality being extended to you in your life?

Why do you think Christians sometimes struggle to share hospitality with people from different cultures, religions, or world views from themselves?

Why must we overcome this struggle?

What are some practical ways you can show hospitality to others on a regular basis?

Name one "out of your comfort zone" way you can/will try to demonstrate hospitality to someone "different" than yourself.





INCA LINK INTERNATIONAL

This team workbook and the corresponding curriculum was prepared by the team of Inca Link International. Inca Link has been operating and serving in Latin America since 2006 with the mission of reaching the 300 million youth of Latin America with Christ's irresistible love.

One of many ways Inca Link is working to reach youth is through the work of short term mission trips. With years of experience they have witnessed the good, bad, and ugly of STMT. However, through all of it they still believe in the power and ability STMT have as tools in God's kingdom. Several missionaries serving with Inca Link first got exposed to missions on a short term trip. It is Inca Link's deep desire that every trip brings glory to God and through that more Latino/a youth come to know God as their Father.

If you would like to learn more about Inca Link or serve with them on a STMT, Internship or as a missionary check out their website at Incalink.org





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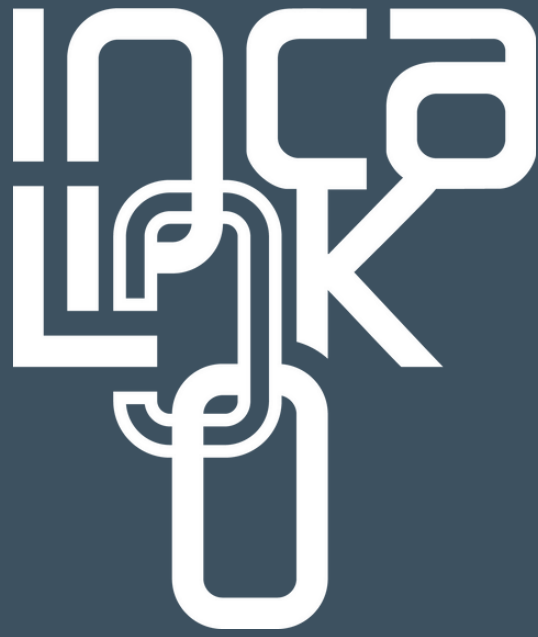




SUGGESTED READINGS

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www.incalink.org