

Chapter II

A Time for Preparation

be ready

Est 4:16 *Go, gather together all the Jews that are present in Shushan, and fast ye for me, and neither eat nor drink three days, night or day: I also and my maidens will fast likewise; and so will I go in unto the king, which is not according to the law: and if I perish, I perish.*

Now that God has called me what is the best way to get to my field of service?

... language studies, cross cultural ministry, learn all you can about the country and people, what you can take and what you should not take to the field, do they have a good Bible translation, be able to give sound and truthful answers to those that ask about your calling and country,

A Time of Planning... preparing your presentation, prayer cards & displays. Being sent by your sending church, mission board. How will the size of your family and their needs enter into this planning time?

Putting in the right ingredients:

Things needed for success: Remember you are looking for success in this journey. It is the first stage of being a successful missionary. If you fail here, you will probably fail down the road or even quit.

Isa 26:3 *Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee.*

Spiritual Preparation:

Just because you are in Bible college and taking Bible courses does not make you spiritual. Just because I know how to drive a car that does not make me a mechanic, nor an electrician because I can turn on a light switch. You must work at it. Salvation is free and given by the grace of God, but sanctifications come through a devotion to God and his word.

Learn godly habits. Faithful to Bible reading, prayer and family devotions. Stay away from questionable activities.

Know your field:

Make sure that all your stats are correct. Remember that person sitting in the pew can easily google the information. When I quote that there are around 7,000 living languages, I say there are sites that say just a few more than that and others just a few less. Making comments like, there are no churches in a particular place would be embarrassing to find out that the church supports another man in the same place. Get the stats for Christian and non-Christian population. If you are working in a Muslim country, know what kind they are. There are those that are very passive and non-militant, but the average church goer might think they are all militant. If you are working amongst Buddhist and Hindus, know what they believe and give example of how they are being reached. Population stats should be current.

Start to learn the language, this will give you a head start. Read books about the history of the country. All this preparation will impress the pastors and churches and make it easier for them to choose you as their missionary. Read books about cross cultural ministry to avoid the pitfalls of being offensive to those that you want to win to Christ.

Seek out a good language school and make sure that you have the funds to attend. Churches and pastors will ask about this. They understand the importance of learning the language.

Do they have a good Bible? Can you get one there or must you send them ahead of time. Same for gospel tracts.

Find out from those living on the field if it is necessary for you to buy household items in country or ship a container.

Visa application. Some countries allow a church to sponsor you while others may be more difficult. Remember, God has called you to this place, exhaust ALL possibilities through prayer and fasting and hard work!

Survey trip:

A short visit to the prospective field of service is necessary. This trip is vital prior to deputation as your eyes will affect your heart. It will be much easier to present your burden because you have seen the need firsthand.

Options are for the husband to go alone, or he and his wife, or the entire family. Plan ahead to get the most out of this trip. If you are working with a veteran missionary (which is my suggestion) plan all details with him. Cost, visas, paperwork needed, dress options, shots and medicine. Make sure the missionary will be there and able to show you around. You should have a list of questions that needs answers. Be prepared to take pictures and videos for your presentation. Ask the missionary about taking pictures, some countries it might be a problem.

How much support do I need?

You will need the input from other missionaries, mission agency and veteran missionaries.

Where will I live?

While on deputation housing must be secured. You might have a home based. Temporally living with family members is a short-term option. Mission apartments, or a rental house. This may become fluid as your circumstances will change as you go along. For us, we lived short time with my in-laws and then moved to a rental house. Funds were tight and some months we did not know how the funds would come in to cover the expenses. God always supplied! It was not easy, and our faith was stretched to the max. We had no bills except rent, utilities, food, gas, insurance. Each month we experienced how God would come through, his supply varied from month to month.

Time needed to gather necessary tools.

Set a goal of one month to obtain those things needed for deputation. Video presentation...prayer cards...equipment...sermons and testimonies...house set up.

Transportation:

You will have to have a reliable vehicle. Purchasing a car, truck, camper are all options, but remember best to have no debt as funds will be slow to come in at first. Loaner vehicles for missionaries (check with sending agent). Proper insurance must be purchased. Make sure that you have a vehicle that is road worthy and that you are not constantly breaking down and arriving late or missing meetings.

Prayer Cards:

All missionaries have this...make yours stand out. If you can design it, set the matching colors for cards, display, and brochures so that they flow together. It is better to have sufficient information on one side of the card as these cards may be on display on a church wall.

Seek out help to design your material. Make sure it is not too busy (overabundance of information) keep it simple but attractive. Your family names...birthdays... anniversary...country of service...objectives...home church with address, personal phone number...name of sending agent with their address.

Print no less than 5,000. Should last a least 6 months. Have a nice family picture taken. Choose your lay out, a 4X6 is most common.

Business Cards:

These are very inexpensive and can be used at any time to give your information to someone.

Brochures:

Information packets are nice but very expensive. The average pastor sees multiple packets of mail that comes across his desk. He will generally read or scan to see if he is interested. If not, out it goes. We know this because as we follow up on our mailings, we often ask the pastor if he saw our packet. Most of the time he will say, "I think so". We do not want to put the pastor on the spot, so we kindly say well, let me tell you a little about it and our ministry.

In the brochure you should have your family picture. Your home church. Your mission board. Your birth dates. Your salvation dates. Your education. A reference from your pastor. Short testimony. Keep it brief but informative. You may need only a few hundred of these. Make sure it can be sent by email. Many pastors prefer this today.

Display:

Do not make a homemade display. Today it is very easy and cost effective to make a roll up display. Remember that the colors and design should match your cards and brochure. Make it attractive and desirable to look at. When people look at it does it

make them think. There are all kinds and sizes of displays. I saw one the other day that was like a prayer card (much larger of course) but a roll up display that could sit on a table.

Carry with you a nice tablecloth...objects from the country where you will serve. A Bible in that language with some gospel tracts. Things of interest, but not overloaded. NO KNIVES...POISONOUS ARROWS OR DARTS...TOYS THAT MAKE OBNOXIOUS SOUNDS...THINGS THAT WILL EASILY BREAK. Make your display so that people want to see it and ask questions. Ask people to see you at your display. Be friendly and involve the whole family. The kids can pass out prayer cards. Your wife must not hide in the corner.

Video Presentation:

Make an outline of your presentation. Here is an example of one that I copied from a missionary.

- I. Geographical information
 - A. Located in Western Europe
 - B. Size of state of West Virginia
- II. Political and Demographical information
 - A. Population
 - B. Major religions
- III. Spiritual Need
 - A. Void that only Jesus can fill
 - B. Trying to fill their void with all the wrong things
 - C. Religion has not filled the void
(Romans 10:1-2)
 - D. The situation is desperate; who will go?
- IV. Music (scrolling statistics)
- V. Testimonies
- VI. Survey Trip
- VII. Plans
 - A. Matthew 28:18-20
 - B. Goals
- VIII. Music (pictures of country)

Write your text out...gather your videos and pictures needed...choose your music (be wise here) not all churches have the same music philosophy. Be conservative in the music. Search out help if you are not able to put this together. Duration of video

should be 5 to 7 minutes, closer to 5 if possible. Thumb drives seems to be the best today as almost all churches have a projector and computer. There will be the occasion where your projector will be needed, but remember sound is always a problem at this point.

Website:

This is a very inexpensive way of communication today. It is a place where you can direct people to see about you, your family and ministry. You can place your video there and also post and photos. If you desire, you can create a blog to keep people informed. It will take time to maintain, and I suggest that if you are not going to keep it current you might just put general information so that you can direct new supporters to the site to learn more about you and your ministry. It can also be used like a missionary packet that is sent to pastors. Your packet can be thrown away, but the website is still there. Choose a Domain name that describes you and can be easily remembered. Make sure it is easy to spell. There are literally thousands of templates to choose from.

Letters:

Today many pastors are desiring to just receive emails. Make sure you respond to their request in a timely manner. Thank you letters and reminder letters. You can create templates for the different types of letters you will send. Introductory, confirmation, thank you letters. Some churches only require a email newsletter. Concerning your Newsletter. I find it better to send email and a physical letter every two months. Remember that when starting deputation, it might be better to send each month. You want to keep your name in front of them.

Office Equipment:

Printer...computer...iPad...smart phone.

Mobile Smart Phone:

Remember you will be traveling around the country. Find out which phone service is the best.

E-mail:

There are several mail services. Choose one that you plan on using for a long time. If it is connected to a service that you have at your home, guess what, when you leave for the field, you will have lost your email address. Hotmail...Gmail... You might not use all of them but in some countries, one might work better than the other. WhatsApp... Face Time...Skype... Again, the veteran missionary can help you in this area. Use your name in the email, make it easy for them to recognize and remember.