

THE COMPLETE GUIDE TO PRE-FIELD MISSIONARY PREPARATION

**WHAT EVERY
FUTURE
MISSIONARY
NEEDS TO
KNOW**



J. TALIAFERRO

PRESENTED BY ANCHORED INTERNATIONAL

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THE COMPLETE GUIDE TO PRE-FIELD MISSIONARY PREPARATION: WHAT EVERY FUTURE MISSIONARY NEEDS TO KNOW

Thinking about becoming a missionary? First of all, you're amazing.

Second, you're not ready. And that's okay! No one is ready at first.

Not even the Apostle Paul jumped into missions without some prep time. That's why this Complete Guide to Pre-Field Missionary Preparation exists—to turn your big dreams of cross-cultural ministry into a lasting, impactful reality. If you're envisioning yourself proclaiming the gospel in another language, drinking tea (or some unidentifiable local beverage) with new friends, and thriving instead of burning out, this guide is for you. Yes, it's possible. But spoiler alert—it requires a lot more than bravery and a passport.

We get it. You're excited, maybe even nervous. Some of you are wrestling with doubts, while others are so pumped that you're basically Googling the cheapest flights out of the country.

Wherever you are in the process, **Anchored International** is here to walk alongside you. We've been helping missionaries like you prepare for decades (and trust us, we've seen it all). From raising support to navigating cultural faux pas (hint: not every culture appreciates thumbs-ups), we'll give you the tools you need to step confidently into the mission field.

This isn't some boring training manual filled with tedious checklists and theological jargon. No, this guide is real talk. We're going to laugh (and cry) together as we uncover what it really takes to thrive in missions. Think

stories, practical advice, and a whole lot of “Oh wow, I didn’t realize I needed to know that!” moments.

Buckle up. It’s going to be a wild, challenging, and rewarding ride — just like missions itself.

WHY PRE-FIELD MISSIONARY TRAINING MATTERS (HINT: IT'S NOT WHAT YOU THINK)



Picture this: A new missionary lands in their target country, pumped up and ready to save the world. Three years later, they're booking a flight home, disillusioned, exhausted, defeated and despising the people group they came to reach.

What happened? It wasn't a lack of technical training or language ability. Most missionaries don't "fail" because they don't know how to teach English, drill a well, or organize a VBS. They fail because, spiritually, emotionally, and relationally, they weren't prepared.

Here's the cold, hard truth. Missionary burnout and attrition are usually tied to **spiritual struggles, culture clashes, and team dynamics – not a lack of skills.**

Pre-field missionary preparation digs into the deeper layers of preparation, focusing on building resilience, cultural humility, and a strong spiritual foundation. If you think you only need a suitcase and a passport, You're in for an awakening.

Here are some uncomfortable truths you need to come to grips with before going to the field.

#1 The Western church has not equipped you for the spiritual battle that awaits you on the mission field. Most Christians, unfortunately, lack a deep understanding of the Bible or the spiritual realm, which leaves them ill-prepared to stand firm against the spiritual realities they will face. Are curses real? Does demon possession really happen? Can God still heal? Don't wait till you are on the mission field to answer these questions.

#2 Biblical literacy – the foundation for discerning truth from lies – is often shockingly low. At our Elite Missionary Training, We start every training with a written test. It includes a section where we ask candidates to put 30 bible characters in chronological order. After more than 350 students (some

seminary graduates) only three have successfully answered that question. Why? Because we have a disjointed understanding of the Bible. We use it to fit our narrative, but we don't truly know the story of God and man.

#3 Most believers have not cultivated the spiritual disciplines in their lives, which are critical for building the endurance necessary to thrive in spiritually hostile environments. Undisciplined Christians are swayed easily and distracted from the spiritual reality around them. You must establish these practices in your life before you go so that you will Hold Fast in the day of suffering and trial.

#4 Even more concerning is the widespread inability to recognize or engage in spiritual warfare. Many equate spiritual battles with abstract concepts rather than the very real and personal attacks of the enemy you'll encounter in cross-cultural settings. Without these tools and insights, many missionaries find themselves blindsided when faced with spiritual resistance. Preparation doesn't just mean being aware of these challenges but becoming actively equipped to handle them through intentional, prayerful, and disciplined practices. Spiritual resilience isn't optional – it's the lifeline that will sustain you.

#5 Westerners are often culturally ignorant. If you don't learn to laugh at yourself, the mission field will teach you in its own unique ways! Maybe you'll realize too late that you've been enthusiastically greeting locals with what you *thought* was a friendly phrase, only to find out it means something entirely different (like ordering ten goats for a wedding). Or perhaps you'll get creative with dinner, only to discover that you accidentally made the spiciest soup anyone has ever encountered. Cross-cultural life is full of unexpected moments, and a good sense of humor will become your secret weapon for navigating them with grace and joy!

The reality is that the missionary force is aging rapidly, and many are retiring earlier or leaving the field sooner than they once did. This creates a critical gap in long-term, seasoned missionaries – those who bring years of

wisdom, cultural understanding, and spiritual depth. Without their presence, the next generation of missionaries loses vital mentorship and guidance, which risks weakening the foundation built by centuries of dedicated labor. If we fail to address this trend, we risk squandering the momentum and progress cultivated over hundreds of years. Now, more than ever, we need missionaries who are willing to commit for the long haul, to not only serve but to empower others to thrive as they take up the mantle of cross-cultural ministry.

STEP 1:
KNOW YOUR CALLING
(AND QUESTION IT. SERIOUSLY.)



Are you absolutely sure you're called to missions? Excellent.

Now, **ask yourself again. Are you sure that you are sure?** Take the time to wrestle with this question in prayer, scripture, and conversations with trusted spiritual leaders.

Missionary life is not Instagram-worthy sunsets and cute kids. It's hard. Like "crying in a grocery store because you can't figure out which kind of rice to buy" or "feeling useless because after 3 years you've seen no fruit" kind of hard.

Seek Counsel from Your Elders and Mentors

Do not walk this path alone. **Seek wise counsel** from trusted elders, mentors, or church leaders who share a deep understanding of the Great Commission. These conversations matter. The right mentors will help you confirm your calling and challenge you with the tough questions you might not think to ask yourself—or might even avoid. They offer a broader perspective that only years of faith and experience can bring.

Not just anyone will do for this conversation. Choose someone who knows the weight of missionary work, someone with a heart for the nations, and someone who isn't afraid to ask you difficult questions. Trust us, you'll be grateful later. If you don't currently have someone like this in your life, reach out to us! **We'd love to set up a coaching call and talk this through with you.**

Here's a list of 15 questions to wrestle through with your mentor or church leader as you confirm your calling to missionary work:

1. How do you see God working in my life, and do you believe I am called to missions?

2. Am I spiritually mature enough to handle the challenges of cross-cultural ministry?
3. What are my spiritual gifts, and how can they be used on the mission field?
4. Am I prepared to live and work in a culture vastly different from my own?
5. How do I handle conflict, and do I have the skills needed for healthy resolution?
6. What role does accountability play in my personal and spiritual life?
7. Have I demonstrated emotional resilience in other challenging situations?
8. Do I have a strong prayer life and personal relationship with God to sustain me during tough times?
9. How well do I work as part of a team, and have I developed a servant-hearted approach?
10. What unresolved issues or fears might I need to work on before going to the mission field?
11. Am I willing to make sacrifices, including financial security, comfort, and proximity to loved ones?
12. Do I have realistic expectations about what life on the mission field will look like?
13. Have I focused enough on learning about the country, culture, and people I plan to serve?
14. How have I prepared spiritually and practically for fundraising and financial support?
15. What steps should I take right now to strengthen areas where I may be lacking?

These questions are not just a checklist; they are the beginning of deep, intentional dialogue. Be honest, be vulnerable, and be open to hearing hard truths. Allow this process to fortify your calling and equip you for the road ahead.

There were days on the mission field when I felt about as useful as a spoon in a knife drawer. I questioned why I was there, wondering if God had made a mistake. But deep down, I knew He had commanded me to be there, and that calling held me steady. Funny enough, it wasn't long after those moments of doubt that we witnessed an incredible harvest of lives transformed!

It's a stark contrast to the time one missionary packed up after two weeks because the Amazon mosquitos were everywhere, hmm who knew? Or another brother, who, after a couple of nights on a bamboo mat, suddenly felt a strong "call" to pursue seminary back in his air-conditioned hometown.

That's why confirming your calling before you arrive isn't optional—it's essential. Sometimes what keeps you pressing on isn't comfort, but the unshakable knowledge that God put you there for a purpose.

STEP 2:
FIND THE RIGHT ORGANIZATION
(BECAUSE CULTURE CLASHES ARE REAL)



Not all mission organizations are created equal. This is where the phrase “measure twice, cut once” could not be more true. If your personal philosophy doesn’t align with an organization’s philosophy, spoiler alert, you WILL struggle.

Is the organization more focused on church planting or humanitarian work?

Do they share your theological views?

How do they make decisions?

What’s their leadership structure?

Take the time to find out how these groups handle cultural differences, conflict resolution, and decision-making processes. A mismatch here could lead to years of frustration or even an early exit from your mission field.

Here are three examples to help you see what I mean:

1. Caleb Matthews – The Nomad Church Planter

A rugged, Reformed young man called to plant churches among Muslim nomads in the Sahel, Caleb thrives in frontier conditions and values theological depth and independence. *Frontiers* fits him best with its decentralized leadership, focus on unreached Muslim peoples, and strong field mentorship.

2. Mark & Rachel Carter – The Compassionate Builders

This evangelical, charismatic-leaning family of five feels called to bring humanitarian aid and gospel hope to post-Christian Eastern Europe. *World Team* provides their ideal environment—structured, family-oriented teams combining practical service and church-planting in collaborative community.

3. Sophia Nguyen – The Redeeming Teacher

A Spirit-led educator with a heart for refugee youth and displaced women in South Asia, Sophia longs to use teaching as a tool for restoration and discipleship. *TeachBeyond* perfectly matches her vision through its global, faith-integrated approach to transformational education and strong mentoring support.

Someone should not go with Ethnos360 if they feel called to do sports ministry in Europe. That's not going to end well for anyone.

So, put some research in. Make some calls, explore your calling with the mobilizers from the different organizations. [The Traveling Team](#) has a great resource called: [Mission Agency Partnership Guide](#). It compares the different organizations and gives you a better understanding of the organizations culture and specific distinctive. That is a good place to start.

When evaluating a mission organization, it's crucial to understand how their policies and structure will fit your life, beliefs, and expectations. Fundraising, for example, varies dramatically between organizations. Some require you to raise full support, meaning your salary, insurance, and retirement benefits are entirely dependent on donor contributions. Others may offer partial support or even a set salary, though such cases are increasingly rare. These differences can significantly impact your long-term sustainability, so it's important to know what you're stepping into financially.

Beyond finances, doctrinal alignment and lifestyle policies should not be overlooked. A mismatch in theological views can lead to major challenges – imagine being asked to teach or practice something you fundamentally disagree with. This can cause both internal conflict and tension within your team.

Additionally, organizational policies on personal freedoms vary widely. Some organizations exercise significant oversight, dictating decisions such as dating or how you spend your free time, while others provide much more

independence. Working styles also differ; one organization may expect a 9-to-5 schedule, while another might require you to be "on duty" around the clock.

Similarly, you might be asked to fit into a tight-knit, pre-existing team structure, or you may be given the latitude to develop your own strategy within their mission framework.

To ensure you're in alignment with an organization, start by asking targeted questions.

What level of oversight will they have in your daily life?

What are their theological expectations, and how closely do they align with your beliefs?

Will you be required to join a team or work independently?

Clarify their policies around key areas like financial support, insurance, and personal freedoms before committing. If possible, speak with current or former missionaries within the organization to get a firsthand account of their experience. Doing this homework up front can help you avoid common pitfalls and ensure a stronger, healthier partnership with your sending agency.

Church Sending

Another fantastic – and very biblical – option is church sending. Think of it as going old school, like Paul and Barnabas being sent out by the church in Antioch (minus the sandals and scrolls). This approach places the responsibility of sending directly into the hands of your local church, letting them pray, fund, and commission you into ministry. It's simple, it's streamlined, and you don't have to wade through agency paperwork that feels longer than Numbers. For those of you who want the best of both worlds – being sent by your church but also having some extra support – you can check out [Shepherd's Staff](#). They're like the training wheels that

make sure you stay balanced while still giving your church the main role.
Plus, we totally trust them, which is saying something.

STEP 3:
CONSIDER TEAM DYNAMICS
(BECAUSE NOT EVERYONE PLAYS NICE)



Good missionaries know their Bible. Great missionaries understand group dynamics. You'll likely be working in a team, and not everyone does team the same way. How does the organization you're considering handle team placement? Who decides who works with whom? How do they deal with disagreements or interpersonal tensions?

My first missionary partner and I DID NOT get along. I hated his music and he hated mine. He was almost 15 years older than me, but lacked common sense and self-awareness that God gave a Panda. I was by no means a perfect partner. I was young and brash and I had no patience for knuckleheads. After our first trip to the jungle almost ended in homicide, I told my supervisor that It wasn't a good idea to send us out together again. Thankfully, he rescued us from the situation and everyone survived.

You don't have to be best friends with your teammates, but you MUST be compatible in your goals, workstyles, and conflict resolution strategies. This is something you can't afford to overlook in your pre-field missionary training.

If possible, reach out to the potential supervisor as part of your pre-field preparation. Ask him or her pointed questions to get a clear picture of how the team dynamic works. Avoid being satisfied with vague responses like, "We are a close-knit team." Instead, dig deeper to uncover the reality of their interactions.

Ask specific questions, such as, "What kinds of activities does the team do together? How frequently do they meet? Do they have dedicated times for prayer and spiritual growth? How is conflict typically addressed within the team?" Answers to these questions will provide valuable insight into whether this team will foster compatibility and unity, which are critical for a healthy mission experience.

Additionally, if you can, contact several current or former team members. Ask them pointed questions about both the positives and the challenges of working with that particular team. Questions like, "What have been some standout strengths of the team dynamic? What were the most significant struggles, and how were they addressed?" can provide a balanced perspective. It's essential to approach these conversations with an open heart and a willingness to listen, as their experiences will give you a clearer understanding of what to expect and how to prepare for your own role within the team.

You will never find the perfect team. It doesn't exist, but don't walk blindly into a fractured team if you can help it.

And while we're talking about *them*, let's talk about *you*. Because guess what? You're going to get your feelings hurt. Yep, someone's going to say something, do something, or just *be* something that totally rubs you the wrong way. It's not a question of *if*, but *when*. We're imperfect people, serving an amazing God, in close quarters. What could go wrong, right?

But here's the beautiful, brilliant, mind-blowing truth: Jesus *knew* this would happen. He literally gave us the ultimate "how-to" guide for when people get under our skin. Have you ever really read Matthew 18:15-17? It's revolutionary! It says *you*, the one who feels offended, *you* get to be the peacemaker. Imagine that! Go to them. Have that honest, loving conversation. And honestly, nine times out of ten, it's just a big, silly misunderstanding. "Oh, I thought you meant *that*!" "No, I meant *this*!" Problem solved, hug it out!

But what if it's not? What if it's still a little sticky? Don't despair! The Bible gives us the next steps too, to protect that precious team unity. So, my friend, arm yourself! Not with anger, but with grace, with wisdom, and with God's word. Because offenses *will* come, but we, equipped by Him, can handle them. And we *will* maintain harmony. We *will*!

STEP 4:
BUILD YOUR PRAYER AND SUPPORT
NETWORK



Do not go alone. Period. Even Paul had an army of supporters behind him. Before you get on that plane, assemble your "spiritual pit crew." These are the people who will pray for you, counsel you through tough times, and remind you why you started in the first place. They are the ones you call, when you want to give up or you don't know if you can endure.

For many years my great grandmother was one of my most ardent prayer supporters. She was in her 90's and she was mostly homebound, but when she bowed her head mountains were moved. I attribute much of my early success to her fervent prayers. She prayed me out of a lot of challenging circumstances and when she finally passed at the age of 100, I felt the loss deeply. I had to recruit dozens of new prayer warriors to replace that one sweet prayer warrior.

Your prayer network should include your home church, family, close friends, and as many other prayer warriors as you can possible recruit into your list. Then keep them apprised of how God is working and they will support you for decades.

And yes, raising funds (if necessary) often goes hand-in-hand with building this network. It's not begging; it's inviting people to invest in God's work. Shift your mindset, and you'll be amazed how God provides.

One invaluable resource that can revolutionize your approach to fundraising is *The God Ask* by [Steve Shadrach](#). This book is a must-read for missionaries preparing to build financial support for their ministry. Shadrach reframes fundraising as a spiritual partnership rather than a transactional process, reminding readers that it's ultimately about trusting God to provide. The book offers practical advice on crafting your support team, making effective presentations, and maintaining long-term relationships with donors. With biblical principles at the core, *The God Ask* encourages a mindset of faith and intentionality, equipping you with tools to approach fundraising with

confidence and a sense of purpose. It's not just about raising money – it's about inspiring others to join in God's mission through their generosity. If you're feeling overwhelmed or unsure about this part of your preparation, this resource can provide you with the clarity and encouragement you need.

STEP 5:
FIND A MENTOR
(PREFERABLY SOMEONE WHO'S BEEN
THERE)



You wouldn't climb Mount Everest without a seasoned guide, would you? Of course not! And trust me, mission work can feel a lot like scaling that mountain – sometimes you're soaring, sometimes you're just trying not to slide off the edge! That's why a mentor is non-negotiable.

Find someone who's not just "been there, done that," but who's actually *still* there, or just recently returned. Ideally, someone living in your target field, doing similar ministry, who's already learned all the hilarious (and sometimes painful) lessons. Or, if they're harder to find, a retired missionary who's not only survived cross-cultural living but thrives on sharing their war stories.

A good mentor isn't just a cheerleader; they're your wisdom well, your sanity check, and your shortcut past a lot of rookie blunders. They'll give you the real scoop, the stuff no textbook can teach. They'll help you laugh when you want to cry, and pray when you feel like quitting. Why did I have such a long and thriving career in missions? Because of my mentors. Simple as that. I soaked up their wisdom, avoided their potholes, and then, yes, made plenty of my *own* unique mistakes!

And guess what? There are amazing programs to help you find that invaluable guidance. Have you heard about the [Legacy Connect Program with Anchored International](#)? They're brilliant! They lovingly pair up those wise, retired missionaries with fresh, new field personnel. It's like getting a cheat code for your first few years.

Want even more insights into this incredible journey of mentorship? Check out my book, "[Letters to An Apprentice](#)" by J Taliaferro. It's packed with personal stories and practical advice that I wish someone had told me when I was starting out.

So, please, don't go it alone. Find that mentor. Learn from their triumphs, learn from their missteps. And then, once you've found your footing, promise me you'll do the same. Turn around. Reach back. Become a mentor for someone younger than you, and complete that beautiful, life-giving cycle. It's how we keep the flame of ministry burning bright!

STEP 6:
TAKE AN ACTUAL MISSIONARY
PREPARATION COURSE



Hear this loud and clear: "modern missions require modern training." Just because your great-grandma went to the mission field with a Bible and a wicker trunk doesn't mean you can skip up-to-date preparation. Nope. Modern missions? They demand modern training, my friends. You can't just skip preparation and expect to thrive. What does that mean? It means diving deep into cultural intelligence. It means serious spiritual formation. Learning conflict resolution. And getting those practical strategies to not just survive, but absolutely flourish overseas for Jesus! Are you ready for that?

But hold on a second. Not all training is created equal, right? How do you choose? You need courses built by folks who are *in it*, right now. People who truly get the modern mission field. And guess what? That's exactly what [Anchored International's Elite Missionary Training \(EMT\)](#) program delivers. We train missionaries. We train them to succeed. Spiritually, practically, powerfully. Our methods? They're rooted in decades of *real*, on-the-ground experience for the Kingdom. (Yes, that was a little self-promotion. But honestly? We're passionate. We're proud. And we're all about equipping you for Jesus!)

Time Commitment – Finding the Sweet Spot

You've probably seen it before—some training programs squeeze everything into just 1-4 weeks. And while you might think, "*Great! I'll get trained and hit the field faster!*", here's the problem with that: you can fake it for 4 weeks. Seriously. You can keep your weaknesses tucked away, keep your cool, and look like you have it all together for a few weeks. But guess what happens when the pressure intensifies over time? The *real you* shows up. That's why our 3-month program is different. We apply just enough stress so your true growth areas become clear, and then we actually have time to work on them before you're out there chasing God's calling overseas.

At the other end of the spectrum, there are training programs lasting 9-12 months. Now, call us crazy, but that seems like *a bit much*. By the time you finish, you could forget half of what you learned before you even land on the mission field! And honestly, life's moving fast, fundraising is tough, and who has an extra *year* just to train? That's why we believe 3 months is the sweet spot. It's long enough to really dig into the challenges and build the skills you need, but short enough to keep everything fresh and actionable when you step off the plane. Our alumni – who are serving in every corner of the world right now – are living proof that 3 months works.

Should My Training Have a “Bush” Portion – Even If I’m Going to an Urban Area?

Oh, this is such a good question. Short answer? Yes. Longer answer? *Absolutely, 100% yes*. Here's why.

1. **It's All About the Squeeze.** Imagine this – you're in an unfamiliar environment, there's no A/C, and every creature with wings is determined to fly directly at your face. Sounds stressful, right? That's kind of the point! The “bush” portion of training isn't about torturing you (we promise). It's about putting you in uncomfortable situations to see what rises to the surface under stress. That's where the growth happens. That's when you – and we – get to see the real you, the you that needs refining before you step out onto the mission field.
2. **Empathy is Your Secret Weapon.** Even if you're heading to a bustling urban center, many of the people you're working alongside, serving, or reaching out to may come from rural or primitive environments. Spending time in the bush helps you truly empathize with their experiences. And trust us, empathy is a *game changer*. It's what turns cultural connections from shallow to sincere.
3. **Yes, You Can Do Hard Things.** Western Christians often doubt their ability to do “hard things.” It's like there's this unspoken limit to what we think we can endure. But spend a month living primitively (in a

safe, structured environment, of course), and guess what? You start realizing just how capable you are. Suddenly, you're not just surviving tough situations—you're thriving in them. That's the kind of confidence that gives you the courage to step out of your comfort zone and take on the challenges you'll face in the mission field.

4. **The Nations Are Coming to the Cities.** Here's the thing—the world is moving, and globalization has brought the nations right into the heart of urban environments. Refugees, migrants, and diverse international communities are now part of urban ministry more than ever before. That means urban missionaries actually need *more* training, not less, to engage with people from all kinds of backgrounds.

The truth is, the bush portion of training doesn't just prepare you for one type of mission field—it equips you to adapt, empathize, and serve with confidence no matter where God calls you. And that's what makes our program more than just training. It's transformation.

Are you ready to step into your calling?

Are you ready to truly make a difference for Jesus Christ?

Then it's time to prepare.

Don't wait.

Don't wait until you're on the field to realize you needed more resilience, more skills, more spiritual depth.

Our training program will give you the tools, the mentorship, and the confidence to thrive in the mission God has for you.

The world is waiting.

Your calling starts now. Join us.

STEP 7:
BE PRAYED FOR, BE COMMISSIONED



Before you go, let's make it official—like, church-official. Getting your sending church to commission you with prayer and public affirmation isn't just a nice little send-off; it's a sacred, powerful moment that sets the tone for your journey.

This step reminds everyone, including you, that this isn't just some extended vacation or “find yourself” trip. Nope. You're being sent by God and your church family as an extension of their ministry. You're an ambassador of Jesus Christ on behalf of your local church.

Now, if you're wondering, “How do I even ask my church to commission me?” don't worry—I've got you covered. Here are a few steps to make it happen:

1. **Schedule a meeting with your pastor or church leadership.** Yes, you'll need to actually ask. Don't just text them a vague, “Hey, so... commissioning???” Have an in-person or video chat where you can explain your mission field, your timeline, and why commissioning is important.
2. **Explain the why.** Be clear about what a commissioning service is and why it matters. It's not just a formality—it's a way for your church to send you out with their blessing, prayers, and accountability. Tell them you want to be surrounded by their support, not just spiritually but emotionally and practically too.
3. **Be flexible.** Maybe your pastor can't fit you into a Sunday morning service right away. That's okay! Be open to other options, like a small-group commissioning, a Sunday evening service, or even a potluck affair (bonus: food makes everything better).
4. **Make it special.** Suggest ways to personalize the service. Could they share a slideshow about the country or people group you are going to? Play a worship song that's meaningful to you? Maybe have a few key

church members pray over you? Think about what will make the moment feel significant for you and your church family alike.

5. **Invite everyone.** Let your church know ahead of time so they can be there to support you! Send out invitations or have the church include it in the announcements. It's not a commissioning if no one's there to, you know, commission you.

Oh, and here's a pro tip: while you're at it, start planting the idea of their first mission trip to come visit you. Don't rush them – give yourself 12–18 months to settle in first – but let them know you'd love to host a team when the time is right. Bonus points if you promise them amazing local food, cool sights, or a free tour guide (that's you).

So why is commissioning so important? Because it's both sacred and super practical. It binds you to your supporters, gives you accountability, and reminds everyone—including you—that this mission isn't about you. It's about Jesus. Plus, you'll have an entire church community cheering you on, praying for you, and maybe even sending you care packages (with Dr. Pepper and Cheez-its, please) while you're out on the frontlines. Now doesn't that sound like the best kind of send-off?

STEP 8:
GET SENT (WE'RE NOT KIDDING)



Finally, it's time to go. After all the preparation, it might feel terrifying to actually take the leap. That's good. If you're not at least a little scared, you probably don't fully understand what's ahead. (And that's also OK.) Trust the process, lean on God, and take that first step of obedience.

This is it. Say your goodbyes—not just to your family, friends, and supporters, but to your comforts, your culture, and the life you've always known. Then, with trembling hands and a surrendered heart, get on that plane ready for an adventure with Jesus like no other. It's going to be scary. It's going to be hard. But in the process, you will be transformed—day by day, surrender by surrender—into the image of Christ.

Lay everything at His feet daily—your fears, your dreams, your plans—and watch Him do incredible things in you. Here's the hidden truth you might not realize yet. Jesus isn't calling you to leave everything just because He needs you to save people or because your skills are uniquely indispensable to His plan. Trust me, God can find people far more capable. This life He's sending you into isn't primarily about what you'll do for others—it's about what He will do in you.

Focus your heart on Jesus more than anything else. Allow Him to refine you, mold you, and deepen your relationship with Him. When you fix your eyes on Him, the transformation He works in your life will naturally overflow, touching the lives of those around you.

The nations will be impacted—not simply because of your efforts—but because of the work He is doing in your surrendered heart. But none of that can happen if you don't take the first step. This is your moment. Trust Him, follow Him, and watch as He takes you on a lifelong journey of transformation for His glory.

Bonus Tips for Aspiring Missionaries

- Don't romanticize the mission field. It's not all tribal dances and baptisms. There are cockroaches, visa issues, and loneliness. Be ready for real life. CT Studd once said, "The "romance" of a missionary is often made up of monotony and drudgery; there often is no glamour in it; it doesn't stir a man's spirit or blood. So don't come out to be a missionary as an experiment; it is useless and dangerous. Only come if you feel you would rather die than not come. Don't come if you want to make a great name or want to live long. Come if you feel there is no greater honor, after living for Christ, than to die for Him."
- Stay flexible. Plans WILL change. You WILL adapt. It NEVER turns out how you envisioned it, and that's ok.
- Grow thick skin. People will misunderstand you, question your motives, and criticize your methods. Smile anyway. Learn to be a God-Pleaser not a Man-Pleaser.
- Cling to Jesus. Your quiet time with God is not optional. It's your lifeline. Pray without ceasing, in the bed when you wake up, in the bus, while you are walking, Pray, Pray, Pray. Share with him the deepest cries of your heart. But don't forget to stop and listen too.
- Be a learner not a teacher. Start out by learning as much as you can. Let them teach you about food, music, dancing, religion, family life and politics. Listen, and learn. there will come a time where you can teach, but first you must understand the context you are teaching in.

You're Not Alone (And That's the Point)

If all of this feels overwhelming, good. Missionary work isn't for the faint of heart. But here's the hope: "you don't have to do this alone." Your family, church, teammates, mentors and countless others are here to help you answer the call. Anchored would be honored if you would let us be a part of your team. Reach out to learn more.

PRESENTED BY **ANCHORED** **INTERNATIONAL**

ANCHORED INTERNATIONAL EXISTS TO HELP MISSIONARIES NOT JUST SURVIVE, BUT THRIVE. WE PROVIDE COMPREHENSIVE TRAINING, MENTORING, AND RESTORATIVE CARE FOR MISSIONARIES AT EVERY STAGE OF THEIR JOURNEY. OUR PROGRAMS ARE DESIGNED BY SEASONED FIELD VETERANS WHO UNDERSTAND THE REALITIES OF MISSIONARY LIFE AND WHO BELIEVE DEEPLY IN PREPARING GOD'S PEOPLE TO SERVE WITH RESILIENCE, JOY, AND LONGEVITY.

ELITE MISSIONARY TRAINING (EMT)

A THREE-MONTH IMMERSIVE EXPERIENCE THAT PUSHES BEYOND CLASSROOM LEARNING INTO THE HEART OF REAL-WORLD PREPARATION. COMBINING BIBLICAL DEPTH, CULTURAL INTELLIGENCE, SPIRITUAL FORMATION, AND FIELD-TESTED RESILIENCE, EMT EQUIPS MISSIONARIES TO FACE THE SPIRITUAL, EMOTIONAL, AND CULTURAL CHALLENGES OF CROSS-CULTURAL LIFE WITH CONFIDENCE.

LEGACY CONNECT

A GLOBAL MENTORSHIP NETWORK PAIRING NEW OR PRE-FIELD MISSIONARIES WITH SEASONED VETERANS WHO HAVE SPENT YEARS ON THE FIELD. IT'S INTENTIONAL, RELATIONAL DISCIPLESHIP —CONNECTING WISDOM WITH PASSION SO THAT NO MISSIONARY WALKS ALONE.

DEBRIEF & RETREAT EXPERIENCE

WHEN MISSIONARIES COME HOME WEARY OR WOUNDED, THIS PROGRAM OFFERS A PLACE TO REST, PROCESS, AND HEAL. THROUGH GUIDED REFLECTION, COUNSELING, AND COMMUNITY, PARTICIPANTS FIND RESTORATION AND FRESH VISION FOR THE NEXT CHAPTER OF THEIR CALLING.

KINGDOM BUILDERS RESIDENCY

A HANDS-ON CHURCH-PLANTING RESIDENCY FOR THOSE CALLED TO MULTIPLY MISSIONAL COMMUNITIES LOCALLY OR GLOBALLY. THIS PROGRAM BLENDS THEOLOGICAL GROUNDING WITH PRACTICAL MINISTRY DEVELOPMENT TO RAISE UP RESILIENT, SPIRIT-LED LEADERS FOR THE HARVEST.

MISSIONS CAMP

A WEEK-LONG IMMERSIVE CAMP FOR HIGH-SCHOOL AND COLLEGE STUDENTS DESIGNED TO AWAKEN A PASSION FOR GLOBAL MISSIONS. THROUGH CHALLENGES, SIMULATIONS, AND MENTORSHIP, PARTICIPANTS DISCOVER GOD'S HEART FOR THE NATIONS AND THEIR PLACE IN HIS STORY.

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