

Answering HIS Call

HOW TO SERVE GOD AND COMMUNITY
WITH LONG-TERM MISSIONARY WORK

WORKBOOK

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STEP 1

CALLING

Action Plan

- Pray for specifics. Ask God direct questions. Expect a direct answer. It may not be the answer we are looking for. It may be something unexpected. Allow your imagination to take hold of the seed for a time.
- Test the idea with God's Word. Even if it seems impossible in the present, continue to pray. God will reveal more to you in due course.
- To fulfil your calling and find your purpose in life is more than rewarding – it's a transformational experience.

'Do not conform to the patterns of this world but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is – his good, pleasing and perfect will.' (Romans 12:2)

What is your best vision of life for yourself?

What do you believe God wants for you?

Have you asked God for your heart's desire? Do you think these may be from God?

What will it take for you to receive what God wants for your life?

STEP 2

Action Plan

- Find a 'tribe' to belong that has a mission focus.
- 'Memory verse' is a discipline we often learned as a child. In fact, it is a useful tool to have as a missionary. We sometimes find ourselves without our Bible or phone and to have verses at the ready in times of healing or comforting others is handy.
- When on short-term missions, we need to remember we are not the hero, or an answer to their problems, but we are sharing in the learning. The relationship needs to be in the context of a two-way relationship. We are often unprepared for the sights we are seeing. Sometimes in our rush to help we do a job the local people can do for themselves. This is not helpful.

“Then I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, “Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?” And I said, “Here I am. Lord, Send me!”” (Isaiah 6:8 NIV)

Are you passionate about finding God's direction?

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Do you have support for your missionary decision?

What do you think is expected of a missionary?

When a situation arises do you view the circumstances positively or negatively?

STEP 3

FEARFUL

Action Plan

- Shout out loud, 'I am a missionary!' just to know what it sounds like, to get used to the idea.
- Write down your fears and share them with God. Journalling helps us overcome our anxieties. It is a spiritual discipline that has many benefits. A good thing to practise.
- Tell your family how long you are away as this will give them hope. A timeframe is something people can comprehend and knowing you will not be gone forever helps.

'All this I have spoken while still with you. But the advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you. Peace, I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.' (John 14:25-27 NIV)

While reading this step what fears did you discover you have?

What is the reason for these fears?

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How can you overcome these fears?

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STEP 4

Action Plan

- Find a world map. Write a list of likes and dislikes of a few countries.
- Write down a few ideas about climate, geography and people groups.
- Begin to pray globally and see where God leads.
- Research agencies through websites. Go along to their open nights. Ask questions. Talk to friends.
- Read newsletters from different organisations, different people groups and countries. You can never gather too much information.

'You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead, they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your father in heaven.' (Matt 5:14–16)

Where do you want to serve in the world? Why?

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What do you want from an agency? What don't you need?

For example:

- *Do you need member care?*
- *Do you need visits from your agency while in the country?*
- *Do you need support for your children? Day care? Extra financial assistance?*
- *Do you want a wage? Insurance? Superannuation?*

How often and for how long do you want to return home?

STEP 5

PRAYING

- Talk to God about a prayer partner. Sometimes it's a leap of faith. Start by asking someone you trust to be your prayer partner or somebody God directs you to.
- Read your bible with an emphasis on the devotional use of scripture.
- Find new and creative ways to bring people into your world.
- Another step would be journalling. Start writing regularly and once you've got answers from God then you'll get excited about writing every day. If you stay focused and write it down, you will not forget the wonderful things God is doing because sometimes our memories fail us. If you write it down and God answers, you'll see His faithfulness.

'Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds in Jesus Christ.' (Phil 4:6-7 NIV)

What is your commitment to prayer?

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How do you see prayer changing your life?

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How will you build a prayer network?

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STEP 6

MOULDING

Action Plan

- Write your changes in your prayer journal. Small changes lead to bigger changes. Pray and write every step. The expectations and the results you have are important to journal. You will see these things answered through your journalling.
- Something to practise – try intentionally allowing a different approach to an event. Maybe let a member of your family, work or college lead on something when normally you might lead. Alternatively, take the lead yourself if this is unfamiliar to you. When the plans change, or they are challenged, try going with the flow. Take a deep breath and try to enjoy the new experience. Most things are not life or death events, they are just changed circumstances.

‘So I went down to the potter’s house, and I saw him working at the wheel. But the pot he was shaping from clay was marred in his hands; so, the potter formed it into another pot, shaping it as seemed best to him. Then the Word of the Lord came to me. He said, “Can I not do with you Israel, as this potter does?” declares the Lord. “Like clay in the hands of the potter, so are you in my hands, Israel.”’ (Jeremiah 18:3-6)

What changes have you made recently?

How has God encouraged you to change?

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What are the areas of your life where you need to be flexible?

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STEP 7

FUNDRAISING

Action Plan

- Discover what your money personality is, so you are more aware of how you think about money.
- Read books and listen to podcasts to get inspired.
- Get excited about where you are going and what you are going to do once you are on the field. Focusing on these things will give you a bubbly, inspirational personality. It will flow out from you and that will help you when you're raising money.
- Get organised with a marketing plan. With a newsletter you will need a spreadsheet with names, email addresses, church attending, etc. Mailchimp or another type of mailing system which has reminders and follow-up appointments are great systems to have in place.

'This is my defence to those who sit in judgement on me. Don't we have the right to food and drink? Don't we have the right to take a believing wife along with us, as do the other apostles and Lord's brothers and Cephas? Or is it I and Barnabas who lack the right to not work for a living? Who serves as a soldier at his own expense? Who plants a vineyard and does not eat the grapes? Who tends a flock and does not drink the milk? Do I say this merely on human authority? Doesn't the law say the same thing? For it is written in the Law of Moses: "Do not muzzle an ox while it is treading out the grain." Is it about oxen that God is concerned? Surely, he says this for us, doesn't he? Yes, this is written for us because whoever plows and threshes should be able to do so in hope of sharing in the harvest. If we have sown spiritually seed among you, is it too much if we reap a material harvest from you? If others have this right of support from you, shouldn't we have it all the more?' (Cor 9:3-13)

What type of money personality do you think you have?

Who are the people in your sphere of influence?

What information would you put in a newsletter? How often are they sent?

STEP 8

YIELDING

Action Plan

- Try travelling to a new location, either the mountains, the sea or anywhere in between, because it often helps with receiving new experiences. Through reading Moses' story, we know how much he struggled. He did not start by giving the people the Ten Commandments with a confident voice. He was a humble shepherd for a long time getting to know God, building up a relationship of trust and commitment.

'Come to me, all who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and humble in heart and you will find rest for your soul. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.' (Matthew 11:28-30 NIV)

Do you have a weight you are carrying on your shoulders?

What makes you feel secure in life?

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Are there things you need to give up?

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STEP 9

RESTING

Action Plan

- I believe it's important to stop on the way to your location. Find somewhere in the world that's warm and comfortable like Thailand. Many missionaries use Thailand as a place to rest. The Thai people are kind and humble with servant hearts. In Thailand there are several Christian mission retreat places, so it is inexpensive. I suggest stopping there for about 2 weeks to gather yourself. To be alone with God. Use the wisdom of those who have gone before you and take a break. Arriving stressed and tired is not the impression you want to give. When there's no one else around, just you and God hanging out together it is rewarding. Enjoying going for a walk, eating well, strengthening your body, having someone take care of your every need. Being emotionally and physically prepared you can expect things will go well. It is not taking a holiday; it is rest and recovery. I think this is a good practice for agencies to embrace so the new missionary has a good outcome in their first few months, so they do not suffer burnout or get homesick or fight with their teammates.

'There remains, then, a sabbath-rest for the people of God; for anyone who enters God's rest also rests from their works, just as God did from His.' (Hebrews 4:9–11 NIV)

What do you enjoy doing that gives you rest?

How will you say your goodbyes?

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Write a list of things you must remember to do.

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STEP 10

FAQ

Are there any issues arising from these questions?

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Make a list of a few questions from each step:

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Who can you go to for answers to your questions?

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