

THE SUMMIT CHURCH

MID-TERM TRAINING



May God be gracious to us and bless us
and make his face to shine upon us, Selah
that your way may be known on earth,
your saving power among all nations.

Let the peoples praise you, O God;
let all the peoples praise you!

Let the nations be glad and sing for joy,
for you judge the peoples with equity
and guide the nations upon earth. Selah

Let the peoples praise you, O God;
let all the peoples praise you!

The earth has yielded its increase;
God, our God, shall bless us.

God shall bless us;
let all the ends of the earth fear him!

Psalm 67

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Introduction

Thank you for your obedience. We are SO proud of you. There are many other things you could do with these next few months of your life, and I want you to know that we are proud of you for choosing to lay your lives down in this way, at this time!

This is the beginning of an experience and season that I truly believe will change your life forever. I believe that this is the best possible way you could spend the next few months of your life.

A lifelong commitment to missions often begins with an opportunity like what's in front of you – whether that's a lifetime commitment to serve God overseas or right here in your own backyard. I want you to go for months but I want you to have your sights set on a lifetime! Allow God to use this time to bring to light the passions of your heart – the things he has created you for.

The Holy Spirit uses people on these type experiences to DO things, but most importantly he changes people on these trips. The Holy Spirit continues to give people a vision to see his gospel penetrate every people group on earth – and that's what you're going to get: a bigger vision for who God is and what he is doing among the nations. He continues to move people with compassion, and I pray that will be the case for you!

However, I want you to be prepared for the things that are coming your way – the hard days... the days when through this experience God exposes junk in your life... the days when nothing seems to be going right. And for that matter, the days when everything seems to be going right.

I want you to stay on the field and finish strong. No one here is interested in you just "making it" for months – this is not the "fake it 'til you make it" time of life. We are interested in you serving these months with all your heart with faithfulness, boldness, humility, and integrity through the power of the Holy Spirit.

But how do you make sure those things happen? How do you make the next few months count? That's what I want to talk to you about today. I believe that you stay and serve faithfully in this matter through understanding what

you are a part of and understanding your priorities!

Everything about our training today will be rooted in and flow from Scripture. Hopefully you will see, begin to learn, or continue learning that no matter where you are and/or what you're doing, you have all you need for life found in the Word of God. Scripture is not just a road map, book of rules/guidelines, but it is our lifeline. It is our daily bread as Matthew says in his Gospel. While our goal today is to be as practical as possible, I want you to be able to see a theme of how to integrate Scripture in all areas of your life and look primarily to the Word of God when you have questions.

Vision

Our vision as an International Missions Team at the Summit is to plant 1000 churches by 2050. At the end of Jesus' time on earth, he commissions his disciples by saying, "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. And behold (rest in this), I am with you always, to the end of the age." Matthew 28

At the Summit, we believe that the local church is God's plan A for making disciples of all nations. Disciple-making is done primarily by members of a local church and in the context of the local church. Therefore, we view missions primarily through the lens of church planting.

We see this model all throughout Scripture, beginning in Genesis 1. In the beginning we have God creating a people for himself and giving them the task of multiplying themselves- definitely for physical reproduction, but also a spiritual reproduction. God created man to be in right relationship to him and Adam and Eve were created to multiply that lifestyle of worship. In Genesis 12 we see God give Abraham the promise that he would continue multiplying worshippers throughout the entire earth. God keeps that promise with the nation of Israel. Scripture says that their number of worshippers was as many as the stars! In Isaiah, we see God command Israel to be a light to the nations- that through them salvation would reach all of the earth. This theme only gets sweeter as we enter the New Testament and see exactly how God will bring salvation to the ends of the earth: through his disciples. We've already mentioned Matthew 28, but we see a similar command in Acts. Jesus tells his followers that they will be his witness to the ends of the earth. And to wrap it up in Revelation 5-7, John gives us a glimpse of the beauty of heaven: people from every tribe, tongue, and nation worshipping Jesus around the throne. Worthy is Jesus to receive the reward of his suffering!

I hope by this point, you feel extremely encouraged and empowered for the task that is ahead of you. You are a part of this vision to plant 1000 churches in the next generation, but more than that, you are apart of seeing every tribe, tongue, and nation worshipping Jesus around the throne.

That's our overarching vision as we send you out. Next is the strategy.

Strategy

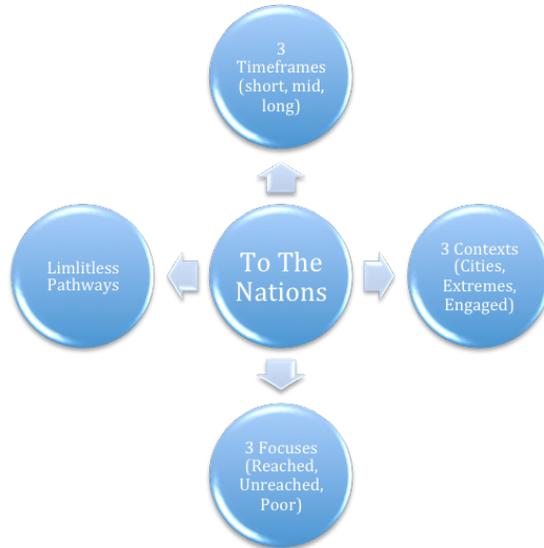
(Draw this) How are we going to plant 1000 churches by 2050? Through a strategy. Our strategy as an international missions team is simple: we want to mobilize The Summit Church to the nations to plant churches for the glory of God. Let's break that down a little through some visuals:

Mobilize The Summit Church...

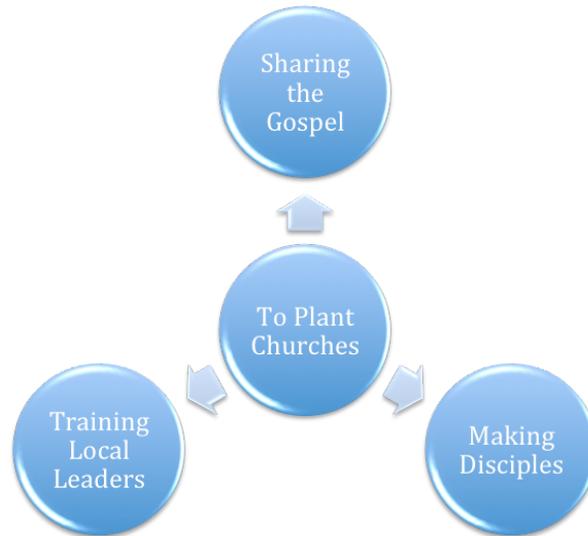


Mobilization is a continual process. We are never finished cultivating, recruiting, assessing, training, sending, and supporting our church.

...To the Nations...



...To Plant Churches...



...For the Glory of God.



Plumblines- helpful phrases that describe and drive us in the vision and strategy:

- The Gospel is at the Center of Everything. Therefore, we send people in response to what God has done in Christ to be a part of long-term work that is specifically, intentionally, and strategically focused and centered on seeing the gospel of Jesus Christ proclaimed and demonstrated in places where it is not known.
- The Local Church is God's "Plan A." Therefore, all of our initiatives are sent from the local church and sent to plant the local church where it doesn't exist and strengthen the local church where it does exist.
- People are the Mission, not Projects. Therefore, we focus our time and resources more on people than projects. Strategic projects often serve as a valuable component to seeing the Gospel in action; however, projects are not the point in and of themselves!
- We Send our Best. Therefore, we take assessment and training very seriously for the sake of God's name and fame among the nations.

At this point, we've developed a vision and strategy from Scripture. Our vision is to plant 1000 churches by 2050 and our strategy for doing that is to mobilize The Summit Church to the nations to plant churches for the glory of God. With these ideas developed, we'll spend the rest of our time together fleshing out our 3 priorities for you as you pursue a mid-term opportunity:

Learn to be with Jesus

Learn to Serve One-Another

Learn to Serve the Nations

Learn to Be With Jesus

I want to invite you to open with me to John 15:1-11. This familiar passage of Scripture outlining the depth of one's union with Christ is going to be our fountain of life as we seek to understand what it means to really be with Jesus.

Before we dig into the richness of John 15, I want to draw your attention to Mark 3:13-14 quickly. Here we have the account of Jesus about to appoint the twelve apostles. Before he does that though, something very subtle happens in the text. Mark describes the account, "And he went up on the mountain and called to him those whom he desired, and they came to him. And he appointed twelve (whom he also named apostles) *so that they might be with him* and he might send them out to preach and have authority to cast out demons."

The very first time that Jesus calls his disciples together, he makes it extremely clear what his intentions were for them: they were to first and above all be with him! Jesus didn't call them to read 3 books, attend an all day training, or accomplish a list of tasks. His primary desire is that they would be with him. That is his primary desire for you as well. It is out of being with him (abiding in Christ) that you will preach the gospel, etc. Everyday should be seen as a success or failure based on whether or not you are abiding in Jesus.

Rant over. Let's dig into John 15 for a few minutes.

"I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser. Every branch in me that does not bear fruit he takes away, and every branch that does bear fruit he prunes, that it may bear more fruit. Already you are clean because of the word that I have spoken to you. Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me. I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing. If anyone does not abide in me he is thrown away like a branch and withers; and the branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples. As the Father has loved me,

so have I loved you. Abide in my love. If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love. These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full."

Hudson Taylor, missionary to mainland China and the primary influencer mobilizing people to reach mainland, at the age of 37 began to enter a new phase of life. His son Frederick writes of his deeper and more satisfying experience of abiding in Christ,

"Here was a man almost sixty years of age, bearing tremendous burdens, yet absolutely calm and untroubled. Oh, the pile of letters! any one of which might contain news of death, of lack of funds, of riots or serious trouble. Yet all were opened, read and answered with the same tranquility — Christ his reason for peace, his power for calm. Dwelling in Christ, he drew upon His very being and resources. . . . And this he did by an attitude of faith as simple as it was continuous. Yet he was delightfully free and natural. I can find no words to describe it save the Scriptural expression "in God." He was in God all the time and God in him. It was that true "abiding" of John fifteen."

For Hudson Taylor, this passage of Scripture was significantly influential in his understanding of union with Christ which in turn always results in the desire for others to experience this union.

As you process through this text, a helpful question to ask is, "How do I grow spiritually when everything around me is unfamiliar and my circle of community is small?" You may understand the need for and deeply desire to abide and grow in Christ but it's possible that your natural rhythms for how you go about doing that are going to drastically change as your environment changes. So let's spend some time talking about some of the challenges that you will face and then go over some practical ways you can combat these challenges.

Challenges You Will Face:

1. Frustration at the spiritual environment
 - a. What if you don't think the pastor/team leader is gifted to teach?
 - b. What if you have sing & pray together with people you're in the middle of a fight with?

- c. What if kids are running around and keep interrupting your quiet time or worship time?
- 2. Frustration at the physical environment
 - a. You like to do your quiet time at night, but the power keeps going out or guests won't leave.
 - b. You like to do your quiet time in the morning, but it takes 45 minutes just to get the house warmed up
- 3. Unsatisfying time with God
 - a. You'll find yourself at times assuming that your time with God will be "more amazing than you've ever experienced" but it never happens.
- 4. Lack of space
 - a. What if your new roommate doesn't have the same habits as you?
 - b. There's no place you can go without being interrupted or when you're sick.
 - c. There something your house church leader does that really irks you, and it would be fine if you could get some space from it until you "got over it" but you have to see him every day.
- 5. Distance and loneliness
 - a. You may wonder: "Is God the same here? Does he hear me from here? No one knows what I'm experiencing."
 - b. Your friends and family offer you trite comforts because they don't know what to say.

How do you tackle these challenges?

Attitudes to Cultivate

- 1. Thankfulness and Remembrance
 - a. Philippians 4:6-7, "Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."
 - i. What is the relationship here between thanksgiving and remembrance?
 - 1. Remembrance allows you to reflect on God's calling on your life, and reminds us that he has always been faithful.

2. Thankfulness cultivates a dependency upon the Father while freeing you of the pressure to perform. As we are reminded of God's faithfulness, we are naturally thankful.

b. Practical Tip: Journalling and/or writing down your prayers. Look back at it, remember how you felt at the time and how you feel now. Watch for God's faithfulness and TALK ABOUT IT (to God, to friends & family).

2. Expectation

a. Expect that prayer and bible study actually yields to fruit.

- i. 1 John 5:14-15 "This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us. And if we know that he hears us - whatever we ask - we know that we have what we asked of him."
- ii. Isaiah 55:10-11 "For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven and do not return there but water the earth, making it bring forth and sprout, giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater, so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth; it shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose, and shall succeed in the thing for which I sent it."

b. Approach God in the right frame of mind.

- i. "The primary purpose of prayer is not to get something from God but to get God himself." Chris Gaynor
- ii. Prayer is priming. Prayer puts us in a spiritual frame of mind. Prayer helps us see and seize the God-ordained opportunities that are all around us all the time.

c. Practical: read and memorize many of the 3000 promises of God + develop a healthy bible reading/prayer plan. (see appendix)

3. Perseverance

a. 1 Chronicles 16:11 "Seek the LORD and his strength; seek his presence continuously."

b. 2 Thessalonians 3:13 "As for you brothers, do not grow weary in doing good."

c. Hebrews 12:1-15 "Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus, the founder and

perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God. Consider him who endured from sinners such hostility against himself, so that you may not grow weary or fainthearted. In your struggle against sin you have not yet resisted to the point of shedding your blood. And have you forgotten the exhortation that addresses you as sons? "My son, do not regard lightly the discipline of the Lord, nor be weary when reproved by him."

- d. You have to work at it. The natural state of your heart will not default to prayer.
- e. You can't piggyback off your teammate's time with God and prayer life. You will drown the both of you.
- f. Practical: memorize the Word of God. Why life cuts you, do you bleed God's word?

4. Service

- a. Philippians 2:1-4 "So if there is any encouragement in Christ, any comfort from love, any participation in the Spirit, any affection and sympathy, complete my joy by being of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. Do nothing from rivalry or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others."
- b. Mark 10: 44-45 "And whoever would be first among you must be slave of all. For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."
- c. "A man possessed with the idea that he is making a sacrifice will never do. A man who thinks any kind of work is beneath him will simply be in the way."-Evaluate your heart here.
- d. Practical: Instead of being frustrated that your team is not spiritually mature and you aren't being "fed", understand that you may be the one who needs to be contributing.

What Can You Do Right Now to Prepare Yourself

Going for 2 years or less is a weird balance between feeling like you're running a sprint and running a marathon. At the beginning you feel like you'll never adjust and you might never make it through eating another one of _____ or another lonely night without _____.

you feel like you were just getting started & there's so much you would have done differently.

1. Check Yourself

- a. Are you learning from God's word or from JD Greear/John Piper/Matt Chandler's teaching on God's word?
- b. Are you thinking about how you prepare for worship on the weekends?
- c. Is what you BRING to your small group proportionate to what you GET from it.

2. Build the Discipline

- a. "Scripture does not yield its fruit to the lazy" ~ Howard Hendricks (Living By The Book)
- b. Get into habits now so it's not one more new thing to adjust to when you get there.

3. Practice Discomfort

- a. Try worshipping some weekends sitting only next to people you don't know at all
- b. Don't raise your hands during worship? Try it.

4. Pray

- a. Ask God to give you a desire for him and time in prayer like a deer pants for a stream of water.
- b. Discipline yourself to pray like you never have before! (see appendix)

Learn to Serve One Another

1 John 4:7 "Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God, and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God."

1 John 3:14 "We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love the brothers."

1 John 3:10 "By this it is evident who are the children of God, and who are the children of the devil: whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor is the one who does not love his brother."

1 John 4:8 "Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love."

1 John 2:9-10 "Whoever says he is in the light and hates his brother is still in darkness. Whoever loves his brother abides in the light."

It is so unfortunate what happens all too often within a church planting team...there are misunderstandings, split visions of how the work should go, hurt feelings, etc. that have a direct impact on the effectiveness of the work. Scripture is clear about the importance of serving and loving one another.

Ecclesiastes 4:9-12 "Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their toil. For if they fall, one will lift up his fellow. But woe to him who is alone when he falls and has not another to lift him up! Again, if two lie together, they keep warm, but how can one keep warm alone? And though a man might prevail against one who is alone, two will withstand him—a threefold cord is not quickly broken."

Luke 10:1-2 "After this the Lord appointed seventy-two others and sent them on ahead of him, two by two, into every town and place where he himself was about to go. And he said to them, "The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few. Therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest."

Why work in teams? What are the practical benefits of teaming in Great Commission work?

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Think about this equation:

(Sinners + Sinners + Working to reach sinners = lots of potential for conflict)

Now it is possible for a team to go the other way with teaming. They could love each other so much that they end up spending all their time with each other. Some teams may just huddle up together and never spend any significant time engaging the people they came to reach. This situation is just as tragic as having a team filled with conflict. We must pray for a balance. We must seek to not fall off on either extreme.

A Counter Intuitive Problem

Most people are surprised when they hear that the number 1 reason people come home prematurely from the field is conflict and strife within their church planting team. Why is this shocking to us?

- We all signed up to do this together!
- We are all believers right?
- We should all have the same mission (and this mission should outweigh any conflict)

Help me brainstorm reasons why this is such an issue on the field (more so than it is here):

- Constantly around the same people
- Culture stress
- Spiritual warfare/Satan's attacks on those on the front lines
- We are all selfish and we all think we are right
- Teaming as church

Why don't we like conflict?

- It's uncomfortable

- We feel threatened

Is all conflict bad?

- I would submit to you that conflict itself is not bad - it's how we handle conflict that gives it a bad name (gossip, etc.)
 - Conflict is normal whenever people with different opinions are in close relationship.
 - Conflict is evidence of proximity. You should wonder about your team if there isn't conflict.

Caveat: We should never permit sin. Sin is not okay. No sin is okay. But how we handle conflict is usually sinful (pointing fingers, not showing grace)

- We are generally terrible at admitting sin.
- Here are phrases you must begin practicing now:
 - I'm sorry for...
 - That was wrong because...
 - Next time I will...
 - Will you forgive me?
- Let's practice, "I sinned and I am sorry. Will you forgive me?"

How to be a good teammate:

"With all humility and gentleness, with patience, showing tolerance for one another in love, being diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." -Ephesians 4:2-3

1. Be committed to one another
 - a. Commitment is key- more key than communication
2. Keep open communication
 - a. Be open and transparent
 - b. Err on the side of over-communicating
 - i. With your supervisors
 - ii. With your teammates
3. Pray together
 - a. "A team that prays together, stays together." Think about the barriers that are immediately broken down when we begin praying.
 - b. Scripture to pray for yourself and your team:
 - i. Ephesians 4: 1-7

- ii. Matthew 5: 23-25
- iii. Galatians 5: 13-26
 - 1. Make a list of the works of the flesh vs. the desires of the Spirit. Which works of the flesh are you more prone to? Pray that you and your teammates would be characterized by the fruit of the Spirit.
- 4. Be a servant (Philippians 2)
 - a. Most conflict is a result of selfishness or pride (emphasize)
 - i. To your supervisors (babysit, ask how can serve and help them)
 - ii. To each other (go out of your way to serve your teammate/partner)
 - iii. To the people you are going to engage
 - iv. Consider other's needs as more significant than your own
- 5. Assume your teammates are intelligent and have the best of intentions.
- 6. Be a good listener.
 - a. Ask engaging questions and actually listen when someone else is talking
- 7. Be a learner
 - a. Don't arrive on the field as a "know it all"
 - b. Don't jump to conclusions and criticize after day 2
 - i. Be humble (Are you submissive and responsive to leadership? Can you receive constructive criticism and feedback?)
- 8. Cultivate friendship and trust
 - a. Have fun together- it is healthy for teammates to enjoy one another's company
- 9. Respect the different gifts and makeup of your team
 - a. Each team member plays a unique role in how they contribute to the work of the team
 - b. Yet, everyone must yield to the team leader for direction and leadership.
- 10. Maintain a passionate love for Jesus and a vibrant devotional life.
 - a. If so, you'll respond more like Christ when you encounter conflict
 - b. If not, it will result in you taking out your frustrations on the people closest to you.
- 11. Strive to resolve conflict in a Christ-honoring way
 - a. The Peacemaker Pledge

- i. Glorify God
- ii. Get the log out of your own eye
- iii. Gently restore
- iv. Go and be reconciled

Expectations:

Unmet expectations are one of the most common problems with Mid-Termers. We all have this particular idea in our brain of what our mid-term experience is going to be like. The problem is that our experience is often very different from our expectations. So...in light of that common occurrence...let me offer 7 cautions when it comes to expectations.

1. Lower your expectations
 - a. Sinful people + working with other sinful people + trying to reach sinful people = lots of sinful people and problems
 - b. Missionary life is not glamorous, it's hard, it's frustrating, and difficult
 - c. You may have the best supervisor and the best experience or you may have the worst supervisor and worst experience...at the end of the day you are working with humans, not angels, and so there will be disappointment and frustration.
2. Be flexible
 - a. You are entering a culture where life is not based on time and tasks
 - b. You have 0 control over most things that happen...recognize that
3. Check your motives
 - a. Why are you doing this? To have fun? To puff yourself up? To impress?
 - b. Make sure your motivation is God's glory, not your own.
 - c. I've seen mid-termers go for all the wrong reasons...examine yourself
4. Be prepared as much as possible.
 - a. Gather as much info as you can before you go...
 - b. Skype with supervisor, gather with team members, research, read, etc...
 - c. Sometimes our expectations are stupid and completely unrealistic and we would have figured that out a lot earlier if we just would have googled something or read a book...so try and do some homework up front
5. Prepare for Culture Shock.

- a. If you stay long enough (4-6 months) it will happen.
 - b. Chances are you will love everything about your new home day 2, but by day 122 you will probably have a completely different perspective...be prepared for that going in...don't let that catch you off guard
6. Expect difficulty and challenge to be a reality.
- a. You are involving yourself in some of the most difficult work on the planet – you would be foolish to think that it will always be easy...
 - b. Expect it, but don't let it ruin your experience or take away optimism
7. Recognize that you are only one piece of the larger picture
- a. Work has been going on without you and will go on after you...
 - b. You are a piece of a much larger equation in trying to reach this particular people with the gospel.
 - c. It's not all about you, it's all about HIM
 - d. If you do those things and have that perspective I think you'll do ok...

Learn to Serve the Nations: Culture and Contextualization

Moving overseas bring all kinds of challenges for daily living as well as strategic ministry. It is very helpful to know what these challenges are and how to face them in a healthy way. In this discussion, we'll discuss culture and how to navigate it. Differences in culture can have a great effect on a missionary (culture shock) and it mandates that missionaries minister in a way that makes sense in any given context (contextualization).

Foundational Truths

- Communicating the Gospel has to begin with a biblical understanding of the gospel. We must have the gospel right (example: Galatians... "You are turning to a different gospel, not that there is another one....but some have distorted it..").
- Every culture is different, therefore, we must be students of culture.
- Everybody in the room will be involved in "cross-cultural" ministry...taking the gospel from one culture to another...before we go any further...What is culture?

Definitions

- Broad: "A set of shared practices, attitudes, values, and beliefs which are rooted in common understandings of the 'big questions' –where life comes from, what life means, and who we are." – Tim Keller
- Simple: The customs, values, and beliefs that result from a shared worldview.
 - The way people live.
 - How a group of people perceive reality (worldview)

Examples of different cultures:

- Hand-shake/cheek kiss
- Taking off your shoes
- Holding hands (men)
- Asking about salary, rent, etc.

Culture and the Bible

- God created humanity with the ability to create culture
 - Imago Dei (image of God) Culture is the outworking of the Imago Dei. We have the ability to create, to think, reason/logic,

we have emotions, we are social, we are spiritual, we are moral creatures (right/wrong). Genesis 1.

- Cultural Mandate: Genesis 1:26-28 (Original Great Commission)
 - "Fill the earth.."- have children, grandchildren, etc. Fill the earth with worshippers.
 - "Subdue (or rule) the earth..."- do not be terrified of the natural world; instead rule it as little kings and queens. Reign on earth and fill it with worshippers (mandate).
- Culture and Babel: Genesis 11:1-9
 - Language is the entry point into a culture
 - Barriers raised: language is a great barrier for mid-termers.
 - This is where the need for cross cultural communication (and ministry) begins.
- Culture and the People of Israel: Genesis 12:1-3
 - God works through one particular culture (Jewish)
 - Jesus is a Jewish Messiah
 - Yet, he comes with a global purpose (from within a specific culture)
 - Blessed to be a blessing (Abraham and You)

3 Key Truths about the Gospel and Culture

1. All culture is fallen and deeply affected by sin
 - a. Cultures are filled with sinful people
 - b. Our tendency is to assume that our own cultures have all the right answers (ethnocentric)
2. The gospel transforms and transcends all cultures
 - a. Transforms: the gospel permeates culture and creates a new people (the Church)
 - b. Transcends: the Church (people of God) is multiracial and multiethnic
3. The gospel, not our culture, shapes how we understand the world around us.
 - a. Cultural behaviors and ideas change (homosexuality, abortion, etc.)
 - b. The gospel and biblical truths remain the same: unchanging.

Insights from Foreign to Familiar (Sarah Lanier)

- Hot vs. Cold Climate Cultures
 - Hot climate cultures- relationship based cultures

- “Feeling”- people are the primary focus, work is relational and may take more time because of the emphasis on relationship
 - Cold climate cultures- task oriented cultures
 - “Thinking” - task is the priority, getting the job done is more important than people's feelings.
 - Indirect vs. Direct Communication
 - Hot Climate: indirect communication helps avoid offending other people
 - Cold Climate: direct communication because they value accuracy
 - Group Identity vs. Individualism
 - Group identity: “you belong” to a family, tribe, clan, etc.
 - Privacy is not understood because hospitality is valued
 - Individualism: “you are an individual” (look out for #1)
 - Privacy/Possessions belong to me!
 - Time and Planning
 - Hot climate: spontaneous events and gatherings are the norm
 - Cold climate: events are organized and structured
 - Helpful Suggestions
 - Look for a cultural interpreter- someone who can effectively explain the culture
 - Commit to being a learner and work to understand the host culture

Culture Shock: A sense of confusion and uncertainty sometimes with feelings of anxiety that may affect people exposed to an alien culture or environment without adequate preparation.

4 Stages

1. Honeymoon Stage
 - a. Usually the first few days or weeks. Marked with excitement, adventure, anticipation, eagerness. Everything and everyone is new and exciting.
2. Frustration Stage
 - a. Some signs could be:
 - i. Difficulty sleeping, sadness, homesickness, exhaustion, increased worry, desire to withdraw, unexplained crying, overeating, anger, frustration, negativity, feeling of hate toward the people or the culture

- ii. When you experience this stage, it's important that you talk to your supervisor/other support person. Don't camp out. When you camp out here, that's when you have trouble.

3. Adjustment Stage

- a. During this stage you become more familiar with the language/culture of the host country. You are better able to deal with situations that were previously very frustrating. Most likely feel less homesick and have developed a support system.

4. Acceptance Stage

- a. You have come to accept and appreciate the new culture. They can compare the good and bad of the new country with that of their home county. You should feel less like a foreigner and more like a local; sense of the host country being a second home. You will have satisfaction knowing they can live in two cultures. This is a huge milestone!

Note: Not everyone progresses linearly through this process. You might even skip a stage and go directly to the next. The phases happen at different time for everyone. The honeymoon stage might end even before you get on the ground, however, it could last several weeks. You might have bad days that cause you to revert back to a previous stage, that's OK. You might even go back and forth between stages before you really stay in the acceptance stage, but even there, you will experience bad days and cultural frustrations.

Contextualization

In missionary contexts, the word contextualization is extremely popular yet oftentimes misunderstood. Because of it's importance in cross cultural settings, I want to spend some time unpacking the biblical foundation for it, a helpful definition, and then some practical ways to do it.

Biblical Foundation

1 Corinthians 9:19-23, "For though I am free from all, I have made myself a servant to all, that I might win more of them. To the Jews I became as a Jew, in order to win Jews. To those under the law I became as one under the law (though not being myself under the law) that I might win those under the law. To those outside the law I became as one outside the law (not being

outside the law of God but under the law of Christ) that I might win those outside the law. To the weak I became weak, that I might win the weak. I have become all things to all people, that by all means I might save some. I do it all for the sake of the gospel, that I may share with them in its blessings.”

Definition

Contextualization = to communicate in word and deed and to establish the church in ways that make sense to people within their local cultural context, presenting Christianity in such a way that it meets people’s deepest needs and penetrates their world-view, thus allowing them to follow Christ and remain within their own culture.

Contextualization is not the desire to change the gospel to make it more palatable. It’s to communicate the gospel to make it more understandable. It’s not giving people what they want. It’s communicating so they can understand.

Principles of Contextualization

1. Remember that culture is a good thing.

The picture that we get in Revelation isn’t of a bunch of white people who all speak English. Neither is it a bunch of ethnically and culturally neutral people who all speak in the tongues of angels. No it’s “a great multitude that no one could number, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages.”

All cultures of the world are rich beyond description, wonderfully adapted to the many conditions under which men and women live.

Why is that important? Because we tend to forget it. We tend to evaluate culture that is different as either good or bad when sometimes it’s just different. Now don’t get me wrong. Some cultural values are wrong. There is no culture in the world that has not been seriously affected by human depravity and sinfulness. A cultural value that encourages the mistreatment of women is just wrong. But that doesn’t mean the whole culture is wrong.

So we have to learn how to filter where culture is positive, where it's negative, and where it's just neutral.

2. Begin by analyzing your own culture

I said earlier, there is no culture in the world that has not been seriously affected by human depravity and sinfulness. That includes our own.

Here's how author Tullian Tchividjian puts it. Tullian's written extensively on contextualization.

"We all live inescapably within a particular cultural framework that shapes the way we think about everything. So if we don't work hard to understand our context, we'll not only fail in our task to effectively communicate the gospel but we'll also find it impossible to avoid being negatively shaped by a world we don't understand."

Tim Keller put it this way: "to over-contextualize to a new generation means you can make an idol out of their culture, but to under-contextualize to a new generation means you can make an idol out of the culture you come from. So there's no avoiding it (contextualization)."

If we want to effectively communicate the Gospel to another culture, we have to begin by understanding how our culture has already colored our perception of the gospel.

So how do you do that? How do you understand a culture, whether it's Raleigh-Durham, or Alexandria, Egypt?

3. Learn to exegete your culture

Exegesis is the process by which we analyze or critically interpret something. So how do we exegete culture?

I want to give you a series of questions that you can ask that will help you understand culture. I'm going to give you 3 big categories and some sub-questions.

a. What do people actually believe in this culture? This is the worldview question.

Important. We can read books about religion, but often what we read about a religion and what people believe is very different...most Americans are Christians...anyone that's served in a Muslim context knows most people don't follow the Koran.

How do they view Christianity?

What do they understand about the basic components of the gospel?

b. Why do people believe this way? What is the value of their beliefs?

Here are some questions that will help you identify that:

What identity is being pursued individually and corporately?

What mission or missions are people on?

What constitutes vogue spirituality?

What constitutes righteousness in the eyes of the people you see?

c. What beliefs, questions, experiences can I affirm?

This is where we usually go wrong.

What redemptive analogy is best for this culture?

Don Richardson – God has left redemptive analogies in every culture; cultural bridges that we can cross in order to carry the good news to spiritually hungry people; call this the fruit of general revelation, call it whatever you will.

Don Richardson, Peace Child – Sawi people; honored treachery as a virtue; when they heard story of Judas' betrayal of Jesus, saw Judas as the hero...difficult people...way of making peace between two warring villages was for a father in one of the villages to offer one of his children as a peace child to his

enemies...Jesus as the greatest peace child given by the greatest father.

4. Don't wait until you understand the culture to start sharing the gospel.

"The gospel doesn't just get lost when we engage culture wrongly. It also gets lost when we fail to engage culture at all."

Most of us are too hesitant.

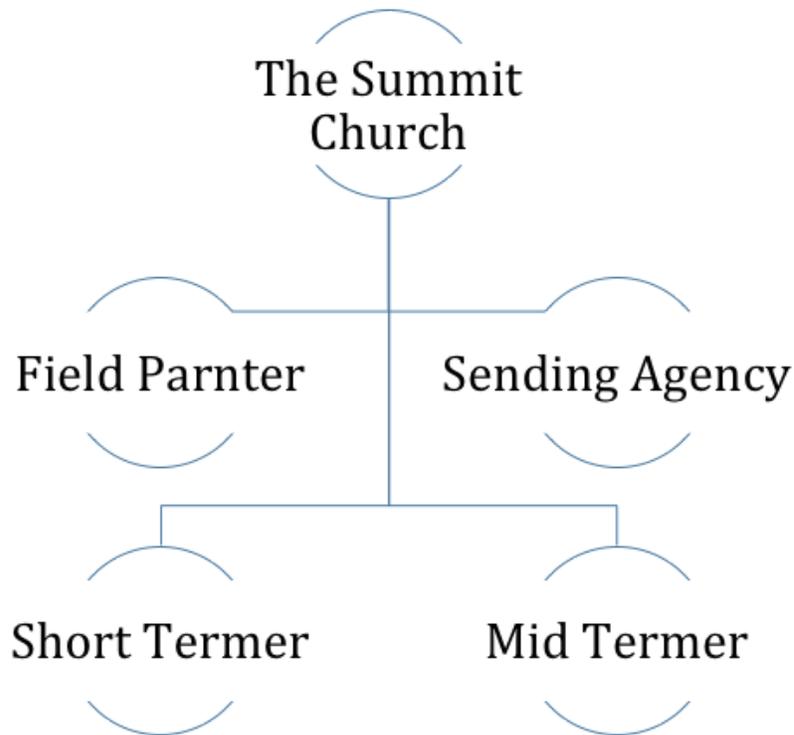
Practice makes perfect.

5. Remember that the best missiologists are in the harvest.

Seek out local leaders to help you navigate the culture and make make the gospel stick.

Accountability and Final Things

As a Mid-Term team member, sent out as an ambassador of Christ, you are expected to conduct yourself in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called (Ephesians 4:1). Agreeing to be sent out under the authority and leadership of The Summit Church, means that you are agreeing to adhere to the guidelines listed in the Mid-Term Covenant as well as continued accountability to the church, to your field leadership, and your supporters.



You are primarily accountable to the authority of the elders at The Summit Church.

- Check-in 1 time per month at summitrdu.com/midtermcheckin
- Skype 1-2 times when on the field

You are directly accountable to your field partner for daily life and ministry.

You are accountable to your sending agency for operations and logistics.

Mid-Term Guidelines

Summit Missions has designed certain standards and policies to accomplish the goals of Mid-Term Missions. The standards are not necessarily policy for all environments, but are deemed necessary for this assignment.

1. We are committed to providing an environment of safety and protection.
 - No foolish behavior that puts your and/or others' safety at risk
 - For safety, participants should always seek the advice and counsel of the field partner before being out at night. Generally participants should never be out at night alone.
 - No going to clubs or bars unless instructed to do so by your field partners for strategic ministry.
 - Dress appropriately for the communities you are living & serving in (i.e. sunbathing, jogging, etc.)
 - No firearms of any kind including airsoft, paintball, BB guns, etc.
2. We are committed to maintaining a high standard of morals as a Christian testimony in our environments.
 - Honor the Lord with your appearance through cleanliness and modesty.
 - Always abide by all mandated dress codes specified by field partners.
 - No men in the women's bedrooms and vice versa. You may be in the community rooms together.
 - No tobacco, alcohol, or drug use is allowed. Infractions may result in dismissal the assignment.
 - No immoral activity.
 - Practice wisdom, prudence, and holiness with your entertainment choices (movies, internet, etc).
3. We are committed to maintaining a high level of credibility and excellence with field partners, their cities, and The Summit Church.
 - Prioritize cleanliness in your living environments at all times.
 - We expect you to be on time to all meetings & events each day.
 - Submit to the desires and instructions of the field partner even if they are contrary to what you would expect or think – you are there to serve, not be served.
 - Display an attitude of submission and respect towards all leaders and authorities.
4. We are committed to creating an environment to best accomplish the goals of Mid-Term assignments.
 - No unapproved trips or absences. Any travel outside of the your city must be approved by your team leader and the

Mid-Term Director.

- All project activities are required functions and should be attended on time. You need the approval of your team leader to miss a meeting or event.
- No leaving the project before it is officially over. The Mid-Term Director must approve exceptions.
- Be considerate of others at all times. Keep quiet hours in apartments; be respectful, etc.
- No dating during your assignment... If you already have a significant other, great! But, we require your interactions to be group minded and respectful of your assignment community.

Dismissal note: The Mid-Term Director reserves the right to dismiss a participant from the project if deemed necessary for the health of the participant and/or for the overall health of the project. If a participant is dismissed, he/she will be sent home at his/her own expense.

Mid-Term Covenant

(Please Read & Initial. In doing so, you agree to abide by the Mid-Term Guidelines & Covenant)

Devotion

- _____ I commit to make knowing and obeying Jesus everyday my highest priority (Mk. 3:14).
- _____ I will spend daily time with Jesus through the Bible and prayer in order to pursue my own spiritual growth and to pray for those I will serve (Matt. 4:4, 1 Tim. 2:1).
- _____ I commit to following Jesus through all difficulties this semester. I will endure knowing that he is working for my good in all things (Heb. 12:1-11).

Character

- _____ I will strive to bring Glory to the Lord Jesus Christ in all I do and will maintain the highest standards of Christian character. To be a faithful witness to Christ, I will keep my character above reproach (1 Cor. 10:31, Phil. 2:14-15).
- _____ I will maintain the highest level of purity and agree to abstain from all sexual sin including pornography (1 Cor. 6:12-20).
- _____ I will be flexible, teachable, and humble throughout the semester.
- _____ I agree to have a servant's attitude at all times. The needs and priorities of those I serve are more important than my own (Mk. 10:42-45).
- _____ I will steward my body well and make wise choices in my exercise, eating and sleeping habits (Matt. 25:14-30)

Community

- _____ I will display Christian love and respect to all people, even if they are different than me (Lk. 10:29-37).
- _____ I will put the preferences of my roommates before my own and will seek their wellbeing in our living environment. I will respect my roommates by keeping my living space and common rooms clean (Phil. 2:4).
- _____ I will strive to foster the unity and health of my team. I will be an encourager (Phil. 1:27).
- _____ I will not gossip or slander against others. If I have been wronged, I will seek reconciliation directly with those involved. I will get help from others until the conflict is not resolved (Matt. 18:15-17).

Authority

- _____ I will submit to and respect those who have been given authority over me at all times (Phil. 2:5-11).
- _____ I will strive to maintain the unity of the project by supporting my leaders and their decisions. I will address any issues I have with their leadership in a Christ-like manner (Heb. 13:17).

- _____ I understand that if I act in a way that is dishonoring to the name of Jesus and do not submit to the leadership my field partner and of The Summit Church at any time during my assignment, I could be dismissed from the program at my own expense.

Miscellaneous

- _____ I will be accountable to my supporters and Summit by sending a monthly newsletter and participating in monthly check-ins and regular Skype calls.
- _____ I understand that excessive use of the Internet, email, phone, text messaging, and social media may be discouraged and limited during my assignment. I agree to monitor myself, and resist activity that keeps my focus from my ministry.
- _____ I have honestly disclosed any spiritual, emotional, mental, or medical issues/history that could affect my participation in this program.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Final Things

1. Be accountable to your supporters
 - a. Thanks You Notes: Need to go out before you leave!
 - b. Monthly Newsletters
 - i. Be brief
 - ii. Be compelling
 - iii. Always Use BCC: so there isn't a big list of addresses at the top
 - iv. Pictures are important but don't overdo it
 - v. Give Specific Next Steps/Requests
 - vi. Consider using mail-chimp or similar service
 - c. Social Media
 - i. Be aware of security
 - ii. Perception is reality
2. Be proactive with your time
 - a. Scheduling: Setting your schedules when there is no structure can be difficult; so be prepared to be very proactive.
 - b. Reading/Journaling: As you've heard today, you must feed yourself and take initiative!
3. Medical Issues
 - a. Be honest and upfront about any medical issues: you should inform field personnel before arriving or as soon as arriving of any sort of medications that you take on a regular basis or any other medical related issue that could become problematic.
4. Current Struggles
 - a. Be honest and upfront about current or history of challenges or struggles - Battles with depression, anxiety or panic attacks, pornography, etc. You should not be coming to the field without first sharing these struggles with someone who will hold you accountable regularly and field personnel should also be notified of any historic or current struggles.
5. When you return:
 - a. Debriefing when you get back. Other counseling services will be available to you as needed.
6. Security
 - a. STS - SIMPLE TRUE STATEMENT. You should be talking with your field partner about what this should be for you.

- b. Your Field Partner is the expert on all security matters, and you should be proactive about asking him/her about all matters of security.

7. Finances

- a. If you are going through Hands On or an outside organization, your finances will be mostly handled for you; however, you are still expected to abide by any and all guidelines given to you and represent The Summit Church with the utmost honor. (i.e. Please do not ask your field partners to buy things for you; turn in receipts and reports on time and with excellence, etc.)
- b. If you are NOT going through an outside program, we will cover everything you need to know about your finances at another time depending on your needs and situation.

Homework and Next Steps

Please complete the following no later than 2 weeks before you leave and notify Amanda at aspringer@summitrdu.com

1. Communicate with Field Partners: Set up a time to skype and talk with your field partner to get more acquainted and ask any questions you have. Ask if there is anything you can bring them.
2. Prayer Support: Recruit at least 10 people who will regularly pray for you while you are gone and inform them you will notify them at least 1x per month about how you are doing and what they can be praying for.
3. Research your City: Spend at least 1 hour researching common facts about your city.

Questions About Your City:

1. How many years has your country been a country? How many people live in the city where you are going?
2. What are the main religions of the people in your country? What percentage of people adheres to these religions?
3. What are the main languages in the country where you are going? In the city where you are going? How do you say "hello" in the main language in your city?
4. What are the top five professions of the people in your city?
5. What are the main ethnicities represented in your country? In your city?
6. What is public transportation like in your city?
7. What is the food like in your city?
8. What type of racism is present in your city?
9. What are the top 5 recreational activities of the people in your city?
10. What type of government runs your country and city?
11. What are the top five historical events that have shaped the landscape of your country?
12. What is education like in your country?
13. How do men and women interact with one another in your city?
14. What types of actions are extremely offensive and should be avoided by visitors?

4. Read: *The Dangerous Duty of Delight*. Write 1 short paragraph about what you enjoyed/learned.
5. Email Flight Info: Send flight info to Amanda and notify once landed for orientation and then in final destination.