

THE JOURNEY

Making the Most of the Journey

AIM Training 2016

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Every AIMer arrives on the field as a liability. How long one remains in that capacity is up to the individual. One can decrease this level of liability by being better prepared.

- Learn as much as you can about the missionary you are going to be working with. Research the country. Know the cultural dynamics (but don't stereotype).
- Learn as much as you can about the field you are going to work in.
- Learn as much of the language as you possibly can. Language learning in many places is essential. It should begin before arrival. Arrive knowing how to carry on a conversation. You can't depend on the missionary to always interpret for you.

Almost all missionaries being appointed in the twenty-first century have served on the AIM Program (see document concerning levels of service). It is recommended that a potential missionary candidate spend a minimum of one year on AIM, then applies and is accepted for the Associate Missionary program, before pursuing intermediate appointment.

If you are going to be involved in Bible school work it is best that you go to Bible college. Other undergraduate education is helpful as well. There are several options of going to Bible College while serving on the AIM program. These include:

- GATS on location
- Harvest Bible College
- Urshan College
- UGST
- North America Bible College distance education programs

Arrival Survival:

Orientation upon arrival is a necessity. If not offered, ask for it. It is also very important to have a detailed job description. An exit interview would be helpful. If there is something that you are doing that the missionary or the nationals do not like you want to know about it now so you can correct it now. Try to figure out supervising missionary expectations and move accordingly.

One of the hardest things is not knowing where to go when issues and conflict arise.

If conflict arises, here is the protocol:

1. Talk it over with your supervising missionary. Choose the right time. Have the right attitude. Choose your “battles” carefully. Some things best just praying through over.
2. If that doesn’t work, talk it over with your missionary field superintendent.
3. It may be necessary to discuss this with your regional director, but not before first trying to work things out on the field.
4. Sometimes it is best to keep a quiet disposition and to transfer to another field. A change of field can be processed through the Global Missions AIM Office.
5. Lastly, there are times to bring the situation to the attention of the Director of Education/AIM. All other avenues should be followed first.

Whom God Calls He Equips

Mark Batterson in an article entitled “Are You All In”, Charisma, said, “A band of brave souls became known as one way missionaries a century ago. They bought tickets to the mission field without the return half. Instead of suitcases they packed their few earthly things into coffins. As they sailed away they waved good-bye to everything they loved and all they knew, knowing they’d never return home.” They didn’t fear the loss of life because they had already died to self. They were consecrated: set apart (Joshua 3:5; Acts 13:2). They were called “One-way Missionaries” and for many they went out, never returning again. Many times God calls his people to complete consecration right before He does something utterly amazing and astounding.

But the flip side of the story: During the Azusa Street revival and outpouring of the baptism of the Holy Spirit in 1906 many people, after they were baptized in the Holy Spirit, within mere days or even hours of their experience left for the mission field. They left believing God was filling them with the language needed to reach the country of their calling. What a surprise to board a boat, arriving weeks or even months later, only to find they had been empowered, for whom God calls, He equips, but God had expected them to be involved in the equipping process. They had been empowered but they were not prepared. Preparation or equipping is a lifelong journey and process of development and discipline. We are empowered at Pentecost; equipped through a process.

There is distance between being empowered and being equipped. It’s a lifetime process. Just study the life of Moses, Joseph, David, Paul, or Jesus, to name a few.

“But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth” (Acts 1:8).

The little chart that follows contrasts being empowered and being equipped:

Empowered	Equipped
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Invest with power	Make ready
To give power or authority	Prepare
To enable/permit	To provide with a particular feature or ability
An example: to leave a second in command in charge for the day	Appropriate provisioning
	To supply with necessities such as tools
	Provided with whatever is necessary for a purpose
	Prepared with proper equipment
	Well-supplied
	Provide someone with skills or personal qualities they need to deal with a situation successfully.

Nelson Searcy in his epic book *The Renegade Pastor* writes gives an excellent analogy concerning the call. You receive a call one day from an influential leader you greatly admire. He says great things about you and that he wants you to be the special speaker for his event.

“You lean back in your chair trying to convince yourself that the phone call really happened. Once you’re sure you weren’t dreaming, a sense of urgency set in. You shift into high gear to get ready for the talk. You start gathering information on the assigned topic, reading everything you can get your hands on, talking to people, looking up quotes and studying, all the while praying for God’s guidance and wisdom...Obviously when the phone rang, you weren’t already equipped with what you would need to meet the challenge. You will have to gather, organize, and internalize the elements that will prepare you to succeed at what you’ve been called on to do. You will have to go through a process of working, learning, practicing, studying and growing as much as you can between now and your moment of truth.” (pg 66).

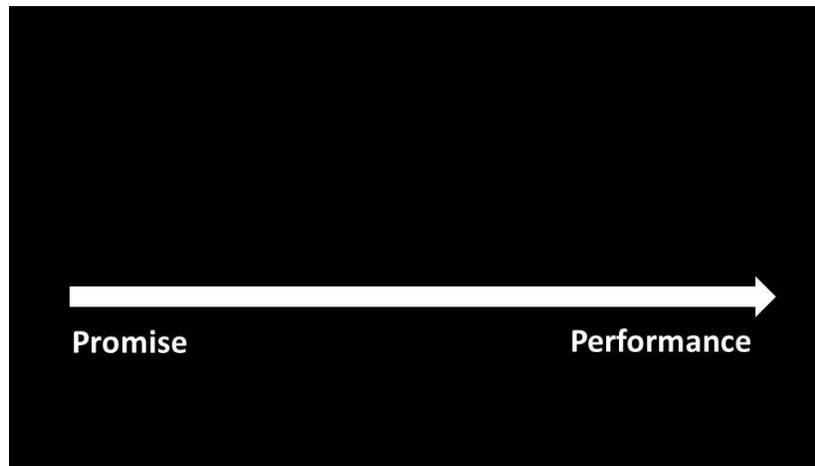
This is very similar to your call to ministry or to missions. He further states, the clutch of the matter, “The call to ministry is the call to prepare—and preparation is an ongoing process....It’s the continual reaching that grows you, equipping you to live and minister at an ever-increasing level.” Others refer to this as becoming a “lifelong learner.” Searcy encourages us to “develop a growth plan that will continually move you toward being the person you need to be to fulfill your calling” (pg 77).

In this process remember this simple truth, according to Mark Batterson, in *In a Pit with a Lion on a Snowy Day*, “God wants you to get where God wants you to go more than you want to get where God wants you to go” (Page 30). He is with you each step of the way as you travel God’s direction.

Here is something Raymond Woodward said to Hyphen-aged participants at Youth Congress 2015.

“Many times when we are at a decision point in our lives, we assume that the answer is going to be a simple YES or NO. In other words, if God doesn’t show us a short road and a straight path to the fulfillment of our dream, we assume He has said “NO,” and we get discouraged and give up, or we start trying to find a shortcut or an alternate route to our dream. But God’s paths are seldom straight, and they are seldom short!”

We prefer that traveling God’s direction is a straight line and easily achievable.



But, traveling God’s direction is whole lot more like this:

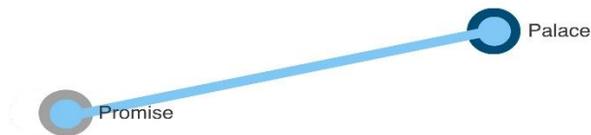


“If we don’t understand God’s detours and timing, we can make critical errors at important junctures in our lives. This is why ...

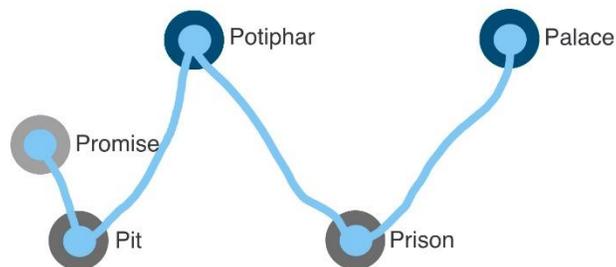
- we try to be leaders when we need to be followers
- we try to exert authority when we need to submit to authority
- we insist on our timing when we should be trusting God’s timing
- we try to force a door open instead of waiting for God to open it.”

Jeremy Durand in a Next Steps lesson in Costa Rica illustrated this point utilizing the life of Joseph, the dreamer.

I'm sure young Joseph thought the fulfillment of his dream as he traveled God's direction was going to be simple; a straight shot.



But, in reality it turned out like this:



Raymond Woodward said, "I have no doubt that God has given many of you great promises about your future. But always remember that God almost never explains the timing or the path to His promises in advance...There is a pattern in the Word of God that we are meant to notice! Between the time God gives us a promise and the time God performs what He said He would do, there is a time of preparation."

"May he equip you with all you need for doing his will. May he produce in you, through the power of Jesus Christ, every good thing that is pleasing to him. All glory to him forever and ever! Amen" (Hebrews 13:21, NLT).

So, the question begging for an answer is, how are the called equipped? Or, how does God equipped the called? Else Lund once said, "Got a call? Feed it!" So, how do you feed your call.

Consider the following possibilities:

1. **Spiritual equipping** through a lifestyle of prayer and fasting.
2. **Academic equipping** through studying a language, seeking out opportunities to receive cross-cultural training, Bible school education, or pursuing an undergraduate degree that better prepares you for an aspect of foreign service.
3. **Mentoring equipping** by working with someone that has traveled the missions' road before. Books can also mentor you. Read missionary biographies and books concerning the call, cross-cultural service, country or area you may feel led to, missionary concepts, fundraising, trends of global missions
4. **Ministerial equipping** through proving oneself at home before expecting to be released to do a work on a mission field. Become involved in many aspects of the local church. Be submissive to, and consult with, your pastor as you travel God's direction. If you learn to minister to the needs of people in one place you will be able to minister to the needs of people in every place. Although culture changes, customs are different, the basic needs of people remain the same. They are cross-cultural, trans-cultural, and timeless. Be involved in reaching a language or cultural group where you are.
5. **Social equipping** through following missionaries and missions-related projects or groups on social media. Remember exposure breeds a burden.
6. **Financial equipping** by minimizing debt, supporting missions now, and preparing to be an effective support raiser.
7. **Mental equipping** through realizing that little hang-ups at home become much larger issues on the field. At home, we have support groups and we learn to cope with, and cover, our shortcomings. Far from home, the support groups are removed and it is more difficult to cope with issues, hang-ups, and shortcomings. God never wastes a hurt. Mark Batterson in his book *In a Pit with a Lion on a Snowy Day* is "convinced that the people God uses the most are often the people who have experienced the most adversity." (pg 73). God "wants to recycle your adversity and turn it into a ministry...God is in the business of recycling our pain and using it for someone else's gain." "Genesis 50:20 is the lens through which each of us must view our past, present, and future. Everyone's path is littered with debris of dysfunction and disappointment" (pg. 94). God has to be able to dig things out of our lives before we can pour our lives into others.

Keep Pastor Involved from the Get Go!

Remember, to always keep your pastor involved. I was going to say, informed. However, there is a big difference between being involved and informed. Informed is like saying, "This is what I'm going to be doing." Involved, "This is what I am feeling but I need your input, direction, involvement, and approval."

Mike Long, an AIMer to France, suggests one of the first steps you should take, after God has birthed a dream in your spirit, concerning short term missions (*or any ministry involvement for that matter*), is to talk about it with your pastor.

The following blog (taken from <http://aimlong.ca/2014/01/29/include-pastor/>) is used here with his permission. Here goes:

My Experience:

I can't express how much of a benefit it has been, to have my pastor both completely informed of and involved in, the application process, the progress of preparations and the communication of my burden. In my mind, the value of your pastor's role cannot be underestimated.

10 Reasons to involve your pastor:

1. **His Responsibility:** Your pastor is accountable to God for the way he takes care of you, one of the sheep that God has entrusted to his care. For this reason, no major ministry-related decisions of any kind should be made without consulting him. If your desire is truly from God, chances are your pastor will not be surprised and will be glad to help you put feet to the dream.
2. **Objective 3rd party:** Your pastor is a great person to identify *errors* or *omissions* that could weaken your application. In my case, there was a contextual issue which, had I not qualified it, could've incited doubts or led to unnecessary questions in the minds of the men evaluating my application. He brought it to my attention and with the addition of a single paragraph, the occasion for confusion was alleviated.
3. **Points of doctrine:** Sometimes statements can be made which can come across to someone who doesn't know you well, as representing an error in doctrine. A poor choice of words could raise a major red flag, which, in the absence of clarification, could hinder your approval.
4. **Organizational knowledge:** Your pastor can provide insight into the normal workings of the departments or individuals on an organizational level: *what things need to happen before something else can occur* for example.
5. **Pitfall experience:** If your pastor has been around for any amount of time, he has likely seen applications (*whether for short term missions, district appointments, or others*) that have done very well and others that have fallen flat on their face... or even fell on "*deaf ears*" because evaluators were missing key details. He can help you to not be another case of pitfall.
6. **Approaching other ministers:** Whether you have a formal ministry position or not, your pastor can be a great help in leveraging support, and/or contact, with other ministers, both in and beyond your district. Some pastors, because of ministerial ethics, will not be

comfortable approaching you directly (*or being approached by you*), without first going through *your* pastor. They want to make sure everything is okay and above board – and this is a wonderful safe-guard.

7. **Impact on the local church:** Whatever the outcome of your application, there will be implications on the local church, more so of course, if you end up going on short term missions for a time. No pastor wants to be surprised about personnel or staffing changes, nor do they want to be surprised about the timeline. They have to work with remaining staff to ensure the smoothest possible transition and minimize any void left by your absence.
8. **No lone rangers:** There have been, in the past, somewhere between the north and south poles, lone rangers. These are people who, to escape a negative situation – whether personally, interpersonally or at a church level – *take off to the mission field*. Perhaps they feel they will “*finally*” be able to “*have a (recognized) ministry*” far away, where no one knows them. In the **long run**... lone rangers generally do not benefit the foreign field, nor do they represent the home church or the kingdom of God well. You do not want to risk being associated with, or perceived to be, a lone ranger. Work with your pastor!
9. **Home church advantage:** You want to benefit from the full support of your home church in the following areas and your pastor is key to them all:
 - i. **Financial support:** unforeseen circumstances may require extra funding. If you have worked with your pastor throughout the process, he will be more inclined to bail you out with a cheerful and willing heart.
 - ii. **Prayer support:** No one knows your strengths (*and weaknesses*) like your home church. They are among the most equipped and the most inclined to stand by you in prayer.
 - iii. **Moral support:** There will be days when a care-package from home will be a welcomed treat. Chances are that someone in your home church spearheaded that effort.
 - iv. **Ministry support:** Times will arise when a word of advice or insight will make the difference in a *make-or-break situation*. Keep the line of communication open with those who know you best.
10. **He’s still your pastor:** Just because you may find yourself on the other side of the world, does not mean that a father in the faith ceases to be your pastor. Your leadership structure may change, but your pastor should always be able to speak into your life or ministry.

In Short:

If you begin your short term missions journey walking in step with your pastor, there’s a good chance that you’ll benefit from his wisdom and resources throughout the entire process. Your overall experience will be greatly improved and the kingdom of God (*both in your life and in your missions experience*) will be advanced.

“You are there to work, not on a vacation.” Be disciplined and have a positive work ethic. It is not acceptable to wake up each day at the crack of ten.

Tithing:

AIM and Associate Missionary tithes should be paid to the missionary field fellowship, whether the money was raised and sent through global missions or not. (Our preference is that all AIM funds should be sent to Global Missions. The exception may be where the Aimer is contributing personal funds to the AIM tour. It is required that all funds for associate missionaries be sent through Global Missions).

Tithes are (minimally) paid on personal support. Housing, air fare, car/travel are sometimes excluded as work –related and work-necessitated items.

With funds sent through GM there is a ten percent administrative deduction on all funds except love offerings. This is not tithes. Missionary accounts also pay the same. This is how GM pays for its administrative operation.

If an AIMer is traveling to churches raising support it is advisable to pay the tithe on the personal offering received to the GM District Director. Additionally, it is required of associate missionaries to tithe to the Global Missions District Director when traveling in a district.

Why Send Support through Global Missions, UPCI?

Global Missions policy calls for sending funds raised for Associate Missionary, AIM, Next Steps, and Associated Minister statuses to be sent to Global Missions. We will deal specifically with AIM here but the same holds true for other levels of status in our short-term missions programs. The possible exception to this requirement is when one is contributing personal finances to the budget.

You might ask, “Why send funds through Global Missions?” Although it is not typically good to answer a question with a question, one comes to mind. That is, “Why not?” Reasons go beyond ten percent of income coming into Global Missions to support the administrative costs of running the program. Here are a few of the many other reasons:

1. It builds up your reputation in Global Missions and makes the staff more aware of your desire and dedication to the global missions cause. You will be working closely with this staff not only in completing your AIM assignment but in fulfilling your mission’s burden and vision in any area of appointment or endorsement with Global Missions.
2. It builds up your support base. This becomes the foundation of support for higher or further levels of appointment. For example, if you were to apply for status as an Associate Missionary or as an Intermediate Missionary, you already have a basic level of

support in the system. Often, the support level achieved under AIM is studied to ascertain the candidate's ability to raise financial support to assist with one's mission's ministry.

3. The fellowship of the United Pentecostal Church International is very familiar with sending monthly PIM (Partners in Missions) support for their missionaries through Global Missions, UPCI. Our short-term mission's programs also have PIM-related accounts. Forms are provided to approved AIMers (and so forth) so they can solicit monthly partners from their family, friends, and those they fellowship.
4. Global Missions and UPCI have a proven track record of integrity established through the years. Additionally, it augments one's integrity when support provided for a short-term missions endeavor is sent through the established procedure of the organization.
5. Receipts usable for income tax purposes are provided to donors sending their donations through Global Missions, UPCI.
6. When documentation of funds received from donors, but not sent to Global Missions, missionary offering credit is provided but no receipt can be given. The reason is, Global Missions, UPCI did not actually receive the money.
7. It increases one's relationship and level of accountability when funds are sent through Global Missions, UPCI.
8. Occasionally, Global Missions is called upon to issue a Letter of Guarantee for visa or immigration purposes in/for your host country. This letter, many times, guarantees financial support for the trip is available. Global Missions cannot ethically release such a letter if we are not able to readily ascertain the availability of the funds.
9. Global Missions policy requires fifty percent of the budget to be available at the time of departure and the other fifty percent firmly pledged. Global Missions can easily verify compliance with this policy by checking the appropriate (AIM) account.
10. Sending funds for the budget through Global Missions, UPCI is a quick, easy way to charter progress in raising the budgetary needs.

Communication:

Effective communication is important in any relationship. It is required in every situation of life where people interact. It is essential and plays a key role in success. Communication can easily be overlooked but it is important in carrying out your God-given dream or vision. Involvement in missions necessitates partnership. The very word "partnership" implies participation, association and joint interest. The old French word implied "part holder." We, in Global Missions, have a vested interest in you and the fulfillment of all God wants to accomplish through you on the mission field. We care about you and want you to succeed. But, in order to care, and help in any way we can, communication must take place. We need to hear from you. We want to share in your vision. Cooperating together advances our mutual interest in reaching

the globe with the gospel. It's a partner-ship and we want to do whatever possible to put wind in your sails to achieve your maximum potential in missions.