

The Big Picture

Adapted from Trevor McIlwain

Brief Intro challenge – What you are headed for is the most challenging, the most exciting, the most difficult and yet the most rewarding work on earth! -- to evangelize and plant a NT church among tribal people who have never heard the Gospel of the Lord Jesus!! What a privilege !! – Yes, to see them come to Christ, begin to have their lives truly changed (from the inside out) and then live unto Him, enjoying each other and reaching out to others who, like themselves previously, have yet to hear! (use picture of Baso)

Purpose - To present an orderly overview of the missionary candidate's future life in ministry. This is set before the student so that he/she can see the "big picture" of what is involved in tribal evangelism and church planting, understanding what lies ahead, and how the "parts" relate to the "whole". Consequently, the "big picture" will enable the student to better comprehend the "why" behind the various subjects being taught at any given point.

Proverbs 14:8 *The wisdom of the prudent is to understand his way*

This is fundamentally key This truth was inspired by God, it's not just Solomon's opinion!

Pre-Entry

Pre-Evangelism

Evangelism

Post-Evangelism

Phase-Out

YOU
ARE
HERE

I. **A Missionary Candidate in Training**

A. **Preparing for future ministry**

1. **A special time of focus!** Now is the time that is set apart / sanctified; to commit yourself wholeheartedly before the Lord for training

Note: you'll never have another opportunity like this!!

2. **Being a good learner and discipler** - A good teacher is first of all a good learner.

Pro 9:9 *Give instruction to a wise man, and he will be still wiser*

a. You will be learning and growing in your spiritual walk as well as in being equipped for ministry. There will be opportunity for using what you are being taught *while* here in the training; you'll have opportunities both within and without –

b. Continue to let the Lord mold and shape you – *as He's been doing before you got here*); allow Him to continue to shape you into a vessel to be used of Him to bring life to others and glory to His name!

Training
characterized
by

B. **Deciding on a future ministry**

1. **Spiritual gifts** - You have God-given spiritual gifts. He has given spiritual gifts to each one (and that includes you); given to you "for the common good" 1 Cor 12:7;

AND He has given them "as He wills" 1 Cor 12:11 **Rejoice in that!**

2. **God-given talents, personality, etc.**

- a. Be honest, realistic; according to knowledge – **Rom 12:3**

He wants you and I to enjoy serving Him! - Yes, it may not be easy at times, but He wants us to enjoy our walk with Him and our ministry (not an endurance contest)

- b. Serving Him as He has engifted you - **1 Peter 4:10**

As you decide on a future ministry, acknowledge how He has engifted you and rest in it!

3. **Field needs** - As you go through the training, here and at NTLI, be open as you get exposure to various fields of need; be attentive to His voice, allow Him to speak; His "field" is the world! (not just PNG!)

4. **Your heart's desire before the Lord** - Be open and honest about your personal heart's desires before Him

5. **Resting in Him by faith** - As you yield by faith, rest confidently that He is trustworthy and will lead you to the place of His choosing (Ps 25:12);

He's *not* playing 'cat and mouse' games with you. His desire is that you go forth bear fruit for His glory! - **John 15:8**

Note: NTMI – NTLI (briefly explain the sequence of training then

II. **After the Training**

- A. **Recognition as NTM missionary** - Explain very briefly - end of NTLI – EC interview; commissioned; account set up in Sanford or home country (vouchers)

- B. **Pre-Field Ministry** (Deputation)

1. **Speaking in churches**

- a. Challenging the lives of others; multiplying God's vision in the lives of others! IF you haven't caught the vision of the Lord's purpose, how will others catch it through you?!! Let Him persuade your heart!

- b. Raising up both financial and prayer support! .

2. **Don't be intimidated or fearful**; be open, honest, and well prepared

KNOW what you'll be doing and what your various needs are –

Note: by His grace, we'll help you in your understanding of these things

C. **Preparing for departure to the field**

1. **Contact with field leadership** - Be open in your communications with field leadership; Ask questions (e.g. – field policies, strategies, field needs, placement needs, etc.) – Be prudent - **Pro 13:16, 14:15**
2. **Buying and shipping of goods; travel arrangements** - Again, be prudent / wise; get counsel / advice; don't re-invent the wheel! ☺, others have gone before you)
3. **Saying good-byes** - "Counting the cost"; your testimonial impact on others; (use as apologetic – e.g. in tribe – we have an important, vital message!!)

We are living for eternal values, - **Mk 8:36,37** - we'll have plenty of time in heaven for fellowshiping;

There will be those who will be eternally glad that you said "good bye" to your loved ones!! Personal: Crying when left Philadelphia; but Bisorios crying when we left (wailed as one does at death; some wouldn't even look at us!)

Gabene, dear fellow believer and friend, said at departing 6'00, "Awaso, xauma wede wisabena biyamo"

III. **Arrival on the Field**

A. **What to expect – Adjustments**

1. **Physical environment differences** –
Sights (incl. being stared at) – different dress, color of skin, houses, roads, physical landscape/scenery, (rugged mountains, palm trees, etc.) animals; etc
Smells - some good, some not so "good" ☺; (in fact, you too after awhile ☺ - sweating "bananas"!)
Sounds - of your surroundings, people, market place, birds, bugs, etc.
Climate - hot, humid (POM "blast furnace"), rainy or cold, chilly - perhaps quite different
2. **Language and culture differences** – e.g. Limited communication: language, hand gestures, facial expressions, hand motions (careful of coming to early wrong conclusions), etc., etc.

3. **Personal and family adjustments** (Note: perhaps fearful yet excited, anxious yet adventuresome, etc.)

- a. Going through change and adjustments is normal - Don't be intimidated or overwhelmed by it; you're not weird, it's normal; all experience it to one degree or another.
- b. Be mindful: change hits each of us; including our children. Be patient with yourself and family members

B. Resting in the Lord - Though all the various changes brought to bear upon you can create stress, He is our sufficiency; the One who brought you there, is with you and will keep you there!! “... *lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.*”

The Lord did not wave good-bye to you from the airport and stay behind in your home country! - **Isa 30:15** and **Isa 26:3**

IV. **Field Orientation**

A. Working with field leadership - This is important!; listen well; wait before making decisions

1. Be a blessing; purpose to work in unity and cooperation as unto the Lord;
2. Be both a learner and a contributor
3. Consider the field's needs vs. your own agenda; The bottom line = His will; you don't want to be like a “loose cannon”, out there doing ‘your own thing’)

B. Learning national language and culture - a **MUST** for living in the host country; You want to be able to bond and develop genuine relationships with the nationals during your orientation. It will help you to grow in your needed life and ministry skills.

Note: sometimes learning the national language and culture provides a helpful foundation for working in the tribe; at times common features in both lang. and culture

C. Surveying new areas -

1. Sometimes invited into new areas by tribe or national or even the gov't; Follow the leads that the Lord sets before you.
2. While new works present great opportunities, so do established works; Allow yourself to be open before the Lord to consider existing works;

There are so many exciting possibilities; there is much to do!

- D. **Choosing coworkers** - A vital consideration; we'll be discussing later on; like getting "married" ☺

Consider: Common values – e.g. walk with the Lord, principles of raising family, philosophy of ministry, ministry goals / objectives, commitment, etc., etc.

e.g. Re commitment – Some tribes 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 couples. Nimo – One of the first questions asked to new miss., “*How long will you be staying?*”

V. **Allocation to Tribe of Ministry**

A. **Moving in**

1. **House building** - Don't be forever; be prudent, not extravagant; we'll be discussing later on
 - a. Consider: What am I / are we modeling for the tribal people? *Do you have an important message or not?! Don't lose the "cutting edge"!!*
 - b. In a real sense, you and your family are living "epistles, "... *known and read by all men*" - 2 Cor 3:2-3. Someone once said, “*Hoarded wealth breeds suspicion*”
2. **Supply lines** - Good supply lines are key to an effective ministry; *saving* time, money and effort; you need to be prudent; Thank the Lord for Jack and Janie!

B. **Pre-Evangelism**

1. **First impressions / first testimony** - Another vital area; your first testimony really starts during the survey;
 - a. Consider: *How many times do you get to have/make first impressions?*
 - b. Be slow to make judgments. We'll be covering many crucial aspects of these important beginning days of ministry in "Pre-evangelism"
2. **Tribal people / bonding** - We'll be discussing the how of effectively interrelating and bonding with your target people; earning the right to speak; working with tribal leadership, avoiding paternalism, etc. Many essential principles for laying good foundations for your church plant!

C. **Family and Team Relationships**

1. **Own family** - Major adjustments (eg. privacy .. not what you've been use to) – isolation / limited travel – no mall, no church, living in middle of jungle
2. **Coworkers** - We'll be discussing; don't necessarily want someone who is identical; someone who, while holding similar values, goals and objectives, will compliment / challenge you

Note: All our relationships (including our own personal walk) are vitally important; walking with the Lord Jesus is ABSOLUTELY ESSENTIAL !!

Yes, pressed against His bosom, you'll feel the weight of your "not enoughness", **but** from Him you'll grow in understanding His tender and strong and uplifting encouragement!

VI. **Language and Culture Learning** - We'll be discussing very soon. This is absolutely central to our working with tribal people. This is a distinctive of NTM (though not only NTM)

A. **Example** - (stand on chair - Sabou on tree stump during those first days ☺)

B. By His grace, strength and enabling we work with diligence and tenacity.
As we walk in a spirit of absolute dependence upon the Lord - this task is doable!!!

VII. **Pre-Teaching** (A tremendously exciting time!)

A. **Further preparing yourself and the people for initial evangelism** - Stirring up specific interest (as have been doing during pre-evangelism) and investigating the people's culture more specifically under Worldview in light of evangelism

After language is broken down into writing

B. **Begin literacy** - Crucial - zeroing in on a very vital aspect of your church planting ministry - Scriptures and Bible lessons.

Wait to you have readers of the mother tongue!! (Odeya staying up late at night teaching others – e.g. Namoleya)

C. **Begin Bible translation** - includes ongoing learning of culture and new vocabulary; translating the Word of God; BTE, typing, checking, etc.

Exciting to see the Word of God start to be written in their language too!

Note: Presently there are over 4,400 lang. that still have no portion of God's Word!)

Tremendous privilege that you can't even put into words !!
Rev 5:9

- D. **Prepare teaching materials** - Also includes ongoing learning of culture and new vocabulary

Note: Literacy, Bible translation, Bible lesson prep going on simultaneously

VIII. **Evangelism / Teaching Foundational Truths**

- A. **Phase 1** - The very moment you've been waiting for and have been working so hard towards ! We'll share indepth later!!

1. **Challenging their worldview** (making the target audience hungry; preparing the "soil")
2. **Teaching foundational truths** (Ph 1; we'll discuss in detail the "how" and why")
Also you'll learn how to produce word-for-word Bible lessons, eventually passing them on to the tribal believers.
3. **Gospel presentation** (the great privilege; the beginning of your actual church!)

- B. **First believers** - *Joy beyond description !!!*

Hameyagu (Basababi); "I believe that when Jesus died for on the Cross ...".
Abumoi (Sabibi), "My legs are not even going to be touching the ground ...".

IX. **The Infant church**

- A. **Teaching the Infant church**

1. Phases 2 (OT/NT) and 3 (Acts) - Nurturing, firming up the foundations planted; Eternal security; indwelling of the Holy Spirit; baptism; prayer; gathering as believers; worship in song; beginning to live as a community of believers, etc.
2. Renewing the mind, building a Biblical worldview (God's point of view)

- B. **Going on outreaches in taking the Gospel to others.** Yes, some may mock and not be interested, *but there will be those who will truly come to Christ* – and ...*you're preparing to have a part in it all!* **Wow! Rom 15:21**

Your role as a church planter continues changing

X. **The Developing Church** (we'll be discussing all the following in *much detail* later on)

A. **Establishing the developing church** (Phases 4 through 7)

1. Establishing in Positional truth (Romans and Ephesians)
2. Addressing needs - topical teaching (e.g. marriage, gossip, SDA's, Cath.,
3. Body life function (What about 'Body life', NTC principles – 1 Cor)
4. Church leadership (How do we develop?; ordaining elders – 1 Tim, Titus)
5. Outreaches (est. other churches / our Hope, He's coming – 1,2 Thes, Rev)

B. **Indigenous support of ministry** (Building a Biblical worldview - individually and corporately)

XI. **The Continuing Church** - (*Not* calling it "Phase Out", but rather the "Continuing Church")

A. **Characteristics of a planted and maturing church** – Discussing self-governing, self-supporting, self-propagating, also we'll talk of a "practical theology" – equipping them to be able to walk in such a way that the truths of Scripture are made practical; being able to self-correct; to keep judging their culture and build a Biblical worldview.

B. **Itinerant Ministry** - The Church planter and his itinerant ministry (not abandonment)

All that we do is *for Him*, and *for Him alone!*

Rom 11:36 *For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things. To Him be the glory forever. Amen.*