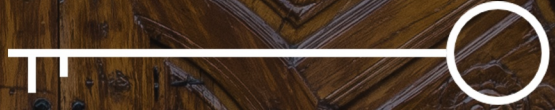




# Keys to a Great Missions Trip

by Jeffrey Bush

# Why a Missions Trip?

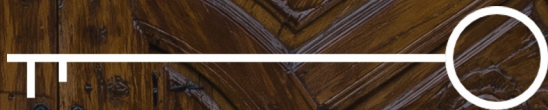


There are many benefits of going on a missions trip. You don't have to be a pastor or want to be a missionary to go on a missions trip - anyone can go on a missions trip. Not everyone will return from a missions trip wanting to be a missionary (although you should definitely be open and willing if God wants that), but everyone will come back a changed and challenged person after taking a missions trip. Here are a few of the benefits of taking a missions trip:

- You will see that the world is a much bigger place. It is so easy to be wrapped up in our own world of activities, but taking a missions trip will show you that life is about much more than your small perception of the world.
- You will see the need. The need for more laborers to go help, the need for more people to hear the Gospel and the need to pray for the missionary's life, family and safety. The need is much greater than the amount of people involved in trying to fulfill the need.
- You will want to get more involved in missions. After you have seen the people, the work and the need, you will want to tell your friends back home about it, help your pastor more in the ministry, rally troops up to pray for the missionary and you'll understand why it's important to give financially to help missionaries through your local church program.
- It will make you question your future plans. Is what you are doing and what your goals are in line with the big picture of what God is doing and want done in the world? Questioning our plans, motives and desires is not a bad thing; it is a good thing.
- It will make you appreciate all that you have. You may come back from the trip and realize that you are worried too much about material things. You may realize how blessed you are to have a church, a copy of God's Word and the privilege to grow up in a place where you could freely hear the Gospel. We take for granted so many things God has given us and taking a missions trip will likely spark an attitude of gratitude in our lives.
- You will return with a zeal for evangelism, both globally and locally. Many people that take a trip will get to pass out tracts, help others and talk to people who do not know Christ. This may be the small spark that starts a fire to give out the Gospel much more at home and see the need for the Gospel overseas.



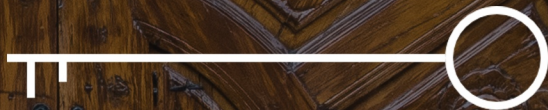
# Picking Your Country



How do you decide on where to go on a missions trip? While it is true that almost anywhere would be good to go visit, it is best to visit with a missionary that is effectively ministering and working a specific area. Find a missionary that has an exciting ministry and is in a situation where he could host you or your church to visit.

Taking a missions trip is much more than just traveling overseas, it is going overseas to learn, help, see the need and experience what God is doing around the world. We recommend you check out an organized trip to visit a missionary who will both take the time to show you around as well as let you be involved in the ministry. You will find a list of missions trips we offer at the bottom of this page or on our website: [www.visionmissions.com/events](http://www.visionmissions.com/events)

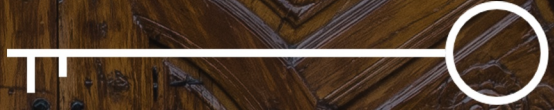
# Trip Preparations



Now that you are planning on taking a missions trip, it's time to start preparing. Here are a few suggestions to prepare right now so that your trip is most effective:

- Research. Study the country you are planning on visiting. Find out the major religions, language and population. Find out the names of the missionary family, their ministry and their background. If you get to know them through research, you will feel like you know them when you arrive.
- Raise the money. Find out how much money you need for airfare, lodging, visas and meals. Once you know how much money you need, begin saving up and raising the money to go. Send out a letter to family members, church people and friends (get the appropriate permission if you are doing so at church or a business). Let people know you are willing to do odd-jobs such as painting, yardwork, babysitting or cleaning to raise the funds for your missions trip. See if you can sell donuts, candy bars, have a bake sale or garage sale to save up money for your trip. If you're willing to save, work and pray, you will not have a hard time getting the needed amount so you can take a missions trip.
- Get the needed paperwork. If you don't currently have a passport, go to your local post office or courthouse and fill out the paperwork for a passport. You can get the application online, but make sure you get one right away instead of waiting. Find out if the country you are going to visit requires a visa. Some countries make you get a visa before you visit and some countries will allow you to pay for a visa once you arrive to the country, so make sure you talk to the missionary and find out what is required to visit his country.
- Take something special for the missionary. There are always items that a missionary misses from his home country and cannot purchase in on his field. Email and find out what he and his family like and then plan on purchasing some of those items (peanut butter, certain candies or cookies, chocolate chips, salad dressing or any number of items the missionary would like to have). You will be greatly loved and appreciated if you can take something special to the missionary that he cannot buy in his new country.
- Pray. Start praying that God would work in your life, that God would teach you something and that you would be a blessing to the people you are going to visit.

# Your Trip To-Do List

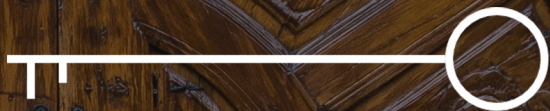


How can you make sure you get the most possible out of your trip? The time is going to go by quickly and soon the trip will be over, so here's a few ideas to make sure you get all you can out of this trip.

- Keep a journal. Everything will seem new, different and shocking to you at first. The way people live, the foods they eat, the smiles in the midst of poverty and the dedication of the Christians you met will all be so new to you, but it will also be soon forgotten if you don't write it down. Write down what God is doing in your life, the lessons you learned from the missionary as well as the people in the country, new foods you tried, the burden you felt and the cultural differences. What you journal during your trip will become a reference to remember when you get back from your trip.
- Jump all in. Don't be a spectator while you are visiting. Find out what the leaders need, what the missionary would like accomplished and how you can help in the missionary's ministry. Don't wait to be told what to do, jump in and help. After a meal, help clean up. Before and after a service, see what you can do to help get things ready or put away. If you aren't sure how you can help, ask the missionary what you can do to help. Talk to the people and be friendly even if you are limited by the language barrier. Grab some tracts or invitations to the church and pass them out. If you want to have a great time, make memories and be appreciated, jump all in by helping and filling any needs you see.
- Open your eyes and heart. Avoid using your computer or devices to play games or talk with friends or family back home. Of course it's fine to tell your mom you made it and are having a great time, but devices can become more of a distraction and you will miss what is right in front of you. Observe all you can by keeping your eyes open. Pray God will speak to your heart.
- Have a good attitude. Decide you're not going to be the person complaining about food, accommodations, how much you have to work or how much you miss home. Obey the authority that is set in place. Encourage others on the trip by having a positive, enthusiastic and proactive attitude. Make it your goal that both the missionary and people from that ministry will fall in love with you and your church group because of the good spirit and attitude you had while on the trip.



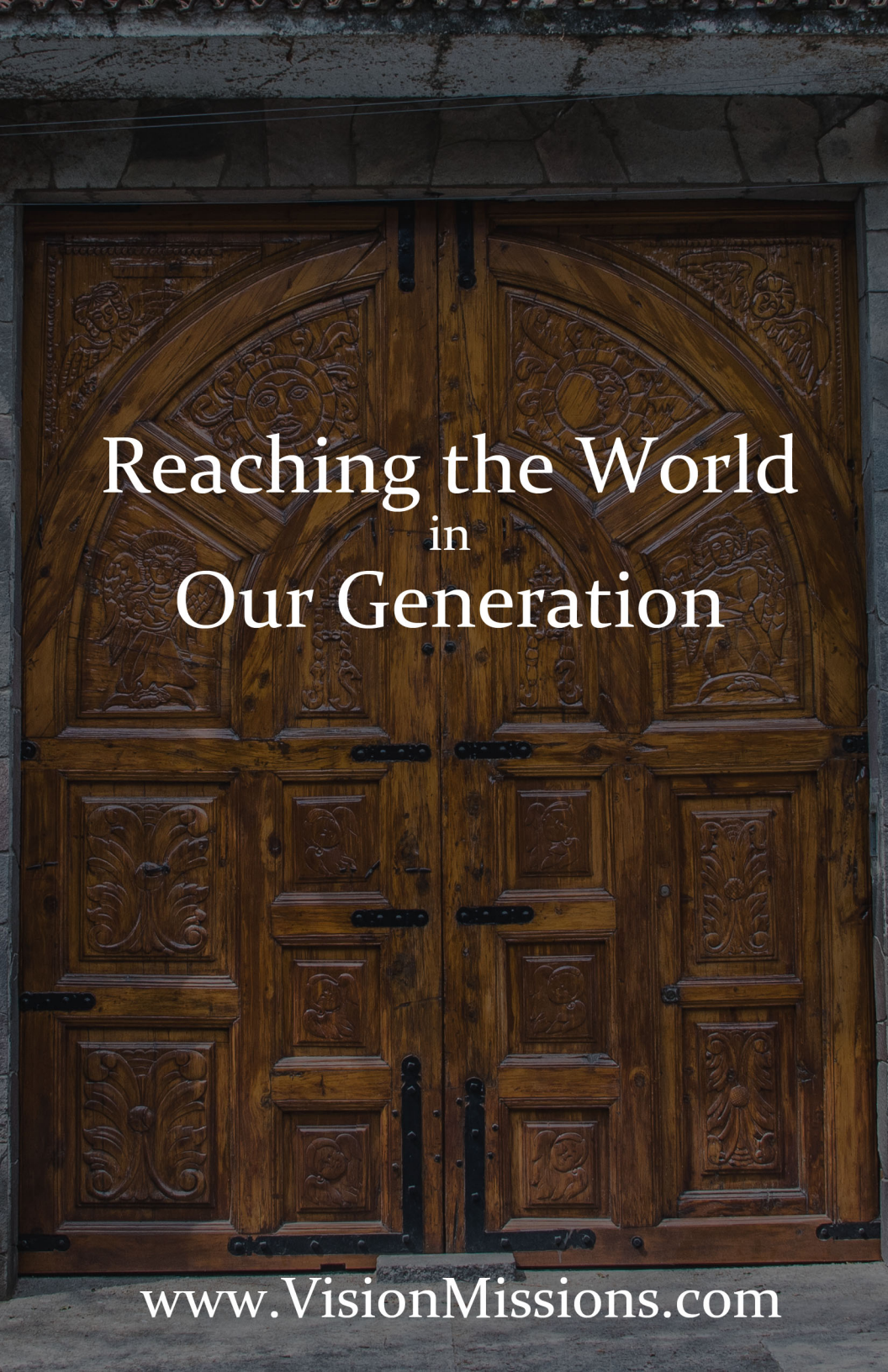
# When You Are Back



You have made it, your trip is over, but what happened can have a lasting impact if you will let it. We want to recommend that you think through the following list in order to get the best return from the trip you made:

- Share your testimony. Very likely your pastor will allow you to share with the church what happened on your trip, but even if you don't share with the church, you can write a letter to all those who helped you and let them know what happened. Tell your friends what God did in your life. Share with your Sunday school class and others; let the memory of what you did encourage others to take a trip in the future. Refer back to your journal so you can find the highlights of what to share when you give your testimony.
- Purchase a map and put it on your wall. Get a map of the country you just visited and a map of the world. Look at the map and pray for the missionary in that country and pray that God would send many more missionaries. The map will allow you to remember where you were and will be a constant reminder of the memories you experienced while on the trip.
- Recruit others to take a trip. Now that you've seen and experienced a new country, new food, sharing the Gospel and getting to know both new people and the missionary working in that country, you are the perfect person to recruit others to take a trip next year. If you enjoyed the trip there are many others that would enjoy it soon, they just need a little encouragement to pull the trigger and decide to go.
- Raise awareness. Share with your church, friends and family of the great need in that country, to support more missionaries and to pray for God's blessing and protection. Let everyone know what God is doing in the ministry where you just visited. Be the ambassador for that missionary and that country.
- Ask God what He wants from you. You have seen the great need and open doors, how do you think God would have you to be a part of more people hearing the Good News? Could you get involved more at your church? Could you give more in the missions program of your church? Would you be willing to tell God "yes" or volunteer to go as a missionary? God may not call every person to be a missionary, but many more people should struggle with the idea or at least ask God if He would want them to be a missionary.

- Stay in contact with the missionary. You just saw one of God's servants who is on the front lines of sharing the Gospel in another country, so try to maintain that contact. It wasn't a coincident or accident that you met the missionary, so stay in contact and allow the Lord to use the missionary to challenge and help you. Don't email him with questions that you can find on Wikipedia (the culture or weather). Ask how you can pray for him and ask what God is doing in his life. Send the missionary family a care package. Ask the missionary what you can do to be a blessing and help. Be the spokesman to your church for that missionary by sharing what is going on in the missionary's life and ministry.
- Plan a future trip. Maybe you can save up and set time aside to take another trip next year. If this missions trip encouraged, strengthened and challenged you, why not plan for another trip?



# Reaching the World in Our Generation

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