

*Short-Term Missions Workbook:  
From Mission Tourists to Global  
Citizens*

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*“If we Christians are not personally engaged in God’s great mission in the world, we have missed the very thing God created us to do. But doing what we were made for isn’t always easy. . . . This classic guide from my dear friend Tim Dearborn continues to be an excellent resource for preparing your most important missions tool – your heart.”*

– Richard Stearns, president emeritus of World Vision United States, author of *The Hole in Our Gospel*

## The World Is Our Classroom

One reason why the body of Christ invests in short-term mission is that it is an exceptional discipleship and mission-education experience – further equipping us for a lifetime of service in God’s kingdom. God is about to send you into a remarkable classroom (the world) with remarkable teachers (people and the Holy Spirit). A good short-term mission experience will lead people to reflect on several sets of pivotal and challenging questions. These Eight Great Questions will be explored more fully in the final chapter, but it’s helpful to begin thinking about them now.

### *What can I learn about myself?*

You will have abundant opportunities to see yourself in new ways. Seek to be open as a learner – even about yourself.

### *What can I learn about God?*

Our faith is expanded when we can see it through the eyes of people from a different background. Seek to understand why others believe as they do.

### *What can I learn about the people of God, the church, and community?*

While on a short-term mission trip, we often discover that other Christians’ forms of community worship and church life are different from our own. Seek to understand what contributes to a vibrant Christian community.

### *What can I learn about how culture affects the way we live and understand the gospel?*

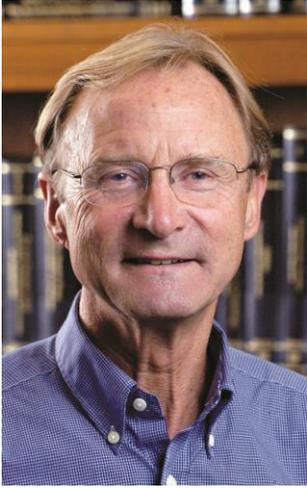
Our perceptions are conditioned by our culture and background. That is an inescapable part of life. However, entering into another culture can give us perspective on our own culture and possibly overcome some of the limitations of our understanding. Seek to gain new insights into the gospel that emerge from a different culture.

### *What can I learn about justice, economics, poverty, and politics?*

Serving in the developing world or in America’s inner cities often leads us to encounter poverty, economic disparity, injustice, and structural evil – as well as great kindness, courage, creativity, and compassion. Why do injustices exist, what is God doing in response, and to what form of engagement is God calling the church? Seek to explore these tough and urgent issues. Why are some poor and others rich? What does God say about this?

### *What can I learn about discipleship?*

When we engage in short-term mission, we often have the privilege of encountering people with a radical dedication to Jesus Christ. We go seeking to grow in our faith; we also go seeking to share it. We often end up receiving far more than we expected. Seek to gain one new insight into what it means to be a disciple of Christ. Seek to have one new step of



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faithfulness permanently incorporated into your life.

***What can I learn about a globally appropriate lifestyle?***

In light of what we learn about poverty and international economics, what are some implications not just for society in general but also for our own lifestyles as Christians? Seek to discern one way you can live differently in response to the needs of others around the world.

***What can I learn about my own vocation?***

Finally, what is God seeking to say to you about your own life and work? What insight do you gain into your calling and God's will for your life? For those who are students, what questions do you want to pursue more fully in your courses and degree programs in light of what you've learned and seen? Seek to understand ways you can steward the gifts, talents, and time with which God has entrusted you in order to participate more fully in God's purposes in the world.

— Taken from chapter one, "The God of Mission"