

Maximize Your Mission Ministry Impact!

Sample STM Devotionals



**Focused
Devotional
Bible Study
Journals for
Short-Term
Missions**



Pre-Field

Getting
READY to GO

On-Field

Sequenced to the
Culture-Shock curve

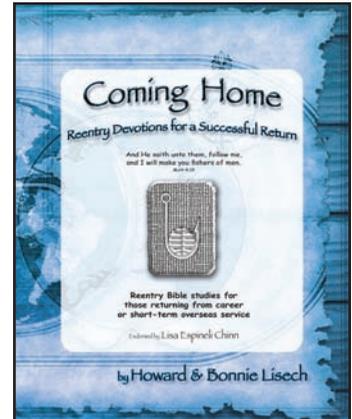
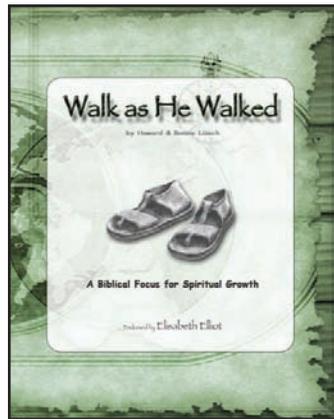
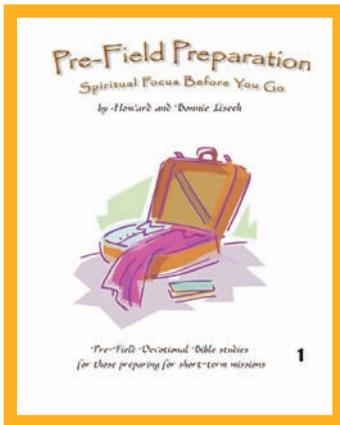
Re-Entry

Sequenced to the
Reentry-Stress curve

Sample Book

Welcome to our FREE Short-Term Missions pdf sampler

In the next 40 pages you will find sample pages from one of our *THREE different* **Pre-Field** devotionals. Following those are sample pages from one of our *FOUR different* **On-Field** devotionals, and at the end of this pdf you will find some sample pages from one of our *THREE different* **Reentry** devotionals.



Contact Howard Lisech
Deeper Roots Publications

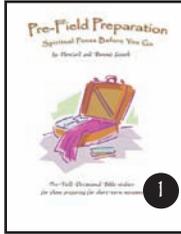
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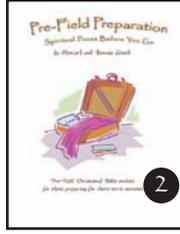
What's Available?

In this free preview booklet you will find a *sample* devotional from a **Pre-Field**, an **On-Field**, and a **Reentry** devotional Bible study. For use by long and short-term missionaries.

Pre-Field devotional journals



Book 1
7 Days
14 Days



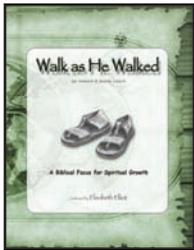
Book 2
7 Days

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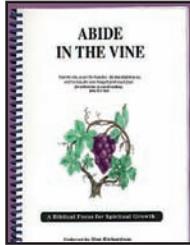
As you can see, our devotional Bible study journals come in various lengths to fit your time frame.

Ask about **CUSTOM editions** for your church or organization where we can use your logo and your personal message in the first 2 pages for your team members.

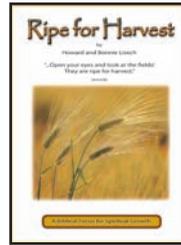
On-Field devotional journals sequenced to the Culture-Shock Curve



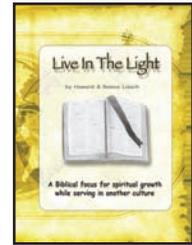
Book 1
14 Days
21 Days
30 Days*
50 Days



Book 2
14 Days
21 Days
30 Days*
50 Days

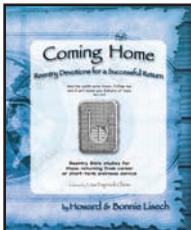


Book 3
14 Days
21 Days



Book 4
14 Days

Reentry devotional journals sequenced to the Reentry-Stress Curve



Book 1
14 Days

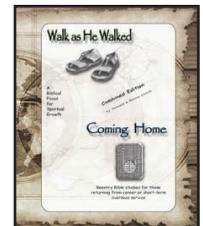


Book 2
14 Days

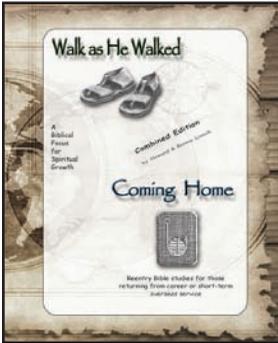


Book 3
14 Days

See page 3
for various
COMBO books



2 part COMBO books containing On-Field & Reentry sections



14 Day WAHW/ 14 Day CH
21 Day WAHW/ 14 Day CH*



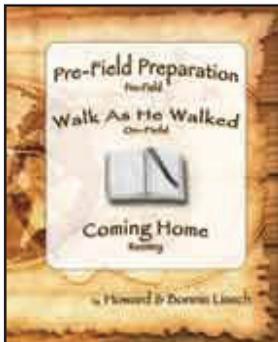
14 Day ABIDE/ 14 Day CHA *
21 Day ABIDE/ 14 Day CHA *



14 Day RIPE/ 14 Day CHA *
21 Day RIPE/ 14 Day CHA *

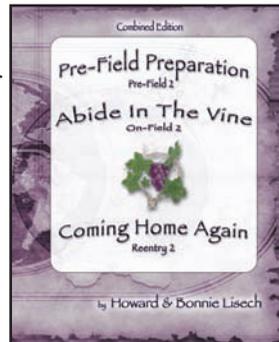
**Available by special order.*

3 part COMBO books containing Pre-Field, On-Field, & Reentry sections

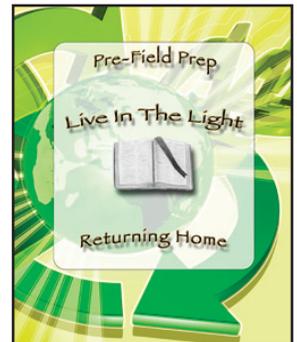


7 Day PFP/14 Day WAHW/14 Day CH

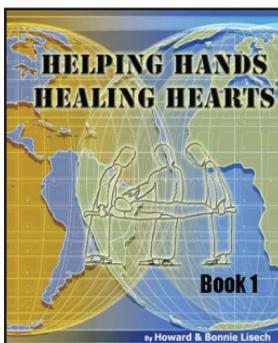
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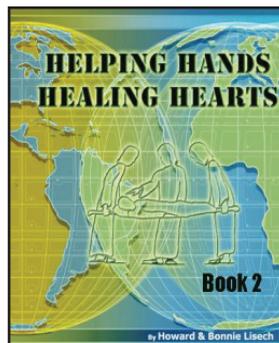
7 Day PFP/14 Day Abide/14 Day CHA



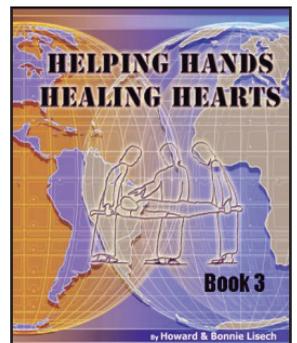
7 Day PFP/14 Day LITL/14 Day RH



Book 1
8 Pre-Field/14 On-Field/8 Reentry
Especially for medical team members



Book 2
8 Pre-Field/14 On-Field/8 Reentry
Especially for medical team members



Book 3
8 Pre-Field/14 On-Field/8 Reentry
Especially for medical team members

This
Copy of

Pre-Field Preparation

Spiritual Focus Before You Go

Belongs To



Pre-Field

Pre-Field Preparation

Spiritual Focus Before You Go

14 Devotional Bible Studies



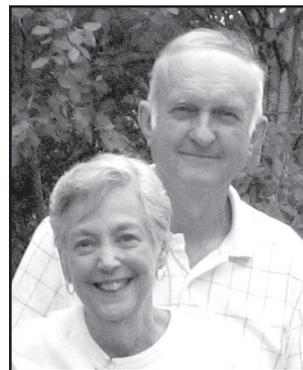
Written by
Howard and Bonnie Lisech

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The purpose of this three part “sample” book is to show you the table of contents and give you a small taste of the different types of short-term mission devotionals that we write.



Howard & Bonnie Lisech

Our studies will help you provide focused, Bible based resources that challenge and encourage your team through inductive questions, space for written answers, and JOURNAL pages for recording their spiritual insights.

Pre-Field materials are designed to help prepare the hearts and minds of team members **BEFORE** they leave home for ministry in another culture.

On-Field resources are sequenced to the **Culture-Shock Curve** to provide the right content to match the emotional highs and lows mission team members experience when faced with very different cultures and values.

The **Reentry-Stress Curve** is a real and documented fact. Whether they’ve been overseas for 1 week or 1 year, our Reentry resources have been helpful to thousands. While the value of *Reentry* Bible studies are sometimes underestimated, they are highly important to a person returning home after being stretched in another culture. To disregard their relevancy may diminish or even nullify the long-term effects of a cross-cultural experience.

Using our Deeper Roots Publications resources will aid your team members get the most from all three phases of the STM experience and maximize the time and expense invested.

As you seek to improve the quality and impact of your short-term trips, we encourage you to request 21 day evaluation copies of several of our valuable resources.

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DeeperRoots@aol.com

www.DeeperRoots.com

SHORT-TERM MISSIONS RESOURCES

PRE-FIELD PREPARATION BOOK 1- 7 & 14 DAY EDITIONS – LISECH	(Pre-Field)
PRE-FIELD PREPARATION BOOK 2 - 7 DAY EDITION – LISECH	(Pre-Field)
BEFORE YOU GO - A SHORT-TERM MISSIONS MANUAL – ERICKSON	(Pre-Field)
WALK AS HE WALKED (BOOK 1) - 50 DAY EDITION – LISECH	(On-Field)
WALK AS HE WALKED (BOOK 1) - 30 DAY EDITION – LISECH	(On-Field)
WALK AS HE WALKED (BOOK 1) - 21 DAY EDITION – LISECH	(On-Field)
WALK AS HE WALKED (BOOK 1) - 14 DAY EDITION – LISECH	(On-Field)
ABIDE IN THE VINE (BOOK 2) - 50 DAY EDITION – LISECH	(On-Field)
ABIDE IN THE VINE (BOOK 2) - 30 DAY EDITION – LISECH	(On-Field)
ABIDE IN THE VINE (BOOK 2) - 21 DAY EDITION – LISECH	(On-Field)
ABIDE IN THE VINE (BOOK 2) - 14 DAY EDITION – LISECH	(On-Field)
RIPE FOR HARVEST (BOOK 3) - 21 DAY EDITION – LISECH	(On-Field)
RIPE FOR HARVEST (BOOK 3) - 14 DAY EDITION – LISECH	(On-Field)
LIVE IN THE LIGHT (BOOK 4) - 14 DAY EDITION – LISECH	(On-Field)
COMING HOME (BOOK 1) - 14 DAY OVERSEAS RETURN EDITION – LISECH	(Reentry)
COMING HOME AGAIN (BOOK 2) - 14 DAY OVERSEAS RETURN EDITION – LISECH	(Reentry)
RETURNING HOME (BOOK 3) - 14 DAY OVERSEAS RETURN EDITION – LISECH	(Reentry)
REENTRY GUIDE FOR SHORT TERM MISSION LEADERS – CHINN	(Reentry)
HELPING HANDS-HEALING HEARTS (BOOK 1) – LISECH (Pre-Field, ON-FIELD, REENTRY FOR Medical Teams)	
HELPING HANDS-HEALING HEARTS (BOOK 2) – LISECH (Pre-Field, ON-FIELD, REENTRY FOR Medical Teams)	
HELPING HANDS-HEALING HEARTS (BOOK 3) – LISECH (Pre-Field, ON-FIELD, REENTRY FOR Medical Teams)	

HOME & CHRISTIAN SCHOOL BIBLE CURRICULUM RESOURCES

ROOTED & GROUNDED – 10-12TH GRADE & ADULT BIBLE CURRICULUM – LISECH & HARRIS
DISCOVERING OUR AMAZING GOD – 7-9TH GRADE CURRICULUM – HARRIS & LISECH
DISCOVERING WHO I AM IN CHRIST 7-9TH GRADE BIBLE CURRICULUM – HARRIS & LISECH
DISCOVERING CHRISTLIKE HABITS 7-9TH GRADE BIBLE CURRICULUM – HARRIS & LISECH
DISCOVERING CHRISTLIKE CHARACTER 7-9TH GRADE BIBLE CURRICULUM – HARRIS & LISECH

DEVOTIONAL QUIET TIME JOURNALS

“QUIET TIME” FOR BUSY PEOPLE (BOOK 1) – LISECH
“QUIET TIME” FOR BUSY PEOPLE (BOOK 2) – LISECH
“QUIET TIME” FOR BUSY PEOPLE (BOOK 3) – LISECH

Unless noted, all Scripture quotations in this book are (NIV) from the The Holy Bible, New International Version, ©1978 by the New York International Bible Society, published by the Zondervan Corporation

Scripture quotations designated (KJV) are from the King James Version

PRE-FIELD PREPARATION (BOOK 1) - 7 day & 14 day devotional Bible studies

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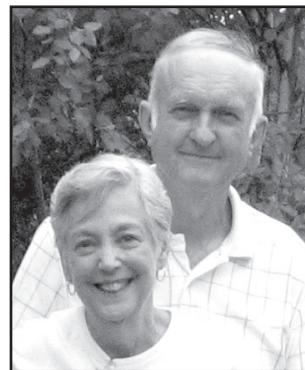
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page	
	8	Before You Go
Day 1	9	The World Will Know!
Day 2	13	A Spiritual Heart
Day 3	17	Be Teachable
Day 4	21	Don't Be Afraid
Day 5	25	"Everyone Must Submit"
Day 6	29	The Yoke
Day 7	33	God—Our Refuge and Strength
Day 8	37	Building Other's Up
Day 9	41	Light Of The World
Day 10	45	Joy—The Mark Of A Christian
Day 11	49	God's Work—Awesome On Man's Behalf
Day 12	53	Right Thinking
Day 13	57	Prayer—His Will With Thanksgiving
Day 14	61	Great Is The Lord

WHO WE ARE



Since 1993, we have been writing and publishing short-term missions devotional Bible studies for those who are going to and returning from cross-cultural areas to minister to people who need the good news of Jesus Christ. *Pre-Field Preparation*, *Walk as He Walked*, *Abide in The Vine*, *Ripe for Harvest*, *Live in The Light*, *Coming Home* (formerly *Fishers of Men*), *Coming Home AGAIN*, and *Returning Home* are collections of concepts, life principles, and personal insights that we have developed into short devotional studies taken from God's Word.

The Lord revealed some of the truths included in this series during several years of missionary training and overseas field assignment as missionaries in Papua New Guinea. We learned other life-changing lessons through personal Bible study, deep spiritual need, during ill health, and through redeployment to a stateside ministry.

While serving as leaders of a successful short-term mission program for many years, we focused on mobilizing and training North American Christians to have a vision for the world. We gained additional insights observing and teaching hundreds of short-term missionaries during pre-field training and reentry seminars. Other insights came as a result of discipling and teaching in our local church. These studies are a result of our personal search and desire to live and model the type of Christianity that works in every circumstance of life.

Personal leadership of six summer missions teams in Nepal, Belize, and Ecuador, combined with travel to Haiti, Bolivia, Mexico, and Guatemala, reinforced the importance of making God's Word a priority. Originally targeted for short termers, we have seen these studies encourage and challenge those ministering overseas and many other Christians here at home! We praise God for His Word, wisdom, patience, and incredible faithfulness to us over the years. We desire that these materials will be a tremendous encouragement to others to walk with the Lord regardless of the challenges and circumstances of life.

Our publications such as *Pre-Field Preparation* (Book 1 & Book 2) can help anyone that desires to prepare their heart for significant ministry in another culture. *Walk as He Walked*, *Abide in The Vine*, *Ripe for Harvest*, and *Live in The Light* are designed for use during the overseas portion of a ministry trip. *Coming Home—Reentry Devotions for a Successful Return* and *Coming Home AGAIN—Reentry Devotions for Another Successful Return* and *Returning Home* were born from our desire to help people come home **successfully**, readjust, and continue getting to know God as a person! They are highly recommended as ideal follow-up reentry studies. We have had many positive reports from both long and short-term workers as they reenter their home culture. We also have several "COMBO" books where 2 or 3 different books that deal with different facets of the trip are combined in one volume. *Walk as He Walked/Coming Home*, *Abide in The Vine/Coming Home Again*, *PPF/Live in The Light/Returning Home*, and *Helping Hands-Healing Hearts* (Book 1 & Book 2 for medical team), are other examples of "COMBO" books.

We hope they will be a blessing.

Howard & Bonnie Lisach

Before You Go

As you go into another culture, it will be a significant step of faith and an experience which can impact you for the rest of your life. Whether there will be lasting benefit to you and those you hope to minister to is mostly up to you and the way you prepare for the experience. As you get ready to go, you may experience excitement, adrenaline, busyness, pressure, frustration and even a hint of worry. Leaving the “known” and venturing into the “unknown” can be stressful, but that’s why preparing your heart for ministry and service in another culture is essential. Take the challenge to prepare seriously as you complete *Pre-Field Preparation*.



These brief devotional Bible studies will bring different concepts and principles to your mind as you open God’s Word. Allow Him to teach, challenge, and prepare your heart for significant ministry.



There are no short cuts! You certainly wouldn’t think of rushing down to the local airport just in time to catch your overseas flight without taking your suitcase, medications, extra clothes, shaving kit, etc. That would be absurd. This trip is not just another day in your life. It takes considerable and intentional effort to get ready to go on a ministry trip to another culture. Don’t fall into the trap of exerting so much effort on the physical preparations that you forget the essential discipline of preparing your heart spiritually.

You will face challenges, discomforts, disappointments, and strange foods and smells. More importantly, you will find significant opportunities to show Christ’s love

Pre-Field

to people who desperately need it. When you can't even say "Hi, how are you?" in the local language, people will be observing that you are different because of your Christian love and character.

Take pre-field preparation seriously and ask the Lord, "What would you have me do or change in order to best represent YOU on my mission trip?" Give Him the right to reveal anything in your heart that needs attention before you set foot on foreign soil. You will gain new perspectives, purposes,

Your heart will be stretched on this trip and it will never be quite as small again after you return.

values, and a deeper understanding of God's heart for the lost and hurting people of our world. Make sure you are willing to do "whatever it takes" to equip yourself spiritually for this exciting ministry experience. You will

be amazed to discover that as you go to "minister" you may instead find yourself being "ministered to" by the very people you want to help.

The devotional Bible studies in *Pre-Field Preparation* may excite you, challenge you, and occasionally convict you. Ask the Lord to use these studies to open your mind and heart as you prepare for ministry in a cross-cultural setting. We encourage you as you GO FOR IT! But we do encourage you to GO PREPARED!



Day 1

The World Will Know!

By this all men will know that you are my disciples,
if you love one another.”

John 13:35

In most countries, you'll stand out in a crowd because you are obviously from another culture. John 13:35 promises that if you love one another, you will be known by the peoples of the world as followers of Jesus. Loving others may seem like a simple command, but the love Jesus asks for is beyond the norm.

1. Read John 13:34-35. Loving others is commanded in the Old Testament. What makes this command to love new?
2. According to Rom. 5:8, how was Christ an example of this extraordinary love?
3. Read 1 John 3:16. How did the Apostle John define *love*?
4. By now, you should understand why this kind of love is not the norm. In ourselves we don't possess the capacity to love in this way. According to the verses you've read in this study so far, what is the major characteristic of Christ's love that makes it beyond human love?
5. According to Rom. 5:5, who gives a believer power to love others the way Jesus loved?

Pre-Field

(The love God gives to believers by the Holy Spirit is called “agape” love. Agape love includes a willingness to sacrifice or suffer for the sake of another. This is the love that is a fruit of the Spirit [Gal. 5:22]. Agape love often means making a choice with our will and ignoring our feelings.)

6. The opportunity to die in another’s place is rare, though it has happened. It is more common to be called upon to die, sometimes daily, to our own desires for the sake of another. Give two examples of this kind of love. Examples: Forgiving a fellow believer when they offended you is a sacrificial act of agape love.

“Love is denial of self for another’s gain.
It is doing what Jesus Himself would do.”*

7. In 1 John 3:18, what problem is John addressing? How does John say agape love is demonstrated?

8. According to Gal. 5:13b, how is love demonstrated? Why may we find it difficult to obey this command?

9. Love is an action word. Often helpful deeds that are not expected are some of the greatest actions of love. Why?

10. Give examples of ways you might be called upon to serve another believer.

*The Expositors Bible Commentary

11. Remember, “Love is denial of self for another’s gain. It is doing what Jesus would do.” Jesus’ life is the perfect model of love, both in word and action. Think back through His life and list at least five ways, other than His death on the cross, in which He sacrificed to love others.

If you are going on a mission trip on your own, with a partner, or with a team, agape love for other believers is the key. The world’s people *will know* that you are a follower of Jesus. In fact, this is God’s promise!

Let all that you do be done in love. 1 Cor. 16:14

12. Agape love begins at home. Are you currently demonstrating agape love by serving your family members? Explain. What is the meaning of 1 Cor. 13:3.

Remember: Agape love only comes through the empowering of the Holy Spirit when a believer is in fellowship with Christ through obedience, (no unconfessed sin). In Scripture, this is called walking in the light. (See 1 John 1:5-9.)

Challenge Project: Now is the time to practice! Do something loving for a family member or friend that is totally unexpected and that requires personal sacrifice. Journal by explaining your deed and record your thoughts and insights.

Thank the Lord for pouring out His love into your heart through the Holy Spirit.
Ask God to empower you to love with actions beyond the norm as you walk with
Him through yielding to His will and obeying the Word.
Pray that the world will know you follow Jesus.

On-Field

Walk As He Walked

Devotions for a Successful Missions Trip

14 Devotional Bible Studies



Biblical Focus for Spiritual Growth

Written by
Howard and Bonnie Lisech

Editorial Assistance
Jaye Hughes

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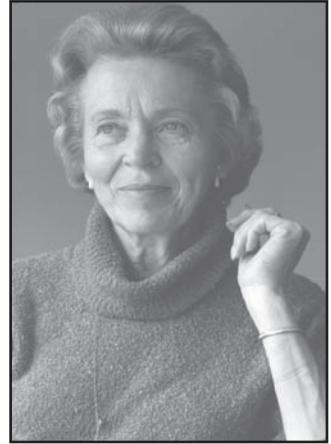
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ELISABETH ELLIOT

Noted missionary speaker and author* had this to say about

"WALK AS HE WALKED"

"The Liseches have had not only missionary experience, but much experience of the faithfulness of God in deep personal trials and afflictions. They have blessed the lives of many young people in training them to be faithful, humble, true followers of the One who loved us and gave Himself for us. I believe this little book would be deeply practical in the preparation of anyone who honestly wants to follow the Crucified."



Warmly,

*Books by Elisabeth Elliot

"THROUGH GATES OF SPLENDOR"

"SHADOW OF THE ALMIGHTY"

"THE DIARY OF JIM ELLIOT"

"THE SAVAGE MY KINSMAN"

"THE SHAPING OF A CHRISTIAN FAMILY"

"THE LIBERTY OF OBEDIENCE"

"DISCIPLINE: THE GLAD SURRENDER"

"PASSION AND PURITY"

and others

Table of Contents

Day 1	HERE AT LAST!
Day 2	WALK AS HE WALKED
Day 3	A PURE AND HOLY LIFE
Day 4	LOVING OTHERS
Day 5	BE A SERVANT
Day 6	EXPECTATIONS
Day 7	OBEY YOUR LEADERS
Day 8	“FORGIVE AS THE LORD FORGAVE YOU”
Day 9	BE ANXIOUS FOR NOTHING
Day 10	TRIALS, PERSEVERANCE, GROWTH, AND JOY!
Day 11	COMPLAINING—GOD TAKES IT PERSONALLY
Day 12	ALL FOR THE GLORY OF GOD
Day 13	GOD IS FAITHFUL
Day 14	THE REAL TREASURE

KEEPING YOUR SPIRITUAL JOURNAL

Congratulations on your decision to travel, serve, and minister in another culture and location. What a tremendous opportunity to grow and mature. Keeping a journal will help you remember some of the things God does in your life.

As you complete the devotional studies, during your personal quiet time, make a conscious effort to listen to and be open to whatever God wants to teach you. Use the blank journal pages that follow each devotional to record your thoughts. Try to focus on and answer one or more of the following questions:

What is God teaching you about Himself, in terms of who He is? (His nature and character)

What is the Lord using to encourage you about His love and care for you?

What is God teaching you about His purpose and plan for you?

What is God teaching you about yourself?

What is God doing that may be causing you to reevaluate your life goals and values?

What person or concern is the Lord leading you to pray for?

What attitude changes or actions of obedience do you think God wants you to make?

Day 5

Be A Servant

*And whosoever will be chief among you,
let him be your servant: Matt. 20:27 KJV*

“And whoever wants to be first must be your slave—,” says the NIV translation. Such an interesting principle; to be first you must be a servant to others. This concept is totally contrary to what we think is logical and what is taught by the world. Read Matt. 20:25-28 for the teaching of Jesus on this matter. Write the world’s view on this subject.

Can you imagine what would happen if believers took this teaching as seriously as they should? Everyone would be serving each other with the same attitude that Jesus had. Record your thoughts.

Read Phil. 2:7. Write one area of life—an area of potential temptation to us—that Jesus gave up to become a servant. Share an area that you have given up, or need to give up, to be a servant.

One of the most beautiful examples of Christ's servanthood is found in John 13: 1-17. In the Jewish culture, washing the feet of his master's guests was the task of the lowliest servant. Walking on dirt roads wearing sandals made very dusty, dirty feet!

Read John 13:1-17.

You might have noticed that Jesus washed their feet after the meal. The washing of feet usually took place as the guests arrived. Not one of the disciples was willing to take on this lowly task—not even to wash the feet of Jesus.

Are you willing to serve others, even if it is not your appointed job?

According to verse 17, what is the result of a servant attitude and action?

Read Phil. 2:3-4 and note the heart attitude needed to be a servant.

Note what changes need to take place in your life. What plan of action will you take to serve others?

PRAYER SUGGESTIONS

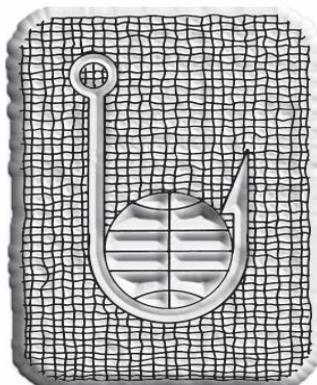
Praise God for His unconditional love for you. Agree with God about any sin He has revealed to you through this lesson. Thank Him for His complete cleansing and the wonderful fellowship with Christ that has been restored. Share with God your need for dependence on Him as you seek to have the attitude of Christ—that of a humble servant.

Re-entry

Coming Home

Reentry Devotions for a Successful Return

14 Devotional Bible Studies
with reentry and debrief questions



Developed and Written by
Howard and Bonnie Lisech

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LISA ESPINELI CHINN

Cross-Cultural Trainer and Consultant

COMING HOME
&
COMING HOME AGAIN



“Who is there for the returning missionary on their first, second, or third reentry?”

Family, friends, and the church become key support people who will listen, understand, and encourage the eager and tired returnee. After the initial sharing and euphoria are over, who stays on to care and listen?

The Liseches have skillfully and sensitively woven together the principles of God’s Word and the issues of readjustment and reentry into each of these reentry studies.

Coming Home—Reentry Devotions for a Successful Return Book 1

takes the readers to the One who is constantly there to comfort and guide. It is a refreshing addition to the meager reentry resources in missions today. This is a ‘must’ Bible study guide for everyone returning home after a time of service in another setting or country.

Coming Home Again—Reentry Devotions for Another Successful Return Book 2

is recommended if you have already completed *Coming Home* (previously titled *Fishers of Men*). *Coming Home Again* will be so very helpful as you process another overseas experience.”

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Author,

“*Reentry Guide for Short-Term Mission Leaders*”: a reentry resource for STM leaders

“*Think Home*”: a reentry guide for returning Christian International students

“*Customs and Culture*”: A very helpful simulation game for those who are reentering their culture

Table of Contents

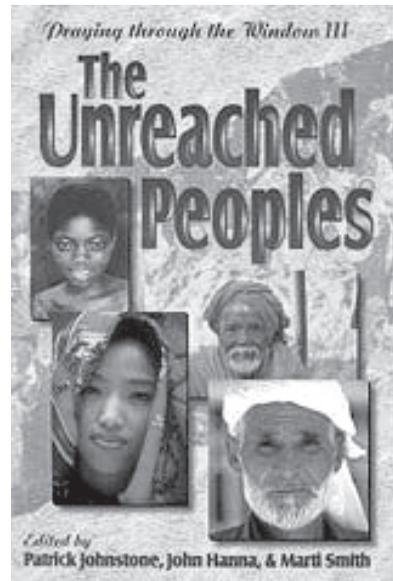
	Page	
	9	Coming Home
	10	Important Reentry Issues
	13	Take Your Time
Day 1	15	Saying Goodbye
Day 2	19	Remember God's Mighty Deeds
Day 3	23	Back to the Land
Day 4	27	The Lord Will Sustain You
Day 5	31	Fret Not
Day 6	35	Speech, Seasoned With Salt
Day 7	39	Do You Want to Get Well?
Day 8	43	Avoiding A Critical Heart
Day 9	47	"Delight Yourself in the Lord"
Day 10	51	Powerful and Effective Prayer
Day 11	55	God's Heart for All Nations
Day 12	61	You Can Make A Difference
Day 13	63	God's Will For You
Day 14	69	100% Guaranteed Success
Day 15	71	Your Final Challenge

COMING HOME

As you return from serving in another culture, you are involved in what is called the “reentry process.” People returning from overseas service don’t usually expect to have to “reenter” their own culture. Remember this: you have experienced significantly different people and places and you have changed. This experience will continue to change your attitude, outlook, and life values. You will have new perspectives and a new appreciation for what God is doing in the world and how you “fit.” Some of the cross-cultural relationships that you formed will influence you forever. It may take months or even years for you to understand the total impact. The magnitude and effect of your cross-cultural experience may elude you for a time, and you may even deny that you are different. Then, after a period of time, you will begin to realize and appreciate the changes in your perspective of the Lord, and of the peoples of the World that He loves.

Our Lord wants to conform us to the image of Christ. As you return to your home, work, neighborhood, church, or your school, you will have unique opportunities to share your overseas experience. Share with enthusiasm, love, and compassion. However, if you encounter apathy or insensitivity, *don't allow yourself to be critical*. Show how God is changing you from who you were, to the person He wants you to be—a *fisher of men*—a World Christian. Share how you are beginning to see the peoples of the world more from God’s perspective than from your own. Choose to serve rather than being served. Talk is cheap, but your actions will prove your new love and vision.

Your overseas trip is over. It was only a first step. Remember how frightening it was to take that step of faith? Consider the impact in your life. You wouldn’t have missed it. The second step of your journey begins as you choose to obey, grow, and get to know God as a friend, a loving Father, and most importantly as LORD. To grow significantly, you will need to exercise discipline. It will take some effort on your part. The choice is up to you. Don’t allow yourself to fall into old patterns and routines. As you grow and mature, you will be able to understand God’s will for you much more clearly. The Word of God is the key to unlocking God’s plan for your life. Don’t misplace your key - *choose* to read and meditate on scripture as you continue to spend quality time in His Word.



A Reentry Letter

When Peter, Edmund, Lucy, and Susan stepped out of the wardrobe*, they were shocked to find out that no one seemed to know anything about the world from which they had just returned. In Narnia, they had experienced the breathtaking beauty of the place and its citizens; they had discovered things about themselves they had not known before; they had conquered evil; they had known love on new and different levels; they had met friends that had challenged all of their normal ways of thinking. They had been important people there. They had completely become a part of that world. So when they walked out of the wardrobe, they were shocked to find their changes were unapparent to everyone around them. When to the children, the changes they saw in themselves were so great that they were now almost completely different people.

We recently had the privilege of having 4 American college guys come live, work, and serve with us. Our boys (as we lovingly called them) faced every challenge head-on without complaint. They dove into the culture and lifestyle of our area 100%. They made friends with many Chinese students, became a part of the host homes that they lived in, and made every effort to encourage and help out the long-term team. Many people heard of Jesus and His sacrifice this summer because of their faithfulness in being both patient and bold. At the end of their time with us, during their debriefing time, we shared how returning to America can feel uncannily like the Peter, Edmund, Lucy, and Susan must have felt when they stepped out of the wardrobe. As we prepared the guys to return to America, we realized that we were also talking to ourselves. Within weeks of our short-term guys leaving, nearly our entire team returned to their home countries for our home-leave (furlough, home assignment) times.

And I must say, we were right! It feels exactly like I've stepped out of my "wardrobe life" into another one. I often ponder what a strange life I live as a missionary, and maybe one of the strangest parts is this thing called Home Leave. I've asked many questions in the month I've been back in America. Who am I? What am I supposed to do today? Why do I feel so awkward in situations that look so familiar?

But the hardest part for me has been transitioning community going from my place in the

* *Narnia* - DISNEY PICTURES, & *The Lion, the Witch, and The Wardrobe*, CS LEWIS

Re-entry



community of Chinese friends and team that I have worked so hard to foster back to my circle of family and friends here in America who I am used to missing from a distance. This has been a super hard transition to navigate, but the Lord has been faithful in granting strength. Also, my family and friends here have helped so much in being persistent and patient with me. I am thankful.

It has been so good for me to have chances to share about China and what the Lord is doing there. Living there, I have become so accustomed to the world around me that I've become a little blind to things that are good to remember. China is an AMAZING place. My Chinese friends are incredibly kind, patient, generous, and hospitable. I have learned so much from living there. I am thankful

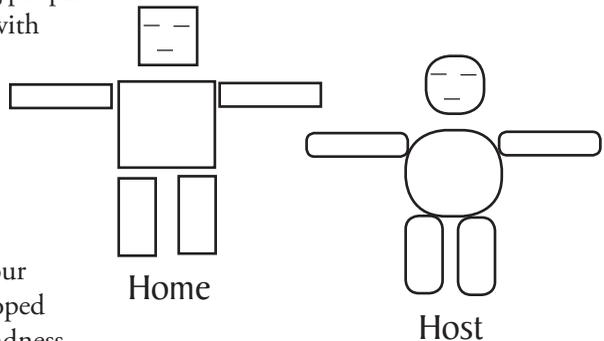
Angie S.

As Angie's letter illustrates, returning home is an uncertain time whether we have been gone for 2 weeks or 2 years. Often things just don't "feel" right and we usually don't expect that.

1. Things may have changed a little or a lot in your absence as you were immersed in another culture. Hundreds of little things change every day, but if we aren't here to adjust to them, they can make us feel out of touch.

2. More importantly, YOU have changed. No matter how long or how short your immersion in another culture, you will be significantly different as you return home. Before you leave home, you can't realize how much the cross-cultural experience will impact you.

Several years ago I saw an illustration* depicting people going from their home culture as stick figures with SQUARES representing the values, ideals, and dreams of the home culture. The host culture was depicted by stick figures that were ROUND. Their roundness was the sum total of their values, ideals and dreams.



Before we leave home, we fit perfectly in our SQUARE holes because our squareness was developed from the time we were infants, just as their roundness

*Concept adapted from LIFE Ministries training materials



was perfectly developed as they grew, thrived, and adapted to their culture and values. Seldom do we realize that whether we are SQUARES or ROUNDS, when we enter another culture, our values, dreams, desires, and experiences are slightly shaped by the host culture. We quickly learn that in many Asian cultures, we leave our shoes at the door. In some cultures, you don't knock on the door of a

See COMING HOME
(book-1)
for complete text and explanations.

right—it's about different.

If we don't recognize how we have changed, we can come home with a critical spirit. We can fall into the trap of criticizing or questioning our church's wisdom. If we observed joyful believers in Guatemala who only had two meals per day, it doesn't seem right to purchase carpet for the youth group room or spend thousands to pave the parking lot. If we sat for four hours on a log in an African church service, spending money for padding for the pews seems like a big waste. Remember, before you left for your missions assignment, you would have seen these examples as perfectly appropriate. **It's true—you have changed!**

Take your time

Great drops of sweat soak into the burning sand. We have all seen it on newscasts and films—soldiers carefully, very carefully, probing the soil and inching forward through a minefield or checking for IEDs. Progress is painfully slow and deliberate. Sometimes you can see

the tension etched on faces, and clothing wet with perspiration. One wrong move and the soldier could become a sudden casualty. Hours of deliberate, intense, painstaking, and nervewracking work often yield only a few feet of progress. The words of wise instructors ring in the soldier's ears. Training and discipline are essential for success and safety. A soldier



See **COMING HOME** for complete text and explanations.

*For more information see *Reentry Guide for Short-Term Ministry Leaders*, Lisa Espinelli Chinn, Deeper Roots Publications

What are some of the effects of reentry stress?

Reentry Stress is often signaled by feelings of:

- *Loneliness*-You feel isolated from family or friends, all alone in a crowd.
- *Being “out of place”*-You don’t seem to “fit” anymore.
- *Detachment*-You are watching what is going on, but you’re more spectator than participant.
- *Confusion*-Even common situations can create unusual feelings or responses in you.
- *Frustration*-No one understands or even cares how much you want to make a difference, now that you are home.
- *Anger*-Materialism and indifference to things that matter make you angry.
- *Discontentment*-The place you just left seems more like home than the surroundings

See COMING HOME for
complete text and explanations.

DAY 1

Saying Goodbye

When Jesus therefore saw his mother, and the disciple standing by, whom he loved, he saith unto his mother, Woman, behold thy son! Then saith he to the disciple, Behold thy mother! And from that hour that disciple took her unto his own home.

John 19:26-27 KJV

In our culture, saying goodbye is one way we bring closure—a satisfactory conclusion to a time spent with a person or a place. Goodbyes can be both painful and joyful. They can change our lives by ending one phase of our lives and beginning another. This life holds many goodbyes: when we leave family and friends for college, marriage, or the mission field; when we're separated by a major move or extended travel; and when we experience the final earthly separation by the death of a loved one. In the scripture above, Jesus says goodbye to his mother.

Read John 19:25-27. Write down your thoughts concerning a difficult time of saying goodbye. Note relationships and places involved. How did this change your life?

In the NIV translation, the word “dear” is placed before the word “woman.” The word “woman” in this verse conveys “great respect.” What kind of relationship do you think Jesus had with his mother? In what way did Jesus bring closure to this phase of life for his mother and Himself?

Jesus said goodbye to his dearest friends. In Luke 24:50-53 and Acts 1:9, Jesus knew the importance of bringing closure with final goodbyes and blessing. According to these verses, what did Jesus do to give the disciples a proper closing to the present phase of their lives and a beginning for the next phase?

How do you think the disciples felt as they saw Him leave?

What activities did the disciples enjoy after Jesus departed? What needs were met?

Do you think the disciples would have experienced problems successfully beginning this new phase in their lives if they had not been allowed to see Jesus leave in this manner? Share your thoughts.

Can you think of other things we do in our culture to bring closure? For example, sometimes we give gifts.

Have you terminated any relationships before or during your overseas experience, without a proper and adequate closure? Are these unresolved conflicts that you need to deal with? If you do not carefully pursue satisfactory closure, you may carry burdens, guilt and unrealistic expectations into the next phase of life. Write your plan: perhaps a visit, a card, or a letter. If a death is involved, spend a quiet time sharing your heart with God.

I have accomplished my plan.

REFLECTING ON YOUR CROSS-CULTURAL EXPERIENCE

How did you feel about leaving your overseas assignment?

What were you glad to leave behind?

What was most difficult to leave behind?

Prayer Suggestion

Praise the Lord that Jesus is the example for your life. Express to Him any difficulty you are having in bringing an experience or relationship to proper closure. Acknowledge to Him any personal sin that is hindering a relationship. Ask for wisdom to deal with any unresolved conflicts in a godly manner. Praise God for His unconditional love, forgiveness, and acceptance.

Insights as you REENTER your home culture
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