



Teaching



A Guide for IMB Students

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The Roadmap for Teachers



Consider Your Opportunity

Where does your career fit with the idea of going to the nations as an ambassador for Christ? Thousands of people groups remain unreached. Many of these groups are even unengaged, meaning there are no churches or missionaries to offer them the gospel. You can use your skills and gifts to live and work among the world’s unreached people, meeting educational *and spiritual* needs..

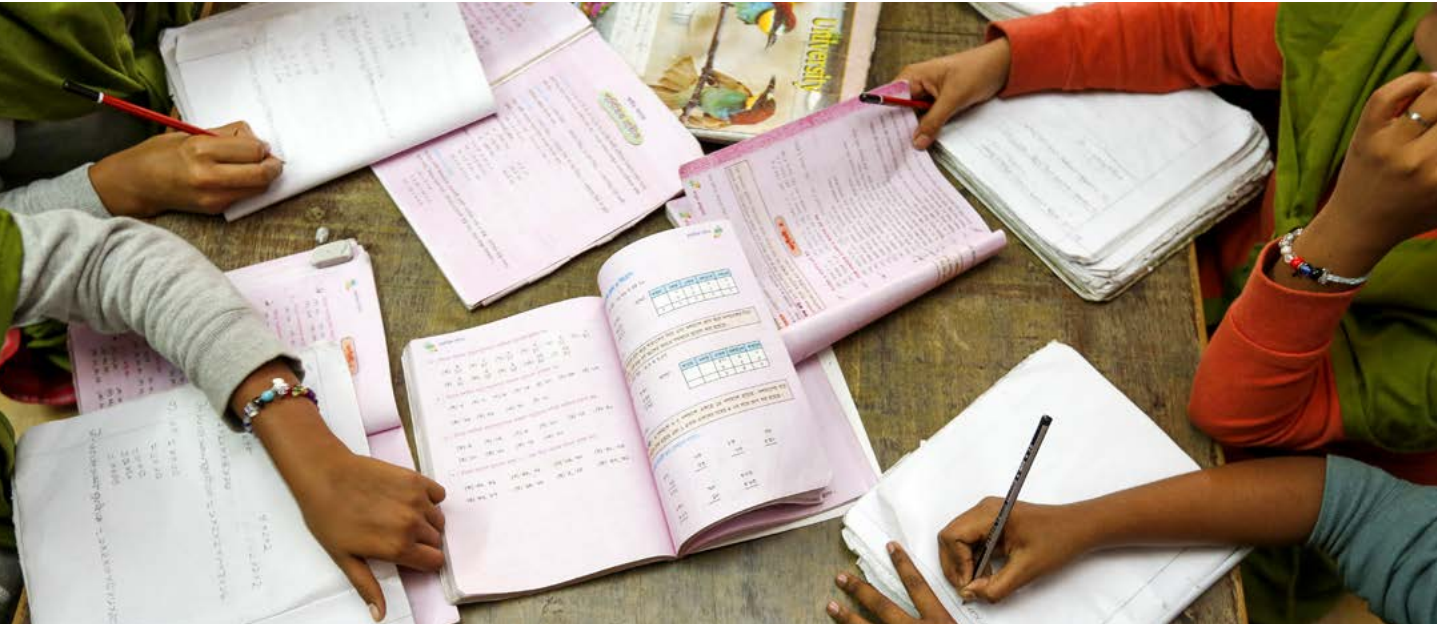
Caring for the needs of people is integral to the missionary tasks of evangelism, discipling new believers, training leaders and forming healthy churches. Education work gives access to the unreached, allows for intimate conversations, meets needs, makes disciples and empowers the church.


As the developing world rapidly works to learn English and modernize education, teachers are needed to:

- Educate children and adults in core subjects such as math, science and the humanities
- Encourage gifts by teaching music and art
- Influence students through coaching sports
- Make disciples
- Multiply churches

This guide will help you learn more about missions, discern your calling, and use your teaching career to serve people and share the gospel around the world. It will point you to tested and proven resources that will help you think biblically, prepare practically, and discern spiritually. Remember, the Holy Spirit is your Counselor.

All this assumes that you are already a disciple of Jesus. Are you? A disciple is more than a person who has mastered some information, or even practices a set of spiritual disciplines and shares the gospel. Have you turned from sin and self (repented) and trusted in Jesus as Savior and Lord? Is the Holy Spirit at work in your life bringing about transformation in your heart and mind, leading you increasingly toward godly affections, will, relationships, and purpose?



**Essential Reading**

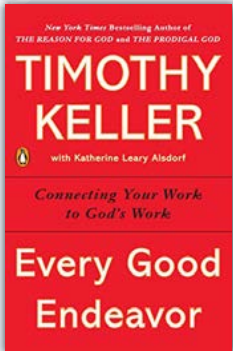
Here is your prerequisite assignment for beginning your journey.

Every Good Endeavor: Connecting Your Work to God’s Plan for the World

By Timothy Keller

This book will provide you with practical guidance and help answer the following questions:

- What is the purpose of work?
- How do I integrate my faith with my work?
- What wisdom does the Bible give us in choosing our work?
- How do I thrive, or even survive, in a cutthroat, bottom-line-oriented workplace?
- Can I stay true to my values and still advance in my field?



STEP 1: Discernment – How Do I Know Missions Is for Me?

So how do you know if God is calling you to be a teacher living among and serving the unreached? Discerning the will of God is often a paradox for believers. In Scripture, it has both the qualities of crystal-clear clarity as well as mysteries to be pursued and explored.

First, recognize some relevant things that God has already made clear about His will:


1. God has called you to Himself through salvation in Jesus Christ. *Matthew 9:13; Acts 2:39; Romans 8:28–30, 9:22–26; 1 Corinthians 1:9, 24*
2. God is to be our supreme passion and His glory our ultimate motivation. *Habakkuk 2:14; Psalm 96:1–9; 1 Corinthians 10:31; Philippians 3:7–11*
3. The call to salvation includes a call to mission. Every person who responds to God’s call receives Christ’s command to make disciples of Jesus. *Matthew 28:18–20; Mark 16:15; Luke 24:44–49; Acts 1:8*
4. Calling is the gracious act of God by which He directs disciples to make disciples in a certain way, at a certain time, among a certain people, in a certain location, or through a certain vocation. *Matthew 4:18–22, 9:9, 10:1–4; Acts 13:1–2, 16:10; Romans 1:1; Hebrews 5:4*

This previous point means that there are items that will require exploration and confirmation in discerning God’s will for you:

1. How to go.
2. Where to go.
3. With whom to go.

There is help in accomplishing this first step of discernment.

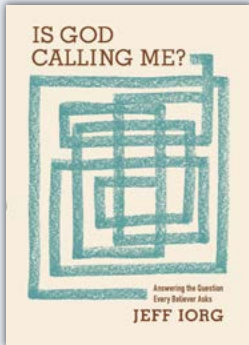
- Talk to God about this. It needs to be an ongoing conversation that includes reading His Word, expressing your questions and concerns, and looking for the ways He will answer.
- Start the conversation about calling with trusted friends and leaders who are believers. Remember, missions is not something you do alone.
- Learn more about the mission of God and the part we are to play in it.

**Essential Reading**

Is God Calling Me?: Answering the Question Every Believer Asks

By Jeff Iorg

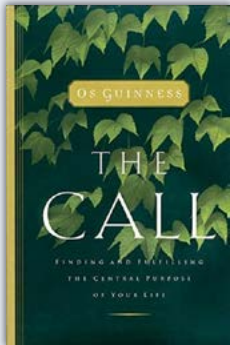
God is calling out a new generation of kingdom leaders who will accelerate the fulfillment of the Great Commission in this generation. This book will help you walk through biblical steps to discern God’s will for your life. It will also help you see how God has called others.



The Call: Finding and Fulfilling the Central Purpose of Your Life

By Os Guinness

This book goes beyond a surface understanding of God’s call and addresses the fact that God has a specific calling for our individual lives. How do I fit God’s call with my own individuality? How should God’s calling affect my career, my plans for the future, my concepts of success? Guinness relentlessly and exhaustively exhorts the believer to honor his or her call to live as a child of the King in every way possible.



STEP 2: Find Mentors

While you study for your degree and learn from the experts on education, it is critical that you also find mentors to assist you in preparing to live and work cross culturally.

Do not expect to find one perfect mentor who can assist you in all aspects of life and ministry preparation — that person likely does not exist. Look for multiple leaders who have different strengths and experiences to help you:

1. Understand and complete the necessary education and licensing to teach internationally.
2. Walk in a deep and growing relationship with God.
3. Share and practice your faith in a work context.
4. Learn how to start churches in a cross-cultural context.

Mentors are all around us. We often “have not, because we ask not.” The list above is just a starter. Make a longer list of the skills you will need in your profession, as a follower of Jesus, and as someone who will be living cross culturally. Identify one person for each of your areas of preparation. Ask that one person to mentor you. You will be surprised how willing and responsive people are to being asked to serve as a mentor.

A few friendly reminders regarding mentors:

1. **Find the right person.** You will need someone wise and experienced but also available. Someone may have what you need, but not really have the time to share it with you. Personality and manner are also important, but remember that “iron sharpens iron.” Don’t be afraid to pick someone who will challenge your perspective and expand your horizons.
2. **Approach mentoring as a two-way street.** Be ready to learn, but also look to add value and to bless your mentor. When possible, offer them assistance. Mentors will not be good at everything, and you may have a skill that will help them in a time of need.

3. **Come prepared.** Mentoring is not about filling a blank mind. Prepare for meetings with mentors by developing a list of questions or items to discuss. Follow through on their suggestions or assignments. Treat the gift of their time as valuable.
4. **Ask to shadow your mentor.** Discussions can be very helpful, but seeing someone actually do what you are preparing to do is even better. Professionals create rhythms and patterns to their work. Seek to learn the habits and practices that have led them to success.



Recommended Reading

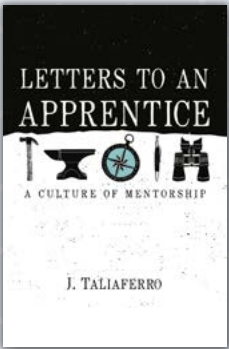
Letters to an Apprentice: A Culture of Mentorship

By Jeremy Taliaferro

Learn from an IMB missionary’s experience as both an apprentice and a mentor.

This book is filled with practical examples and steps to help you:

- Find your mentor and make the best of that relationship.
- Find your apprentice and pass on what you have learned.
- Create a culture of mentorship in your family, church, ministry, or team.



STEP 3: Prepare Spiritually

Spiritual preparation is the most crucial step in any plan to live and work internationally for the gospel. Your decision to be in the marketplace for this purpose makes you a missionary. You will be using your skills and gifts to share the gospel with people who have never heard. The missionary assignment requires that you have an authentic personal walk with God and participation in corporate worship, discipleship, and service through a church.

Let’s make this clear: your spiritual preparation is both individual and communal. There is no substitute for your private worship, Bible study, and prayer. You need time alone with God, and that needs to be a regular and even daily discipline. It is also true that to follow Christ means to be vitally linked to His body—the church. Most of the admonitions of the New Testament cannot be obeyed and practiced alone.

Questions to consider as you determine how to prepare spiritually:

- **Are you an active member of a healthy, gospel-focused church?** Remember, the biblical pattern is that churches send out those whom God calls. Is your church aware of and supportive of your desire to serve God in missions?
- **Are you engaged in personal habits of Bible study, prayer, and Scripture memory?** Spiritual disciplines help you to abide daily in Christ and rely on Him. They also undergird your ability to serve God and join Him in His work.
- **Are you struggling with any habitual sins or addictive behaviors?** Recognize that you have a spiritual enemy that wants to distract and even disqualify you from opportunities to serve God in missions. To overcome sin, it is essential to take proper steps of repentance, change, and accountability.

Your spiritual preparation is an investment not only in yourself but also others. Take this step seriously and:

1. **Ask a mentor to lead you through a discipleship assessment.** Just like a yearly medical examination helps you to evaluate, improve, and protect your physical health, the right kind of spiritual assessment can identify areas in which you need to grow or heal. Lifeway Resources (lifeway.com) offers the Discipleship Pathway Assessment as such a resource.
2. **Engage in a discipleship study with a group.** IMB offers several free online courses that focus on missions and can be done with others. Find these at imb.pathwright.com.
 - a. *Explore Missions* is a 6-week study that gives you a biblical overview of the mission of God and how He purposes the people of God to join Him in His redemptive plan.
 - b. *Ready to Go* is an 8-session study that helps students prepare for a summer or semester of missions service.
 - c. *Deepen Discipleship* is a 6-month course designed to be done with a mentor or small group in the context of your local church. The lessons and activities will help you develop or deepen habits of obedience in your Christian life. You’ll also walk through the entire New Testament and learn to see your whole life in light of the gospel.
3. **Connect with others who are balancing academics with spiritual development.** Training for a career in education can be rather difficult and has its various pressure points. The challenge will be to find time and energy for church engagement and personal devotion. Whether through a campus ministry, your church, or fellow Christian students, find or create a team who can support your spiritual journey as you study.



Recommended Reading

Renovation of the Heart: Putting on the Character of Christ

By Dallas Willard

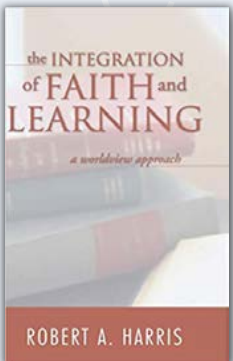
Don’t settle for complacency. Accept the challenge to become an intentional apprentice of Jesus Christ, changing daily as you walk with Him. This book explains why Christians need to undergo change in six aspects of life: thought, feeling, will, body, social context, and soul. Willard also outlines a general pattern of transformation in each area, not as a sterile formula but as a practical process that you can follow.



The Integration of Faith and Learning

By Robert A. Harris

Get the philosophical context and practical tools necessary to make the connections between Christian knowledge and the knowledge you will acquire during your undergraduate and graduate years in higher education. This book focuses on helping you to develop the practical skills needed to evaluate knowledge claims and to integrate all knowledge into a unified whole through the touchstone of Christian truth.



STEP 4: Start Making Disciples

This roadmap is about the possibilities of you using an education in teaching to minister to the mental, social and spiritual needs of people. More specifically, you can follow the powerful biblical example of proclaiming the gospel in both word and deed. Christians are called to both share the gospel and show the gospel.

The missionary task requires that you embrace the call to make disciples.

Disciple-making is the Christ-commanded, Spirit-empowered duty of every disciple of Jesus to evangelize unbelievers, baptize believers, teach them the Word of Christ, and train them to obey Christ as members of His church who make disciples on mission to all nations.

(Matthew 28:16–20; 1 Corinthians 12:4–31; Ephesians 4:1–16; Colossians 1:27–29)

Your missionary task of making disciples starts now.

Your training in education will include many actual experiences of teaching students or working closely with those who do. Your missionary training needs the same practice. A recent Southern Baptist initiative, Who’s Your One?, offers the simple challenge to be intentional about evangelizing and discipling someone. When you think of someone far from God, who’s the first person who comes to mind? Is it a neighbor? Coworker? Parent? No matter who it is, God can use you to reach them. The Who’s Your One emphasis includes a forty-day devotional guide (whosyourone.com) to lead you through the effort to love someone who is lost and lead them to Christ.

A prerequisite course for IMB long-term missionaries is Deepen Discipleship, a 6-month discipleship resource designed to be done with a mentor or small group in the context of your local church. As you walk through the lessons, you’ll read and do activities designed to help you develop or deepen habits of obedience in your Christian life. You’ll also walk through the entire New Testament and learn to see your whole life in light of the gospel. Find it at imb.org/training.



The essential tools for discipleship are the Word of God, the Spirit of God, and the people of God.

Disciple using the Bible. There are many good resources to help you make disciples, but there is no substitute for Scripture. Every disciple needs to develop a thorough knowledge of the Word of God.

Disciple in reliance on the Holy Spirit. Only the Holy Spirit can take the Word of God and use it to transform every area of a disciple’s life. Discipleship must be done in conscious dependence on the power and work of the Holy Spirit.

Disciple in the context of the church. God provides the local church as the necessary setting and the primary relationships for the full measure of biblical discipleship. One-on-one discipleship has a useful role, but it is not enough. Biblical discipleship requires the gifts and input of everyone in the body of Christ.

Learn Other Languages

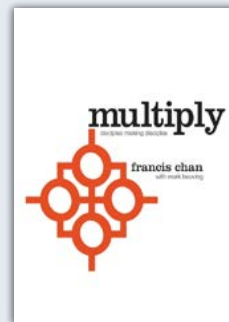
Making disciples involves the ability to communicate the gospel to people in ways they can understand. In cross-cultural missions, this means that learning their heart language is invaluable. If you are preparing for long-term service, don’t miss the opportunity now to begin to master another language. A second language opens up more job possibilities, communicates that you are serious about working abroad, and helps you make international contacts.

A few practical ways to go about language learning:

1. **Make international friends** – As a friend of an international, you will have the opportunity to learn language from your friend.
2. **Use free language-learning resources** – Local and campus libraries have free audio, video, and print resources. Research the best apps.
3. **Use electives wisely** – As an education major, you will have few spaces for electives, but when you do have the option, choose language electives. They are fun and offer a change of pace.
4. **Take a community course in language** – Many colleges offer free or low-cost language classes for the community, often at night, over the weekends, or during summer. Start your search with your school’s office of continuing education.
5. **Pursue volunteer opportunities in multi-lingual environments** – Having this experience will not only assist you in taking the gospel to those in need, but it will also help you find a job.



Recommended Reading



Multiply: Disciples Making Disciples

By Francis Chan, with Mark Beuving

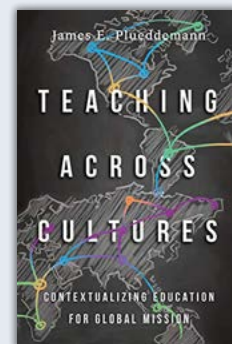
Jesus gave His followers a command: “Follow me,” and a promise: “And I will equip you to find others to follow me.” Designed for use in discipleship relationships and other focused settings, *Multiply* will equip you to carry out Jesus’ ministry. Each of the twenty-four sessions in the book corresponds with an online video at multiplymovement.com



Something Needs to Change: A Call to Make Your Life Count in a World of Urgent Need

By David Platt

Platt invites readers to relive his trek through the Himalayan mountains and seek answers to tough questions like, “Where is God in the middle of suffering?” “What makes my religion any better than someone else’s religion?” and “What do I believe about eternal suffering?” Learn what it means to give your life for the gospel — to finally stop talking about faith and truly start living it.



Teaching Across Cultures: Contextualizing Education for Global Mission

By James E. Plueddemann

In our globalized world, ideas are constantly being exchanged between people of different cultural backgrounds. But educators often struggle to adapt to the contexts of diverse learners. Some focus so much on content delivery that they overlook cross-cultural barriers to effective teaching. This book offers field-tested insights for teaching across cultural differences. Plueddemann provides a model of teaching as pilgrimage, where the aim is not merely the mastery of information but the use of knowledge to foster the development of the pilgrim learner.

STEP 5: Build Your Resume/Curriculum Vitae, Portfolio, and Networks



Develop a Portfolio of Experiences

These give evidence to prospective employers that you care deeply about teaching. Portfolio experiences typically include class projects related to teaching, co-op or internship projects, and volunteer efforts (international and domestic) related to teaching. Be sure to document these experiences with pictures and simple write-ups. Be ready to share this when applying for jobs.

Build a Network

It is important for you to develop relationships regarding the “who you know” aspect of securing a job. This process can be easier than you think. Here’s a quick four-step guide to building your network while a student:

1. Attend education-focused events and ask questions. During your time as a student, there will be formal and informal education seminars and events. Attend some. Ask questions and let professors and other professional teachers know you are curious and want to learn.
2. Gain certifications and contact professional teachers. Professional teachers are busy, but they are often willing to provide help to education students. Have a project for class that requires some research? Seek out a professional teacher and ask for help or info. While you should try to keep it simple, it is an effective way to learn and meet people.
3. Be a volunteer intern. While paid internships are extremely helpful, taking some time to volunteer and shadow a teacher will allow you to meet his or her network and garner some real-world teaching experience.
4. Seek out Christian teachers. Ask people in your church or campus ministry to connect you with teachers they know. You can take these new contacts out for coffee and talk with them about your desire to be a teacher serving cross-culturally and ask for advice on getting started.



Choose a Pathway to Licensure

Requirements for becoming a licensed teacher vary from state to state and country to country. The kind of qualification you need for teaching abroad depends on what and where you are going to teach. Each country has a government office that licenses and regulates international schools. Typically, a country’s requirement would be no less than what is expected in your home state.

Create a Resume

Work on your resume throughout your time studying education. Your resume is not mainly about the format and look, it is about the content. Do you have novel, unique experiences related to teaching (e.g., volunteering with refugees)? There are many great online resources for building resumes. Here are a few:

1. monster.com/career-advice/article/sample-resume-elementary-teacher
2. education.depaul.edu/student-resources/student-teaching/Documents/Creating%20Your%20Student%20Teaching%20Resume.pdf
3. teachanywhere.com/job-seeker/career-hub/archives/cv-tips-in-two-minutes-how-to-create-a-cv-to-impress_57
4. youtube.com/watch?v=u75hUSShvnc
5. greatsampleresume.com/resume-examples/teacher/international-school-teacher-resume
6. joyjobs.com/seekers/sampler.htm

STEP 6: Explore Possibilities and Needs

God is calling you to join Him on mission, but where and with whom? A major step along your journey is discovering possible locations to live and serve. There are so many options it may be difficult to narrow them down and discern God’s leading. What is the best way to find direction and move forward? Nothing is more helpful than to visit locations.

A few main options for these visits are:

Take a short-term trip

- A mission trip can introduce you to a culture, a people group, and a team of missionaries, all which will be important components in your future service in missions.
- Start the search with your church, your local Baptist association of churches, and your state Baptist convention.
- IMB offers trip opportunities. Explore these at imb.org/opportunity-finder.

Study abroad

Many universities and degree programs highly encourage students to study abroad and may have an entire office devoted to offering opportunities and assistance. Study abroad options will help you:

1. Visit a new culture in a safe environment and program focused on helping you understand the people, history, and culture.
2. Help you meet international educators and learn about teaching opportunities.
3. Receive academic credit while preparing to live cross culturally.
4. Explore a culture to see if you are a good match.

Another place to explore study abroad is with the Consortium for Global Education (cgedu.org). CGE is a network of universities committed to assisting students and faculty in impacting the world through education. CGE’s Global Study Abroad programs provide strong academic and service-learning opportunities in key locations around the world.

A NOTE OF CAUTION: Not all study abroad experiences are the same. Prior to applying, research online for student reviews of their experience. Also, check with your academic institution and ask for references from students who have previously studied abroad. Finally, make sure to inquire about financial aid assistance and whether your existing scholarships and financial aid can apply.

Find a natural connection

Wherever you live, it’s likely that the world has come to your doorstep. Consider the international students on your campus, refugees and immigrants in your community, and ethnic churches and church plants. Missions does not start “over there,” but right where you live. Many missionaries began to develop a heart for a specific people group through relationships they made and ministry opportunities they encountered at home.

Many churches have established partnerships with missionary teams and church planters or have adopted unreached people groups. They can provide opportunities that would give you a “paved road” for a connection. A professional network, mentorship, or internship could also introduce you to people, places, and needs through which God stirs your heart and directs your attention.

IMB can assist you in exploring opportunities and pathways of service as well as preparing for a mission trip. Contact info@imb.org.



STEP 7: Find A Job



Search for international teaching jobs

Here are just a few of the websites offering opportunities:

- jobregistry.nafsa.org/jobseekers
NAFSA is a large and respected organization with an extensive job board for international educators.
- goabroad.com/teach-abroad
A site to browse international teaching jobs and programs.
- tieonline.com
The International Educator is an international teacher head-hunting and recruiting service.



Finding a job will likely be the most difficult and faith-challenging step in your move to serve cross-culturally as a teacher. While there are many teaching jobs available globally, finding the right one can be difficult. Be patient and do not get discouraged.

Here is how to move forward:

1. Maximize use of career services at your university. This office can connect you with alumni in your field, assist you with job and internship placement, and help you practice and develop your interviewing ability.
2. Tap your existing network. Start with these sources:
 - a. Former student teaching supervisors
 - b. Professors
 - c. Teachers in schools or institutions where you have volunteered or interned
3. Talk with teaching recruiting firms and explore online job-search engines. Inquire with them about international options.
4. Find and attend an international job fair. International School Services has an annual membership that offers access to fairs across the country and job opportunities as well.

When it comes to finding the right job, do your homework. Just because you find an overseas job on the web doesn't mean it will be as amazing as it seems. Research the school online and see how teachers feel about working there. Use common sense and when in doubt, ask questions. Americans often expect schools to treat teachers well, but know that in some cultures, teachers are highly valued and in others they are held in low regard.

STEP 8: Connect with Believers Serving Cross Culturally

Connection and support are keys to long-term success as a person living and working in another culture for the sake of the gospel. These connections will take time and intentionality to build and maintain over the long haul. Here are a few recommendations as you begin your journey:

Seek to partner with a missionary team

Missionaries work best as part of a team; this is a biblical precedent. As a teacher with many opportunities to build relationships with unbelievers, you could become a key partner and valuable ally to other missionaries. They also could be of great support to you and offer good counsel. The possibility of teaming up with vocational missionaries should not be taken lightly, however. Most of them must function with security protocols and in a trusted network. IMB offers a Team Associate role (self-funded) which involves an application process. Discover more at imb.org/go/options/team-associate.

Join an international church

Many communities overseas have expat or international churches. These churches are gathering spots for believers who live and work in a country outside their own. Even countries with the most restrictive laws about Christianity often allow international churches. International churches can be excellent places to unite in fellowship and help you find friends and support as you adjust to the community. In addition, the people in international churches can help you learn methods of evangelism and disciple-making that work best in the community.

Two online resources for finding international churches are:

- internationalchurches.net
- gccweb.org/about/find-a-church

You can also inquire at info@imb.org for recommendations and connection ideas.



Summary Checklist

Pre-College/Freshman Year

- ☐ Explore the concepts of calling and missions.
- ☐ Dialogue with trusted friends and leaders.
- ☐ Choose a major.
- ☐ Join a small group engaging in Bible study and discipleship together.
- ☐ Read *Every Good Endeavor* by Tim Keller.
- ☐ Read *Is God Calling Me?* by Jeff Iorg.
- ☐ Read *The Integration of Faith and Learning* by Robert A. Harris.
- ☐ Begin language learning.

Sophomore Year

- ☐ Read *Letters to an Apprentice* by Jeremy Taliaferro.
- ☐ Read *The Call* by Os Guinness.
- ☐ Start looking for spiritual and academic mentors.
- ☐ Take a discipleship assessment and plan your next steps in spiritual preparation.
- ☐ Read *Renovation of the Heart* by Dallas Willard.
- ☐ Continue language learning.
- ☐ Look for opportunities to job-shadow teachers.
- ☐ Learn to make disciples; complete the Who's Your One? 40-day devotional.
- ☐ Serve internationally in the summer following your sophomore year.

Junior Year

- ☐ Concentrate on building your portfolio of teaching experience through volunteer projects.
- ☐ Build your relational networks in the teaching world.
- ☐ Read *Multiply* by Francis Chan.
- ☐ Continue to make disciples.
- ☐ Read *Something Needs to Change* by David Platt.
- ☐ Find settings where you can practice a second language.
- ☐ Pursue a volunteer teaching opportunity in a different culture or international context.

Senior Year

- ☐ Read *Teaching Across Cultures* by James E. Plueddemann.
- ☐ Explore possibilities and needs through a trip overseas.
- ☐ Volunteer with or shadow a teacher.
- ☐ Complete needed licensing or student teaching assignment. Focus on student teaching opportunities in international schools or with cross-cultural classes.
- ☐ Search for international jobs.
- ☐ Build, complete, and send out your resume.
- ☐ Explore the Team Associate role at IMB.



Suggested Additional Reading

Biographies

- Bengé, Janet and Geoff. *Lottie Moon: Giving Her All for China*. Edmonds, WA: YWAM Publishing, 2001.
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Other Books

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