

And Invitation to Contribute to:

A Devotional Guide for Volunteers in Mission

Below you will find a list of scripture lessons, and suggested themes, that will be the basis for a book of devotion to be offered to individual Volunteers in Mission as they prepare for, participate in, and then return from a short term mission. These devotions are intended to lead the missionary into a deeper understanding of God's mission and Christian participation in the Mission of Christ.

Anyone who has participated in a VIM project is invited to one or several devotions based on these scriptures and themes. You may suggest additional verses and themes to be added in any portion of the list. Each devotion should begin with the complete scripture reading, followed by a devotion of 500 to 750 words, followed by a short prayer. Devotions may be submitted by email to globaltheology@smu.edu. We will acknowledge receipt. If a devotion is used in the final publication the writer will receive acknowledgment and a small honorarium.

We are also asking for contributions of complete, short, worship plans for groups while they are engaged in their short term mission. These worship plans should include an original call to worship, two or three songs or hymns, original prayers, a scripture passage, and a short original devotion based on the scripture passage. The suggested songs or hymns should be easy to sing with only a guitar, or without any accompaniment. Suggested scripture lessons are found in part II below. As with the devotions, we will acknowledge receipt of each proposed worship plan, and the author will receive acknowledgement and a small honorarium if the plan is published.

I look forward to hearing from each of you as we seek to prepare God's people for richer and more fruitful mission.

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I. Preparation for mission.

1. God's Purpose for Human Life - be fruitful and multiply (Genesis 1-2)
2. The Chastening Land and God's continuing care (Genesis 3:17 – 24)
3. The Chastening Sky (Genesis 7:11-12)
4. The Hope of God's Covenant - Earth and Sky Will Never Betray God's Purpose (Genesis 8:21 – 22)
5. A new start for humanity - look to the Heavens - The Rainbow (Genesis 9:1 - 17)
6. Diversity: God's Desire (Genesis 11) God will not let humanity remain a single race in a single place – the command remains “be fruitful and multiply and cover the face of the earth.”
7. A Path to Redemption - Abraham the father of nations (Genesis 12:1 – 3)
8. Look to the Earth and Heavens –Dust and Stars a Sign of God's Promise of Fecund Diversity (Genesis 13:16, Genesis 15:5 – 6)
9. Calling Israel out of Egypt- One nation a sign of God's faithfulness to and desire for all nations. (Exodus 19: 5 – 6,)
10. Torah - God's desire for a human order within which God's promise and desire may be fulfilled. (Exodus 20: 2 – 17)
11. God amid the nations - each a sign in its history of God's faithfulness and redemption and judgment. (Our faith is rooted in a single tradition of calling, as is natural for humanity. Human diversity cannot exist without a variety of human stories. Generic humanity is no part of God's story - always humans are identified by difference and relationship - beginning with Adam and

Eve. So we can find in others a witness we may have forgotten, ignored, or misunderstood in our own history.) (Amos 9:7)

12. How can this vision be fulfilled - this vision of redeeming love that fulfills our needs without quenching our spirit? The Promise of Messiah. (Isaiah 53:11-12)
13. Messiah as more than a Sign: An invitation into covenant, a new engagement between God's Reign and human societies. (Isaiah 49)
14. The Mission of Jesus - Good News that God's Reign is near. Mark 1:14 -15
15. Defining God's Reign - Luke 4:14-21
16. Proclamation - words made whole in deeds - the works of Jesus. (Matthew 4:23)
17. God's Reign just for Jews? - Healing for the nations (John 4:39 – 42 – Jesus the savior of the world)
18. Faith among the Nations. (Luke 17:11 – 19)
19. The unity God seeks - worship and truth, not a single sanctuary. (John 4:19-26)
20. Engagement as battle with a hostile world: The reality of rejection - Jesus on the cross. (Matthew 15:1 – 15)
21. Resurrection - A new sign of God's continued engagement with the world through the empowered apostles of Jesus. (Luke 24:36-49)

II. Part 2 – In the midst of mission

22. The calling of the Apostles to Jesus Mission (Luke 9:1 -9).
23. Apostolic proclamation - words made whole in deeds - the works of the apostles. (Luke 10:1 – 24)
24. Acknowledging Jesus as Christ the Lord of God's Reign – (Luke 9:18 – 19).
25. Sent to the nations - making disciples through the renewal of human society through Torah - return to the divinely created order.(Matt 28: 16 - 20)
26. Baptizing them . . . Initiation into a community pledged to live as the continuity of Jesus' mission. (Matt. 28:16 – 20)
27. Filled with Christ's spirit – God speaks to people as they are. What does it mean for God to speak in a diversity of tongues, if not to a diversity of human situations. (Acts 2)
28. Witness of the apostolic church - A life in community that is a sign of God's Reign – How do we live together in mission so as to show the possibilities of God's mission – living as a witness and invitation to possibilities of love and relationship before the world.(Acts 2:42 - 47)
29. The Fellowship of Communion – All must come to worship together if we are to be a sign to the nations of Christ's death until his coming again. (I Corinthians 11:17 – 26)
30. Finding faith among the nations - Peter and Cornelius (Acts 10)
31. Acknowledging God's continuing witness among the nations (Acts 14:8 - 20)
32. Our diversity of Gifts seeing and respecting all the gifts of God's servants in mission (Romans 12:1 – 8)
33. Put your love into action (Romans 12: 9 – 21)
34. The Weak, The Strong, and the witness to the Gentiles (Romans 15:1 – 15)
35. Where is God witnessing to you among those weak and foolish in the eyes of the world? (I Corinthians 1:20 – 31)
36. Bear One another's Burdens (Galatians 6:1 – 10)
37. Respect those who plant, value your work for what it is, and put your faith in God to bring the growth. Prepare to leave your mission in the hands of God, from whom you received it.(I Corinthians 3:6 – 10)

III. Part 3 - Life beyond Mission -hopeful expectation that God fulfills what we begin.

38. A reminder to leave God to continue the work you leave behind (I Corinthians 3:6 – 10)
39. The great cloud of witnesses - faith in time of trial - in this case when the excitement of success gives way to doubt about what has actually been done. (Hebrews 11)
40. Attending to ongoing fellowship, provision for God's people – (I Corinthians 16:1 – 4).
41. Shared Prayer for those with whom you now have fellowship – (Colossians 1:3 – 14)
42. Shared Encouragement for those with whom you now have fellowship (Colossians 2:6 – 15)
43. Remember where your mission leads and take hope: The promise of God's Reign – Our worship joins us in worship with the saints and martyrs in heaven. (Revelation 4:1 – 11)
44. God's promise to finally renew the earth - (Revelation 21:1 – 8)
45. God builds on the work begun with Israel and continued by the apostles - what we have done is never lost. (Revelation 21: 9 – 21)
46. The nations will come - the fecund diversity God has gently tended and nurtured, and fiercely protected in world he created is brought into the new Jerusalem - *the nations* will come. (Revelation 21: 22- 24)
47. And the Gates are ever open. There is no end to God's grace. (Revelation 21:25 – 27)