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Short-Term Missions -- Long-Term Change

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PREFACE

As globalization has increased, the ability for some individuals to travel to other countries has also greatly increased. Unfortunately, with this increased ability and privilege to see the world, there hasn't been an increased desire to travel in ways that actually shape the person traveling. We go and see but we often don't 'see' in a way that leads to change. In many ways, this is true of short-term missions. We go and experience another culture and we end up uncritically reinforcing our own narratives and beliefs about things such as poverty, 'the other,' and our place in this world.

As a mission minister at a local church, I have a great desire to place my church members in situations where they are challenged to critically reflect on the world and to help facilitate that critical reflection. There are few better opportunities for that critical reflection to occur than on a short-term mission trip (though that shouldn't be the sole or primary reason for such a trip) to a repeated partner. In my case, those partners are in South Africa and they have graciously agreed to host us for eight years. Over those eight years, we've worked hard at creating an experience that increases the likelihood of participant change and therefore outweighs the time and cost of planning and facilitating a trip.

The George Fox DMin process has been richly rewarding to me both professionally and personally. Our lead mentor, Dr. Jason Clark, challenged us to become reflective practitioners not just for this program but also for life. I hope I have become a reflective practitioner and will continue to learn and be challenged for as long as God gives me breath to breathe, a heart to love, and a mind to think. During this process, Cliff Berger and Loren Kerns have challenged me to "drill down" and get to the core of the

ABSTRACT

The amount of participants sent yearly on short-term missions (STMs) and the cost to send teams is astounding. Unfortunately, the change of participants that occurs on these trips is often overstated, especially if one is to believe existing data that counters the STM mantra that "my trip changed my life."

Section 1 examines the current status of STMs, seeking to place them in their global context. It then answers the question of why many STM trips don't lead to participant change.

Section 2 examines the solutions to the current problem, including books, dissertations, conferences, and other media. I then state three differences between my dissertation and those proposed solutions.

Section 3 outlines my thesis. It argues that the field of experiential education provides insight into how STM trips might be facilitated to increase the likelihood that these trips will produce change. Once that pedagogical structure has been laid, Section 3 articulates themes that must be incorporated into the STM process.

Sections 4 through 6 deal with various technical aspects of the artifact.

The Appendix contains the dissertation artifact.

SECTION 1: THE PROBLEM

Introduction

Jill is excited about her upcoming short-term mission (STM) experience to South Africa, which will be her first time outside of the United States. Prior to her trip, her team has met several times to discuss logistics and the work they'll be participating in, and to pray for the ministry they'll be doing. The trip is led by a lay-leader in the church who is very committed to the mission movement and short-term missions in particular.

Jill arrives hoping that her trip will be "just what she needs" to spur herself on to being more involved in making a difference in the world. While in South Africa, she participates in several ministries including tutoring kids, helping out in a hospice clinic, and building a vegetable garden. Every night she goes to bed exhausted from, and grateful for, her hard day's work. One evening near the end of her team's trip, they circle up and talk about the plight of "poor Africans," how they'll no longer take material possessions for granted and how they wish they could help more. They each talk about how the trip has impacted them and made them aware of the vast inequalities that exist in the world.

After twelve days in South Africa, her team heads for home, excited to share their experiences with their church and their family members and hoping that their lives will be different. Fast-forward six months and Jill's South Africa trip feels like it happened a lifetime ago. It hasn't had any lasting impact on her life. She doesn't feel connected to the larger mission movement, she's not engaged in mission at home, and she's never pondered if God was calling her to vocational mission. It's as if her twelve-day trip was just a vacation outing.

If you believe much of the research, Jill isn't alone. Her story could be replaced with countless others who participate in the short-term mission movement hoping their trip would be a marker in their life, a point in time that they can look back on and notice change.

As will be shown shortly, this story is played out over and over again in the lives of STM participants. Section 1 will set the stage for the dissertation by examining the current status of STM trips. It will then examine the research around participant change. Finally, it poses several reasons why change might not be as prevalent as mission trip leaders would hope. Section 2 will then examine the existing literature, conferences, and organizations that are seeking to increase the likelihood of STM trips creating change. It will then pose several distinctions between this dissertation and those approaches. Section 3 will then propose a pedagogical framework for STM facilitation and what elements should be included in STM trips to increase the likelihood they will produce change. Sections 4, 5, and 6 address issues with regard to the artifact. Finally, within the appendix is the actual artifact. In summary, this dissertation seeks to examine the reasons why STM trips at large do not lead to measureable change in many participants, and then make concrete proposals that will mitigate those factors.

While addressing STM trips at large, this dissertation also has in mind a particular network of churches[1] that have been partnering with South African churches and ministries since 2008. This dissertation is born out of the hope that those who participate

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[1] The churches are: Second Baptist, Little Rock, Arkansas; Second Baptist, Memphis, Tennessee; First Baptist, Wilmington, North Carolina, First Baptist, Abilene, Texas; Broadway Baptist, Ft. Worth; First Baptist, Knoxville, Tennessee; First Baptist, Chattanooga, Tennessee. A denominational entity, the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, is also a member of the network.

in an STM trip to South Africa will come home changed and then seek new ways to engage in God's mission to heal a broken world.

Before this dissertation proceeds any further, it should be noted that some argue that STMs should be ceased[2] all together and not merely tampered with to fix them. That they are so fundamentally flawed no amount of critical reflection and change can justify their use. It would do well for advocates of STMs to listen to these arguments[3] and really examine if STM trips should happen. With so many participating in STM trips, it seems unlikely for a moratorium to occur. If STM trips do not cease then we must seek to make them as missiologically sound as possible, both for those receiving teams and those who are participating.

Before one can begin to examine the change (or lack thereof) of participants in STM trips, it's helpful to step back and take in the breadth of the STM movement and place everything in a proper context and underline the importance of such an endeavor.

The Current Status of Short-Term Missions

Robert Wuthnow estimates that the number of American Christians engaged in STMs is quite large at 1.6 million, though this only includes those 18 years and older. If teenagers are included, the number is significantly larger.[4] Unfortunately, scholarly research relating to their activities is limited. By comparison, "1% of American

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[2] See Troy Jackson's Sojourners blog at: http://sojo.net/blogs/2010/06/02/time-declare-mission-trip-moratorium. He argues that US Christians should "declare a Mission Trip Moratorium" and send the money instead. This is an important topic and is further addressed later in this section.

[3] These arguments often center on the consumer nature of STM trips, their financial costs, how they undermine local initiatives, and further perpetuate a paternalistic mindset.

[4] Robert Wuthnow, *Boundless Faith: The Global Outreach of American Churches* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2009), 171.

undergraduates participate in study-abroad programs [with] major scholarly journals devoted to the educational dimensions of study abroad."[5] Unfortunately, there are no scholarly journals devoted to the significantly larger STM movement. Furthermore, a dearth of information exists on STMs from the majority world perspective. What does exist is scattered in a variety of places and in various forms.[6] Thus, understanding the perspective of STM trips in the majority world is difficult. Vinoth Ramachandra echoes this by writing, "Majority-world theologians don't deal with such trips because (a) only affluent kids or kids from affluent parts of the world can engage in such trips; and (b) they are so peripheral to the life and witness of the church in our countries."[7] However, the totality of data that exists in various places (blogs, interviews, conferences) points towards a STM movement that is vibrant, growing, and in need of reflection and implementation of best practices.

Where are they going? The majority of STM trips are to places where Christianity is already prevalent, with 84% going to World C (evangelized), where 33% of the world's population lives. Only 3.5% go to World A (least evangelized), and 12.5% to World B (somewhat evangelized).[8] Leading the list is Belize and the Bahamas, who yearly receive on average one STM participant per 15 and 19 residents, respectively.[9]

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[5] Robert J. Priest et al., "Researching the Short-Term Mission Movement," *Missiology*, 34 no. 4 (October 2006): 434.

[6] Edwin Zehner, "Short-Term Missions : Toward a More Field-Oriented Model," *Missiology* 34 no. 4 (October 2006): 511.

[7] Vinoth Ramachandra, "More on Re-Thinking Mission," Vinoth Ramachandra, May 21, 2010, http://vinothramachandra.wordpress.com/2010/05/21/more-on-re-thinking-mission/.

[8] Robert J. Priest and Joseph Paul Priest, "'They See Everything, and Understand Nothing': Short-Term Mission and Service Learning," *Missiology* 36, no. 1 (January 2008): 65-66.

[9] Ibid., 64.

What are the financial costs? Robert Priest argues that when compared to study abroad and international tourism, STM costs are quite cheap. He writes, "The median cost of a short-term mission trip abroad is somewhere between $1,000 and $1,500, and the mean cost of these short-term mission trips is somewhere between $1,370 and $1,450."[10] The sum total spent on STM trips is conservatively $1.6 billion per year.[11]

Who's going? The typical STM participant might surprise some. They are "a white, married, college-educated male in his forties whose children are grown and who live in a relatively homogeneous suburb in the South or Midwest. Religiously, he is affiliated with an evangelical church."[12]

What was once a small and marginalized movement has become a force to be reckoned with by missionaries and churches. Denominations and mission agencies that ignore the movement do so to their own peril because there is no indication that the STM trend is slowing. With significant time and resources being spent on these trips, they must take center stage to ensure STMs are having appropriate impact on both those receiving and those going.[13]

Does Lasting Change for Participants Occur From STM Trip Experiences?

It is beneficial to pause here and comment on the tension between goals that center on the STM participants and trip goals that focus on those who are receiving an

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[10] Robert Wuthnow and Stephen Offutt, "Transnational Religious Connections," *Sociology of Religion* 69, no. 2 (Summer 2008): 218.

[11] Wuthnow, *Boundless Faith*, 180.

[12] Ibid., 172.

[13] Mutual transformation for those going and those receiving should be the goal of STM trips. However, for the purpose of this dissertation I have chosen to solely focus on the change of those going. But for a holistic approach, both must be held together.

STM team. Receiver goals are the most important category because the ramifications of what happens during a STM trip can either bless a local ministry or can cause such pain, anger, and calamity that it inflicts damage to a ministry. While there could be an endless list of receiver goals, a survey of existing literature indicates that the primary ones focused and commented on by receiving communities are tangible projects, social capital, and resource assistance.

Appropriate and successful trips occur when the skills and talents of a sending community meet the real or felt needs and desires of the receiving community, with the emphasis being on the receiving community. This can take various forms, from construction to Vacation Bible School to orphan care, all depending on the community's needs and desires. Unfortunately, because the planning and implementation of STM trips are often weighted on the wrong side, they may not achieve their potential. David Ngaruiya, professor at the Nairobi International School of Theology, interviewed ten pastors throughout Sub-Saharan Africa. A common thread in their stories of receiving STM teams is the lack of listening, dominance of the visitors, and a desire for short victories as opposed to long-term relationships. He argues for a host-directed model where "the host has a primary role in the control and direction of the mission task."[14] Priest furthers this thought by writing, "When the locus of decision-making and power moves away from the field to the North American congregation and its leadership, there are deep questions of whether contextual wisdom will underpin the patterns being forged

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[14] David Ngaruiya, "The Trendy Giant Wounds : Some Lessons from the Church in Africa," *Evangelical Missions Quarterly* 44 no 1 (2008): 61.

for stewardship and global ministry."[15] Ensuring that STM trips bless those who receive[16]

rather than harm should be a focus of further research and writing, but it is not the

primary focus of this dissertation.

This dissertation focuses on the change that is expected in the lives of the

estimated 1.6 million STM participants. Many see firsthand the raw realities of life for

the world's majority; it would be expected that those experiences would lead to a change

in participants, either in worldview, ongoing mission participation, walk with God, or

other desirable changes. A few scholars, including Stephen Offutt[17] and Jenny

Trinitapoli, document minor changes as a result of these trips. Trinitapoli writes that

many scholars argue "adolescents who go on a short-term mission between interview

waves report increased religious participation and solidified religious beliefs."[18] When

looking at the breadth of STM research, participant change is far from universal or

viewed as a common occurrence. In 2008, Kurt Ver Beek looked for quantitative, non-

self-reporting research that focused on participant change. He writes, "eleven of these

thirteen studies found little or no significant positive impact from the STM trip in the

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[15] Robert J. Priest, "U.S. Megachurches and New Patterns of Global Mission," *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* 34, no. 2 (April 2010): 102.

[16] It should be noted that the idea of being a 'blessing' does not mean STM participants are seeking to 'change' or 'save' the area they are visiting. For more information on making sure STM trips appropriately help see: Zehner, Edwin. "Short-Term Missions : Toward a More Field-Oriented Model." *Missiology Oct 2006*, October 1, 2006. See also, Priest, Robert J., ed. *Effective Engagement in Short-Term Missions: Doing It Right!*. William Carey Library Pub, 2008.

[17] Wuthnow and Offutt, "Transnational Religious Connections."

[18] Jenny Trinitapoli and Stephen Vaisey, "The Transformative Role of Religious Experience: The Case of Short-Term Missions," *Social Forces* 88, no. 1 (September 2009): 121.

lives of participants."[19] Brian Howell writes, "In most cases, where results were based on data other than self-reporting, the researchers found that the claims of STM [participant change] fell short."[20]

While conversion of self is a worthy goal to most, some pause regarding the validity and appropriateness of such a goal when connected to STMs. Sri Lankan Vinoth Ramachandra poignantly asks why rich western Christians have to see the world in the guise of a mission trip. Why can't they do like everyone else and travel as a tourist? Furthermore, why is it that they need "to have 'exposure' to mission before they engage in mission, when the great majority of missionaries in the world are poor and unable to afford such costly trips?"[21] At a 2009 STM conference entitled "Being There: Short-Term Missions and Human Need," held at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, Kenyan pastor Reverend Oscar Muriu lamented that "The African Church is subsidizing western discipleship and asked the church of the West to do your own spiritual formation at home! We don't have the time or the resources to do it for you."[22] Both Muriu and Ramachandra's critiques are valid reminders that our understanding of mission and discipleship is influenced by our wealth and our access to power, which is addressed

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[19] Kurt Alan Ver Beek, "Lessons from the Sapling: A Review of Quantitative Research on Short-Term Missions," in *Effective Engagement in Short-Term Missions. Doing It Right!* (Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library Pub., 2008), 476.

[20] Brian M. Howell, *Short-Term Mission: An Ethnography of Christian Travel Narrative and Experience* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press Academic, 2012), 200-201.

[21] Vinoth Ramachandra, "Who Says 'No' to "Mission Trips?," Vinoth Ramachandra, May 7, 2010, accessed March 10, 2013, http://vinothramachandra.wordpress.com/2010/05/07/who-says-no-to-mission-trips/

[22] Susan L. LeFeber, "Outposts in the Wilderness: Short-Term Missions and the Mission of God," *International Congregational Journal* 10, no. 1 (Spring 2011): 48.

later[23]. While a good critique and reminder, both seem to be reacting to the worst

caricature of STM trips, as if religious tourism is the sole reason for an STM trip. Brian

Howell writes that it is "important to distinguish STM trips from 'mere' tourism. In this

way, seemingly ego-focused motives are rejected for ones that have theological

significance and hold out long-term benefits for both the receiving and the sending

groups."[24] Is it possible that STM trips have succumbed to a consumer[25] mindset and are

merely 'myopic' experiences that rich westerns can afford?[26] Yes, some certainly have.

But the alternative might be even worse. Without an inward emphasis, participants are in

danger of placing an unhealthy importance on their work, which can lead to an even

greater paternalistic and colonial mindset.[27] Acknowledging the tendency allows the trip

to be facilitated in a way that allows for lasting discipleship and change but not a

temporary myopic experience that fades six months after an experience.

But, what specific changes or transformation have researchers looked for in STM

participants, and are they occurring? STM trips can have a seemingly unlimited number

of goals for participants, but three are the focus of this dissertation and therefore will be

examined here: vocational calling, engagement in mission at one's home location, and

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[24] Brian M. Howell, "Mission to Nowhere: Putting Short-term Missions into Context," *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* 33, no. 4 (October 2009): 206.

[25] Acknowledging the consumer element of STM trips is healthy and a first-step towards ensuring that the trip is not solely driven by a consumer mentality devoid of a larger more meaningful and appropriate narrative.

[26] Data is beginning to show that even churches generally thought to be on the receiving end of STM trips are sending out STM teams of their own to other countries.

[27] William Saayman comments on the historical intersection of an unhealthy understanding of missionary work with colonialism. He writes, "For many white South Africans, the missionary and colonial past remains the wonderful period of "bringing light to darkest Africa" For many black South Africans, though, that same past remains instead of "the jungle of western capitalism" brought about by their loss of land and power." Willam Saayman, "Christian Mission In South Africa: A Historical Reflection." *International Review of Mission* 83, no. 328 (1994): 11–19.

participation in the wider global missions movement.[28] As noted above, the answer to whether these outcomes are occurring is unclear. Offutt writes, "Skeptics, whose ranks include both scholars and religious leaders, question how trips of such short duration can affect any real change and doubt that the expenses they incur can be justified. But a minority of other data suggest that STMs do provide life-altering experiences for those who travel, if not for their hosts."[29]

Vocational Calling: Many hope that the STM experience will impact a person's vocation in life and that some will become vocational missionaries because of their experience with an STM trip. But this does not seem to be the case. There is concern that "Short-term missions has moved from being part of a large missions vision and instead has become the primary goal of many missions programs. What was once a preparation step for long-term service has become the final destination."[30] However, some research indicates that with the right circumstances, there is more openness to vocational missions among people involved with STM, though there is also a real worry that multiple STM trips to differing locations will produce junkies looking for their next fix.[31] Unfortunately, more openness doesn't seem to have led to more missionaries, if based on current research. Scott Moreau researched missionary statistics from 1996 to 2005, and found a significant increase in STM participants. Conversely, he found that those committing to

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[28] These goals were chosen because they were broad enough to be achieved in various ways, had aspects of the both the global and local nature of mission, and were realistic.

[29] Stephen Offutt, "The Role of Short-Term Mission Teams in the New Centers of Global Christianity," *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 50, no. 4 (December 2011): 79.

[30] Don Parrott, "Managing the Short-Term Missions Explosion: Let's Not Lose the Opportunity," *Evangelical Missions Quarterly* 40, no. 3 (July 2004): 357.

[31] Priest et al., "Researching the Short-Term Mission Movement," 447.

become a long-term missionary declined slightly and those serving for 1 to 4 years

declined 5.2%. "It was the first decrease in this category since 1992."[32] The data would

seem to indicate that the growth of the STM movement is begetting growth for the STM

movement and not the career missionary movement. Short-term missions as it is currently

practiced is possibly harming the long-term mission movement, as those who participate

are looking more for their next spiritual high than a life calling.[33]

Mission Engagement at Home: While not everyone is called to a career of

vocational mission (being financially supported by the mission enterprise), when anyone

accepts the call to follow Christ, they are called to engage in mission at his or her home

location as part of who they are and their normal everyday life and existence. The second

goal for participants is that their STM experience will catapult them into being personally

concerned and involved in mission work, both locally and globally. Believing that STM

trips do help people engage in mission, Robert Wuthnow writes,

> Those who go abroad are still more likely that those who stay home to believe
> their congregation should emphasize the program of religious persecution, be
> interested in U.S. responsibilities to poor countries, and support the work of
> Christians in other countries, and they are more likely to have participated in
> church meetings about international issues.[34]

Wuthnow writes elsewhere, "Rubbing shoulders with Christians in other countries,

leaders say, is worth the time and effort because it encourages deeper and longer-lasting

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[32] A. Scott Moreau, "Short-Term Missions in the Context of Missions, Inc.," in *Effective Engagement in Short-Term Missions. Doing It Right!*, ed. Robert J. Priest (Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library Pub., 2008), 10.

[33] Some argue that the era of long-term or career missionaries has passed. In 1975, R. Elliot Kendall was among the wave of people to argue for a restraint of sending westerner missionaries to Africa. This sentiment has steadily grown over ensuing decades. See: Kendall, R Elliott. "On the Sending of Missionaries : A Call for Restraint." *International Review of Mission* 64, no. 253 (January 1975): 62–66.

[34] Wuthnow, *Boundless Faith*, 181.

commitment to transcultural ministries."[35] In another study, Trinitapoli and Alder write, "taking a mission trip significantly increases the likelihood of adolescents participating in various forms of civic activity, particularly religious-based volunteer work."[36] Unfortunately, in a recent study, LiErin Probasco argues the opposite, finding that "high school participation in an international mission trip has no significant association with adult volunteering or giving when other factors, like recent participation in an international mission trip, are taken into account."[37] What's interesting about Probasco's study is that she found that domestic mission trips do in fact have a significant impact on volunteering. She does not offer in-depth analysis or evidence to explain the difference.[38] The current success of this goal seems to be equivocal. But, regardless of its current success, an STM experience should challenge and encourage more people to be actively involved in God's work in the world.

Connection to the Global Missions Movement: As participants travel, they can obtain a concrete understanding of what God is doing in other places and ideally will support those ministries (or other similar global ministries) as a result of their experience. There are several ways to quantify this, but one of the most common is monetary giving. STM trips often place affluent Westerners in a different socioeconomic status than their

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[35] Ibid., 180.

[36] Kraig Beyerlein, Jenny Trinitapoli, and Gary Adler, "The Effect of Religious Short-Term Mission Trips on Youth Civic Engagement," *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 50, no. 4 (December 2011): 780.

[37] LiErin Probasco, "Giving Time, Not Money: Long-Term Impacts of Short-Term Mission Trips," *Missiology: An International Review* 41, no. 2 (April 2013): 219.

[38] Probasco does hypothesize that the exotic nature of an international STM trip might limit the post-trip impact at one's home location.

own.[39] A common refrain heard from a returning participant is that they are "grateful for what they have" and they now realize "they don't need as many material possessions." In the face of such grinding poverty, simply being grateful is an inadequate response or goal. One would hope that STM participants, having now witnessed poverty, would be more open to financially supporting the work of God to alleviate such conditions via direct institutional support or by supporting missionaries.[40] STMs should aspire to create lives of financial stewardship that, viewed longitudinally, makes the cost of STM trips make more financial sense, even to their skeptics. They should cause more money to be used in long-term missions and not less. Unfortunately, current research casts doubt on this goal. Priest writes, "As currently practiced, STM does not appear to be producing lives of sacrificial stewardship."[41] Ver Beek, in his 2006 study of participants who helped after Hurricane Mitch, found that "while participants reported that their trip had resulted in significant changes in their lives, including their financial giving, their donation records did not reflect any substantial differences."[42] Around tax time in 2006, Robert Priest and his team surveyed several Sunday school classes in Chicago, Christian college students (Palm Beach Atlantic University and Geneva College), and seminary students about their STM involvement and financial giving. Comparing these groups, his team said, "No methodologically sound research we have discovered has yet demonstrated a

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[39] Priest, "U.S. Megachurches and New Patterns of Global Mission," 99.

[40] Jim Harries questions the missiological appropriateness of the flow of money from the West to the majority world. He writes, "The question is always of how to give wisely, and never whether one ought to give (material things) at all! Should this be so?" Harries, Jim, and Fred Lewis. "Is Mission Diverse, or Is It All Just Money? An Examination of Western Mission to Africa," *Evangelical Review of Theology* 36, no. 4 (October 2012): 347–55.

[41] Priest et al., "Researching the Short-Term Mission Movement," 441.

[42] Kurt Alan Ver Beek, "The Impact of Short-Term Missions: A Case Study of House Construction in Honduras after Hurricane Mitch," *Missiology* 34, no. 4 (October 2006): 477.

significant average increase in giving by participants caused by STM experience. In short, one claim about STM, that it helps to create higher levels of financial support for the career missionary enterprise, does not appear to be true."[43] To financially justify the costs of STM trips, new ways to connect trips and lives of financial stewardship must be implemented.

Though there is some evidence that STM trips do impact participants, that impact is not as far-reaching as it could and should be. This is especially true with regard to vocational calling, engagement in one's home location, and engagement with the broader missions movement. It would seem that short-term mission is, at best, not helping the long-term missions cause and at worst is actually hurting the long-term missions cause.

Why Don't STM Trips Lead to Lasting Change?

To research the results of the STM trips is relatively easy when compared to diagnosing the reasons why STM trips, as presently practiced, do not create change. But, if STM trips are to continue to play a positive role in the global missions movement, the questions of "Why don't STM trips consistently lead to change in a participant?" must be addressed. The reasons are varied and multifaceted, but there seem to be three primary and related theories. First, David Livermore argues that many facilitators assume a "send them and they will grow"[44] mentality and do not train and debrief their STM teams appropriately. They think that merely placing someone in an international setting where they experience a different culture, poverty, etc. will change an individual. More often

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[43] Priest et al., "Researching the Short-Term Mission Movement," 439-440.

[44] David Livermore, "If We Send Them They Will Grow," March 2011, accessed December 8, 2013, http://davidlivermore.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/03/If-we-send-them.pdf.

than not, with this hands-off approach, STMs can turn into religious tourism. While experiencing another culture is important, it is certainly not the totality of a trip. When trips are approached in such a manner, it is no wonder they do not lead to lasting change in participants.

Second, as mentioned earlier, LiErin Probasco recently studied the participant impact from both international and domestic STM trips. She found that domestic trips do, in fact, have an impact on the lives of participants whereas international STM trips do not. She surmises that the context of an international STM trip is so different that participants cannot make the leap because of its exotic nature and incongruity with normal everyday life.[45] Probasco's 'leap' is more formally known as learning transfer. Learning transfer is the ability to take from one experience and draw conclusions and implement change in another, different experience.[46] Transfer theory argues that "little evidence exists that a participant can effectively apply what is learned in one context to another, novel context."[47]

A third reason why STM trips don't often lead to change is because of who facilitates them. In a recent study of mega-churches, Priest found that only 22% of mega-church mission pastors have a degree in mission.[48] Smaller churches that cannot afford a mission pastor often have STM trips facilitated by dedicated lay leaders or other

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[45] Probasco, "Giving Time, Not Money," 219.

[46] Nate Furman and Jim Sibthorp, "Leveraging Experiential Learning Techniques for Transfer," *New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education* 2013, no. 137 (2013): 17.

[47] Steven J. Durning and Anthony R. Artino, "Situativity Theory: A Perspective on How Participants and the Environment Can Interact: AMEE Guide No. 52," *Medical Teacher* 33, no. 3 (March 2011): 189.

[48] Priest, "U.S. Megachurches and New Patterns of Global Mission," 101.

ministerial staff such as a youth or education minister. Priest goes on to argue that many

of those mega-church mission pastors are not missiologically well trained. But blame

doesn't only rest with mission pastors. He also argues that missiologists have not done a

good job of communicating with the non-missiologist in mind.[49] He writes,

> there is a marked divide between scholars and practitioners, between missiology
> and short-term mission. Missiologists, until recently, have ignored and sometimes
> disdained short-term mission. We have not systematically researched it, have not
> produced high quality missiological analyses of short-term mission structures and
> have not oriented our writing or teaching to the large numbers of our students
> whose connection to mission and the global church is through STM. STM leaders
> often avoid missiology, and missiologists avoid STM. Interestingly, this divide is
> present even in many academic settings, which support short-term missions. Even
> when seminary or Christian college campuses run formal STM programs, they
> frequently are run by non-missiologists, unconnected from the missiologists on
> campus.[50]

In a recent study Brian Howell participated in, and studied, Central Wheaten Church's

(CWC – a pseudonym used by Howell) vast STM program for an anthropological study

of STM trips. He found that

> CWC has a substantial and thoughtful preparation process for STM teams, but
> when those teams are led by lay people with no more expertise in cross cultural
> training than those going, they rely on the structures of American evangelical
> culture to inform the narrative preparation and are likely to reproduce narratives
> drawn from their own culturally particular narratives and theologies.[51]

This does not call into question the heart of those leading STM trips, but merely the

technical skill and life experiences of those leading.

Any attempt at trying to make STM trips a catalyst to increase a participant's

connection to global mission, vocational calling or missions in one's home location must

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[49] Ibid., 102.

[50] Priest and Priest, "They See Everything, and Understand Nothing," 67.

[51] Howell, *Short-Term Mission*, 205.

address these three primary reasons or theories as to why STM trips do not lead to lasting change.

Summary of Introduction

In summary, there are at minimum an estimated 1.6 million STM participants every year. As STM trips are currently being implemented, they often do not lead to changed lives. Research suggests that participants do not sense increased vocational calling, increased connection to mission at one's home location, or increased connection to the global missions movement. This lack of a 'changed life' is often connected to three main factors: lack of in-depth training of participants, learning transfer or the incongruity of the international STM experience with one's home life, and a lack of skilled STM facilitators. In order for STM trips to reach their full potential, a rethinking and retooling of STM trips must occur. The next section, Section 2, will examine how others are seeking to ensure that STM trips create change.

SECTION 2: OTHER PROPOSED SOLUTIONS

Introduction

Since the late 1990s, more and more resources (books, websites, conferences, etc.) are popping up that are designed to help leaders facilitate their STM trips. This section is broken up into "Popular Books," "Dissertations," "Online,"[1] "Conferences," and "Organizations," and examines how a few in each of these categories are attempting to address the lack of change in STM participants.

Popular Books

Deep Justice Journeys: 50 Activities to Move From Mission Trips to Missional Living[2]

This resource is geared specifically to youth ministers. Its main sections include 'Framing,' 'Experience and Reflection,' 'Initial Debrief,' and 'Ongoing Transformation.' What makes this book unique are the activities designed to engage the entire person, heart, body, mind, and soul. For example, one section encourages youth participants to examine their church budget in light of their experience[3] while another focuses on practicing spiritual disciplines in conjunction with the STM experience.[4] It also challenges youth ministers to create "walls of support and feedback"[5] that surround the student through the experience.

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[1] I've also included in this section books that have an online component, which are often videos accessed via the web.

[2] Brad M. Griffin, *Deep Justice Journeys Leader's Guide: 50 Activities to Move from Mission Trips to Missional Living* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2009).

[3] Ibid., 175.

[4] Ibid., 165.

[5] Ibid., 16.

Short Term Missions Workbook[6]

This book is geared towards any STM participant, regardless of age or location. It follows the pattern of pre-trip preparation, on-site facilitation, and post-trip debriefing. It is designed to be completed in eight sessions before the trip and two sessions once the trip has concluded. Most sections heavily incorporate biblical text into the themes and ideas of any given chapter. It begins by examining the God of mission to set the stage for the STM experience. There is also a heavy emphasis on issues, such as communicating clearly and crossing culture. An appendix gives the leader other ideas for discussion and activities that can be done by individuals and a group.

Mission Trip Prep Kit: Leader's Guide[7]

Written by Kevin Johnson, this book is designed for the STM leader who knows very little, if anything, about facilitating youth STM trips or the philosophy that undergirds them. He provides four pre-trip training sessions designed to help prepare students to achieve the goals that have been laid out. He also provides two follow-up debriefing sessions that are designed to help students share their experience with their families and to encourage students to think about how they will live differently post mission trip.

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[6] Tim Dearborn, *Short-Term Missions Workbook: From Mission Tourists to Global Citizens*, Workbook edition (Downers Grove, IL : InterVarsity Press, 2003).

[7] Kevin Johnson, *Mission Trip Prep Kit Leader's Guide* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2003).

Dissertations

Message, Mode and Milieu: Recalling an Ancient Approach to Christian Discipleship Sufficient for the Western-Consumerist Context of the American College Student.[8]

Written by Bill Westfall, this dissertation was not completed to improve STM but to disciple Western college students steeped in consumerism. The author calls for "a cross-cultural, service-learning experience"[9] as a solution. To facilitate that experience he wrote 40 lessons. "Each lesson is designed to stimulate new ideas as the student engages the curriculum on an intellectual level through individual reflection and group discussions."[10] His lessons begin with an understanding of an individual's *telos* and ends with a move to find and live life in Jesus.

Short Term Mission Trips: A Vehicle for Developing Personal and Spiritual Well-Being[11]

Written in 2000, David Manitsas examines the personal and spiritual benefits of STM trips. During his research, he found no added benefit for STM participants when compared to a control group who had no previous STM experience.[12] Using data from service learning trips, Manitsas surmises that trips must be properly planned from initial conception to post-trip debriefing and that reflection must be used throughout.[13]

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[8] Bill Westfall. "Message, Mode and Milieu: Recalling an Ancient Approach to Christian Discipleship Sufficient for the Western-Consumerist Context of the American College Student." (DMin. diss., George Fox University, 2013.

[9] Ibid., 88.

[10] Ibid., 89.

[11] David L. Manitsas, "Short Term Mission Trips: A Vehicle for Developing Personal and Spiritual Well-Being" (PhD diss., George Fox University, 2000).

[12] Ibid., iii.

[13] Ibid., 52-53.

Short-Term Missions at the Master's College: An Experiential Education[14]

Written by Lisa La George, this dissertation examines the STM experiences of students who attended The Master's College from 1989 through 2004. It also examined the students' STM training materials. The majority of her recommendations for change of their STM trips center on the use of reflection by STM teams. She writes, "Reflection must be a continual process woven through an experience, and must be taught, encouraged, and modeled for teams throughout the training phase, the trip phase, and following the trip."[15]

Researching the Effect of Short-term Missions Experience on Paternalism Among Students from Selected Christian Colleges in the United States[16]

In 2007, Kyeong-Sook Park researched paternalistic tendencies of STM participants from various Christian colleges as well as the impact that missiological training had on those same tendencies. He found that STM participants who had a personal experience with local leaders while on an STM trip had a lower rate of paternalism. He also found that STM training (as was practiced in 2007) did not lead to valuing missiological education or cultural training.

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[14] Lisa La George, "Short-Term Missions at the Master's College: An Experiential Education" (PhD diss., Biola Universtiy, 2009).

[15] Ibid., 256.

[16] Kyeong-Sook Park, "Researching the Effect of Short-Term Missions Experience on Paternalism Among Students from Selected Christian Colleges in the United States" (PhD diss., Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, 2007).

A Short-term Mission Trip Training Program with an Emphasis on Cross-cultural Training and Reentry for Covenant Church in Winterville, North Carolina[17]

Written by Donna Sheets, this dissertation seeks to answer the question, "What should constitute an effective short-term mission training model for Covenant Church in Winterville, North Carolina?"[18] Her solution was six training sessions that are an hour and a half each. They focus, among other things, on learning the context one is traveling to, sharing one's faith, and addressing reentry issues, even before the team leaves.[19]

Online

Cultural Intelligence or CQ[20]

Dr. David Livermore and Dr. Linn Van Dyne lead Cultural Intelligence. CQ is an online training and evidence-based assessment tool for determining one's ability to successfully navigate differing cultures. After assessing one's CQ capacity with their online diagnosis, tests, tools, and strategies can be used to strengthen one's areas of cross-cultural weakness. One of the primary strategies of CQ is to challenge a participant's expectation of a STM trip as well as other cultures.

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[17] Donna Leigh Sheets, "A Short-Term Mission Trip Training Program with an Emphasis On Cross-Cultural Training and Reentry for Covenant Church in Winterville, North Carolina" (DMin. diss., Regent University, 2011), 1.

[18] Ibid., 2.

[19] Ibid., 114-117.

[20] "Cultural Intelligence Center," accessed August 8, 2014, http://www.culturalq.com/tmpl/home/index.php.

Round Trip DVD[21] and *Round Trip Participants Guide*[22]

Created in 2008, *Round Trip* is a training curriculum that focuses on a multi-directional short-term mission experience. Created by *Christianity Today*, it follows Americans traveling to Kenya as well as Kenyans traveling to the United States in an STM exchange. It shows their pre-trip training, on-site cultural adjustments, and discussion and their debriefing of their experience. The STM curriculum itself is broken up into five sections and can be used by individuals or churches. The main question it seeks to answer is, "How can these short trips lead to lasting change?"[23]

When Helping Hurts: The Small Group Experience[24]

Written by Steve Corbett and Brian Fikkert, this book is a follow-up to their widely popular *When Helping Hurts*. Through a series of six lessons and activities, participants are challenged to develop a theological understanding of poverty (broken relationships with God, creation, others, self) that impact everyone, but affect the material poor drastically. The rest of the book challenges participants to engage in solutions that do not hurt those whom one seeks to help. This curriculum also includes a video component with commentary from Corbett, Fikkert, and others that supplements the written portion.

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[21] "Round Trip: Full Curriculum," *Building Church Leaders*, accessed August 4, 2014, http://www.buildingchurchleaders.com/downloads/shorttermmissions/roundtripfull/.

[22] Andy Crouch, *Round Trip Participant's Guide* (Carol Stream, IL: Christianity Today, 2008).

[23] Ibid., 6.

[24] Steve Corbett and Brian Fikkert, *When Helping Hurts: The Small Group Experience* (Chicago, IL: Moody Publishers, 2014).

Conferences

Fellowship of Short-Term Mission Leaders Conference (FSTML)[25]

A yearly gathering since 1981, the FSTML (also known as the Forum) creates a conversation amongst leaders, ministry practitioners, and academics that centers on the role that STMs have in God's global mission and how to achieve the movement's best practices. Participants are challenged to network together, rejuvenate themselves spiritually, and have the best form of STMs possible.

Organizations

Short-term Evangelical Mission International (STEM)[26]

STEM began ministry in 1985 and it has a threefold purpose: 1. Short-term mission trips. 2. Short-term mission training. 3. Short-term mission publications. Their publication section has created helpful tools to facilitate STM trips including *Mission Maker Magazine* and *Effective Engagement in Short-term Missions: Doing it Right.*

Standards of Excellence (SOE)[27]

SOE "is an accrediting and resourcing body for those who send, receive, facilitate and support short-term mission (STM) endeavors."[28] They advocate seven standards for STM trips: God Centeredness, Empowering Partnerships, Mutual Design,

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[25] "FSTML About US," accessed August 8, 2014, http://www.fstml.org/about.php.

[26] "Short-Term Evangelical Missions," accessed August 8, 2014, http://www.stemintl.org/about.

[27] "Standards of Excellence: About," accessed August 18, 2014, http://www.soe.org/explore/about/soe-intro/.

[28] "SOE- Intro," accessed August 8, 2014, http://www.soe.org/explore/about/soe-intro/.

Comprehensive Administrations, Qualified Leadership, Appropriate Training and Thorough Follow Through.[29]

Thesis Differentiation

Over the past ten years, there has been a wealth of new material created to increase the likelihood that STM trips will have a lasting impact on its participants. While all of these approaches bring something to the table, there are some gaps that need to be addressed and will hopefully be appropriately addressed by this dissertation. There are at least three distinctions between this dissertation and the majority of the aforementioned resources.

First, many of these resources seem to be designed to help create change, but they never state the change their curriculums are designed for. This is like following general travel directions but having no idea where you're going. Surely knowing the destination might influence the journey itself and will allow one to know if they've achieved the right destination. This thesis specifically states the goals of the STM curriculum (as it pertains to participants) and builds the curriculum around these stated goals: (1) Increase in vocational calling; (2) Increase in connection to global mission; and (3) Increase in mission in one's home location.

Second, the majority of these aforementioned resources note the importance of local people, places, and culture. Unfortunately, none of these resources are designed with a particular location in mind. They are designed as general resources used for any STM team going anywhere. While there is some merit to that approach, it is often too

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[29] "The Seven Standards," accessed August 8, 2014, http://www.soe.org/explore/the-7-standards/.

general and broad. This thesis places an emphasis on a particular place (South Africa) and particular ministry partners and builds the curriculum around that. Furthermore, it seeks to show that God is using locals to address systemic issues within South Africa. Creating a hyper-local curriculum will hopefully increase the likelihood that this dissertation's stated goals will be achieved.

Third, this dissertation reimagines STM training through the lens of experiential education with particular emphasis on the constructivist use of reflection and the structivist idea of a community of practice. These two theories are used throughout the pre-trip training, on-site facilitation, and post-trip debriefing to create an experience that engages the entire person (body, heart, mind, soul) towards a particular end.

The following section, Section 3, contains the heart of the written argument. It examines the constructive and situative experiential education theories and proposes several changes in trip facilitation that will help increase the connection to the global missions movement, mission at one's home, and, finally, vocational mission.

SECTION 3: THE THESIS

Introduction

As indicated earlier, there is a growing list of literature and other resources that attempt to bridge the divide between sound missiology and the current practice of short-term missions. Despite many good resources, the current general consensus is still that STM trips, as they are currently practiced, do not, as a whole, produce changed lives.[1]

This thesis section will first examine the field of experiential education for insight into understanding what the pedagogical framework and structure of a trip should be and why many adults who participate in formal experiential education often experience some degree of measurable change. It will examine both constructivist and situative education theories and propose how to create a hybrid model that might influence the STM movement.

After an examination of experiential education, individual components of STM training and facilitation will be proposed. These elements are broken into two categories, foundation and practice. The foundation category consists of the *Missio Dei (*Mission of God)*, poverty and power, and global Christianity. The practice category consists of issues of cultural competence. These elements are proposed in hopes that they will lead to an increase in vocational calling, mission engagement at home and a greater connection to and involvement in the global missions movement.

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[1] As noted in Section 1, there is some evidence of change with some STM participants. But, the limited nature of that change requires we reimagine how we facilitate trips so that change is the norm for all participants.

Experiential Education

As already noted in Section 1, the current practice of STM trips often does not create change in an individual and therefore a new framework or lens for STM facilitation is needed. Fortunately, there are other lenses that are readily available and could be tailored to the STM experience. One such lens commonly used by others crossing culture boundaries is the field of experiential education. Why would fully viewing and implementing an STM trip as a more formal experiential education experience make a difference as opposed to the "send them and they will grow" mentality? For one reason, experiential education studies, of which there are many, based on semester abroad and secular international adult education trips suggest, "studying abroad transforms students' global perspectives and cross-cultural effectiveness."[2] These trips often have rigorous trip training and intentional facilitation that STM leaders and participants can benefit from. In one research study on student teachers traveling abroad for international field research, "students have reported…improved foreign language skills, increased ability to navigate in cross-cultural contexts, heightened interest in foreign travel, and a more critical view of their country of origin."[3] Another recent experiential education article argues that experiential education programs have had success in changing global perspectives because they are "grounded by a sound

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[2] Joellen E. Coryell, "The Foreign City as Classroom: Adult Learning in Study Abroad," *Adult Learning* 22, no. 3 (June 1, 2011): 4.

[3] Erik Malewski, et al., "How International Field Experiences Promote Cross-Cultural Awareness in Preservice Teachers through Experiential Learning: Findings from a Six-Year Collective Case Study," *Teachers College Record* 114, no. 8 (January 1, 2012): 3.

pedagogical framework."[4] The authors argue that when those programs are appropriately

grounded change occurs. They write,

> It is our contention that experientially based, short-term educational travel
> programs provide a learning site for students to experience, grapple with, reframe,
> and reflect on issues global in nature—a potential transformative experience that
> leads to a shift in perspective, awareness, and worldview. In order to truly
> facilitate the transformative experience necessary to guide students to redefine
> who they are in relationship to the wider globe, it is vital to create a marriage
> between experiences and critical reflection. It is at this interface of experiences
> and the critical reflection of those experiences that a salient avenue for nurturing
> global citizenship emerges.[5]

It's reasonable to believe that if STM trips are viewed and facilitated in much the same

manner as a semester abroad or an adult experiential educational trip, change in an

individual could be more easily found and measured. To fully understand the

implications of experiential education on STM trips, a brief history of experiential

education is helpful.

Early support for experiential education pedagogy and learning derive from the

philosophies of Plato (rationalism) and Aristotle (empiricism).[6] Rationalism "refers to the

idea that knowledge derives from the mind alone and not from the senses," [7] which

therefore discounts experience. Learning occurs when knowledge is "transferred from the

teacher to the learner and becomes stored in the learner's memory for later use."[8]

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[4] Krystina R. Stoner et al., "Global Citizenship as a Learning Outcome of Educational Travel," *Journal of Teaching in Travel & Tourism* 14, no. 2 (2014): 151.

[5] Ibid., 159-160.

[6] Durning and Artino, "Situativity Theory," 190.

[7] Ibid., 189.

[8] Ibid., 190.

Rationalism's counterpart, empiricism, "argues the opposite – experience is the only source of knowledge."[9]

In 1938, John Dewey challenged the predominately platonic basis of the American educational system "and justified education based on learning by doing."[10] He writes, "How many [students] acquired special skills by means of automatic drill so that their power of judgment and capacity to act intelligently in new situations was limited? How many found what they did learn so foreign to the situations of life outside the school as to give them no power of control over the latter?"[11] For Dewey, experience served as necessary supplement to the classroom because one could not learn everything he or she needed to know in that setting alone.[12] Experience bolsters learning. But Dewey also argues that just because one experiences, he or she does not automatically learn. He writes, "The belief that all genuine education comes about through experience does not mean that all experiences are genuinely or equally educative. Experience and education cannot be directly equated to each other. For some experiences are mis-educative."[13] Certainly this might be a descriptor of the STM enterprise.

What exactly is experiential education when it's properly understood? Christian Itin provides an in-depth definition of experiential education that bears quoting in full:

> Experiential education is a holistic philosophy where carefully chosen experiences supported by reflection, critical analysis, and synthesis, are structured

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[9] Ibid.

[10] Tara J Fenwick, *Learning through Experience: Troubling Orthodoxies and Intersecting Questions* (Malabar, FL: Krieger Pub., 2003), 6.

[11] John Dewey, *Experience and Education* (New York: Macmillan, 1938), 15.

[12] Arifeen Daneshyar, "Evolution of a Global Perspective: Experiential Learning During an Education Abroad Program," *Review of Business* 32, no. 1 (Winter 2011/2012): 65.

[13] Dewey, *Experience and Education*, 25.

> to require the learner to take initiative, make decisions and be accountable for the results, through actively posing questions, investigation, experimenting, being curious, solving problems, assuming responsibility, being creative, constructing meaning and integrating previously developed knowledge. Learners are engaged intellectually, emotionally, socially, politically, spiritually, and physically in an uncertain environment where the learner may experience success, failure, adventure, and risk taking. The learning usually involves interaction between learners, learner and educator, and learner and environment. It challenges the learner to explore issues of values, relationships, diversity, inclusion and community.[14]

This definition highlights the interplay of experience, knowledge, and interaction of participants to produce a desired learning goal. When viewed in this light, it is not surprising that a typical STM trip does not match this definition of experiential education. From the time John Dewey first challenged the platonic foundation of American education, there have been many theories that have since expanded his thoughts. Two theories, constructivism and situativism, offer particular help with understanding and implementing an STM trip in a way that produces desired changes in an individual.

Constructivist Theory
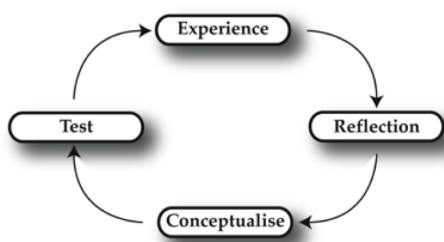
Figure 1: Kolb Learning Cycle

In the constructivist theory, "individuals are constantly constructing knowledge based on their experience in the world. Constructivism asserts that an individual's interactions with his/her environment produce specific observations which are then interpreted and generalized into concepts

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[14] Christian M. Itin, "Reasserting the Philosophy of Experiential Education as a Vehicle for Change in the 21st Century.," *Journal of Experiential Education* 22, no. 2 (October 15, 1999): 93.

of the way the world works."[15] In the 1980s, David Kolb wrote *Experiential Learning*, a

seminal text in the constructivist movement.[16] In *Experiential Learning*, he writes,

"Learning is the process whereby knowledge is created through the transformation of

experience."[17] In his book, Kolb formulates a learning cycle (Figure 1) that encapsulates

his theory of learning and one that those in the constructivist movement consistently

reference. A person can start at any stage, but for learning to occur he or she must go

through all stages. A significant advance was Kolb's emphasis on "new ways of doing

and thinking through reflection on concrete experience."[18] For constructivists, finding

meaning and creating knowledge cannot occur until one has critically reflected on an

experience. There is no learning without active reflection.[19]

Reflection isn't the only key to constructivist learning. As promoted by the

model's ongoing cyclical nature, learning and reflection done prior to an experience is a

prerequisite for learning to occur.[20] One cannot hope to learn if he or she has not reflected

on the necessary information to place an experience in context. It's in this cyclical

rotation between more cognitive and abstract education and true experience that

reflection has the ability to promote learning.

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[15] Micah Jacobson and Mari Ruddy, *Open to Outcome: A Practical Guide for Facilitating & Teaching Experiential Reflection* (Oklahoma City, OK: Wood "N" Barnes Pub. & Dist., 2004), 16.

[16] Ibid., 13.

[17] David A Kolb, *Experiential Learning: Experience as a Source of Learning and Development* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1984), 38.

[18] J. Garraway and T. Volbrecht, "Theorising Experiential Learning," *South African Journal of Higher Education* 25, no. 6 (November 2011): 1091.

[19] Fenwick, *Learning through Experience*, 24.

[20] Norma Hedin, "Experiential Learning : Theory and Challenges," *Christian Education Journal* 7, no 1 (Spring 2010): 109.

A major critique of Kolb's cycle, and constructivism in general, is that it does not give weight to the social context (relationships, environment, etc.) in which learning occurs.[21] The constructivist emphasis on reflection is not without criticism either. Reflection is criticized because it's based on rationalist assumptions[22] and "excludes much of the richness and complexity of human experience and consciousness from knowledge creation."[23] Richard Jordi's critique of constructivist reflection is particularly helpful. He writes,

> If reflection could stretch its limbs, get in touch with its bodily held feelings, its discomforts, emotions, intuitions, and imagination, might then awareness emerge of a more expansive calling in the service of human learning and development? Might reflection see that it can embrace a wider range of elements in our learning processes?[24]

It's important to note that Jordi and many others don't negate reflection. He's advocating for reflection's expansion beyond a cognitive base, to elevate other parts of the human heart, soul, and psyche. Some of these constructivist critiques can be minimalized and learning enhanced by combining constructivism with a situative theory of learning.

Situativism

As constructivism was becoming the predominant experiential education theory, cognitive psychologists in the 1980s were questioning its emphasis on reflection as the

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[21] Garraway and Volbrecht, "Theorising Experiential Learning," 1091.

[22] Richard Jordi, "Reframing the Concept of Reflection: Consciousness, Experiential Learning, and Reflective Learning Practices," *Adult Education Quarterly: A Journal of Research and Theory* 61, no. 2 (May 2011): 182.

[23] Ibid., 193.

[24] Ibid., 18.

only or primary vehicle for learning.[25] Their response focused on how elements outside

of the individual influence learning. Situativism's emphasis is on a 'community of

practice' (COP) and the theory is often referred to as such. A community of practice is

"any group of individuals who work together for a period, developing particular ways of

doing things and talking about things that their members come to learn."[26] This could be

a group of medical doctors specializing in cardiology, or engineers working on a bridge,

or an international partnership to which a church continually sends STM teams.

Situative theory places learning and knowledge squarely in experience and

interaction with the community. Experience is understood holistically and includes

participants, facilitators, the receiving community, culture, and the physical space. For

learning and knowledge to occur, all of these elements must be interacting with each

other; this is not a 'hands off' approach but the exact opposite. Learning is socially and

culturally constructed in the experience itself, as opposed to the constructivist proposal of

learning occurring only during reflection.[27] Instead of trying to get "the world inside the

head," situative theory places an emphasis on "the head inside the world."[28] Jean Lave

and Etienne Wager flesh out what this looks like practically:

> Individuals learn as they participate by interacting with the community (with its
> history, assumptions and cultural values, rules, and patterns of relationship), the
> tools at hand (including objects, technology, languages, and images) and the
> moment's activity (its purpose, norms and practical challenges). Knowledge

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[25] Jayson Seaman and Alison Rheingold, "Circle Talks As Situated Experiential Learning: Context, Identity, and Knowledgeability in 'Learning from Reflection,'" *Journal of Experiential Education* 36, no. 2 (June 2013): 158.

[26] Fenwick, *Learning through Experience*, 56.

[27] Durning and Artino, "Situativity Theory," 188-189.

[28] Ibid., 189.

emerges from these elements interacting….The objective is to become a full participant in the community of practice, not to learn *about* the practice.[29]

As this paragraph emphasizes, "the process of knowledge is essentially embodied, realized through action, and therefore often worked out in a domain beyond consciousness. This fundamentally challenges the belief that individual reflection and memory are significant in knowledge production."[30] Constructivists place an emphasis on "understanding at the intersection of the individual and the environment."[31]

As with constructivism, situative theory is not without critique. With situative theories, truth claims are problematic. The dichotomy of true/false is irrelevant. Truth is found in "what is relevant in this particular situation, what is worth knowing and doing, what is convenient for whom, and what to do next. The emphasis is on improving one's ability to participate meaningfully in particular practices, and moving to legitimate roles within communities."[32] Unfortunately, just because a community practices something doesn't make it right or ethical.

A second critique is that situative theory pays too little attention to the actual information being transferred. Just because a community gathers to do or think through something doesn't make the information legitimate or correct. If a group of engineers wants to lecture about cardiology there should be some serious concerns about how pertinent and accurate their information is! On an STM trip, this is akin to the participant

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[29] Fenwick, *Learning through Experience*, 25-26.

[30] Ibid.

[31] Durning and Artino, "Situativity Theory," 191.

[32] Fenwick, *Learning through Experience*, 26.

talking about the history of South Africa when he or she has never been there or studied it[33] or assuming that the culture one is visiting is exactly the same as one's home culture.

Both constructivism and situative theory are important foundations to experiential education. It is possible to combine these two theories to create a holistic experience that will increase the likelihood that a STM trip will be transformational for those participating.

Constructivist/Situative Hybrid Theory for Short-Term Missions

Tara Fenwick argues that there isn't a 'silver bullet' with regard to adult experiential education. She writes, "Clearly no one pedagogical approach responds adequately to these deeper [pedagogical] concerns. However, educators can explore and combine different roles and methodological approaches in their own practice."[34] Short-term mission trips are in need of such a hybrid model. Combining constructivism and situativism creates a model that responds to the three major challenges of why STMs are not transformational and which balances out the criticisms of the other model.

As noted earlier, there are three main theories on why STMs do not lead to lasting change. First, they are often facilitated with a 'hands off' approach, assuming that if participants go they will grow. Second, the international setting is so different than one's normal experience that the jump between settings cannot be automatically or easily bridged. Third, those leading have not acquired the appropriate information or experience to facilitate a trip outside of one's home situation.

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[33] Garraway and Volbrecht, "Theorising Experiential Learning," 1091.

[34] Fenwick, *Learning through Experience*, 104.

Send Them and They Will Grow

Constructivism values an individual's previous learning before an experience. For an STM trip, this expands the start of the trip from point of departure to the first STM training session where content and experience can begin to shape conceptions of a trip and subsequent future action and reflection. These training sessions are vitally important and combat the 'send them and they will grow' mentality. An individual cannot merely show up and expect to learn. As with formal education, there is required homework, class time, assignments, discussion, and critical thinking. Education and experience before a trip set the stage for the experiences of the trip. This aspect of constructivism also helps mitigate the situative tendency to not focus on accurateness or truth of the content and information being shared. Engaging books, videos, and other bodies of information that are available from reputable scholars, thinkers, and historians increases the likelihood that the information being reflected upon is accurate.
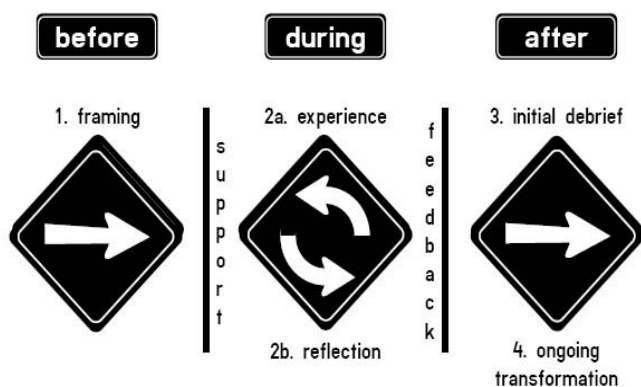
Figure 2: Griffin and Powell Model

At the Fuller Youth Institute, Brad Griffin and Laura Powell created a constructivist model (Figure 2) for STM facilitation based on a previous model by Laura Joplin.[35]

Griffin and Powell's adapted model is particularly helpful because it places importance on every stage of the trip. Participants aren't expected to undergo an international

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[35] Terence Linhart, "How We Learn from Short-Term Mission Experiences : A Grounded Theory Modification of the Joplin Model," *Christian Education Journal* 7, no 1 (2010): 182.

experience without understanding the context. As participants are on site, they are

engaging simultaneously in meaningful experiences and in meaningful reflection while

being supported and engaged by a facilitator. Once the on-site experience is over, a full

debriefing occurs where one begins to "start thinking about the even harder work of long

term change."[36] Finally, special emphasis is placed on ongoing transformation, realizing

that the STM process isn't over when a participant arrives home. Unfortunately, post-trip

reflection is something that STM teams have shown to be deficient on.[37] Focusing on the

trip itself isn't enough: "Without the intentional inclusion of the other stages in the

process, there is the risk of simply experiencing without intentional learning. Experiential

learning must include intentional processes to assure that learning indeed takes place."[38]

While this is a good model, there are a few gaps that a situative approach can address.

Situativism answers the 'send them and they will grow' mentality by forcing the

facilitator and planner to actively think through what particular events and experiences

the STM team will undertake, because learning does not take place solely through

personal reflection but through interactions. The facilitator must "consider the

environment, learner dynamics and perspectives, teaching modalities, and their

interactions – they all matter."[39] Doing so, the facilitator can draw people further into the

STM community "by creating authentic conditions for people to experience and practice

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[36] Kara E. Powell, *Deep Justice Journeys Student Journal: Moving from Mission Trips to Missional Living*, Student edition (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2009), 7.

[37] Brian N. Ballard, "Mission Trips: Attend to the Planning and the Purpose," *Word & World* 33, no. 3 (June 2013): 284.

[38] Hedin, "Experiential Learning," 115.

[39] Durning and Artino, "Situativity Theory," 196.

in."[40] Situativism forces the facilitator to realize that changes in the work project, living arrangements, tools, if someone is sick or not working, the receiving community, etc. can all affect the community of practice and thus the ability of persons in the community to learn. The facilitator can't merely plan a trip and hit the 'play' button but must be willing to actively participate and hit the 'pause,' or 'fast-forward' button or to change the music all together. The facilitator has a key role in ensuring that the environment is conducive to learning.

A key component for any STM trip that seeks to create change in participants is the influence of and interaction with host Christians (those that are receiving STM teams). A situative approach is designed to do just such a thing. As quoted earlier, "Individuals learn as they participate by interacting with the community (with its history, assumptions and cultural values, rules, and patterns of relationship), the tools at hand (including objects, technology, languages, and images) and the moment's activity (its purpose, norms and practical challenges)."[41] Who better for visiting STM teams to interact with then locals whose differing 'values and assumptions' are naturally embedded into their own life? The benefits of interacting with local Christians and allowing them to lead is integral to this dissertations stated goals of change by helping eliminate attitudes and actions that keep an STM participant from engaging the global missions movement in a way that undermines global Christians, as well as the message that any follower of Christ should carry. Park, in his 2007 research, examined several

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[40] Fenwick, *Learning through Experience*, 190–191.

[41] Ibid., 25-26.

questions surrounding the effect of short-term missions on the paternalist tendencies of

STM participants. Park defines paternalism as

> the dominance of the sending church and its representatives over the partnership
> churches who receive them. Paternalism involves an attitude, tendency, or
> disposition to relate to others in a fatherly manner, that is, to relate to adults of
> another culture, as if they were children. Specifically, paternalism combines
> benevolence with an assumption of Superior knowledge, experience and skills…
> giving one the right to make decisions and exercise authority on the behalf of
> others, for their own good, without giving them full and equal respect and the
> right to determine their own agenda.[42]

The first question Park researched was on the correlation between STM trips in general

and paternalistic tendencies in participants. He found that the "STM movement is often

associated with somewhat lower levels of paternalism."[43] But as he rightly notes,

"Correlation does not prove causality."[44] Digging a bit deeper, Park asks several other

questions including, "Might a certain kind of STM experience result in lower levels of

paternalism? Alternatively, does limited exposure to the national Christian leaders and

their ministry sites on STM trips result in higher levels of paternalism?"[45] He found that

"STM exposure to national Christian leaders and their ministries was in fact negatively

correlated with paternalism…"[46] He sums up the implications for STM trips:

> if STM can be structured in such a way that participants will be given more
> opportunities to understand the challenges, struggles, and triumphs indigenous
> leaders experience in their ministry, the results will be more beneficial to the
> global Christian Body of Christ. In turn, participants are likely to return home

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[42] Robert J. Priest, ed., *Effective Engagement in Short-Term Missions: Doing It Right!* (Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library Pub., 2008), 508-509.

[43] Ibid., 515.

[44] Ibid.

[45] Ibid.

[46] Ibid., 516.

with a more realistic, rather than a staged picture of missions, thus becoming less paternalistic.[47]

Certainly interacting with local Christian leaders and ministries is not a cure all for STM participants to experience change. But, if Park is correct, then it is a vital element in producing change in participants and, more importantly, it is the correct way to engage in global mission.

Learning Transfer

As noted in Section 1, learning transfer is the second theory of why STMs don't create change and can also be addressed by a constructivist and situative hybrid theory. Again, the hallmark of constructivism is its major emphasis on reflection. The challenge of reflection on an STM trip is that "often we are so deeply involved in the experience itself that we are unable, or do not have the opportunity, to step back from it and reflect upon what we are doing in any critical way."[48] Time must be made for reflection in an STM trip and needs to be both a "mode of thought…and a programmatic activity"[49] and should be used from the first gathering to underscore its importance and to signify the experience to come. Furthermore, goals should be set and communicated before the trip so participants can reflect on how they are proceeding towards those goals.[50] Viewing

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[47] Ibid.

[48] David Boud, Rosemary Keogh, and David Walker, *Reflection, Turning Experience into Learning* (New York: Nichols Publishing, 1985), 69.

[49] Jayson Seaman and Alison Rheingold, "Circle Talks As Situated Experiential Learning: Context, Identity, and Knowledgeability in 'Learning From Reflection'," *Journal of Experiential Education* 36, no. 2 (June 2013): 156.

[50] Jane Jackson, "Cultivating Cosmopolitan, Intercultural Citizenship through Critical Reflection and International, Experiential Learning," *Language and Intercultural Communication* 11, no. 2 (2011): 92-93.

reflection as both mode and programmatic ensures that appropriate time is given to

reflection and subsequently learning.

Situative theory also has something to offer with regard to learning transfer.

Creating a community of practice places the trip participant in a larger narrative with

others and not on an isolated island having to work out the ramifications of a trip on their

lives by themselves. Ideally, an STM team is but one of many teams sent from a church

that are sent over time to a particular group and place. This allows participants to not only

learn from those they travel with, but engage those who went before and will go after. It

creates a shared liminal experience. Participants can share how ideas and lessons learned

while participating in an STM community have impacted their life back home. If the

church keeps its focus on one or two particular STM places and embraces a community

of practice approach, it can keep the experience in the mind and conversations of an

entire church. This can even be broadened to a network of churches that engage together

in a particular place, allowing for more interactions of experiences within the community

of practice.

Situativism also notes the value of reflection, but it's reflection that should be

shared with others and towards a particular end. "As such, a key take-home message from

a situative perspective is that in teaching and learning situations, instead of focusing

primarily on content…teachers must also pay close attention to demonstrating when and

how…this information could and should be used."[51] The facilitator and the community

must help the participant imagine how their STM experience should impact their lives at

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[51] Durning and Artino, "Situativity Theory," 189.

home. They can do this by continually asking questions like, "What does this have to do with your life back home?" and allowing the group to discuss and influence each other.

Lack of a Qualified Leader

As mentioned in Section 1, lack of a qualified leader is the toughest of the three challenges to STM trips. It takes significant time and experience to develop a missiologically well-trained leader. In 2007, Robert Priest researched mission endeavors among U.S. mega-churches (those with at least 2,000 in attendance over a weekend of worship services). He received surveys back from over 400 qualifying churches. His research is quite startling; he found that only 22% of mega-church mission pastors have a degree in mission.[52] If mega-churches, who have much larger budgets, can more easily afford someone dedicated to the mission enterprise (and thus STM trips), the percentage of smaller churches that have a trained mission pastor is surely less. Furthermore, Priest's data was obtained before the 2008 market crash that caused many churches to tighten their financial belts and shrink their staffs. It would not be surprising to see those percentages even lower in a post-2008 economic crash world.

While not a perfect solution, the situative understanding of experiential education gets closest to solving this challenge. "Situativity theory stresses the social nature of cognition, meaning, and learning, with emphasis on the importance of the participants and the environment, as well as the evolving interaction between the participants and the environment within which thinking and learning occur."[53] By nature, the situative

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[52] Priest, "U.S. Megachurches and New Patterns of Global Mission," 101.

[53] Durning and Artino, "Situativity Theory," 188.

approach sees others, the environment, etc. as integral to the learning experience; it does not see only one leader as the fountain of knowledge that must be imparted. In practice, this means that those who receive STM teams are vital to the experience of those teams. Their experience, knowledge, and wisdom can be the greatest driving factor that creates change in an individual and thus, to a degree, minimizes the importance of a well-qualified leader. Though, certainly, a well-qualified leader and community interaction would be the ideal scenario.

When reflection and a COP form the pedagogical framework for how an STM trip is planned and facilitated, it will more closely resemble an experiential educational trip. With the framework set, it's necessary to create the content and themes that will drive an experience. To make an analogy, reflection and a community of practice are the train tracks that guide the STM experience, but there are still cars, or content, that must drive the experience in order for the STM to go where it should. That content is broken up into two categories, foundation and practice. The foundation category consists of the *Missio Dei*, an understanding of power and poverty, and, finally, the shift in global Christianity. The practice category consists of issues that relate to crossing to a culture that is not one's own.

Foundational Themes

The Missio Dei: Origins

Many view William Carrey's travels to India as the commencement of the modern missionary movement. Unfortunately, since the eighteenth century, the understanding of what constituted the modern missionary movement was rather limited. In terms of geography, it was about taking the Gospel from Christian Europe to the rest of the non-

Christian world.[54] Its chief aim was to save souls through the act of preaching,[55] primarily

by missionaries sent by mission societies "largely from *outside*, and to some extent

alongside, the established churches,"[56] often with cultural dominance. It was the West

trying to fix the rest of the world, and by "fix," it often meant making natives more

Western. To be sure, this was not the only picture of Christian mission during this time,

as Lamin Sanneh has argued.[57] Vinoth Ramachandra also argues for nuance, writing that

there are

> many shameful stories to be told of Western missionary complicity in colonial
> practices of domination, but the more typical stories of missionaries and local
> Christian leaders in India, Africa or the South Pacific who courageously defended
> native interests and combated racist theories and stereotypes propagated by their
> fellow countrymen are missing from the anti-Orientalist corpus.[58]

To be certain, the history of the modern missionary movement is complex, with stories

that inspire but also stories that make one question the entire missionary enterprise.

In the middle of the twentieth century, Karl Barth reframed the conversation of

mission "by shifting the rational and agency for mission away from the church and

placing them instead within the life of the Trinity."[59] As a result, the church was no

longer the starting point for mission, but mission existed because "God is a sending

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[54] Martin Lee, "The Five Marks of Mission," *Evangel* 26, no. 3 (September 2008): i.

[55] Ibid.

[56] Craig Van Gelder and Dwight J Zscheile, *The Missional Church in Perspective: Mapping Trends and Shaping the Conversation* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2011), 19.

[57] Lamin O Sanneh, *Translating the Message: The Missionary Impact on Culture* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2009).

[58] Vinoth Ramachandra, *Subverting Global Myths: Theology and the Public Issues Shaping Our World* (Downer's Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press Academic, 2008), 247.

[59] Van Gelder and Zscheile, *The Missional Church in Perspective*, 26.

God."[60] David Bosch sums it up well by writing, "There is church because there is mission, not vice versa. To participate in mission is to participate in the movement of God's love toward people, since God is a fountain of sending love."[61] God seeks to reconcile all of creation, the poor, the rich, the outcast and even nature. This emphasis on the *Missio Dei* led to the critique of the

> Whole missionary enterprise…God had been working in the world all the time, and in all places, creating and redeeming, liberating and saving, whether the churches in the West realized this or not. God's work in all cultures was seen to be part of salvation-history, and something that challenged all human institutions and provoked a crisis in the church and its mission.[62]

As a result of that challenge, the *Missio Dei* has rightfully become the starting point and lens for missiology. It has been "accepted by conciliar and evangelical Protestants, Pentecostals, and both the Orthodox and Roman Catholic Churches."[63] This is not to say that the theology of the *Missio Dei* is complete and that everyone agrees on its scope, definition, and ramifications. In fact, there is still much discussion.[64] Many in the missional church movement are having a conversation on how and where the *Missio Dei* and the missional church intersect. Some argue that the church "embodies the reign of God"[65] and that God's work happens only in the church. Others believe that "the church witnesses to the reign of God within the world…This view engages the world

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[60] Ibid.

[61] Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, 389-390.

[62] Philip L. Wickeri, "Mission from the Margins: The Missio Dei in the Crisis of World Christianity," *International Review of Mission* 93, no. 369 (April 2004): 187.

[63] Mark T. B. Laing, "Missio Dei: Some Implications for the Church," *Missiology* 37, no. 1 (January 2009): 91.

[64] Van Gelder and Zscheile, *The Missional Church in Perspective*.

[65] Ibid., 56.

redemptively but leaves unanswered the place of God's generalized work in the world

beyond the redemptive work related to the reign of God."[66] Others argue for a more

secular approach, believing that "God's mission unfolds through secular history,"[67] a

view that gives the church no significant importance. As creation becomes the best

version of itself (without God's help) the ideals of the Kingdom are realized. Others

argue that "God's mission unfolds in the midst of secular history,"[68] that God's Spirit

actively works with secular history to bring about the Reign of God. A more integrated

approach, and the assumption of this dissertation is that, "The church participates in

God's continuing creation and redemptive mission. People in the church pursue God's

mission in the world both as co-creative creatures engaging with God's Spirit continuing

work in all creation and by bearing witness to the reign of God."[69] This gives importance

to the church yet does not limit the work of God to the church and, probably to the

disappointment of some, the Western church specifically.

Unfortunately again, based on research by Robert Priest[70] and the lack of

missiologically well-trained mission ministers and STM facilitators, it's probably safe to

say that the idea of the *Missio Dei* has not filtered down to this grassroots movement of

short-term mission. If the *Missio Dei* is the critical/pivotal theology of the 21st century

that challenged the church and the modern missionary movement, how should it interact,

shape, and challenge the STM movement? If the centerpiece of missiology were to meet

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[66] Ibid.

[67] Ibid.

[68] Ibid., 56.

[69] Ibid., 57.

[70] Priest, "U.S. Megachurches and New Patterns of Global Mission," 101.

the grassroots STM movement, what might that look like and how might that affect STM trips?

Missio Dei, Poverty and Power

The current starting narrative for many STM trips is often a position of power and ownership from the participant. "Most of the places that church groups from the United States are likely to visit on a short-term mission trip are characterized by high degrees of social inequality where most people understand themselves to have little power to effect change."[71] A participant's motivation is to do something good, but the effects of their actions can have an undesired lasting impact. Steve Corbett and Brian Fikkert write that, "Unfortunately, STM teams are generally in 'needs based' mode, bringing their knowledge, skills, and material resources to poor communities in order to accomplish a task as fast as possible…As a result, paternalism rears its ugly head, and we undermine local assets and increase poverties of being, community, and stewardship."[72]

This position of power is often connected to an inadequate and dangerous understanding of poverty, because only the material poor are understood to be in poverty. Many STM participants may see poverty as primarily the lack of material goods (meaning that the solution to poverty is giving material goods). Instead, Bryant Myers argues for a deeper and more theological understanding. He writes, "Poverty is the result of relationships that do not work, that are not just, and are not for life, that are not

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[71] Karla Ann Koll, "Taking Wolves among Lambs: Some Thoughts on Training for Short-Term Mission Facilitation," *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* 34, no. 2 (April 2010): 95.

[72] Brian Fikkert and Steve Corbett, *When Helping Hurts: Alleviating Poverty Without Hurting the Poor and Yourself* (Chicago, IL: Moody Publishers, 2009), 169.

harmonious or enjoyable. Poverty is the absence of shalom in all its meanings."[73] This

absence of shalom is expressed in broken relationships with God, others, creation, and

self.[74] There is no part of the human identity that is not marred from the fall of creation,[75]

and therefore in poverty. This understanding of poverty is important for STM participants

to believe because it's very easy to provide some sort of material good, and by doing so

to deepen the "intangible aspects of their [materially poor] poverty,"[76] such as shame,

inferiority, and helplessness. If the materially poor are living on a cliff of sorts, this kind

of STM help might be just enough to push them off. But an inadequate understanding

doesn't only affect the materially poor, it also affects the materially non-poor – those who

travel on STM trips to help others. It can create or reinforce a god-complex because STM

participants overestimate the worth and value of their own help. Furthermore, when a trip

begins with the participant's own ability to meet a need, God can often be unknowingly

left out of the equation.[77] An adequate understanding of poverty and the *Missio Dei*

changes the narrative of the trip. It's not about 'what I can do' but about what God is

already doing and finding one's place in the midst of His mission. It brings about

humility because it's no longer centered on the participant and his or her ability but on

God and his faithfulness. It forces Westerners to change their own self conceptions and

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[73] Brent L. Myers, *Walking with the Poor: Principals and Practices of Transformational Development* (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1999), 86.

[74] Corbett and Fikkert, *When Helping Hurts*, 27.

[75] Myers, *Walking with the Poor: Principals and Practices of Transformational Development*, 130.

[76] Corbett and Fikkert, *When Helping Hurts*, 34.

[77] Jeff Haanen and Brian M. Howell, "Better Partners: How Can Short-Term Missions Best Advance God's Mission?," *Christianity Today* 57, no. 1 (January 2013): 79.

recognize that even the rich are poor and in need of God's work in their life, something that runs counter to Western values and mindset.

A strong emphasis on the *Missio Dei* can also broaden the definition and physical location of the mission enterprise. David Bosch poignantly said that mission is more than crossing saltwater.[78] The *Missio Dei* is not limited to 'somewhere else far away' nor is it limited to telling others about Jesus or even social ministry. It's much broader and encompasses God reconciling all of creation. It includes taking care of the Earth, helping one's neighbor, and telling others about Jesus. It also means that our own sense of being and calling fall under the flag of the *Missio Dei.* Furthermore, mission doesn't only occur while one is on the trip itself. Wherever the believer finds herself, be it at work, school, a sports game, or, yes, even while on an STM trip, they are on mission because God is on mission.[79] This is not to assume that everything a believer does is automatically part of the *Missio Dei* because, as Stephen Neill writes, "If everything is mission, nothing is mission."[80] But, with that word of caution, participants should be challenged to arrive home looking for where God is at work around them and seeking to be part of that mission.

Another word of caution is needed here. Framing the STM trip in the *Missio Dei* is not a panacea that automatically fixes everything that is wrong with STM trips. In fact, if a facilitator is not careful in explaining the correct ramifications of the *Missio Dei,* it can further perpetuate a neocolonial mentality and participants will then just graft the *Missio Dei* into their existing mindset, providing added justification for what might be

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[78] Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, 10.

[79] Haanen and Howell, "Better Partners."

[80] Stephen Neill, *Creative Tension* (Edinburgh House Press, 1959), 81.

questionable missiology and then leading to questionable actions. Mike Breen examines

this possibility by writing that, "In other words, the *Missio Dei* seems to be producing

individual missionaries, because our theology of a singular God (*Missio Dei*) combined

with the heady cocktail of Western individualism gives rise to an individualistic

methodology of mission."[81] The *Missio Dei* viewed through this lens can lead directly

back to that which the *Missio Dei* is a corrective for: undoing importance and emphasis

on the work of the missionary, as if God is a distant thought to local Christians and that

they are incapable of addressing their own context and therefore outsiders are necessary

for the work of God to occur. Peruvian missiologist Miguel Angel Palomino echoes this

when he writes,

> STM may be seen as an expression of a postmodern type of U.S. American
> missionary colonialism. One of the deepest concerns regarding the effects of
> STMs on host countries is the displacement of local workers and professionals,
> making national churches totally dependent on outside help and creating
> insecurity about the resources they have themselves.[82]

A theologically correct understanding of the *Missio Dei* should critique and counter

practices that seek to elevate an outsider or perpetuate a neocolonial mentality.

If the *Missio Dei* is the foundation for an STM trip, an adequate understanding of

global Christianity enables the participant to understand how the *Missio Dei* has, and is,

playing itself out in the larger world. It also places the STM trip in the appropriate global

context, influencing both theory and practice.

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[81] Mike Breen, "Why the Missional Conversation Must Change" 3DM Leadership Blog, accessed July 17, 2014, https://weare3dm.com/mikebreen/we-are-3dm/why-the-missional-conversation-must-change/.

[82] Miguel Angel Palomino, "'If Everything Is Mission, Nothing Is Mission' : Reflections on Short-Term Missions," *Journal of Latin American Theology* 2, no. 2 (January 1, 2007): 220.

Missio Dei and Global Christianity

The *Missio Dei* "undermines the anachronistic concept that mission is executed by the church sending missionaries overseas, traditionally from the West to the non-West. Since mission is integral to the very nature of the church, the church is missional wherever it is located."[83] The shift of global Christianity is the quintessential example that mission should not be viewed as from 'the West to the rest' but from everywhere to everywhere, because the church is everywhere.

In *The Next Christendom: The Coming of Global Christianity*, Phillip Jenkins outlines the current state of Christianity in the world. In the book's introduction, Jenkins argues that popular Christian publishers don't focus on the non-majority world. He writes,

> Outside the ranks of scholars and church bureaucrats few commentators have paid serious attention to these trends, to what I will describe as the creation of a new Christendom…In the catalogues of North American religion publishers, materials from or about either Africa or Asia are rarely in evidence…Third world topics rarely attract a general audience…For whatever reason Southern churches remain almost invisible to Northern observers…. when in 2,000,…Christian Century listed the "Hundred most important events in church history" the only mention of Africa, Asia or Latin America involved the British abolition of the slave trade.[84]

It has been almost ten years since *The Next Christendom* was first published*,* but how much of that information has been disseminated to the average STM participant remains very much in doubt.

Randall Friesen argues that learning about the global church shouldn't only come from books. He writes, "The value of the global church seems to be difficult to acquire

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[83] Laing, "Missio Dei," 91.

[84] Philip Jenkins, *The Next Christendom: The Coming of Global Christianity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 4.

without the experience of living and serving with Christians in other parts of the world. 'World Christians' do not emerge within the North American Church without some level of intentionality focused on discipleship in cross-cultural mission."[85] But travel itself is not a panacea. He goes on to argue that one of the most serious charges leveled against STM teams is that "they feed the already prevalent western tendency towards ethnocentrism and cultural myopia."[86] The ramifications of this ethnocentrism can lead individuals to developing a "preferential loyalty to their own 'in-group' and its culture, along with negative opinions and attitudes towards out-groups—those of other ethnicities—this ethnocentrism is a contributor to inter-ethnic prejudice and conflict."[87] When STM trips have been shown to lower ethnocentrism in participants it is often only in the short term. This is akin to Ver Beek's description of a sapling, bend it for three weeks and there is a change, but when the pressure to bend is released it goes back to its old form.[88] The one exception to this is when proper training and trip facilitation occur. When these elements are present, "significant change is possible"[89] with regard to ethnocentrism. Not only can focusing on global Christianity lead to an increased global awareness and decrease in ethnocentrism, but possibly also to increased financial giving

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[85] Randall Friesen, "The Long-Term Impact of Short-Term Missions on the Beliefs, Attitudes and Behaviors of Young Adults" (PhD diss., University of South Africa, 2004), 220.

[86] Ibid., 22.

[87] Priest et al., "Researching the Short-Term Mission Movement," 22.

[88] Ver Beek, "Lessons from the Sapling: A Review of Quantitative Research on Short-Term Missions."

[89] Priest et al., "Researching the Short-Term Mission Movement," 444.

if this awareness is then intentionally connected to a long-term relationship with a community or ministry in the majority world.[90]

By focusing on the shift of global Christianity, it forces STM participants to realize that their own current religious practice and understanding of their faith is no longer the most prevalent one that exists in the world. In his book, *Christianity in Africa*, Kwame Bediako quotes Kenyan Scholar John Mibiti saying "the centers of the church's universality [are] no longer in Geneva, Rome, Athens, Paris, London, New York, but Kinshasa, Buenos Aires, Addis Ababa and Manila."[91] The church in the majority world is thriving and expanding and STM participants need to realize that their lives are "inextricably bound up with the problems and prospects of people and environments thousands of miles away and prompt them to reevaluate their attitudes, values, and assumptions."[92] Kurt Ver Beek writes that STM leaders "must create structures and expectations that push the participants to see the STM experience as only one part of a larger commitment to learn more, pray more, give more, and do more for the families, church, community, and country they visited."[93]

Though these ideas may be new, very few participants will argue against the *Missio Dei* and that the work of reconciling the world is God's. Most will probably realize that we're all broken and live in some kind of poverty. Most probably won't argue

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[90] Ver Beek, "Lessons from the Sapling: A Review of Quantitative Research on Short-Term Missions," 494.

[91] Kwame Bediako, *Christianity in Africa: The Renewal of Non-Western Religion* (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1996), 154.

[92] David Selby, "Towards an Irreducible Global Perspective in School," *Westminster Studies in Education* 14 no 1 (January 1991): 30.

[93] Kurt Ver Beek, "Who Gets 'Socially Rich' from Short-Term Missions?," accessed January 8, 2015, http://www.christianitytoday.com/ct/2005/julyweb-only/52.0.html?start=2.

that a shift in global Christianity isn't happening. But that doesn't mean they understand

the implications or can integrate these three ideas into their STM experience or their lives

as a whole. Wholesale structural and narrative change of the STM must occur. These

themes must influence the entire process of the STM trip and not be merely an 'add-on.'

Perhaps the most important implication of these three themes will be hardest to

implement and graph into the experience for participants: giving up control to local

Christians. Brian Howell writes that,

> until the agendas of STM are structurally reoriented around the Missio Dei, with
> education and community as the primary goals, or at least equally missional as the
> activities and projects of visiting groups, then the narratives of these trips will
> continue to be created primarily by the cultural context and historical trajectory
> from which travelers come. Lasting transformation of travelers and local
> communities will best be brought about by relocating control of the trip itinerary
> from the hands of North Americans (whether church leaders or long-term
> missionaries) into the hand of local Christian leadership.[94]

Research by Stephen Offutt[95] and Robert Priest[96] expand on this thought by indicating

that leaders in El Salvador and South Africa find STM teams as beneficial resources and

support to their ministry, despite the potential 'hazards and threats" that are associated

with them.[97] But that desire doesn't come with a mentality that wants to give Westerners

control or undue influence in their ministry, as if local Christians should step aside

because Westerners have arrived to their location. Offutt writes, "Although leaders

almost universally want teams to come, they also want to exercise control over what

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[94] Howell, *Short-Term Mission*, 223.

[95] Offutt, "The Role of Short-Term Mission Teams in the New Centers of Global Christianity."

[96] Priest, "U.S. Megachurches and New Patterns of Global Mission."

[97] Offutt, "The Role of Short-Term Mission Teams in the New Centers of Global Christianity," 801.

STM teams do and how they act while they are in country."[98] The practice of evangelism

on STM trips highlights the challenge that local leaders face in controlling the STM trip.

Many Evangelical leaders in Ghana, Rwanda,[99] El Salvador, and South Africa[100]

discourage STM participation in evangelism but are often overruled by visiting teams.

Offutt interviewed several leaders from South Africa and El Salvador, finding that

"STMs may not have sufficient cultural sensitivity to engage in properly contextualized

evangelistic efforts."[101] South African pastor Japie La Poorta lamented that,

> An evangelistic approach that is just to come and try to get people saved in the
> South African context, without taking care of the social situations, getting
> involved in combating HIV and AIDS, and helping with the literacy programs and
> home-based care and those things, then it becomes a problem, you see, then it is
> irrelevant and we don't need it, we can do it here.[102]

Juan Ventura, a leader in World Vision El Salvador, said, "When they [STM teams]

come with an interest to do evangelism, I feel that they do not really know our culture,

and if you don't know the culture, sometimes what they do is acculturate us…and we

cannot separate the evangel from [American] culture."[103] Despite great hesitancy from

locals, the fact that evangelism is the second most common activity among STM trips

affirms the belief that U.S. teams, and not the locals, are driving the direction of STM

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[98] Ibid.

[99] Zehner, "Short-Term Missions," 510.

[100] Offutt, "The Role of Short-Term Mission Teams in the New Centers of Global Christianity," 802.

[101] Ibid.

[102] Ibid.

[103] Ibid.

projects for receiving communities.[104] STM facilitators and participants must give up

control of the STM experience to locals and enter into honest dialogue and conversation

if they are going to engage others appropriately in God's redemptive work in the world.

Practice Themes

With a foundation in place, STM participants need to prepare themselves for

crossing into another culture. Regrettably, "there has not been enough effort given to

prepare short-termers to understand the meaning of local cultures they will be entering

which can lead to less effectiveness, and actually harm the missionary cause."[105] In the

zeal for mission, STM participants often proclaim an American version of the Gospel

without paying attention to how that message is understood in a different culture.[106]

David Livermore writes that, "Misreading cross-cultural behavior is one of the most

consistent findings of my research."[107] This "misreading" of culture is part of why the

STM movement has been called the amateurization of mission and is bolstered by a

recent study that found cultural insensitivity was the second most common downside of

hosting an STM team.[108] Priest and Priest write that STM participants are often like a dog

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[104] Priest, "U.S. Megachurches and New Patterns of Global Mission," 99.

[105] Steven Ybarrola, "Avoiding the Ugly Missionary: Anthropology and Short-Term Missions," in *Effective Engagement in Short-Term Missions. Doing It Right!* (Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library Pub., 2008), 110.

[106] M.K. Rodewald, "Short-Term Mission: A Reflection," *Missio Apostolica* 18, no. 1 (May 2010): 53.

[107] David A Livermore, *Serving with Eyes Wide Open Doing Short-Term Missions with Cultural Intelligence* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2013), 72.

[108] Dennis Horton et al. "Short Term Mission Trips: What the Long-Term Missions Personnel Really Think about Them." (Paper presented at the annual meeting for Association for the Scientific Study of Religion, Dallas, TX December 8-10, 2013), 72.

in a museum, "They see everything and understand nothing."[109] Finally, and most

importantly, it's important to note that a general survey of existing literature indicates

that majority world leaders often feel STM teams are not culturally prepared when

entering their context as typified by one African leader who said, "[Those North

American youth pastors] have prepared just enough for this trip to make them

dangerous."[110]

Each culture requires its own special focus to adequately prepare STM

participants for their trip, and therefore an exhaustive proposal of everything that should

be studied and prepared for is unique to each trip. I will, however, list some of the

challenges, reasoning, and certain aspects that should be taken into account. Focusing on

cultural competence is important because "sociologists have consistently found that the

way we anticipate a situation strongly influences how we engage in it. More specifically,

our expectations about a new role or a new environment will directly influence how we

experience that new situation, both positively and negatively."[111] Preparing folks

appropriately helps lay the groundwork so participant change can take place.

Universal vs. Particular Aspects of Culture

Anthropologist Steven Ybarrola argues that one of the primary challenges when

working with STM participants in another culture is the tension between the universal

and particular aspects of culture. For example, most STM participants want to

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[109] Priest and Priest, "They See Everything, and Understand Nothing," 54.

[110] Livermore, *Serving with Eyes Wide Open Doing Short-Term Missions with Cultural Intelligence*, 13.

[111] Ibid., 48.

overemphasize the "universal nature of the Gospel – i.e., there is neither Jew nor Greek, male nor female, slave nor free – and either downplay or totally ignore the particular cultural and social context in which people they hope to reach actually live."[112] When this happens the Gospel becomes decontextualized. Brian Howell echoes something similar writing, "In marginalizing touristic impulses…short-term mission organizers often de-emphasize the particularities of the location and context in which the trip will take place. Instead, a generic STM language and practice emerges that serves to make STM trips the same for participants, regardless of the specific location they visit."[113]

Such a focus on the universal aspects of culture also hinders STM participants in being reflective on how their own culture has shaped their understanding of the Gospel.[114] David Livermore writes that, "more than three-quarters of the short-term participants I surveyed commented on the similarities they observed in the new culture with what they experienced at home or in another place."[115] Even if nonverbal clues and behaviors are the same in differing cultures, that doesn't mean they have the same function because there are often different cultural frameworks present.[116] Combine this tendency to overemphasize the universal with a lack of understanding particular cultural contexts and it's a recipe for unintended consequences, which can damage the work of missionaries or local Christians. To limit negative consequences, it's important for STM participants to familiarize themselves with the places they are visiting. Brian Howell

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[112] Priest, *Effective Engagement in Short-Term Missions*, 104.

[113] Howell, "Mission to Nowhere," 206.

[114] Priest, *Effective Engagement in Short-Term Missions*, 105.

[115] Livermore, *Serving with Eyes Wide Open Doing Short-Term Missions with Cultural Intelligence*, 68.

[116] Ibid., 70.

argues that this familiarization should include "the history, politics, and religious context of the trip's destination, rather than giving attention solely or primarily to preparation for the trip's 'project.'"[117] This is important because societies are not created overnight or in a vacuum. They develop and change over time.

History

Focusing on history is important because Americans often have a narrow view of history whereas other cultures take a long-view. For instance, South Africa, like much of Africa, has a history of missionaries, colonialism, and a clash of cultures that has created a society full of racial tensions and great disparity between the materially rich and poor. While some missionaries did wonderful work, many others were connected to colonial powers that created an Apartheid system whose effects are still felt everywhere, even though the system fell in the mid-1990s. In light of their history, how might an STM team change its language? Should they even use the term 'mission' or 'missionary' because of the history those terms conjure up? Knowing the history allows for better interaction between persons and lessens the likelihood of cultural missteps.

Current Issues

In order for STM participants to further understand a local context, they need to understand the current issues.[118] For example, South Africa is projected to have over 2.5

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[117] Howell, "Mission to Nowhere," 7.

[118] Rodrigo Maslucán, "Short-Term Missions: Analysis and Proposals," *Journal of Latin American Theology* 2, no. 2 (January 2007): 153.

million orphans as a result of HIV/AIDS.[119] If one combines this statistic with a country whose unemployment rate is high, knowing how best to help can be a challenge. If an STM participant is unaware of these two issues, they'd have no idea why there were so many child-headed households, or how and why the South African Social Services are unable to meet the demands of so many orphans. Surely this would inform how that group might seek to serve orphans themselves and the organizations that have ministered to them on a long-term basis.[120]

Person-to-Person Interactions

Once history and current issues have been addressed, then participants should spend time focusing on contextual issues that are at the forefront of human interactions. Each country will require its own specific cultural focus, but issues that generally need to be addressed by U.S. teams that are steeped in modernity when visiting the majority world are, among others, understanding of concepts of time, power, decision making, doing verses being, and where problems come from.[121] Adequately preparing teams to cross cultural boundaries will decrease the likelihood of causing irreparable harm to the ministries of local Christians or missionaries while decreasing the ethnocentrism of an STM participant.[122]

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[119] "UN AIDS Statistics" Accessed April 1, 2014
http://www.unaids.org/en/regionscountries/countries/southafrica/

[120] Learning the history and current issues of a culture is key for experiential education that allows a participant to internalize and have a greater possibility of learning. See *Learning Through Experience*, 25-26.

[121] Stephen Hoke, *Global Mission Handbook: A Guide for Crosscultural Service* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2009), 116.

[122] Priest and Priest, "They See Everything, and Understand Nothing," 70.

Making it Happen

Answering the question of "what cultural issues should an STM team focus on?" may be easier than answering, "how is the best way to make it happen?" All STM teams (unless there is an expat returning home), by virtue of their nature, are cultural outsiders. They are going from their home culture to another often very different culture. Short-term participants "need to be even more intentional about developing tools for cross-cultural interaction, since there is less time for feedback and learning in context."[123]

One of the key components or "tools" to answering the "how" question is a cultural guide. Enlisting "a facilitator or culture guide…is an essential component to cross-cultural learning."[124] Someone who knows the context can provide the cultural issues that should be addressed before the trip and can also help facilitate during the trip. There are four possibilities for a cultural guide, and they are listed in preferential order.

1. Local Christians: Peruvian Missiologist Tito Parades writes, "it is crucial to accept the fact that the local church (the national church or the Christians from the place where the STM teams are heading) must be the significant actor with whom and under whom STM teams must be ready to dialogue."[125] These is rather obvious because locals are cultural insiders and know their culture better than any STM participant could hope. Park has also shown that when STM participants are directly engaged with local

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[123] Rodewald, "Short-Term Mission," 54.

[124] Orv Gingerich, "Cross-Cultural Learning: Considerations for Leaders," *Clergy Journal* 83, no. 6 (April 2007): 9.

[125] Tito Parades, "Short-Term Missions: What Can Be Rescued, What Can Be Criticized, and the Challenge of Contextualization," *Journal of Latin American Theology* 2, no. 2 (January 2007): 256.

leadership, paternalistic tendencies are lowered.[126] This is partly because locals are seen as the experts and in a position of authority while the STM participants are seen as learners and therefore countering those narratives that place undo importance on the participant. One of the biggest downfalls of having a local Christian facilitate is that it can negatively interrupt their own ministry and cause him or her to spend more time and energy addressing the cultural needs of his or her guests. Reverend Oscar Muriu sums this up, "The African Church is subsidizing Western discipleship…do your own spiritual formation at home! We don't have the time or the resources to do it for you."[127] One realistic option may be to find someone who has moved from the country the STM team is visiting and allow him/her to offer insight into their home culture. With current trends in globalization and migration, this is not an unlikely scenario.

2. Missionaries: One of the benefits of missionaries facilitating cultural training is that they understand the culture of those receiving and those going and may be able to more effectively communicate how to appropriately engage the new culture. The downside is that missionaries aren't often born into the culture where they are living. In some respect, they are and always will be outsiders. Another downside of using missionaries is the same as using local Christians. Dennis Horton interviewed 100 missionaries who received STM teams and found that the most common downside of hosting teams is often the "time and energy taken away from their regular ministry opportunities."[128]

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[126] Priest, *Effective Engagement in Short-Term Missions*, 524.

[127] LeFeber, "Outposts in the Wilderness," 48.

[128] Horton et al., "Short-Term Mission Trips: What the Long-Term Missions Personnel Really Think about Them," 71.

3. Mission Pastor or Other Trained Facilitator: Besides being furthest from the receiving culture, the biggest challenge of this approach is that, as Robert Priest has proven, trained facilitators are often hard to come by.[129] They don't exist in near the numbers needed to facilitate STM trips.

4. An Integral Approach: This approach uses modern technology and combines the best of the other three while minimizing their downsides. For instance, STM facilitators can video interview either local Christians (option 1) or missionaries (option 2). This allows for quality control of content, shows local leadership, and minimizes time spent by local Christians or missionaries. A church or a wider community of practice can continually use the videos for subsequent trainings, assuming they repeatedly return to the same place.

Summary

Churches spend large amounts of money on STM trips in hopes that participants will experience change. This section has examined the two experiential education theories, constructivism and situativism. It has then argued that a hybrid model can address STM challenges by expanding pre-trip training, on-site facilitation, and post-trip debriefing by incorporating reflection and a community of practice mentality that gives the greatest chance for learning and change to occur.

After laying the pedagogical framework, the content of STM training was proposed. Grounding the trip in a correct understanding of the *Missio Dei*, poverty and power, and global Christianity changes the narrative of the trip and forces participants to

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[129] Priest, "U.S. Megachurches and New Patterns of Global Mission," 101.

put the trip into proper perspective, allowing it to shape their lives when they arrive home. Focusing on the practical cross-cultural aspects decreases the likelihood that participants will do irreparable harm to local ministries and can give proper perspective on one's home culture and how to engage it appropriately. It has been argued throughout this paper that those who receive STM teams should be closely involved with the process and take the lead when and wherever possible. It has benefits for those receiving as well as those going.

The following sections (4 through 6) deal specifically with the description, creation, contents, and implementation of the dissertation artifact.

SECTION 4: TRACK 02 ARTIFACT DESCRIPTION[1]

My research into short-term mission trips has found that STM trips do have a lasting impact on some participants, but that there are many others who do not experience change as the result of their trip. As the direct result of my research and findings, I have produced an artifact that hopefully increases the likelihood of change for those participating in trips. It is an in-depth STM curriculum that focuses on pre-trip training, on-site facilitation, and post-trip debriefing. My artifact connects to my dissertation in several ways.

First, this dissertation examined experiential education pedagogy that creates participant chance in other disciplines. As a result, this artifact has a hybrid constructivist and situative structure that surrounds the experience and focuses on three aspects of change to be measured (increase in vocational mission, increased connection to global mission, increased connection to mission at one's home location). The participants are expected to engage in critical reflection towards that end. But it does not rely solely on refection that occurs in one's mind. It also requires active engagement with the environment, thoughts of others, the history of the place one is visiting, and other important experiences that occur outside of one's own mind.

Second, this dissertation focused on the importance of local leadership. Engaging them is essential to not only 'doing no harm' but also in creating change in the individual. This artifact achieves this by interviewing local leaders, showing them as component

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[1] The George Fox DMIN Track 02 does not require a complete and full-blown PhD-style dissertation. Instead, it calls for an artifact to be developed that can be practically used in one's ministry context. But, that artifact must adequately reflect both the theological and theoretical findings of the written portion of the dissertation (Sections 1 through 3).

ministry leaders whom God is using to make the world as it should be. It also encourages local leaders to be involved with the debriefing of teams while they are on a trip.

Third, in addition to the video interview of local leaders, the pre-trip facilitation contains content to shape the experience. It has six PowerPoint presentations that begin broadly with the *Missio Dei* and global Christianity and then narrow to specific issues that pertain primarily to South Africa.

Fourth, it provides an on-site devotional guide that helps the participant focus on the stated goals of participant change by engaging the participant in ongoing reflection.

Fifth, it calls for the trip to be extended to at least four post-trip meetings that focus on integration of the trip goals into one's life at home.

SECTION 5: ARTIFACT SPECIFICATION

The third component of the dissertation is the artifact specification. It is designed to account for the goals, audience, scope and content, budget, and post-graduate considerations. It also must meet certain standards of publication particular to each form of media. Since the artifact requires 100 hours, and a given artifact might take significantly longer to completely finish, a plan must be presented to finish the artifact in a timely manner.

Goals:

Goal 1: The STM curriculum will challenge participants to discern if God is calling them to serve in a cross-cultural vocational capacity in mission.

Goal 2: The STM curriculum will lead to an increased connection to the global mission movement

Goal 3: The STM curriculum will lead to an increased connection to mission at one's home location.

Audience:

A unique and important aspect of this work is its local nature, which makes it difficult for the totality of this work to be used for countries other than South Africa. The totality of the curriculum is designed for those persons engaged in short-term mission to South Africa, particularly the South Africa Network.

Despite the hyper-local aspect of the curriculum, the general pieces can be pulled out (for example, the *Missio Dei*) and be used for other locations, though other local specific elements would need to be added back in.

Project Scope and Content

Introduction:

Facilitating Your South Africa Trip Introductory Guide

Pre-trip Meetings:

Session 1: The *Missio Dei*

1. "Letter from Korea" opening session activity

2. PowerPoint presentation on the "*Missio Dei*" by Chris Ellis

3. Discussion questions on *Missio Dei*

4. Interview with Lelani Brits, Executive Director of Refilwe

5. Discussion questions on interview

6. Prayer exercise

7. Devotional to be done the week after session is completed

Session 2: Global Christianity

1. Global Christianity Quiz

2. PowerPoint Presentation on the "Shift of Global Christianity," by Chris Ellis

3. Discussion questions on PowerPoint presentation

4. Interview with Dr. Rob Nash, former head of Global Missions for the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship and current missions professor at MacAfee Seminary

5. Discussion questions on interview with Dr. Rob Nash

6. Devotional to be done the week after the session is completed.

Session 3: History of Christianity in South Africa

1. PowerPoint presentation on, "History of Christianity in South Africa" by
    Chris Ellis

2. Questions on PowerPoint presentation

3. Video Interview with Sister Didi – This session is longer than the others. To
    shorten the session, give participants the interview link and questions and
    have them watch it as part of their mid-week devotional

4. Questions on video interview

5. Nelson Mandela Biography

6. Other resources guide

7. Devotional to be done the week after session is completed

Session 4: Poverty and AIDS

1. "HIV and AIDS" PowerPoint presentation by Liz Ellis

2. Questions on "HIV and AIDS" PowerPoint presentation

3. "Understanding Poverty and Development" PowerPoint presentation by Josh
    Smith

4. Questions on "Understanding Poverty and Development" by Josh Smith

5. Interview with Cheryl Allen

6. Devotional to be done the week after the session is completed

Session 5: Cultural Dinner

1. "South Africa Culture" PowerPoint presentation by Josh Smith

2. Discussion guide on PowerPoint presentation

3. Cross-culture games

4. South Africa dinner options

On-site Facilitation

1. Daily devotional guide

Post-Trip: Debriefing Sessions

1. Session 1 & 2: Post-Trip Debriefing Guide

Standards of Publication

A multi-media curriculum containing:

1. Plug and Play PowerPoint presentations on the major themes

2. Facilitator's guide

3. Video interviews with local leaders

4. Handouts containing devotionals and other trip material designed to aid the

    participant in critical reflection

Artifact Promotion

The artifact will be not promoted broadly but will be freely given to those

churches within the South Africa Ministry Network.

If the artifact becomes widely used within the network and is successful in

creating change in participants, then the curriculum could be tailored for use with other

countries. This would most likely occur through the facilitation of the Cooperative

Baptist Fellowship.

Artifact Budget

The cost for initial testing of the artifact is $25,000 (10 people X $2,500 per trip).

If the artifact proves successful, additional funds can be sought to create new interviews

with local leaders as necessary. An estimate of the funds necessary would be an

additional $5,000.

Everything will be digital so there will no costs associated with a physical copy of

the curriculum.

Artifact Development Process

October 2014–January 2015: Curriculum created

March–July 2015: Pre-trip curriculum tested

Late July 2015: On-site facilitation tested

August 2015: Post-trip curriculum tested

October 2015: Feedback and retooling of curriculum as needed

SECTION 6: POSTSCRIPT

In 2007, after being on staff at Second Baptist (2BC) for eight months, I led my first mission trip to South Africa. There was little thought behind how our trip should be facilitated (even as one who took the Global Missions track at Truett Seminary, we didn't talk much, if any, about short-term mission trips, despite the fact so many people participated in them). 2BC didn't have an international partnership and I felt (and feel) that this was something God was calling us towards. The process that led to choosing South Africa for a trip seemed less like a divine miracle and more like a routine practical decision. I had friends in South Africa that were willing to facilitate our trip and so we went. Fortunately for us, there were reasons we went that we hadn't yet comprehended.

Little did I know, that trip would begin to color how I see the world and how I understand mission. After that initial trip, we decided that God was calling us back to South Africa. Since that initial visit we've made eight trips and have had our South African partners in our church on three separate occasions. There now exists a South Africa Network, which consists of roughly eight churches that are committed to ministry and partnership there. Over those past eight years, I've learned a lot about facilitating trips. I've learned that change of participants is most likely to happen with intense preparation, an engaged on-site facilitator and post-trip debriefing.

Before I embarked on this dissertation I only had vague notions about how STM trips could be facilitated to produce change, but my research has significantly refined those thoughts and given me a framework to further my understanding. It has given me the confidence to say that unless we are willing to change how we understand and facilitate trips that maybe we should consider halting STM trips altogether because how

the majority of trips are being facilitated isn't worth the time of locals, participants, or church ministers. With over 1.5 million STM participants and over $1.6 billion being spent on STM trips every year, it's time that we expect more from these trips. I hope this artifact, as a direct result of my research, is a step in that direction.

Because there is such a divide between the church and the academy on this issue, further research is greatly needed. While this dissertation focuses on change in STM participants, new and fresh thinking also needs to focus on the impact of STM teams on local Christians. As referenced in this dissertation (Section 3) local leaders feel like visiting STM teams do not really listen to their needs and desires. They are merely a means to end and that end is a great trip for the participants. If this does not change, then what exactly are we bearing witness to? Certainly it is not the person of Christ who gave up power (Philippians 2:6-11). No, we are bearing witness to a consumerist culture that blinds itself into thinking we are "helping" and "serving" the other when in reality we are just consuming them for our own desires and needs. They are merely a means to our end. Then, after we have consumed them for our needs, we look for another STM experience where we can "help" and "serve." Either this process must change or STM trips must cease.

In closing, I am greatly indebted to all those associated with George Fox Seminary and my DMin. Cohort. These past three years have been some of the most challenging and rewarding of my life. I hope and pray that I will continue to internalize the lessons that I have learned both in my coursework and in writing this dissertation, doing so will make me the best minister possible.

APPENDIX

Before you Begin: Facilitating Your South Africa Trip

Unfortunately, a variety of studies have shown that STM trips have a limited impact on the lives of participants. The reasons for a lack of change are varied and multifaceted, but a major reason is the lack of engagement by STM leaders. David Livermore argues that many facilitators assume a "send them and they will grow"[1] mentality and do not train and debrief their STM teams appropriately. He argues that many leaders think that merely placing someone in an international setting where they experience a different culture, poverty, etc. will change an individual. More often than not, with this hands-off approach, STMs can turn into religious tourism, where we pay to have a good time with our Christian friends and hope to learn a little about God. When trips are approached in such a manner, it isn't surprising that they don't lead to lasting change in participants. To begin changing this common STM narrative, it's important to create trip goals, and to work towards achieving them.

This STM curriculum is designed to meet the following:

1.) **Be a blessing to those we meet.** This is by far the most important goal. The last thing we want to do is cause pain/hardship for those who live in South Africa and negatively impact their ministry. But, we must also temper that desire to serve and bless with the realization we are not here to 'change' or 'save' Africa, and that we have much to learn and receive from them.

2.) **Increase your connection to the global mission movement.** How is God calling you to be involved in the world? To financially give more? To increase your prayer support for global issues? To create awareness for those around you?

3.) **Increase your involvement in mission at home.** This trip will hopefully give you a new lens to view what God is doing right around you in your hometown and to increase your involvement in it.

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[1] Livermore, "If We Send Them They Will Grow."

4.) **To discern if God might be calling to you to serve in a vocational[2] capacity.** How about spending a year volunteering at Refilwe or Door of Hope? What about serving in a more long-term capacity somewhere?

In order to achieve these goals, this STM curriculum assumes some minimum qualifications for those leading.

- Constant engagement. This won't be a "hands off" experience for you. It's the opposite of the "send them and they will grow" mentality. This STM trip begins not at the airport, but with the pre-trip training sessions, then it moves to the on-site experience, and it ends with debriefing the trip afterwards. If you aren't engaged, don't expect your team to be engaged. If you don't care, don't expect them to care.

- A willingness to complete the curriculum. This doesn't mean that you can't add your own material, or tweak the curriculum. But, if you begin the process, don't stop until the process is fully finished.

- A willingness to invite South African Christians into the process to be change agents and to ensure that the trip is beneficial for their ministries.

- A willingness to realize that your actions reflect on the entire South African Ministry Network community of practice. What your team does or doesn't do affects many others!

The following curriculum has its basis in constructivist and situative experiential education theories. We'll begin with the constructivist theories.
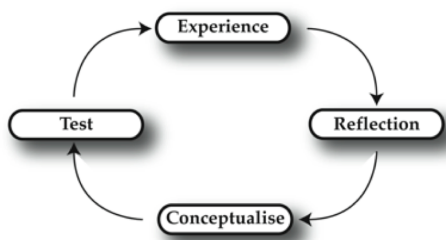
Figure 1

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[2] By "vocational" I mean supported by the mission enterprise. Though, God could certainly call one to move his or her business to South Africa (or anywhere else) or call one to get a 'secular' job in another country.

The constructivist education theory places an importance on an individual actively reflecting on their experience. They can't just go and experience, but must intentionally graft that experience into their life. One of the leading constructivist thinkers formulates a learning cycle (Figure 1) that encapsulates his theory of learning. A person can start at any stage, but for learning to occur he or she must go through all stages. What exactly is reflection? It's the "activity in which people recapture their experience, think about it, mull it over and evaluate it."[3]

A good facilitator won't just assume participants are reflecting but will set up support processes and feedback mechanisms to attend to the substance and quality of reflection. "What does this look like in practice?" is probably what you're thinking. Well, it can be pretty simple. At the end of a significant experience (or at the end of each day) the facilitator needs to engage the team in reflection. One way to do it is by asking three questions. 1. What? What did we experience? What happened? 2. So what? Why does it matter? 3. What's next? How is this experience grafted into your life?

Here's how facilitating in this way might work:

Pre-trip:

- **Curriculum:** Completing the curriculum is essential. It provides the necessary information, from history to politics to culture, to set the stage for the experience.

- **Goals**: It's also essential to constantly reflect on the trip goals. This gives the participants an "end game" to work towards and lets them know that this is what they'll be held accountable for (through nightly debriefings, journaling etc.).

On-trip:

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[3] Jordi, "Reframing the Concept of Reflection," 182.

- **Nightly debriefing**: sharing their experiences with the STM team is important. This "involves discussions that allow participants to review how they personally and as a group responded to a challenge, how they succeeded and where they fell short, how they reacted to failures, and how they plan to make use of their successes and failures during future challenges."[4]

- **Journaling:** Time should be set aside daily for participants to personally reflect. A morning devotional experience frames the day and prepares the participant for each day's activities. Participants should also spend a few moments every evening writing about their experiences, intercultural interactions, and learning takeaways that are connected to the trip goals.

Post-trip: The trip might be over, but the experience isn't. Post-trip debriefings are essential to the success of the trip goal.

- **Feedback:** Giving participants the opportunity to give feedback requires that they engage in reflection. One way to achieve this is to create surveys based on what they liked, didn't like, what could be better, and their personal success with regard to the four goals.

- **Sharing Times:** It's important to gather the team together after the experience to reflect on the experience together. Questions might include,
    - What did you think of the South African leaders you met? How do you feel about your interaction with them?
    - What did you think about the culture and people of South Africa?
    - If you were going to South Africa again, what would you do differently?

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[4] Randee Lipson Lawrence, *Bodies of Knowledge: Embodied Learning in Adult Education: New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education,* (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2012), 47.

- o   What was your image of Refilwe/Door of Hope/South Africa before you went compared to now?

- o   What image comes to mind when you think of our ministry partners?

- o   How have you grafted the goals into your life? Which ones are you struggling with?

- **Ethnographies**: Many STM participants take lots of pictures on their trip. These pictures can say as much about the person taking them as the picture themselves. Ask folks to choose 5 to 10 pictures that visually describe their experience and then to write why these pictures describe their experience on the trip and how they might be connected to the trip goals. You can have folks talk about their ethnography at your post-trip meetings or have them e-mailed to the team. They will also serve as a record of the community of practice (which will be discussed in a bit) and can be used to prepare future STM participants.

Community of Practice

If you were just to facilitate with a constructivist approach, you'd be missing a few important ideas. One of the downsides of only using the constructivist approach is that it doesn't place an emphasis on the social situation (relationships, social context) but only what goes on in the mind. One commentator wrote:

> If reflection could stretch its limbs, get in touch with its bodily held feelings, its discomforts, emotions, intuitions, and imagination, might then awareness emerge of a more expansive calling in the service of human learning and development? Might reflection see that it can embrace a wider range of elements in our learning processes?[5]

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[5] Jordi, "Reframing the Concept of Reflection," 18.

Situative theory balances out constructivism by emphasizing experience and interaction

within the community. Experience is understood holistically and includes participants,

facilitators, the receiving community, culture, and the physical space. Some folks call this

a community of practice (COP). Tara Fenwick explains learning in a COP by writing,

> Individuals learn as they participate by interacting with the community (with its history, assumptions and cultural values, rules, and patterns of relationship), the tools at hand (including objects, technology, languages, and images) and the moment's activity (its purpose, norms, and practical challenges). Knowledge emerges front these elements interacting….The objective is to become a full participant in the community of practice, not to learn *about* the practice.[6]

Part of your job as the leader and facilitator is to create a South Africa community of

practice out of your mission trip participants! So what does this facilitation look like in

practice?

- Pre-trip
  - **Conversation**: Engage others who have been on short-term mission trips
    and have experienced some sort of change. Invite them to come and spend
    ten minutes talking about how they grafted what they experienced on their
    trip into their everyday life. If you have been to South Africa on multiple
    occasions, have current participants sit down with previous participants to
    have coffee and hear about their past experience. Did you know that as a
    church in the South Africa Network you are already part of a community
    of practice? We share lessons learned and best practices, and collaborate
    on projects. Be in contact with those other churches.
  - **Engage South Africans**: Use the video interviews that are designed to
    show that God has competent, gifted, and called persons who are being

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[6] Fenwick, *Learning through Experience*, 26.

faithful to what God has called them. You might also try setting up a Skype interview so you can build those connections in an even more real way.[7] Studies show that engaging local leaders is a way to lessen the tendency we have to be paternalistic towards those from other cultures.[8]

- o **Create prayer partners**: One easy way to graft people into the COP if they can't go on a trip is to connect them to those who are going and ask them to pray for the goers. You can even invite non-goers to participate in some of the training sessions or invite them to engage online.

- **On-trip**

  - o **Engage South Africans:** Foster interaction between local South Africans and your mission team so the team can continually learn from South Africans. For example, if you go the Apartheid museum in Johannesburg, invite some of your South African friends to go with you and encourage conversation along the way. Hearing first-hand stories of Apartheid is a powerful thing. Or, if you to a restaurant for a nice meal, invite your partners to come and encourage your team to ask questions about their ministry, life, South Africa, etc. Here are some suggestions of questions to get conversation going:

    - ▪ If you could describe the best of South African culture in five words, what words would you use?

    - ▪ How do South Africans understand community?

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[7] If you do decide to Skype, remember that South Africa is in many hours ahead.

[8] Park, "Researching the Effect of Short-Term Missions Experience on Paternalism among Students from Selected Christian Colleges in the United States."

- ▪ What has God been doing in your life and ministry?

- ▪ What was life like under Apartheid?

- ▪ What can you remember about the day that all of South Africa could vote?

- ▪ What are some of the biggest challenges in your ministry?

- ▪ What gives you hope about South Africa?

  o **Debrief Nightly or Continuously:** During debriefings, invite South Africans to join you. They are their own, more experienced, community of practice, but they are also in the South African Ministry Network COP. They have valuable insights that need to be shared. They can also answer any questions that arise dealing with culture, worldview, or other things you're not readily familiar with. You can also engage participants while they are in the midst of working. This can often be the best time for one-on-one conversations that center on the work, situation and goals.

- **Post-trip**

  o Gather the team together and have them talk about their experience grafting the goals of the trip into their life. It's also a good idea to bring in others who have been through this experience so they can talk about their own process of achieving the goals, the difficulties of adjusting back to one's own culture, and how they are now involved in the COP.

As you can hopefully see, this isn't a hands off approach. In fact, it's the opposite. You as the leader have to be very engaged in the process, making sure that your participants reflect on their experience, become a COP, and ultimately achieve the goals that have

been set out for them. The curriculum that follows is designed to do just that, so be sure to follow the major elements and be sure to add your own based on the needs of your group. If you have ideas, suggestions, or things that worked or didn't work, please share them with other leaders of the network; that's the benefit of being a community of practice!

Training Session 1
***Missio Dei* Facilitator's Guide**

This meeting is designed to set the stage for your South Africa mission trip. This session centers on the following goals:

1. To inform us on how we will prepare for this trip.
2. To broaden the definition and understanding of mission. It's bigger than evangelism and bigger than this trip.
3. To counteract notions that this trip is solely dependent on our effort.
4. To introduce trip goals that will constantly guide the group on its journey.
5. To show that local leaders are in charge and that God is using them.

Any introduction material that deals specifically with your team (get to know you games, trip logistical information, etc.) is not covered.

Session Overview:
1. 'Letter from Korea' opening session activity
2. *PowerPoint* presentation on the *Missio Dei* (9-10 minutes)
3. Discussion questions on *Missio Dei*
4. **Interview** with Lelani Brits, Executive Director of Refilwe (17 minutes)
5. Discussion questions on interview
6. Introduction of goals
7. Prayer exercise
8. Devotional to be done the week after meeting. Purpose: To understand this trip in light of what God is doing in the world.

Session Elements

1. "A Letter From Korea" Questions
   a. What are your initial thoughts?
   b. What was the tone of the letter?
   c. Do you feel like the Koreans were coming to help or do you think they were coming to accomplish their own agenda?
   d. Would you want to host this Korean mission team?
   e. How do you think we can keep our mission team from becoming like that mission team?

2. "*Missio Dei*" Questions – The PowerPoint presentation can be stopped periodically if discussion during is more advantageous than after.
   a. Slide 1: When you hear the word mission what do you think of?
   b. Slide 2
      i. What do you think about this phrase, "Mission is something exotic, something that only missionaries do"? Has that been your understanding of mission? Do you think this church has bought into that phrase?

    ii. Do you agree that our modern notion of mission has a tendency to leave God out of the equation? Why or why not? How can we keep from leaving God out?

  c. Slide 4 (movie slide):

    i. Have you ever thought about the whole Bible as a missionary document? Do you think the narrator is right? If the entire Bible is a missionary document, what does that say about God? What does that say about us?

    ii. What difference does it make that God comes to Earth to renew his creation and it's not simply discarded or destroyed?

    iii. What is your part in that plan?

  d. Slide 5: "Mission doesn't start with William Cary or even Jesus but with the creation of relationships." Agree or disagree? Why?

  e. Slide 6:

    i. The narrator argues that salvation is bigger than your soul and where you go when you die. Do you agree or disagree?

    ii. If mission is bigger than evangelism, or construction, how does that impact our mission trip? Could we be on mission while we are at the Apartheid Museum? At dinner?

    iii. Is this one of those scenarios that "if mission is everything, then mission is nothing?" What would be considered not part of the Mission of God? On this trip specifically, what would not be part of the Mission of God?

  f. Slide 7: On this trip how we can participate in God's mission but not own it, control it, and make it about us?

Final question to reflect on – What's your role in the narrative of the *Missio Dei*? How are you participating in that narrative in your hometown? We're not just on mission in South Africa but also where we live.

3. Questions for the **<u>Interview</u>** with Lelani Britts

  a. What stood out to you in this interview?

  b. She said that, "It will never look like how you picture it." So how do you picture this trip? What word or image comes into your mind when you think about it?

  c. She challenged us to "understand their reality without trying to change it to our reality." What do you think she meant by that? How can we do that? Do we have a tendency to try and make people like us?

  d. Lelani emphasized doing the small things and not just the big things. How does that relate to our earlier conversation on the *Missio Dei?*

4. Questions based on our goals.

     a. What do you think it means that, "short-term mission shouldn't take away from long-term mission?"

     b. Which of these goals are overwhelming?

     c. Which are you most excited about working through?

     d. How can we keep these goals in front of us?

4. Prayer Exercise: Listen to David Crowder's, "All Creatures of our God and King" and prayerfully consider these two questions:

     a. How big does God view salvation?

     b. How big do I view salvation?

Session 1
The *Missio Dei* Devotional

In our first South Africa training session, we talked about the *Missio Dei,* which is a Latin term meaning "Mission of God." The *Missio Dei* will be the overriding narrative of our trip. We'll seek to understand those we visit, our work, ourselves, and who we are when we arrive back home, in light of it.

But, what exactly is the *Missio Dei?*

The *Missio Dei is* a term used to describe the entire scope of God's activity since the creation of the world. The late South African theologian David Bosch wrote that mission is "seen as a movement from God to the world."[9]

But what exactly does "*A movement from God to the World*" mean? It means that mission originates in the life of the Trinity and then flows to the world. It means that mission doesn't start with a missionary, a mission enterprise, or even this mission trip. It started a long time ago when God first created relationships and as he continues to create new and heal existing relationships.

Question for Reflection: What does the fact that God has a mission say about God?

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What exactly does the *Missio Dei* encompass?

Read John 3:16-17 and take in the scope of the text.

John 3:16 is one of the most famous texts in the Bible. You've seen it at baseball games, on T-shirts, and proclaimed from pulpits around the world. The Greek term for world (κόσμον) is translated *cosmo*s. Most people think this means the souls that make up Earth, which it does. But, it's so much bigger than that! It means all of creation, everything, from the smallest atom to the farthest planet. There is nothing that falls outside of the *cosmos.*

The *Missio Dei* encompasses everything God does to make the *cosmos* what it should be. I like to think of it in terms of the relationships that were ruined in Genesis 3, when both man and woman decided to disobey God. God's mission seeks to:

Reconcile our relationship to *God.*
Reconcile our relationship to *ourselves.*

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[9] Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, 389-390.

Reconcile our relationship to *each other.*
Reconcile our relationship to *creation.*

Question for Reflection: Which of these are you most comfortable or uncomfortable with and why? Which do you find easiest or hardest to participate in? Do you think one is more important than another? If so, why?

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_____

What does that mean for the church?
South African theologian David Bosch writes, "Mission is not primarily an activity of the church, but an attribute of God. God is a missionary God."[10]

Does that mean the church doesn't have a role in God's mission? Just the opposite, actually! The church is the center of God's mission. God chooses to use the church as the primary agent for the healing of these relationships. In fact the church exists because of God's mission. Darrell Guder writes, "the church is viewed as an instrument for that mission. There is church because there is mission, not vice versa. To participate in mission is to participate in the movement of God's love toward people, since God is a fountain of sending love."[11] The church has an important role in God's mission, it just doesn't own it nor does it control it. It responds to it and participates in it.

Question for Reflection: If the church is the center but not the entirety of God's mission, what does that mean for people and organizations that aren't the church or even specifically Christian? Do you think God can use them in his mission?

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Question for Reflection: How do you think this should affect our attitudes and the way we carry ourselves as we participate in that mission?

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[10] Ibid.

[11] Darrell L. Guder, *Missional Church: A Vision for the Sending of the Church in North America*, Reprint edition (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1998), 389-390.

What does that mean for me on this trip?

Stop and think about that question. If we really view this trip in light of the *Missio Dei,* what does that mean?

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Here are a few thoughts.

1. Be on the lookout for where God is already working! God has already done and is doing some amazing things at Refilwe, Door of Hope and Sister Didi's clinic. What's your role in the work God is doing there?

2. Mission is more than 'saving souls' or 'building a house.' Whenever we are appropriately participating in the healing of one of those four relationships we are participating in mission. What might this mean for time spent at the Apartheid Museum learning about South Africa's past? Or walking with Sister Didi in the Joe Slovo informal settlement next to Refilwe? Or time spent encouraging the Door of Hope housemothers?

3. In many ways, the way in which we go is more important than what we do when we're there. If God is active and already working in South Africa, what does that do to your sense of purpose or calling on this trip? How does this affect how you should go?

As we talked about at our last meeting, we're going to focus on a few primary goals that we'll seek to accomplish on this trip. We'll continually come back to them to force ourselves to think about them and to hold ourselves accountable to them.

1.) **Be a blessing to those we meet.** This is by far the most important goal. The last thing we want to do is cause pain/hardship for those who live in South Africa and negatively impact their ministry. But, we must also temper that desire to serve and bless with the realization we are not here to 'change' or 'save' Africa, and that we have much to learn and receive from them.

2.) **Increase your connection to the global mission movement.** How is God calling you to be involved in the world? To financially give more? To increase your prayer support for global issues? To create awareness for those around you?

3.) **Increase your involvement in mission at home.** This trip will hopefully give you a new lens to view what God is doing right around you in your hometown and to increase your involvement in it.

4.) **To discern if God might be calling to you to serve in a vocational capacity.**
How about spending a year volunteering at Refilwe or Door of Hope? What about serving in a more long-term capacity somewhere?

Session 1
Letter from Korea[12]

Dear Missions Partner,

Thank you so much for your willingness to host our mission team this coming summer. We are looking forward to our trip and partnering with you. Because we have been working on this for a while and praying about the ministry we'll be doing in your church and community, let me share with you our vision so you can begin preparations for our arrival. We want to minister in four areas: spiritual formation, acts of service, outreach, and physical well-being. Please allow me to make a brief clarification in this email, and then we can work out the details in the coming weeks.

1) Spiritual Formation: We have heard from a variety of sources that U.S. Christians are not very strong in prayer. We will therefore build a prayer chapel beside your church to which all your members will have access 24 hours a day, seven days a week. It is our prayer that you will model your praying after our approach and have members of your church praying at the chapel continuously—24 hours a day, seven days a week.

2) Acts of Service: We also simply want to serve you humbly. We will be bringing 90 junior high and high school students along with 10 leaders on this trip. They would like to paint the houses of your ministers, beginning first with the senior pastor. We have heard about how hot it is in Texas during the summer, so we will not paint the outside of the houses; rather we will paint the inside of the houses. We know this will be a real blessing to your ministers and their families.

3) Outreach: We will go to all of the homes in your community to share our faith. Because most of the members of our group do not speak English well, we will need for you to supply about 20 translators who will be able to go with the team members as they go out two-by-two. They will also need transportation.

4) Physical Well-Being: We have heard that many people in the U.S., especially in the South, struggle with weight problems. Because we Asians have a much healthier diet, we will teach you about authentic Asian food to help keep you in good physical health.

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[12] Dennis Horton, "Short-Term Missions" (presented at the Rethink Missions Conference, Waco, Texas, September 2013).

When our team members stay in the homes of your church families (about 3 members to each family), they will teach your families how to cook a number of authentic Asian dishes. It is our prayer that by the end of our month's stay in Texas that all of your members will have acquired a habit of eating such wonderful and healthy foods as Tofu and Kimchi, and drinking hot tea.

We look forward to being with you soon. Blessings. Your partners in South Korea.

Training Session 2
Global Christianity Facilitator's Guide

This meeting is designed to frame the STM experience into the current context of global Christianity.

Session Goals:

1. To realize that what God is doing in the world is much bigger than just what we as North Americans are part of.
2. To realize that the West is no longer the center of Christianity.
3. To challenge the participant to think as a global Christian, and not just an American Christian.

Session Overview

1. Global Christianity quiz.
2. <u>PowerPoint presentation</u> that examines how Christianity has grown and shifted since its beginnings (30 minutes).
3. Discussion questions on PowerPoint presentation
4. <u>Interview</u> with Dr. Rob Nash, former head of Global Missions for the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship and current missions professor at MacAfee Seminary (18 minutes).
5. Discussion questions on the interview with Dr. Rob Nash.
6. Devotional to be done the week after session is completed. Purpose: To think globally and to realize that our American expression of the faith is not THE expression of faith.

Session Elements

Questions from "Global Christianity" PowerPoint
1. Slide 3: How many of you have had a similar experience with visiting missionaries? How do you think that has shaped you?
2. Slides 6-10: How many of you are hearing these kinds of stats for the first time? If so, why do you think that is? How do they strike you? Is there one that stands out more than another?
3. Slide 18: The narrator says, "Most of us grew up in churches that were very European, in that our worship and our theology are very formal and structured. But in the global south, the emphasis is less on correct belief and form than on enthusiastic feelings and practices." How comfortable are you with that? What are the positive and negatives of an experience like that?
4. Slide 20: The narrator advocates an Acts 10 model as a form of engagement. What does he mean by that? How else should thinking through the lens of global Christianity affect not only our mission trip, but also how we view our place in that story?

Question based on the interview with Rob Nash
1. Nash said that in the 20th century many-hoped Christianity would become the dominant faith in world. How many of you grew up with that hope? Is that a bad thing?
2. Nash says that churches in the majority world have flourished since the 20th century, but recently the "Western church has lost its way." What do you think he means? Do you agree with that statement?
3. Nash says, "God works outside the boundaries of the church." Do you agree? Does that make you feel a little uncomfortable? What does that say about God? What does that say about the church? How should that statement challenge us as a church?
4. When talking about the future of Christianity Nash says that that he sees the U.S. becoming a "spiritual backwater." Do you agree or disagree? Why or why not? Where have you seen examples of this? If he's right, how does that make you feel? What should be our response?
5. Final Question: Now what? What are we supposed to do with everything we've talked about?

Summary Questions –
1. What was new information for you today? In a few words, how would you sum up what we've talked about today?
2. How do you think this should impact how we participant in this STM trip? How does it change your mindset? Actions?
3. How does session relate to our trip goals?

Session 2
Global Christianity Devotional

In our first session we talked about the *Missio Dei* (Latin for Mission of God) and how that affects the entire cosmos. We then talked about our role in that mission and how this trip can play a part in that mission. During our second session, we focused on how the *Missio Dei* has played itself out in the shift of Christianity over the past 100 years. Remember that:

- Kenneth Ross, co-author of *The Atlas of Global Christianity*, says in reference to Christianity, "This 100-year shift between 1910 and 2010 of the center of gravity is the most dramatic in all of Christian history."

- Kenyan scholar John Mibiti says, "the centers of the church's universality [are] no longer in Geneva, Rome, Athens, Paris, London, New York, but Kinshasa, Buenos Aires, Addis Ababa and Manila."[13]

One of the joys of coming into the Christian faith is that we get a new identity. We define ourselves by what God says about us and not what others say about us. But it seems that so often we want to "tribalize" our faith and define ourselves in other ways. Many here in the Untied States first see themselves as an American. We fail to realize what the Apostle Paul was trying to convey in Galatians 3:28 when he writes, "There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus." Our identity should be found first and foremost in our faith and not in our national identity. We must lift our gaze from ourselves to the nations of the world. God doesn't love America any more than he loves Iran, Spain, Thailand, or Palestine. We do not serve and worship a tribal God, an American God, but a global God who loves all the nations of the world.

Question - What difference does it make if we view ourselves Christian first and then American? Or, does it even make a difference?

_____

_____

_____

Question - How would your relationships change if when you met someone the first thing that came to your mind were that this is a child of God created in his image?

_____

_____

_____

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[13] Jenkins, *The Next Christendom*, 2.

Test: Here is a bank map of the world. Try to label each of the countries and see how many you can come up with.

That doesn't mean that we deny outright our nationality and claim, "we don't see nationality." I'm afraid that for most everyone that would be rather dishonest. I am a Christian who lives in America. Being in America has shaped my faith and given me a particular lens in which to view the world and language to communicate in the world. Denying my Americanism would be like a zebra denying he has stripes. I can try and try to deny it, but it's still there. How then should we as a global Christians understand our nationality? Is it bad to be patriotic?

In life, and particularly on this trip, consider holding your faith firmly and your nationality loosely. Learn all about you can about the issues of other places, in particular South Africa. Nations come and go, but those that who claim Christ are grafted into a new eternal family. Revelation 7:9 echoes this, "After this I looked, and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and before the Lamb. They were wearing white robes and were holding palm branches in their hands."

Finally, how might viewing God as a God of ALL nations affect or influence the achievement our trip goals?

1.) Be a blessing to those we meet. This is by far the most important goal. The last thing we want to do is cause pain/hardship for those who live in South Africa and negatively impact their ministry.

2.) Increase your connection to the global mission movement. How is God calling you to be involved in the world? To financially give more? To increase your prayer support for global issues? To create awareness for around you?

3.) This trip will hopefully give you a new lens to view what God is doing right around you in your hometown and to increase your involvement in it.

4.) Might God be calling to you to serve in a vocational capacity? Spending a year volunteering at Refilwe or Door of Hope? What about serving in a more long-term capacity somewhere?

Becoming a global Christian isn't, seemingly, a natural thing to do but something we have to commit ourselves to. Here are a few things you can do this week:

1. Understand what God says about the rest of the world. Try going through the Psalms and circling every time 'nations' or the 'world' is mentioned.

2. Listen to BBC World News (or some other world news site) and seek to understand what's going on in the rest of the world. Connect your faith to events that are happening now and that don't have any immediate connection to your world.

3. Pray for the world. Pray for Christians who have to live out their faith in settings that cost more than we, as Americans, could ever know.

Session 2
Global Christianity Quiz

1) How many Christians are there in the world today?
   a) 3.34 Billon
   b) 2.2 Billion
   c) 1.75 Billion
   d) 4 Billion

2) What share of all Christians around the world are Catholics?
   a) 30%
   b) 40%
   c) 50%
   d) 60%

3) Which country has the most Catholics?
   a) Italy
   b) USA
   c) Brazil
   d) Nigeria

4) The USA has the most Protestants; can you name countries with the second and third most?

   a) Nigeria
   b) China
   c) South Africa
   d) UK

5) Which country has the most Orthodox Christians?
   a) Egypt
   b) Russia
   c) Ukraine
   d) Greece

6) What proportion of the world's Christians live in Europe today?
   a) 25%
   b) 35%
   c) 45%
   d) 50%

7) What proportion of the world's Christians lived in Europe a century ago?
   a) 74%
   b) 66%
   c) 57%
   d) 46%

8) Which region doesn't have one of the 50 largest churches in the world?
   a) Europe
   b) North America
   c) Russia
   d) South America

9) Which country sends out the most missionaries per Christian capita in the world?
   a) South Korea
   b) USA
   c) England
   d) Palestine
   e) Brazil

10) Circle the phrase(s) that you think that you think describe global Christianity?
    a) Charismatic in practice
    b) Conservative in theology
    c) Inclusive of women
    d) Wanting to lead

11) The center of Christianity in 1900AD was?
    a) Europe
    b) USA
    c) Brazil
    d) China

12) The center of Christianity is now _____.

13) In 1800AD, _____% of all Christians lived outside North America and Western Europe.

14) In 1900AD, _____% of all Christians lived outside North America and Western Europe.

15) In 2000AD, more than_____% of all Christians live outside North American and Western Europe.

Answers:
Question 1: 2.2 Billion (33%)
Question 2: 50%
Question 3: Brazil
Question 4: Nigeria now has more than twice as many Protestants as Germany, the birthplace of the Protestant Reformation.
Question 5: Russia (second is Ethiopia)
Question 6: 25%
Question 7: 66%
Question 8: The Embassy of the Blessed Kingdom of God for All Nations, Kiev Ukraine
Question 8: North America
Question 9: Palestine - This country's vibrant population of Christians send 3,401 missionaries for every million Christians. Palestine's "followed by Ireland, Malta, and Samoa. (Interestingly, South Korea ranks No. 5 at 1,014 missionaries sent per million church members, a sign of the continued strength of its missions movement compared to the No. 9-ranked United States at 614 missionaries sent)." Christianity Today 2013
Question 10: A, B, D
Question 11: Europe
Question 12: There isn't one – "Centers" is a better way to describe it.
Question 13: 1% (Pew Forum)
Question 14: 10% (Pew Forum)
Question 15: 66% (Pew Forum)

Session 3
History of Christianity in South Africa Facilitator's Guide

Session Goals:
1. To underscore that our theology and mindset matters when we relate to others, we need to view people as Christ views them.
2. To understand Apartheid and its impact on South Africa.
3. To determine if using the word 'Mission' in our STM trip is useful.
4. To caution us from thinking that we know what's best for our South African brothers and sisters and to examine how we view South Africans.
5. To show that God is active in South Africa and is using locals as his witness.

Session Overview:
1. <u>PowerPoint presentation</u> on "History of Christianity in South Africa"
2. Questions on PowerPoint Presentation
3. <u>Video Interview</u> with Sister Didi – This session is longer than the others. To shorten the session, give participants the interview link and questions and have them watch it as part of their mid-week devotional.
4. Questions on video interview
5. <u>Nelson Mandela Biography</u>
6. Questions from Mandela biography
7. Other resources guide
8. Mid-week devotional (Point: To discern how we should talk about our trip).

Session Elements

"History of Christianity in South Africa" Questions
1. In one word, how would you sum up the history of Christianity in South Africa?

2. Slide 5 – What was the rationale or mindset of the Dutch, which allowed them to marginalize native South Africans? What might have been an anecdote for their theology?

3. Slide 7
   a. The narrator quotes a LMS missionary saying, "We have never found a child-race so young that intellect and soul had not begun to function." If Africans were going to 'grow up' they would need European help. Though this was spoken in 1926, do you think this mindset towards Africans still exist?
   b. Do you think the paternalistic mindset unintentionally exists in how our church approaches people who are different than us and whom we seek to minster to/with?

4. The narrator talked a lot about the clash of cultures and how Europeans forced their worldview and faith expression upon Africans who held a traditional worldview. Is there only one right way to view the world and practice the

Christian faith? In what ways (positive and negative) do you think our cultural lens has affected our own understanding of faith, how we do church, and how we live life?

5. Obviously the history of Christian missions in South Africa has created baggage and stereotypes that we are connected to. How do you think this should affect the way we understand this trip?

6. In light of the history of missions in South Africa, do you think we should use the term 'mission?' Based on what we've talked about, is 'mission' a good description of what we're doing? What are some other terms that we might be able to use that more accurately portray what we're doing in a way that does not create barriers?

Questions Based on "Interview with Sister Didi"
1. What words would you use to describe Sister Didi?

2. Sister Didi said that nursing is her passion. What are you passionate about? How can that passion be used to bless the world?

3. Sister Didi saw a need that wasn't being met and created a medical clinic to meet that need. What are the needs you see around you in your hometown? Is God calling you to be engaged?

Questions from Mandela Biography
1. Do any of you remember Apartheid? What do you recall?

2. In your own words, what was Apartheid? What was it designed to accomplish?

3. What do you think are some of the repercussions from Apartheid? How would you guess they might be felt in South Africa today, even after 20 years of free elections?

4. How do you think this might connect to the Civil Rights movements of the 1960s, right here in the United States?

Other resources on South Africa:
1. Books
   a. Long Walk To freedom (Mandela Autobiography).
   b. Cry The Beloved Country

2. Movies
   a. Invictus

      b. <u>District 9</u>
      c. <u>Mandela</u>
      d. <u>Tsotsi</u>

Summary Questions –

1. What was new information for you today? In a few words, how would you sum up what we've talked about today?

2. How do you think this should impact how we participant in this STM trip? How does it change your mindset? Actions?

3. How does session relate to our trip goals?

Session 3
Missions Devotional

This past week we talked about the history of Christianity in South Africa. Unfortunately, this was often connected to power, dominance, and forcibly imparting a European understanding of faith. Africans were viewed as 'childlike' and thus needed help from Westerners.

Bible Search:
- Think of all the places in the Bible where the term "mission" or "missionary" is used. Write them down.

- Get out your index or concordance and look for all the places where the word "mission" or "missionary" appears.

How many times does it appear? _____

Next write down a few adjectives that you would use to describe missionaries. Then, write down, in light of what we've learned, how Africans might view missionaries.

Western Perspective	African Perspective

The only time the word "mission" or "missionary" is used in the biblical text is in a few section headings entitled "Paul's Missionary Journeys." Those headings were added to help modern readers and weren't part of the original text. Chapters and verses weren't added to the biblical text until around 1227AD. It's safe to say that the word "mission" or "missionary" shouldn't be viewed as biblical or even sacred.

If there's a difference between how Africans might view Western missionaries and how we might view them, how do you think we should bridge this gap? Should we continue to use a term that might harken images of power and dominance or should we look for something else?

If you're like me, when you're sitting on a plane next to a South African and they ask, "why are you going to South Africa", you might have a bit of hesitancy in answering that question. This might especially be true when you look around the plane and see various groups of people wearing the same mission trip t-shirts.

So, how would you answer that question? Why are you going to South Africa?

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Fortunately, there are some biblical stories that might help us phrase an answer.

Read Cornelius' interaction with Peter in Acts 10
-   Who does God speak to first?
-   What does the text say about Cornelius?

Cornelius was a member in the army; he wasn't a Jew or a Christian. Yet, he was God-fearing and capable of hearing a word from the Lord and immediately acting upon it. Peter was a disciple, an apostle who in this text argues with God about whether he should eat unclean meat.

What happens to Cornelius at the end of this text (v 48)?

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What happens to Peter near the end of this text (v 34)?

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Who was converted in this text? How were they converted?

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Both Peter and Cornelius were converted to who God was calling them to be. As people who are like Peter and 'going' we should expect to be converted from old ways and thoughts. We should expect to become more like Christ. We should expect to humbly learn something new from the "Corneliuses" of the world. Remember, you were not just "saved" but you are always in the process of "being saved."

So what word(s) can you use that encapsulate the personal conversion aspect of mission?

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Mission isn't only about changing us, though. Mission is also about the "other," and serving and helping. How can we best describe what we're doing without using a word that might conjure experiences and feelings that we don't mean to convey?

Write down a list of words that you might use that conveys the notion of helping others.

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What if we let Philippians 2:1-14 inform us? Go ahead and read it.

We have to be able to give the second half of our reason for the trip. Saying that we're only going to 'learn' or 'be changed' sounds (and is!) a bit narcissistic and selfish. One of those terms you might consider using is "serve." Read these texts that talk about serving: Galatians 5:13-15, Matthew 20:26-28, Mark 9:33-35.

What are some characteristics of Christian service to others?

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How might this help us avoid the notion that we're going to South Africa to "take God" or to "fix their problems?"

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In light of this devotional and our past meeting, how are you going to answer that question on a plane when a South African sits next to you? "Why are you going to South Africa?"

_____

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As always we want to focus on our goals. How do this devotional and our last presentation relate to or impact them?

1. Be a blessing to those we meet. This is by far the most important goal. The last thing we want to do is cause pain/hardship for those who live in South Africa and negatively impact their ministry.

2. Increase your connection to the global mission movement. How is God calling you to be involved in the world? To financially give more? To increase your prayer support for global issues? To create awareness for those around you?

3. This trip will hopefully give you a new lens to view what God is doing right around you in your hometown and to increase your involvement in it.

4. Might God be calling to you to serve in a vocational capacity? Spending a year volunteering at Refilwe or Door of Hope? What about serving in a more long-term capacity somewhere?

Session 4
Poverty and Development Facilitator's Guide

Session Goals:
1. To gain a biblical and theological understanding of poverty.
2. To understand what development is and our role in it.
3. To understand the current status of HIV/AIDS and how that is impacting South Africa.

Session Overview
1. "HIV/AIDS" PowerPoint Presentation*
2. Questions on "HIV/AIDS" PowerPoint Presentation
3. "Understanding Poverty and Development" PowerPoint Presentation (40 min)
4. Questions on "Understanding Poverty and Development"
5. Interview with Cheryl Allen (13 min)
6. Questions on Cheryl Allen Interview
7. Mid-week Devotional

*Session Note – This session is particularly long because there are two PowerPoint presentations. To shorten the session, have members watch and reflect on the video as part of their midweek devotional.

Session Elements

1. "HIV/AIDS" PowerPoint Questions
   a. How many of you have ever known someone with HIV/AIDS? If so, can you share what that experience was like for them?

   b. Do we still have a stigma here in the United States about folks with HIV/AIDS, either in how they got it or what kind of moral person they are?
      i. The stigma and lack of knowledge about HIV/AIDS in the general U.S. population in the mid-80s is similar to what South Africans currently experience.
      ii. What if I asked you to go to your doctor and to ask for a HIV/AIDS test but you couldn't tell them why you needed one. Would you feel a stigma? Would you be reluctant to go?

   c. If we were to take the number of AIDS orphans in South Africa and place them in Texas it would be roughly 22,000 per county. How do you think this would affect the social structure? How would they be cared for? This is exactly the dilemma that South Africa is going though.

2. "Understanding Poverty and Development" questions
   a. Slide 3:
      i. What is your personal view of the nature and purpose of development?
      ii. What's your understanding of poverty?

   b. Slide 6: The narrator says, "Therefore at its deepest level, poverty is spiritual." Do you agree or disagree? Why? What are the dangers of seeing poverty this way?

   c. Slide 19: Do you agree that we as Westerners have an "excluded middle?" Is that good or bad? What would we gain or lose if we had one?

   d. The narrator says that we are all have poverty and that our poverty affects the materially poor. How can we ensure that we are really addressing our own poverty so that we aren't unintentionally harming the material poor?

   e. What does this mean for how we approach those we meet on our short-term mission trip?

3. Cheryl Allen <u>Interview:</u>
   a. What words would you use to describe Cheryl and her ministry?

   b. Cheryl said that when she got to know black people her understanding of them changed. Have you ever had a similar situation where you thought one thing about someone and had your opinion or understanding changed as a result of actually getting to know him or her? What does this say about the way the world works?

   c. What's the importance of adoption in the Christian faith? What biblical references are there? Does the story about the women giving her son up for adoption because she loved him (not because she didn't love him) strike a chord with you? Have you had that thought before?

   d. If you were in Cheryl's shoes, what role would hope play for you?

   e. So why do we need to know this going into South Africa?

Summary Questions –
1. What was new information for you today? In a few words, how would you sum up what we've talked about today?

2. How do you think this should impact how we participant in this STM trip? How does it change your mindset? Actions?

3. How does this session relate to our trip goals?

Session 4
Poverty Devotional

When you hear the word poverty, what ideas and images come into your mind? Write them down:

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_____

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If you're like me the words and images you came up with probably aren't associated with yourself. You might think of a starving child in Africa, or a mom in a *favela* in Brazil. Yes, that is poverty, but is that a holistic and biblical view of poverty?

Read Genesis 2:4 -3:24.

Write down words that describe the world before and after the fall.

Before the Fall	After the Fall

Did you notice these relationships destroyed in the fall?
Man/Woman to God (verses 8-9 – hiding from God)
Man/Woman to creation (verses 14-15 – as typified by the new relationship with the snake)
Man/Woman to itself (verse 7 – realizing they were naked)
Man/Woman to each other (verse 12 – accusing others)

So what is poverty? Bryant Myers writes that "Poverty is the result of relationships that do not work, that are not just, that are not for life, that are not harmonious or enjoyable. Poverty is the absence of shalom in all its meanings."[14]

If poverty is defined as broken relationships then who's in poverty? Everyone is in poverty. We all have broken relationships. We abuse and take advantage of other people.

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[14] Myers, *Walking with the Poor: Principals and Practices of Transformational Development*, 143.

We damage creation to advance society. We suffer with anxiety, depression, and god-complexes. We don't listen to God and seek to relegate him to just a few areas of our lives (if even that). We are all poor and live in poverty. In what areas of your life is poverty present?

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But, to say that we are all poor is not to say that all poverty is created equal. Do you agree or disagree? Why?

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To live on less than $2 a day is very different than to suffer a god-complex because you have too much money, or you're too overweight because you have an inappropriate relationship with food. Material poverty has drastic consequences often not associated with other forms of poverty.

The Bible is filled with from beginning to end with texts and mandates about not oppressing others and helping the materially poor. Write down a few texts that come to your mind and how they connect with your life.

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If you're having a problem thinking of a text, check out these: Psalm 72:12-14, Luke 4:14-25, Matthew 25:37-40.

Our sacred scriptures command us to help those in material poverty. But doing so in a way that helps and not hurts isn't always the easiest thing. On this trip, we are going to engage the poor, but let's not fool ourselves. We're probably not going to make the life of the poor drastically better with a short two-week trip. But here are a few ways that we can work with those we're engaging and that won't foster our own god complexes.

1. Listen. Listen to the problems, situations and stories of the people.
2. Don't assume you know the solution to what people in material poverty in a different culture are facing. Also, don't assume that you know the causes of their material poverty. It probably isn't as simple as laziness or inefficiencies.
3. Don't do for others what they can do for themselves, but help them in ways that are sustainable, contextual, and that don't create more problems.

4. Help in ways that create dignity and honor the Image of God found in each person. Think about how you would want to be treated and seek to treat others like that.

Lastly, how does a biblical understanding of poverty and engaging the material poor relate to our trip goals?

1. Be a blessing to those we meet. How are you going to bless appropriately? Leaving your used clothes and shoes doesn't bring dignity nor is it sustainable!

2. Increase your connection to the global mission movement. Did you know that ½ of the world lives on less than $2 a day? There are many people and organizations that are fighting material poverty and they would love your prayer, financial, and other support.

3. Increase your involvement in mission at home. How might God be calling you to engage poverty (in all its forms) in your hometown?

4. To discern if God might be calling to you to serve in a vocational capacity. What areas of poverty are you most drawn to? Is this where your bliss meets the world's needs?

Session 5
Culture in South Africa Facilitator's Guide

Goals
1. To prepare the participant for cross-cultural interactions
2. To continue showing how our culture affects our understanding of faith
3. To experience some of the tastes of South Africa

Session Overview.
1. "Brief Encounters" Culture game
2. Dinner – Menu options
3. "Culture in South Africa" PowerPoint
   a. Note: There are no automatic timings set for this presentation.
4. Questions for "Culture in South Africa"
5. Mid-week Devotional

South Africa Dinner:

Menu: Getting your folks ready for South Africa also means getting them ready for the food they'll eat. Here are several recipes that they will probably eat while in South Africa:
1. Chakalaka: South Africa vegetable stir fry
2. Mealie Meal: Similar to thick grits.
3. Boerewors: South African style sausage
4. Bobotie: Spiced minced-meat dish
5. Malva Pudding: Baked dessert
6. Rooibos Tea: Served everywhere.

Before Eating
1. If possible, have everyone sit as close together as possible. Try to have them invade each other's space. Talk about the difference in personal space in South Africa compared to the U.S.

2. Have everyone get their own plate and portions but instruct them not to eat until all are seated and you give the final word. Once everyone is seated, talk about food and the importance of eating what's in front of you and about food as a form of hospitality. Then, have everyone take his or her plate and pass it to the left. Continue to talk about food's importance and have everyone pass again. Instruct folks that they must eat what is in front of them (obviously be sensitive to allergies).

"Culture in South Africa" Questions

1. Slide 4: The narrator says that a biblical worldview is one where the spiritual world (miracles, sacred spaces) and the physical world are interacting at all times. As a Christian, do you agree or disagree? What limits do we want to place upon that interaction? Are those limits good or bad? What would our culture say about that interaction?

2. Slide 5: The narrator says, "It is possible to say that South Africa is a varying mixture of the modern, the biblical and the traditional worldviews. For instance, it is not uncommon for someone who is sick to go to the doctor for Western medicine, to the church for prayer and to the traditional healers for traditional medicines." What do you do when you are sick? Why? This is the reflection of which worldview?"

3. Slide 6: The narrator talks about the difference of viewing time as based on a clock and one that is based events/people. What's the difference? What's the purpose of time? How should we view it? How do you think you'll do going to a place where time is more centered on people than a clock? Will you be okay when you visit a church service that is supposed to be from 10am-12pm but doesn't actually start till 10:30am and doesn't end till 1pm?

4. Slide 7: The average Westerner likes a personal space radius of 3 feet and personal space is almost non-existent for South Africans. How is this going to affect you?

5. Slide 8: The needs of the group are more important than the needs of the individual. What do you think about that? What are some of the good and bad things about this? Which do you emphasize?

6. Slide 10: The narrator says that a majority of African churches are characterized by speaking in tongues, casting out of demons, and exuberant worship. What do you think about that? How do you think you'll respond if you're in a worship service and those things occur?

7. How many of you are afraid of messing up with regard to culture? Afraid that you'll say something you're not supposed to, or do something you shouldn't? *Reiterate that that feeling is okay. They probably will mess up because it's not their culture. But, they need to seek to learn from their mistakes. Out of fear, don't shy away from interacting!*

Because we're seeking to be sensitive to other cultures, this is also a good time to bring up picture taking. Many in South Africa often do not mind having their picture taken, but participants must ask them first. If participants can't ask, then they shouldn't be taking their picture. Ask participants to imagine themselves in the shoes of those who are having their picture taken. How would it make you feel for a bunch of Americans to come in and

take pictures of your home so they can go home and tell others how you live? If you wouldn't want your picture taken a certain way, don't do it to someone else.

It's also important to greatly limit the amount of Facebook, Instagram, etc. that participants engage in. They should try as hard as possible to leave America in America and to be completely in South Africa. Limited phone/internet use communicates to the hosts that participants value their presence and participation in the trip.

Session Summary Questions

1. What was new information for you today? In a few words, how would you sum up what we've talked about today?

2. How do you think this should impact how we participant in this STM trip? How does it change your mindset? Actions?

3. How does session relate to our trip goals?

Session 5
Culture in South Africa Devotional

Point: Our cultural lens affects our faith and how we read scripture. Because South Africans read the Bible differently and experience faith differently doesn't automatically make it wrong. In fact we as westerners have much to learn.

In our final session, we talked about culture. In many ways, our culture is the lens in which we view the world; it informs the decisions we make, and the interactions we have. Culture tethers one person to the society at large. Any given culture is not entirely good or bad, but has aspects of both. When one person travels to another culture, 'culture shock' can often happen.

What are some adjectives you would use to describe U.S. culture?

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Since you're only staying in South Africa for a couple of weeks, you probably won't experience any drastic forms of culture shock. You'll probably notice a few things here and there and might think that South Africans are just like Americans. This is far from the truth. Noticing culture differences is like a captain on a ship looking out to sea and noticing just a bit of ice above the surface. An experienced captain will know that the bulk of the ice is actually under the surface and the part that she sees is just the 'tip of the iceberg.' While you're in South Africa you'll just notice the 'tip of the iceberg' with regard to culture, but that doesn't mean there isn't a great difference lurking below the surface.

One of the cultural differences sitting below the surface in South Africa (and much of the non-western world) is a collectivist mentality. In a collectivist culture, the most important thing is the community, or family unit, not the individual. Decisions aren't filtered through the lens of "what's best for me," or "what I want to do." Self-actualization isn't a priority. Rather, their lens is what brings harmony and preserves and benefits the community. One's family and community help make important decisions. It isn't left up to the individual.

What do you think are some positives attributes to a collectivist understanding of life?

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Not only does culture affect your trip, it affects your very reading of the Bible! Randolph Richards and Brandon O'Brien write,

> To open the Word of God is to step into a strange world where things are very unlike our own. Most of us don't speak the languages. We don't know the geography or the customs or what behaviors are considered rude or polite. And yet we hardly notice. For many of us, the Bible is more familiar than any other book. We may have parts of it memorized. And because we believe that the Bible is God's Word to us, no matter where on the planet or when in history we read it, we tend to read Scripture on our own, when and where, in a way that makes sense on our terms.[15]

Question: Do you agree with that quote? What's the danger of the Bible being so familiar? What are the benefits?

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When Western Christians read the word "you" in the biblical text we understand it in individualistic terms whereas in many cultures, including the first century, "you" was often plural, better translated 'y'all.' Dallas Theological Seminary Professor John Dyer recently examined the translation of "you" in the Bible and found that "there are at least 4,720 verses (2,698 in the Hebrew Bible and 2,022 in the Greek) with *you plural* translated as English 'you,' which could lead a reader to think it is directed at him or her personally rather than the Church as a community."[16]

Question – What difference does it make if we're always reading "you" in the Bible as singular and therefore addressing an individual, or plural and therefore addressing a community?

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Here's an example of how our individualistic reading of the text can cause us to run right past a communal text. When we think about "being saved" we think in very

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[15] E. Randolph Richards and Brandon J. O'Brien, *Misreading Scripture with Western Eyes: Removing Cultural Blinders to Better Understand the Bible* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Books, 2012), 11.

[16] Matthew Schmitz, "First Things," accessed November 26, 2014, http://www.firstthings.com/blogs/firstthoughts/2013/06/texas-bible-converts-you-to-yall.

individualistic terms. We each have to make a "decision for Christ." We certainly don't want to minimize the decision that someone makes to follow Christ, but we need to recognize that we understand it as a hyper-individualistic decision. That hasn't always been the case. Take a moment and read Acts 16 and Acts 18.

Notice the part that talks about the 'entire household' being saved? How does that strike you?

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As a Westerner steeped in individualism, I'm not sure what to do with that! Sure I can rationalize it away, but I'm not sure that honors the text, though rationalizing it away would further support my individualistic cultural lens! A South African would read this and understand the communal ramifications. Before they decided to follow Jesus they'd want to talk to their family. To make such a major decision and not consult one's family would be offensive and possibly put the harmony of the family and community in jeopardy. It could even lead to being ostracized from the community.

This is just one example of how culture affects our reading of the biblical text, let alone our entire outlook on life! Whenever we read the Bible, make a decision, or even act we are doing so through a cultural lens.

So, how can you try and get a glimpse of the iceberg below the surface while in South Africa? Here are a few things to do:

Tips:
Withhold judgment: It's easy to see something different and quickly pass judgment on it. But judging assumes that you have all the information necessary. It's safe to assume that when going into another culture that you are not in the know! While this might be a little harsh, leading Short-Term Mission thinker Robert Priest says that STM participants are often like a dog in a museum: "They see everything and understand nothing."[17]

Seek to understand: Withholding judgment is good, but still short of what we should be doing. We should seek to understand what's going on. You can do this by observing, reading appropriate material, and asking good questions.

Be Humble: An attitude of humility will take you far and cover over a multitude of mistakes.

Goals:

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[17] Priest and Priest, "They See Everything, and Understand Nothing," 54.

We don't have any other meetings prior to our trip. So spend a few minutes reflecting on our goals and how you will integrate them into your final trip preparation.

1. Be a blessing to those we meet. This is by far the most important goal. The last thing we want to do is cause pain/hardship for those who live in South Africa and to negatively impact their ministry.

2. Increase your connection to the global mission movement. How is God calling you to be involved in the world? To financially give more? To increase your prayer support for global issues? To create awareness for those around you?

3. How can you increase your involvement to God's mission in your hometown? This trip will hopefully give you a new lens to view what God is doing right around you! Get involved!

4. Might God be calling to you to serve in a vocational capacity? Spending a year volunteering at Refilwe or Door of Hope? What about serving in a more long-term capacity somewhere?

Session 5
Brief Encounters[18]
By Andrea MacGregor

Grade Level: 8-12

Time Required: 60-80 minutes

Overview:

- Everyone has a culture. It shapes how we see ourselves, others, and the world.
- Behavior is affected in large part by cultural beliefs and values.
- Culture is like an iceberg. Some aspects are visible; others are beneath the surface. Invisible aspects influence and cause the visible ones.

Objectives:

- Students will gain skills in observing and describing behaviors.
- Students will develop an understanding of how our cultural values influence the way we view other groups.

Materials:

- Cultural-norms sheets (below) for the Pandya and Chispa cultures (half of the players will receive Pandya sheets and the other half Chispa sheets)
- Recorded music

Introduction

Science fiction fans will recognize a familiar theme as they participate in this simulation. Many science fiction authors have explored how humans will behave when we meet an alien race for the first time. "Brief Encounters" brings the question closer to home and asks students to explore the interaction of two cultures—one outgoing and casual, the other more reserved and formal—with different social norms.

Instructions

1. Remove all furniture from the center of the classroom. Students will need space to move around. Explain to the class that they will adopt the cultures of two unfamiliar groups, interact with each other, and then examine their reactions.

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[18] "Brief Encounters," Exploring Cross-Cultural Differences through Simulation, accessed November 26, 2014, http://www.peacecorps.gov/wws/lesson-plans/brief-encounters/.

2. Divide the participants into three groups. Two groups should be about the same size and should have roughly equal numbers of males and females, if possible. A smaller group of two or three students will act as observers.

3. Ask the observers to watch closely as two different cultural groups—the Pandyas and the Chispas—interact. They may move among the participants, but they may not touch or speak to them. Their observations will help the class view the lesson with a wider perspective during debriefing.

4. Send the Pandya and Chispa groups to opposite corners of the room. Distribute copies of the Pandya cultural-norms sheets to one group and the Chispa cultural-norms sheets to the other group. Ask the members of each culture to read these sheets and to discuss their norms among themselves.

5. Visit the Pandyas and clarify their values. Emphasize the importance of staying in character. Emphasize that the male students should be chaperoned at all times. Remind them of the Pandyas' reluctance to initiate contacts with people of other cultures.

6. Visit the Chispas and clarify their values. Emphasize the importance of making several brief contacts rather than a few lengthy ones. Define a contact as eliciting a verbal or a nonverbal response from a member of the other culture. Remind them of their friendly, outgoing nature and their eagerness to meet people from other cultures.

7. The simulation: Announce that the two student groups from imaginary countries have been invited to a party sponsored by an international student-exchange organization. The party organizers hope the two groups will get acquainted and learn about each other. When students return to their home schools, they will present culture reports to their classmates. The students are welcome to mingle, dance, and talk.

8. Start the music and let the two cultures interact. The teacher and student observers should walk among the groups, looking for behaviors that can be described and discussed during debriefing.

9. After 10 to 12 minutes, call time and end the party. Ask the students to meet once more in opposite corners of the room and to make notes for their culture reports.

10. Give each group about 10 minutes to create a brief report. The Chispas' report will describe Pandya behavior and the values that their classmates could expect to encounter if they visited the Pandya nation. The Pandyas will create a similar description of the Chispas' culture.

11. Ask a representative from the Chispas to present the group's report to the class. Then, after providing the Chispas with a copy of the Pandya cultural norms, ask a representative from the Pandyas to read that group's norms sheet. Ask the Chispas to note how their report compared with the Pandyas' cultural-norms sheet.

12. Repeat with a Pandya representative sharing the group's report on the Chispas (and provide the Pandyas with the Chispas' norm sheet).

Debriefing

Use questions such as the following to guide discussion of how our own cultural biases influence the way we view other groups. Be sure to ask the small group of observers for their views on the participants' attempts to communicate across cultures and to maintain cultural norms.

1. How did you feel about the behavior of the members of your own group? Of the other group? Did your group's culture report use positive, negative, or neutral terms to describe the other group?

2. How well did your group members observe the norms of their assigned culture? During the party, what did you do if a member of your culture did not observe a particular norm?

3. What are the real-world advantages of following cultural norms?

4. Ask students to discuss whether they agree or disagree with each of the following statements:

- People have difficulty describing the behaviors of other groups in non-judgmental terms.
- People acquire cultural norms fairly quickly.
- Most of the group's norms are maintained through peer pressure.
- Americans tend to feel uncomfortable without eye contact, even though in many parts of the world, eye contact is considered to be rude and impolite.
- The same behavior can be perceived differently depending on your group's norms. For example, what appears friendly to Chispas seems pushy to Pandyas.

5. What are some real-world situations that were illustrated during the game?

6. Pandya women were instructed to speak for the Pandya men. In what real-world situations does one group speak for another?

7. How would the game be different for players if the Pandya men dominated the women?

8. What lessons from this activity would you want to keep in mind if you were going to spend time in an unfamiliar culture?

9. Ask students to list as many examples of cross-cultural experiences as they can. Remind them that not all cross-cultural experiences take place in other countries or between people who speak different languages or come from different racial

backgrounds. Attending worship services, for example, with a friend who holds different religious beliefs is a cross-cultural experience. It's possible that going to a new school or having dinner at the home of a friend from another culture also could be a cross-cultural experience. Brainstorm ideas about what students can do to encourage clear communication in such.

Cultural Norms:

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You Are a Pandya

Pandya Cultural Norms

- Pandyas prefer to interact with members of their own culture.
- Pandyas do not initiate conversation. They speak only when spoken to.
- Pandyas have very formal speech patterns. For example, they always use "sir" and "ma'am."
- Among Pandyas, women have more status than men. Men are chaperoned by Pandya women.
- Pandya men avoid eye contact with women from other cultures.
- Pandya men do not talk directly to women from other cultures. They respond through their chaperones.
- Pandya prefer to have a 3ft distance between people not in their culture
- Pandya men can talk to men from other cultures. They can maintain eye contact with men from other cultures.
- Pandya do prefer not to have physical contact with people they do not know.

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You Are a Chispa

Chispa Cultural Norms

- Chispas are informal and friendly.
- Among Chispas, there are no gender roles. Men and women behave the same way.
- Chispas are outgoing. They love to make contact with people from other cultures.
- Chispa contacts are brief and casual.
- Chispas prefer to be spatially close to the person they are talking to.
- Chispas are democratic and call everyone by his or her first name.
- Chispas value cross-gender contacts more than same-gender contacts.
- Chispas love physical contact.

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On-Site Journal

The journal is designed to help the STM participant think through their experience as well as the trip goals. As it is currently formatted, the travel guide/devotional does not have enough space for participants to write lengthy responses to the questions. But it is encouraged that participants write down their response in a separate journal.

The devotional starts one week prior to the team gathering at the airport. Since many South Africa Network churches leave on Wednesday, this journal is set up as such. This matters because the journal assumes that participants will worship on Sunday and asks questions related to church services on those days. The days can be easily switched if necessary.

Sharing this journal with family and or church members is encouraged. It allows others to know what the team is processing and experiencing. It can also serve as a prayer reminder for those not traveling. It also aids in creating a community of practice.

The devotional is broken up into 3 columns.

1. The left column is labeled "Journey" and is used for logistical information during the trip (what the team is doing on a particular day, individual assignments, etc.).

2. The middle column has a scripture verse(s).

3. The right column has devotional thoughts to guide the participant. Each day (during the trip) also has two questions, what did I learn today? And, why does it matter than I learned it? Encourage the participants to focus on those two questions at the end of the day and to write down their responses in their journal.