

TEN STEPS TO SERVICE WITH CHRISTIANS IN ACTION

Are you thinking about being a missionary? Are you asking yourself what you can do to prepare yourself for missionary service in the future? Here are some steps that you should take seriously.

Step 1: Daily Devotions

One of the most important habits you can establish now is a daily program of Bible reading and prayer. As you draw from God's Word for daily sustenance, your walk with the Lord will be stimulated to grow. You will also gain skills in using the Word as the "sword of the Spirit" (Eph. 6:17) as you apply the Word to daily circumstances. A systematic reading of the Bible and using a daily prayer list can help your faith mature. It is important to pray about God's using your life in missionary service. Include the needs of the peoples in the areas where you are thinking about serving.

Step 2: Church Involvement

Becoming an active member of a local Bible-believing church. On the mission field, you will be an integral part of the local church. It is important that you are an active partner in a church now, getting experience in different church functions (Sunday school, youth activities, evangelism, etc.), interacting with church leaders and other members. Make an appointment and talk with your pastor about your desire to be a missionary, seek his counsel, ask where you can "serve" (Mk. 10:44) in the church right now. Get involved in some of the menial jobs as well as the more visible ones. This will give you real practice for missionary life which usually isn't very glamorous. Make a similar appointment with your church's missions committee.

Step 3: Evangelism Experience

You need to ask God for a genuine concern for those without Christ and the joy of leading some to put their faith in the Savior. In most communities, there are training courses in both theory and practice in evangelism. Working with your local church in its visitation or evangelism program is an excellent place to start. Also, it's important to share Christ with people of different ages and cultural backgrounds from your own. Over the years, Christians in Action has developed a simple, yet effective personal evangelism plan that is used in most of our fields. If you would like further information on this material, please see our Ministry Resources or contact us page.

Step 4: Financial Responsibility

It is important that you begin now to manage your personal finances. This should include setting up and living within a budget and keeping a record of expenses. Establishing the habit of faithful tithing and giving extra offerings will help you establish the attitude that your finances and material goods belong to the Father.

Step 5: Physical and Emotional Preparation

Living in a foreign country can place you under physical and emotional stress as you adjust to a different environment and culture. You can make that adjustment easier by developing good health habits now. Pick a sport or a physical activity that you enjoy and can continue on the mission field. Practice good nutrition habits. Visit your doctor and dentist regularly.

Your emotional health is also important. Ask the Lord to show you areas where you need to mature -- you may want to ask your pastor or another mature person for their evaluations. Ask the Lord, too, to help you develop in your ability to get along with difficult people. Tough, stretching experiences and working with people in a variety of ways is valuable. Ask the Lord to help you learn to laugh at difficult circumstances rather than to cry over them. Philippians 4:8 exhorts us to develop a positive attitude toward life.

Step 6: New Experiences

In many areas of North America, you don't have to travel far to find people of different cultures. Make opportunities to experience these different cultures, asking the Lord to give you an open mind and heart. Also, you can meet and fellowship with Christians from different denominational backgrounds than your own. Many missions, including Christians in Action, offer summer missions experiences in the U.S.A. and abroad, in which you may be able to participate.

Step 7: Educational and Professional Preparation

You should set professional and educational goals to be met before you become a missionary. These may be college, Bible school, trade school, or job experience. You need to prayerfully assess your special skills, talents, and gifts, asking God for His direction. Whatever goals you set, you should be sure to complete a systematic, thorough study of the Bible. Take advantage of the many special seminars offered to Christians (on evangelism, counseling, spiritual growth, etc.) through church and para-church ministries.

Step 8: Missionary Training Course

Christians in Action's Missionary Training Course has been established especially for those interested in serving as missionaries with Christians in Action who need or desire additional Bible training with a missionary focus. The program will provide specific training in Bible, church ministry and missions as well as an introduction into the CinA family. Eligibility for the program is based on several factors. Please ask us to send you the MTC brochure if you are interested.

Step 9: Application Procedure

When you are ready to begin with Christians in Action, write or call us for information. A formal application must be filled out and submitted to attend the Missionary Training Course. When the application and references are received, they are taken before the mission board for prayer, review and approval. Once accepted into our program, an information packet will be sent to you to guide your final preparation to enter the program.

Step 10: Deputation and Appointment

After MTC, candidates proceed to the deputation phase in order to raise prayer and financial support. After meeting their deputation goals, they may appear before the Mission Board to be appointed as "intern" missionary. The "intern" missionary works on the mission field under direct supervision of a senior missionary for a time to prove his ministry and provide him with on-the-job training and experience while learning to adapt to a new culture and language.

Note: These steps are generally applicable to all "World Christians", whatever country of residence. However this page is intended for residents of the United States and Canada. Residents of other countries should contact us regarding training opportunities in a country near to them.

Application is also available on our website at www.christiansinaction.org.