Dear Nurture Program Member,

The Global Outreach Team is keenly aware of both the joys and the stresses that our Global Partners are under as they seek to share the good news of Jesus Christ in cross-cultural settings. Often the hardest years for them are their first or second years of ministry. We have also become aware that preparation for going into this sort of work varies depending on the type of mission agency. As a result, Bethlehem Baptist Church and the Global Outreach Department are in the process of developing ways to help those sent out by our church to be better prepared to face the challenge before them.

One of these ways is through the questionnaire attached. This tool is designed to help you think through realistically some of the issues you may face as you serve on the field, or some of the issues you may bring with you which could affect you as you minister.

As a Global Outreach Team and as a church we want to help cultivate an atmosphere in which our people can feel free to share any concern, where nothing is considered to be in the "we don't talk about that" category. The mission’s enterprise is so crucial that we want to make every effort so that honest and supportive relationships flourish between our Global Partners and the sending church. The purpose of the Preparedness Questionnaire is not simply to screen those who should or should not go to the mission field. The questionnaire is designed to be a tool to help you reflect on your spiritual, emotional, relational and cultural readiness for going into a cross-cultural ministry and to help us guide you in this process. Some of the questions you will not have even thought about before, some you will not know how to answer. Don't worry. Remember, this is not a test to pass or fail. The aim is to nurture you. Some of you may respond to certain questions like this, "If they really knew the truth about this area of my life they would never even consider sending me!" Wrong. Consider the Apostle Paul (see I Timothy 1:12-16). We all come from very different backgrounds with different strengths and weaknesses. God in his mysterious way uses the weaknesses and sins of our past to uniquely prepare us for future ministry. So please don't fret.

And please be totally candid. Your questionnaire will be held in strictest confidence. This questionnaire will only be read by the selected counselor, my wife Tamara, and myself. If others will be asked to read it, you will be asked prior to their reading.

The Preparedness Questionnaire will take you approximately five thoughtful hours to complete. Please email your completed questionnaire to nurtureprogram@hopeinGod.org with the appropriate subject line.

May the Lord bless you as you prepare!

Together with you in the Greatest Cause,



Todd Rasmuson

*Minister of Global Outreach*

Together with and on behalf of the Global Outreach Team

# Nurture Program Preparedness Questionnaire

## I. General Information

Date Questionnaire Completed

Name:

Address:

E-Mail:

Phone:       (home)       (work)       (mobile)

Date of Birth:       Place of Birth:

Marital Status:  single and unattached

single but in significant relationship

single but engaged

married, how long?

widowed

divorced

other, please explain

List the names and ages of any children:

## II. Physical, Mental & Emotional Health

1. Please rate your health at this particular time:

Very good  Good  Average  Poor  Improving  Declining

If not very good, please explain:

2. List all illnesses, allergies, injuries or handicaps that presently affect you.

3. Are you presently under any kind of medication for either physical or psychological reasons?

4. Describe your eating habits (e.g. Are you a junk food or health food addict? Do you eat regularly or sporadic?

Is your diet balanced? Etc.).

5. Is weight an issue with you? Have you experienced significant weight changes recently?

6. Do you have any addiction or cravings that you find it difficult to control (sweets, drugs, alcohol, food in general, etc.)?

7. Are you getting enough exercise?

8. Are you getting enough sleep?

9. Do you have any problems sleeping? Are you having any recurring nightmares or disturbances?

10. Which of the following have you or are you presently struggling with? Please check all that apply.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Blasphemous thoughts | Inadequacy | Lustful thoughts |
| Compulsive thoughts | Inferiority | Obsessive thoughts |
| Doubts | Insecurity | Worry |
| Fantasy |  |  |

11. How happy are you with yourself just as you are today?

12. What would you like to change about yourself right now? How would you like to grow and mature in other areas?

13. Would you consider yourself to be an optimist or pessimist (i.e., do you have a tendency to see the good in people and life or the bad)?

14. Have you ever been hospitalized for a mental or an emotional problem? If so, please explain.

15. Do you struggle with foul thoughts, jealousy, or other negative thoughts? Explain.

16. Which of the following emotions have you or are you having difficulty controlling? Please check all that apply.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Anger | Fear of death | Feelings of worthlessness |
| Anxiety | Fear of going to hell | Frustration |
| Bitterness | Fear of hurting loved ones | Hatred |
| Depression | Fear of losing you mind | Loneliness |
| Fear of committing suicide | Fear of terminal illness |  |

18. Of the above listed emotions, which are particularly troubling to you? Please explain.

19. Concerning your emotions, whether positive or negative, which of the following best describes you? (check all that apply)

I express some of my emotions but not all.

I readily acknowledge my emotions but am reserved in expressing them.

I tend to suppress my emotions.

I find it safest to not express how I feel.

I tend to disregard how I feel since I cannot trust my feelings.

I consciously or subconsciously deny my emotions because it is too painful to deal with them.

20. Is there someone in your life whom you know that you could be emotionally honest with right now (i.e., you could tell this person exactly how you feel about yourself, life, and other people)?

21. How important is it that we are emotionally honest before God and do you feel that you are? Explain.

## III. Spiritual Development

1. Are you presently enjoying the assurance of salvation or are you plagued with doubts concerning your salvation?

2. What are you currently doing to help yourself grow spiritually?

3. Have you ever participated in other religions or had experiences with the occult? If so, please describe your participation and how this affects you.

4. Have you previously participated in a legalistic church or denomination? If so, please describe your participation and how this affects you.

5. Describe on a scale of 1-10 how equipped you feel in using your Biblical knowledge for:

      personal devotions

      counseling a troubled believer

      sharing the gospel

      leading a Bible study

6. Briefly describe your current prayer life. Is prayer generally a joy, a duty, hard work, or pretty scarce?

7. Describe the method(s) of Bible study you generally use.

8. In the past year who or what have been the most significant spiritual influences? How do you think this will be affected when you go to the mission field?

9. How do you deal with evangelical Christians who do not share your theological views or your philosophy of ministry?

10. How do you deal with evangelical Christians who do not share your understanding of gifts of the Spirit (eg. Cessationist vs. Charismatic)?

11. What might be ways that you strive to grow in your spiritual life while on the mission field?

12. How would you describe your present experience with God (kind, severe, near, distant, intimate, impersonal, etc)?

13. When you repent of sin do you experience God's forgiveness and cleansing or do feelings of guilt linger?

14. During the past year how have you predominantly responded to God (joyfully, indifferently, bitterly, etc)? Please explain.

15. What do you find to be the hardest thing to trust God for?

16. Do you have any nagging doubts about the Christian faith? Please explain.

17. Do you have any doctrinal issues that you would like to work toward resolving before you leave?

18. Is there currently unresolved bitterness, unforgiveness, or anger in your life directed toward God, others or yourself? Please explain.

19. How have you suffered and how have you dealt with it?

## IV. Relationship to Bethlehem

1. What kind of support network (spiritually, emotionally, financially, practically) do you have in the church at this time?

2. In what ways and to what extent are you hoping Bethlehem will support you?

3. How do you, your spouse, your relatives and other people important to you feel about the support raising process?

4. What have been the most helpful teachings you have received at Bethlehem?

5. Are there any teachings at Bethlehem that trouble you, or seem unbiblical or harmful to you?

6. Do you need to resolve any issues with any of Bethlehem's pastors or members before you leave?

7. How do you plan to maintain your relationship with Bethlehem while you are away?

## V. Previous Cross-Cultural Experience

1. What kind of cross-cultural experiences have you had?

2. What was the highlight of your previous cross-cultural experience?

3. What was the lowest point of your previous cross-cultural experience?

4. What do you plan to do differently next time?

5. How is your tolerance for ambiguity?

6. If you were to have some very hard times on the mission field who do you think you would talk about them with?

7. What cross-cultural training have you had?

8. What cross-cultural training do you think you still need for the mission field? How do you plan on getting that training?

9. Why do you want go cross-culturally? Why missions?

## VI. Expectations of Yourself

1. Who are some people whom you have most respected? Have they influenced your expectations of yourself? If so, how?

2. How do you measure success for yourself?

3. Do you often compare yourself with others?

4. Do you spend time wondering what other people think of you?

5. What do you most wish for others to think of you?

6. Do you tend to be hard on yourself? What do you say to yourself when you make a mistake? Do you labor under it for a long time?

7. How do you respond when a person important to you criticizes you?

8. How do you relate to those in authority over you? Would you behave differently if the authority were from another culture?

9. How have you experienced feelings of prejudice toward someone of another race? How do you respond when you sense these feelings in your heart?

10. Do you struggle with perfectionism? How do you respond to imperfect performances on your part? Please explain.

11. Are you experiencing any significant amount of stress? If so, can you identify the source of this stress? How are you handling it?

12. When have you been lonely? How have you dealt with it and how do you deal with it now?

## VII. Lifestyle on the Mission Field

1. What do you anticipate will be the most difficult lifestyle issue you will face when you move to another culture?

2. What do you anticipate your lifestyle to be as a missionary living among the nationals of the place to which you are going?

3. What kind of housing do you currently need for yourself and your family? How do you anticipate this changing in another culture?

4. From your experience of living with roommates or family here, how much privacy or time alone do you feel you currently need? How do you anticipate this changing in another culture?

5. How do you feel about people dropping in without warning?

6. How do you feel about standing out and being more noticeably different?

7. How do you set boundaries to enable time with family or friends? How do you anticipate this changing in another culture?

8. What are you doing now to prepare yourself and your family to make the significant lifestyle changes that missionaries need to make?

9. How do you relax? With whom do you relax? How will you transfer these activities to another culture?

10. How do you spend your free time? What hobbies do you enjoy?

11. What music do you enjoy? What do you like to read?

12. How do you currently use the Internet (news, email, social media, entertainment, etc)?

13. How much do you currently use the Internet?

14. Do you want to change how much you use the Internet?

15. How do you perceive your use of the Internet changing when living in a different culture?

## VIII. Family of Origin

1. Is everyone in your family of origin still alive? If not, who have died and when?

2. Is there any history of mental illness?

3. Do you find yourself worried or preoccupied with the physical, mental or spiritual well-being of your parents or any other significant people you will "leave behind" when you go? Please explain.

4. Briefly explain your parents' Christian experience (i.e. are/were they Christians and do/did they profess and live their Christianity?).

5. Are your parents presently married or divorced? Explain.

6. Was there a sense of security and harmony in your home during the first twelve years of your life?

7. During the first 18 years of your life, how would you rate the moral atmosphere in which you were raised:

|  | Overly  Permissive | Permissive | Average | Strict | Overly Strict |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Clothing |  |  |  |  |  |
| Sex |  |  |  |  |  |
| Dating |  |  |  |  |  |
| Movies |  |  |  |  |  |
| Music |  |  |  |  |  |
| Literature |  |  |  |  |  |
| Free Will |  |  |  |  |  |
| Drinking |  |  |  |  |  |
| Smoking |  |  |  |  |  |
| Church Attendance |  |  |  |  |  |

8. Describe your relationship to your father.

9. Describe your relationship to your mother.

10. How many siblings do you have? What are their ages in relation to you? Describe your relationship to your siblings.

11. All of us at times feel strongly about various issues. Some of these may signal an issue that is unresolved. Such unresolved issues may become burdensome under the increased stress of the mission field. Do you spend much time thinking about any of the following issues as they relate to your family members or any other people in your life? (check all that apply and explain)

feelings of anger

feelings of abandonment

feelings of loss/grief

feelings of guilt/shame

12. When you were growing up, how did conflict look between parents?

13. When you were growing up, how did conflict look between parent and child.

14. When you were growing up, how did conflict look among siblings?

15. Describe how you currently deal with conflict with your spouse, or, if you are single, with roommates or co-workers.

16. How do you handle feelings of anger?

17. In your present family or living situation or in your family of origin is there now or has there ever been neglect or physical, emotional or sexual abuse?

18. In your life or in your family has there been any addictive behavior in the following areas? If so, please describe.

chemicals

eating habits (over eating, bingeing, excessive dieting)

money (compulsive buying or saving)

work ("workaholism")

sexual behavior (addictions or pornography, masturbation, extramarital affairs, etc.)

17. Have you or anyone in your family ever struggled with same-sex attraction?

18. Describe how emotions were expressed in your family of origin. Were there unacceptable emotions?

19. Briefly describe your childhood (happy, confused, care-free, traumatic, insecure, etc.).

20. How did you feel about the amount of structure or flexibility in your family of origin regarding roles expectations and regarding rules and expectations of compliance to those rules? Please explain.

21. How do you feel about how close your family was? To what extent do you sense their support for you now?

## IX. Reaction to change

1. What have been some of the most significant changes you have been through in your life?

2. To what or to whom did you turn to for support in the midst of change?

3. Describe how you cope with stress?

## X. Marriage

*(if applicable)*

1. What are the strengths and weaknesses of your spouse?

2. What are your own strengths and weaknesses?

3. How does your spouse respond to stress and how have you been able to help?

4. Do you feel you are prepared to minister to your spouse’s weaknesses and receive his/her ministry to your weaknesses? How does that happen in your marriage? How has the ability to minister to each other grown over the years?

5. What are the biggest challenges that you have encountered in your marriage? How have you dealt with them?

6. How do you keep your marriage healthy and strong? How have you struggled in this area?

7. How do you seek to grow spiritually together in your marriage? How has this been a struggle and a delight?

8. How do you each deal with conflict in your marriage? How has this changed over the course of your marriage? Have you seen a pattern in your conflicts and, if so, how have you dealt with this?

## XI. Parenting

*(if applicable)*

1. Have you talked with your spouse about parenting issues as they relate to the mission field? Do you agree?

2. How do you plan to nurture, discipline and educate your children on the mission field? What special needs do you foresee them having?

3. What concerns do you have for your child(ren) on the mission field?

## XII. Singleness

*(if applicable)*

1. What do you think are the assets of being single on the mission field?

2. What are the liabilities of singleness on the mission field?

3. How will you deal with the fact that other missionaries or nationals may be attracted to you and/or you to them?

4. Describe how you feel about your singleness?

5. As a single person, what is your strategy for dealing with your need for intimacy, encouragement and love?

6. Do you feel free to talk to a trusted friend, family member or counselor about your own sexuality or it this a hard topic for you to bring up?

## XIII. Re-entry

1. Some missionaries, including short-termers, have found it more difficult to return to their homeland than it was to enter another culture. They have changed significantly and the homeland has changed. What plans have you made for your re-entry into the States? What can you set up now that will help lessen the stress of your re-entry.