

on the job training

Luke 9:1-6, 10

Jesus walked, rode, visited, argued, encouraged, rose early, worked late, and generally proved Himself to be a man of action. And, we can be people of action too . . .

We see the kind of disciple He's looking for in Luke 9:1-6, 10, where He gave His first followers a job to do. While the details of how to go about it were tailored for that situation, the principles are for us. Let's take a look at some.

Before Jesus sent His disciples out, He taught them and demonstrated what to do. Then it became their turn, and we see what happened in our passage.

▶ Read Luke 9:1-6, 10.

- ▶ What was their mission objective?

- ▶ What gifts of the Spirit did Jesus give the disciples?

- ▶ Why do you think Jesus gave them these gifts?

- ▶ Jesus told them not to take any food, clothes, or extra money. What did He want them to learn?

- ▶ Why do you think Jesus told the disciples to leave the towns that didn't welcome them?

- ▶ When the disciples set off on their first training mission, how do you think they felt?

- ▶ How do you think the disciples' relationship to Jesus changed after they had been out preaching and healing?

Jesus is a man of action. He trains His disciples, then turns them into active copies of Himself.

Luke 9:1-6, 10

¹When Jesus had called the Twelve together, he gave them power and authority to drive out all demons and to cure diseases, ²and he sent them out to proclaim the kingdom of God and to heal the sick. ³He told them: "Take nothing for the journey—no staff, no bag, no bread, no money, no extra shirt. ⁴Whatever house you enter, stay there until you leave that town. ⁵If people do not welcome you, leave their town and shake the dust off your feet, as a testimony against them." ⁶So they set out and went from village to village, proclaiming the good news and healing people everywhere.

¹⁰When the apostles returned, they reported to Jesus what they had done. Then he took them with him and they withdrew by themselves to a town called Bethsaida.

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Being a Christlike servant involves our thoughts, speech, actions, motives, and attitude. Ask God to show you how you can develop in these areas.

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Thoughts "Christ has set us free" (Gal. 5:1). Read Galatians 5:1-15. According to this passage, what is a wrong way of thinking about our salvation? What are we now free to live for in new ways?

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Speech "If you keep on biting and devouring each other, watch out or you will be destroyed by each other" (Gal. 5:15). What

is something you have said to a family member that was "biting" instead of building up? Ask God to forgive you, then go ask that person for forgiveness.

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Actions "Keep in step with the Spirit" (Gal. 5:25). Galatians 5:16-26 describes two kinds of people—those controlled by their sinful nature and those controlled by the Holy Spirit. Think of someone you are not getting along with. How could you demonstrate the fruit of the Spirit to them?

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Motives "Let us not become conceited, provoking and envying each other" (Gal. 5:26). It is possible to do "religious" things and still not be a servant who pleases God. Why do you think our motives are so important to God?

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Attitude "Serve one another humbly in love" (Gal. 5:13). Being a servant can be demeaning, boring, and tedious—unless we share Christ's attitude of love. With His attitude, being a servant brings dignity, excitement, and fulfillment. Ask God for this love to serve others.

You, my brothers and sisters, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the flesh; rather, serve one another **42** humbly in love.

—Galatians 5:13



By Chris Lyda, youth pastor, Canton, TX

Do's and Don'ts for New Missionaries

1. Do bring an open heart. Don't bring a bad attitude.
2. Do bring a good water bottle. Don't bring bottled soft drinks.
3. Do bring your Bible, notebook, and pen. Leave electronic devices at home!
4. Do bring hearty snacks. Don't bring a bunch of candy.
5. Do bring extra socks and underclothes. Don't bring uncomfortable walking shoes, high-priced jeans, or your grandfather's antique watch.
6. Do bring a good quality sleeping bag and pillow. Don't bring a suitcase you can't carry.
7. Do bring deodorant (please!). Don't bring lots of hair care products.
8. Do bring sunscreen and insect repellent. Don't bring bottles of cologne.
9. Find out ahead of time how to best use your cell phone in the country you are visiting to avoid costly fees.
10. Exceed the need. Bring a great team spirit. Don't leave home without it.

TORTILLAS

a missions story

BY LINDY KEFFER

to BUNKBEDS



In an old scrapbook, I have a cool picture of my friends Amy and Wade playing soccer in the airport in McAllen, Texas. (Okay, maybe we shouldn't have been playing soccer in the airport.) McAllen is on the border between Texas and Mexico, and we were getting ready to cross the border for a week-long mission trip to Reynosa, Mexico. Snapping photos in the airport, I didn't know I was about to have my mind and heart enlarged. I was going to minister to the people of Reynosa, but I didn't realize it would be a lot more than that.

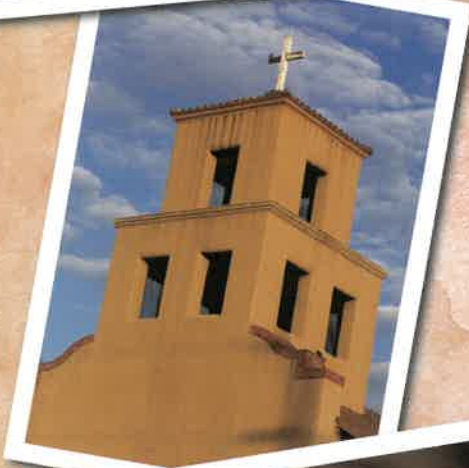
scary drivers and homemade tortillas

A few days later, I was sitting in a 15-passenger van half-asleep because it was 6:30 in the morning. Suddenly, I was totally awake, because our driver, Bob, was driving the wrong way on a divided highway! He only did it for a short distance before finding a break in the median and getting back on the right side of the road. There was no chance of going back to sleep after that!

The really crazy thing was, we weren't going somewhere at 6:30 a.m. We were coming back from somewhere—a 5:00 a.m. prayer meeting at a local church. Yup. Back home I'd still be dreaming at that hour, but in Mexico, I had already been meeting with other believers for an hour and a half. This was the first important, unexpected thing that happened on that mission trip: instead of ministering to the Mexican people, I learned something from them. The Christians we encountered in Reynosa prayed and worshiped in a way I'd never seen before. They really believed that their city needed Jesus, so they began praying that their neighbors would come to know Christ.

Guess what? It happened! And as more people accepted Jesus, more people came to pray. By the time our mission team arrived, hundreds of people met every morning to sing and pray. They didn't pray like we did, either. They walked around the sanctuary and prayed out loud, all at the same time. (It seemed weird at first, but I discovered that when you're praying that early, walking around and praying out loud is a good way to stay focused and awake.) After one week, I came back to the U.S. with a new understanding of what it means to pray without ceasing and to have a burden for my city.

Another thing happened that week that I didn't expect. After we were done with the crack-of-dawn prayer meetings, we went to a church in another part of town and led Vacation Bible School. That was cool, but the part that I remember most is what happened after VBS each day. A group of ladies from



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the church made an amazing Mexican meal. I fell in love with the homemade tortillas and all the stuff that went with them. Looking back, I'm pretty sure that these people weren't wealthy, and that feeding a dozen hungry Americans each day wasn't pocket change for them. But they hosted us with such love. I thought I was going to Reynosa to minister to the Mexican people. I had no idea that they would also minister to me.

building bunk beds for Jesus

Fast forward eight years. I'm in another airport, but this time it's in London, not Texas. I'm on my way to Nairobi, Kenya—my friends and I are on another short-term mission trip. We are going to a university to join their summer service team (a group called Doulos, which means “servant”). Once we got to the campus, we head to a camp called Freedom Base that used to be a prison camp. Now it is a camp where people come to meet Jesus. In just a few weeks, Freedom Base will host its first summer camp. The campers will be street kids from the slums of Nairobi who will come for a week of ropes courses, bonfires, and worship. Right now, the Doulos team is here to build bunk beds, showers, and an outhouse so that the kids can have a great camp experience.

Because of my experience in Mexico, I'm not surprised when the Kenya trip turns out to be more than I expected. Here's the main thing I took away from that experience. We were a group of 17 Americans traveling to a new country to serve in a new way. There, we met 11 African students—nine from Kenya, one from Uganda, and one from Malawi—who had given up their summers to serve. We weren't going to minister to the African people, but to minister with them. Mission accomplished.

By the time we were done, I felt like the lesson I began learning in Mexico eight years earlier was finally complete. As an American Christian, I have a lot to gain from getting to know my brothers and sisters in Christ whose skin color and language are different from mine. Not only can missions be an opportunity to minister to them, but I can learn from them, be ministered to by them, and serve with them. What an amazing worldwide family—the Body of Christ.

