



Student Handbook

THE INSTITUTE IN BASIC LIFE PRINCIPLES

GLOBAL
Encounters

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IBLP *Statement of Faith*

WE BELIEVE in the one true God, existing in three Persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. These three are coequal from all eternity, each with distinct personalities but of one essence.

WE BELIEVE the Bible is the verbally inspired Word of God and is the sole, infallible rule of faith and practice.

WE BELIEVE Jesus Christ is the eternal Son of God, that He entered into the world through the virgin birth, and lived among us without sin as perfect Man and perfect God.

WE BELIEVE Adam was directly created in innocence and in the image of God and did not evolve from preexisting forms of life. By voluntary transgression, he fell, and thus the whole human race is now sinful by nature and practice and, therefore, under just condemnation to eternal separation from God.

WE BELIEVE Jesus Christ shed His blood on Calvary as a vicarious substitute for all sinners, was buried and rose again bodily, and ascended to the right hand of the Father, from whence He will personally return.

WE BELIEVE people are justified by grace through faith in the shed blood of the Lord Jesus Christ without any mixture of works.

WE BELIEVE the Holy Spirit convicts the sinner; regenerates, sanctifies, and indwells the believer; and fills the believer for effective service.

WE BELIEVE in the priesthood of the believer and that God has made provision for each believer to be victorious by being led of the Spirit and not walking after the flesh.

WE BELIEVE in the resurrection of both the saved and the lost, the just unto the resurrection of life eternal and the lost unto the resurrection of eternal damnation.

WE BELIEVE Satan is a living being and that hell is a place of eternal conscious punishment for him, his hosts, and all non-believers.

WE BELIEVE Scripture commands Christians to abstain from all forms of compromise with unbelief.

WE BELIEVE the Bible sets forth principles for Godly living and that if one learns and follows these principles, one will be able to avoid and refute false teachings and false concepts.

PREPARE YOUR HEART TO SEEK THE LORD

Picture Jesus, standing at the door of your heart, knocking for entrance so that you can enjoy fellowship with each other over a meal. “Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me” (Revelation 3:20). In preparation for letting Him in, what things should be removed from your heart that would grieve and displease Him? These things must go! Ask God to reveal to you any areas in your life that you have not yet totally yielded to Him, any “ground” that you may need to have restored in your soul, and any strongholds that need to be torn down. “For the eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward him . . .” (II Chronicles 16:9). The most important preparation is making your heart pure before the Lord so that He will have the freedom to work through you and to bless your life.

PREPARING FOR LEADERSHIP

You are going to a foreign country, and it is vital that you are prepared to be a spiritual leader. This is one of the most important areas of preparation. A whole lifetime of growth is our goal, and there is never a time when we become completely prepared spiritually. Nevertheless, we must look at the specifics that would be helpful when serving in foreign cultures.

First, learn the lessons of leadership from the great men of the Bible. Study those men in Scripture who served other countries and people with different characteristics. Look at the challenges and difficulties that they faced, how they met those challenges, and the impact that they had. Daniel 1:4 reveals seven qualities that government leaders are looking for in the lives of those that would serve. Study the life of Daniel and see how he interacted with both King Nebuchadnezzar and King Darius in such a way that they both made worldwide declarations about the power of God. Another person to study is Joseph. Notice the struggles and challenges he faced with his family and Potiphar, and the lessons he learned in prison that prepared him to serve the King. David is another strong example. In I Samuel 16:18, David was noted for six characteristics in his life. These qualities stood out and brought him to the attention of the ruler of the country.

Second, listen to God’s will and the direction of the Holy Spirit. After the filling of the Holy Spirit at the time of salvation, a Christian will often experience a time of testing. This testing is manifested as we properly respond to infirmities, reproaches, necessities, persecution, and distress. (see II Corinthians 12:9–10.)

Having clear direction from the Holy Spirit that you are to serve on this ministry trip is vital, as you may encounter times of discouragement and difficult situations. God will use that solid direction to strengthen and encourage you in the hard times. Often He provides needed funds or direct answers to prayers as confirming signs of His blessing and direction for your life.

It is very important to take advantage of all the training that you can in preparation for ministry. IBLP offers great opportunities that prepare you for effective ministry, such as the Basic and Advanced Seminars, Journey to the Heart, Children’s Institute, Character First!, EXCEL, EQUIP, and the Counseling Seminar. Allow God to direct your steps as you pursue further training for ministry, keeping your heart open to the promptings of His Holy Spirit.

Third, enlist a prayer team. It is vital to understand that God uses the little, the least, and the last. A spirit of humility is crucial and foundational for enlisting a prayer team. Understand that the work needs to be done by God, and that we are His tools. Find a team of people who can pray for you and with whom you can communicate on a regular basis. Put together a prayer letter, newsletter, or some form of communication to keep them informed regularly about what is happening and to let them know how God is working. Try to avoid emphasizing the difficulties and the struggles in a discouraging sense; rather, keep them encouraged and strengthened about what God is doing.

Additional tools for you to prepare for ministry:

- ☑ Learn a creative way to share the Gospel.
- ☑ Study the country’s culture.
- ☑ Take a language course.

Character

DEVELOP STRONG CHARACTER

The inner characteristics of a person are especially important overseas. Listed below are seven qualities that are essential to success while working with foreign cultures. All the qualities are important, but those listed below are critical when working overseas. Identify and develop these qualities in your life as part of your preparation to serve in a foreign nation.

FLEXIBILITY

Not setting my affections on ideas or plans that could be changed by God or others. (See Colossians 3:2.) In a foreign culture, everything is new and different. You need to be able to move and flow with their plans and the way they do things.

SINCERITY

The eagerness to do what is right, with transparent motives. (See 1 Peter 1:22.) Everybody is suspicious of foreigners. That is why it is vital that you have an open and transparent life, maintain a clear conscience, and receive power from God.

PATIENCE

Accepting a difficult situation from God without giving Him a deadline to remove it. (See Romans 5:3-4.) In any overseas work, it is extremely important to understand that there will be difficulties and that those difficulties will not easily disappear. God will use your time in a foreign culture for personal growth and development.

DISCRETION

The ability to avoid words, actions, and attitudes that could result in undesirable consequences. (See Proverbs 22:3.) This involves sensitivity to the culture and to the attitudes and thinking of those around you. It is often very easy for us to get focused on ourselves and our methods. You need to be discreet in how you approach people and how you carry out your work in another culture.

TOLERANCE

The acceptance of others as unique expressions of specific character qualities in varying degrees of maturity. (See Philippians 2:2.) In some overseas countries, people have not had the Gospel very long or perhaps the Christian faith has been distorted. They have not had access to the Biblical truths that many Americans have had. Thus it is very important to have an attitude of tolerance in working with them.

HUMILITY

Recognizing that it is actually God and others who are responsible for the achievements in my life. (See James 4:6.) As a foreigner overseas, it is extremely important to give praise and recognition to others for their contributions. You must recognize the great achievements of their society and minimize our efforts, thus recognizing that it is God who has accomplished all good things.

DEFERENCE

Limiting my freedom in order not to offend the tastes of those whom God has called me to serve. (See Romans 14:21.) While overseas, you may not be able to enjoy the same freedoms that you had previously enjoyed. This may mean that freedoms in dress, behavior, or actions, to which you were accustomed to, will not be possible overseas. These limitations come because of the message we share with those to whom we are ministering.

COMMITMENTS THAT PROTECT AND STRENGTHEN

One cannot overemphasize the importance of the basic life commitments expected of those ministering overseas. In chapter one of the Book of Daniel, we are told that before the King's food and wine were ever offered, Daniel had purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself. He handled that test of character with a tremendous amount of grace, patience, understanding, and sensitivity. He also displayed a deep confidence in God, which led to success in his appeal and his ministry. There are also basic commitments asked of those serving with IBLP, which are vitally important for the success of young people in their spiritual preparation to serve in a foreign country.

□ The first commitment that is vital and non-optional is **salvation**. This includes understanding that unless we are saved by grace and have the Holy Spirit within us, we will be unable to effectively tell others about the wonderful work of God.

□ The second commitment is **submission to the Lordship** of Jesus Christ. We are looking for those who have yielded all their rights to God! In other words, you must love God with all your heart, and all your mind, all your soul; and love your neighbor as yourself. We are not going to accomplish anything in a foreign country unless we love the people genuinely and completely, which first begins by loving God.

□ The third area is **dedication of your body** to God and to the control of the Holy Spirit. Scripture explains that our bodies are the temple of the Lord, and the purpose of our bodies is to glorify Jesus Christ. (see 1 Cor. 6:19-20.) For this reason, any involvement with tobacco, alcohol, drugs, or any other immoral activity that defiles the body will not be tolerated under any circumstances. Students must be committed at all times to maintaining their body as a morally pure vessel to be used by the Holy Spirit.

□ The fourth commitment is for **courtship and purity** in all relationships. A young person who is committed to the principles of courtship avoids the snares and consequences of dating, flirting, and similar activities. Weakness in this area affects the entire group and mars the witness we have with leaders and others we serve.

□ The fifth commitment is in the area of **Godly music**. Music can be one of the greatest distractions for Christian young people. The importance of this cannot be underestimated. There needs to be a heart felt commitment to this area of listening only to wholesome, Godly music.

□ The sixth commitment is **virtue**. It is very important to maintain a modest, wholesome, and virtuous appearance at all times. This includes using dress styles and clothing that is Godly, appropriate, professional, clean, and orderly. Hairstyles should be neat and well trimmed. Young men should be clean-shaven.

Have you made the following commitments in your life?

- Salvation
- Submission to the Lordship of Jesus Christ
- Dedication of your body to the Lord
- Courtship and purity in relationships
- Godly Music
- Virtue — Modest and conservative appearance

Be Ready

LESSONS IN LEADERSHIP

The best preparation to avoid making wrong decisions is to learn now, while still at home, how to take “every thought captive to the obedience of Christ.” (See II Corinthians 10:4-5.) This discipline involves evaluating every single thought and idea that comes into your mind and consulting with the Lord immediately before accepting it, acting on it, or rejecting it.

As we are faithful to bring every thought captive and are consistent to obey Christ’s Word and the prompting of the Holy Spirit, making wise decisions becomes a natural part of our thinking process. This skill is what gives those in authority the ability to trust certain members of the group with leadership privileges and allow them to make decisions themselves in obedience to Christ.

This discipline requires commitment to continually develop alertness to the prompting of the Lord. In the story of Elijah’s depression and God calling him on the mountain, we learn that God speaks in a “still, small voice.” (See I Kings 19:9-13.)

Pray that the Lord will give you alertness to His still, small voice. Further sharpen your sensitivity to His prompting by instantly obeying when He does direct you. Your memorization of Scripture is a very important part of this sensitivity, because it is by allowing the Word of Christ to dwell in you that He is able to speak to you through passages of Scripture.

A further insight from Elijah’s experience reveals the nature of God’s “still, small voice”—the Lord often prompts us with questions. Elijah was asked, “What doest thou here, Elijah?” Be alert to your conscience when it is tinged with the question, “Should I do this?”

It is also significant that the Lord revealed Himself to Elijah during a time of discouragement after a great spiritual victory. As you give of yourself in ministry, you may tend to feel very drained at times. Do not allow this to develop into discouragement, but rather use these times as a signal of the need to refocus on your personal relationship with Christ and His Word. It is the joy of the Lord that will be your strength. (See Nehemiah 8:10.)

BE READY ALWAYS TO GIVE A REASON

As an ambassador for Christ, you will often have opportunities to speak to children in groups, one-on-one, with their families, and at times in other public gatherings. Scripture exhorts us to “be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you” (I Peter 3:15).

Have practical, personal testimonies ready to share with various groups. Try to have several testimonies prepared that relate to the different areas of growth the Lord has brought you through.

FOUR PARTS OF A TESTIMONY

1. Describe a problem you experienced.

Word it in such a way as to make it meaningful to as many people as possible. For example, it is not necessary to name specific rock music groups, but address the basic issue of wrong music. Do not describe immoral activities in detail.

2. Explain how you tried to solve the problem.

Relate how you attempted to take care of the trouble in your own strength and how it only got worse through self-effort.

3. Give the Biblical answer.

Explain the correct solution that God revealed to you. Support the solution with Scripture, and describe how it worked. Add depth by sharing how you applied it to your life.

4. List all the benefits.

Share the blessings you have experienced since resolving the problem and submitting to God’s will in that area. Encourage others to seek the same benefits through your enthusiasm and sincerity.

Culture & Conclusion

MENTAL PREPARATION

A significant area of preparation is mental readiness for an encounter with a foreign culture. It is important to prepare yourself as much as possible for what lies ahead and how to work in a culture. The following areas are very important. This involves understanding a country's history, language, people groups, and cultural differences.

A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

Understanding the history of foreign cultures or the people that you are going to work with can be accomplished in a number of ways. You may study encyclopedias and books from the library or look up information on the Internet. Research the history, geography, and the background of the nation so that you have an understanding of the people. The Internet is a great tool to aid in research. In studying history and culture, you should look for key leaders or citizens. Following are some questions to ask yourself:

- How was the specific country founded?
- How was Christianity first introduced?
- Who were key political and spiritual leaders in the history of the country?

Familiarize yourself with the country and specifically where you will be ministering. These are some of the things that will help you understand and prepare for ministry in a foreign culture.

VERBAL COMMUNICATION & LANGUAGE

An important part of international ministry is learning to communicate despite language barriers. In countries where English is not the primary language spoken, translators will most likely accompany you. However, having a basic familiarity of the local dialect will aid you greatly in your ministry. If applicable, begin learning some simple phrases and some common introductions in the language of the people to whom you will be ministering.

CONCLUSION

In our human understanding, it is impossible for us to comprehend the extent of our ministry if we willingly submit ourselves to the control of Jesus Christ. Jesus does not want our words or our great works; Jesus wants our heart. When Jesus has our hearts, all that we say and do will glorify His name. It is for this purpose that we were created, and it is for this purpose that we should live. Scripture says that "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him" (1 Corinthians 2:9).

The whole world is watching what happens in the lives of this generation. You as an individual are a light to the whole world. The world is influenced as a "city on a hill" shines forth the light, and the city is lit by individuals who shine forth the light of Christ in every aspect of their lives. Note the careful sequence that Christ gave in His Sermon on the Mount to explain how this happens.

"Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven" (Matthew 5:14-16).

If we bring the light of Jesus to the families of this day, it cannot be hidden from the watching world. And if you allow Christ to reign in your life, completely surrendering to His will, then through you the world will be changed, one life at a time!



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