

A Personal Debriefing Exercise

Set aside a time for reflection on Philippians 4:8-9: “Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things. Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me—put it into practice. And the God of peace will be with you.” Using this verse as a springboard, spend two or three hours alone, reflecting on your missions experience.

As you reflect, make a list of the things you are grateful to God for during your time on the mission field. List them under the headings of true, noble, right, pure, lovely, and admirable.

In your notebook, record the following:

- What you have learned through your experience on the mission field.
- What you have received from God through it.
- What you have seen in the lives of your fellow workers that you would like to incorporate into your life.
- What you have seen God do in the lives of the people to whom you ministered.

Pray and ask God to show you how you can work these new insights and values into your life once you are back home. Record the specific insights He shows you.

List the obstacles that might prevent you from incorporating these new values and insights into your life. Pray about strategies to overcome them.

Finally, write yourself a letter. Pretend you are writing the letter to a friend, and include in it the most important points you have covered in your personal debriefing. Put the letter in an envelope, and address it to your permanent home address. Ask a reliable friend to mail the letter to you in five or six months' time. When it arrives, it will be a surprise, and should be a great encouragement to you. You will also be able to measure just how well you are doing in applying to your life at home all the things you learned on the mission field. Covenant with yourself that when you receive the letter, you will correct any deviation that may have crept in from the course you set for your life.