<u>Honest Advice</u>
(for the new Missionary Candidate)

As you look at becoming a cross-cultural missionary, there are some realities you should be aware of. I offer the following for your consideration drawn from my personal experience and conversation with many seasoned missionaries.

1) Be a learner. Allow yourself plenty of time to acclimate to the “temperature of the water” before you “dive” into ministry.

2) Observe everything carefully and document your observations. Then discuss them with experienced missionaries and trusted locals.

3) Remember that language learning is really culture learning. You can't separate the two. If you do, you will never REALLY learn the language but only how to pronounce the words.

4) Make **who you are** in Christ the priority, not **what you do** for him. If you get the “who” right, the “what” is automatic.

5) Be content to be what you are or can become, a trusted outsider, in the culture. Don't give in to the temptation to try to be something you are not. The locals know you are not one of them and that is okay.

6) Allow God to lead you into what he wants YOU to be instead of you leading him into what you want HIM to do.

7) Resist making strategy suggestions to your ministry partners until they have asked for your input or until two years have passed. Then do so with the utmost humility.

8) Remember who is paying for and running the show, the Producer and Director. You are just the actor following his every direction as best you can.

9) Cross-cultural stress is a silent thief of time, energy and passion. Be content with accomplishing even just one goal for a day. Remember, life is ministry and results are God’s thing.

10) The toughest people to get along with might be your own ministry teammates. Live and give grace to everyone in abundance.