



December 2019

It's officially December, and we at BMM are thinking about Christmas. We'll celebrate together as a Home Office staff at our annual Christmas party this week. Our missionaries are planning specific ministry efforts centered around this wonderful celebration. I hope you're anticipating some joyful times, as well.



A time of preparation

As we've focused these last several *Serve* editions on preparation, I wanted to address that topic one more time. After all, Christmas is a time of preparation. Jesus' birth was the fulfillment of God's ancient promise; therefore, His people were anticipating His coming. Some were more prepared than others. We do well to take that lesson for ourselves and encourage others with it this season. As Isaac Watts' famous carol puts it, "Let every heart prepare him room," because He's promised to come again.

The end of the year becomes an annual reminder that I ought to be living my life with an eye of expectation on the future. The “now” is important, too, so don’t get me wrong. But am I so focused on today, that I am ill-prepared for what God has for me in the coming days? Do I lack the will and discipline to stop procrastinating and to plan steps toward obeying Christ? It is a worthy activity to invest in during this season, to stop and evaluate your habits, your routine, and your plans. Make any changes necessary in order to serve Christ better in the coming year.



Three ways to plan

Briefly consider with me three ways to prepare for the coming days.

1. Prepare to commit.

As Jesus made clear, following Him involves decisive action. He said, “Whoever desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me” (Mk 8:34). While it may feel scary and insecure, life as a Christian requires commitment. Commitment means knowing what God wants and resolving by faith to do it. For some of you, God has been leading you to commit to full-time missions. Ask God for courage to move ahead in that decision. As you look ahead to the coming year, prepare to commit to God’s leading in your life.

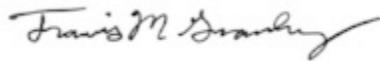
2. Prepare to serve.

Christ's example of service is unmistakable, and He desires for you to make that your lifestyle, too. Evaluate how you are doing in serving. Are you regularly giving of your time and energy? Can your pastor count on you to step in where you are needed most in your church? Plan to selflessly serve in the coming year, and even start now during this Christmas season.

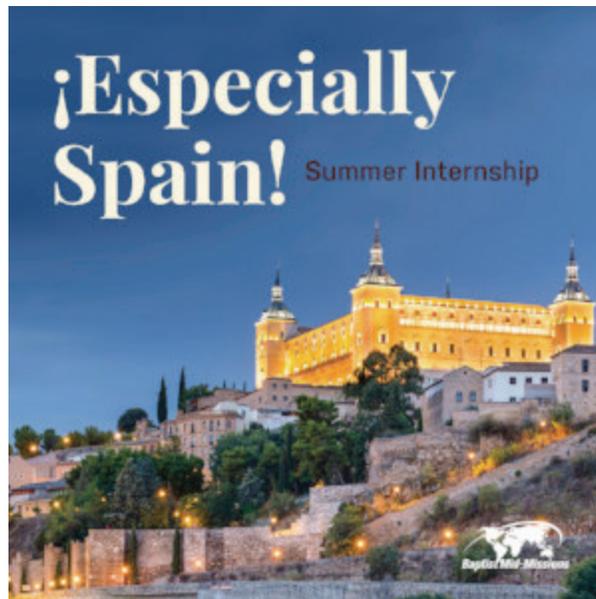
3. Prepare to pray.

Life with God requires dependence on Him. More specifically, the cause of missions depends on the faithful prayers of people like you and me. We must pray for God to work powerfully converting darkened hearts and providing for His workers. As you prepare for serving in missions, know that you must be a person of prayer. How are you doing in this area? This Christmas season prepare to do better. Get alone with God, repent of your prayerlessness, and make a plan to make prayer a regular part of your daily walk with God.

My hope is that you will have a wonderful Christmas, and that it will be a blessed time preparing for what God has in store for you.



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