



April 2019

## Preparing for Ministry in Africa

*This month's article was written by Mark Seymour, who grew up in Chad, Africa, and served there 30 years as a missionary. Mark currently serves as BMM's Eastern Director of Enlistment.*

### Preparation is vital

What kind of mental images come to mind when you hear the word *prepare*? Preparing for an exam or a class or maybe preparing to face the day comes to mind. Preparation for ministry is always important. But for ministry in Africa, preparation is vital, mostly because the cultural differences between Africa and North America are enormous. Preparation could include taking classes on culture shock or cultural anthropology. Reading a short book like [\*African Friends and Money Matters\*](#) by David Maranz would help you understand how people think in an African setting.

### Speak their language

In some African nations, the official language may be French, Spanish, Portuguese, German, or Arabic. Beyond these trade languages, most African countries have many tribal languages also. A class in linguistics is good preparation for language learning. Another way is to seek training in teaching

English to speakers of other languages (TESL). This could be beneficial not only for your future ministry but also for your own language acquisition. Many North American communities offer services to help refugees adjust to their new home. Volunteering in a program to help with conversational English will in turn help you learn other cultures.

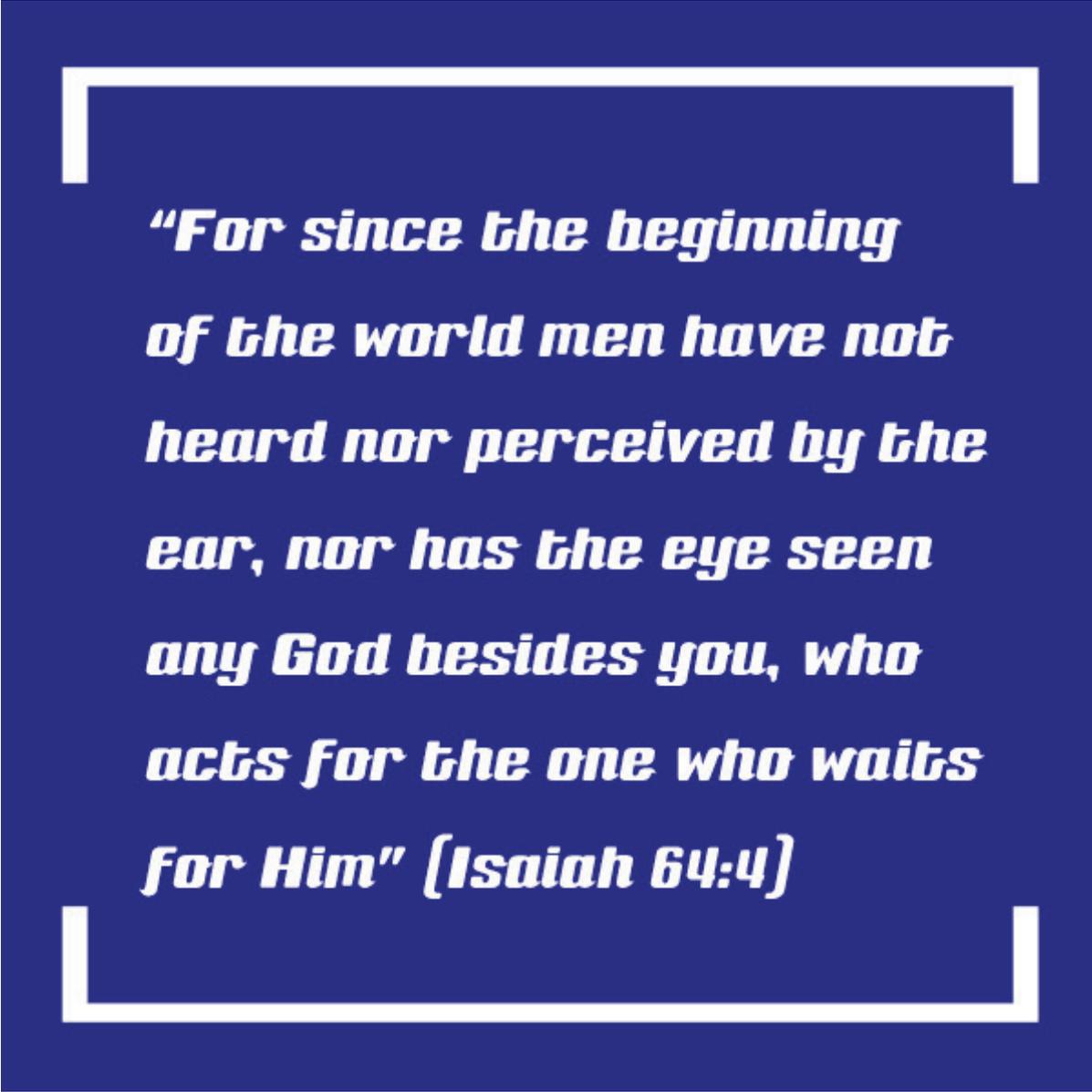


## Make it enjoyable

Fun activities might include eating at an authentic North African restaurant or visiting the African section of an international market. Plan a movie night where you watch videos on life in Africa (popcorn is a must 😊).

Corresponding with an African missionary your local church supports can provide much useful information on life as a missionary there. Reading missionary biographies could also encourage you to see what God can do through a life spent in Africa. Take a mission trip to Africa to see what ministry looks like. As a bonus, this would provide you with a personal testimony and

pictures that will be invaluable when raising support to go back.



***“For since the beginning of the world men have not heard nor perceived by the ear, nor has the eye seen any God besides you, who acts for the one who waits for Him” (Isaiah 64:4)***

### **The most important step**

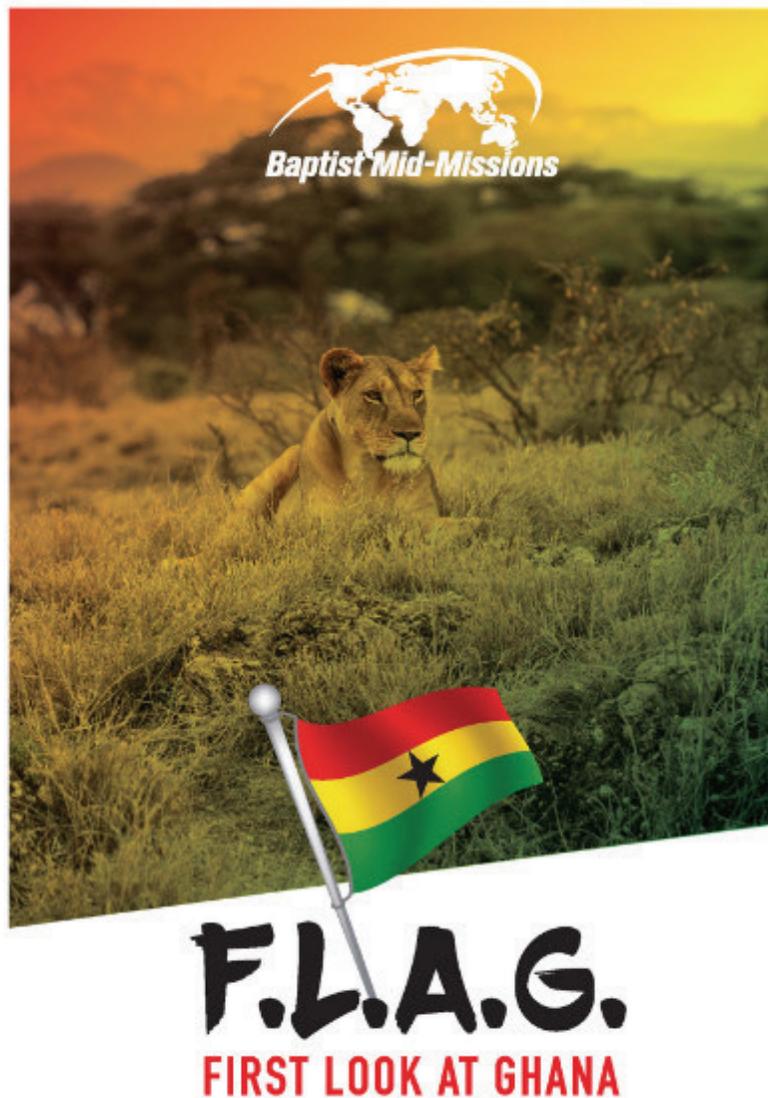
All the above will help you, but the most important preparation is spiritual. Prepare now by developing a strong habit of daily Bible study and prayer. Grow deep in the Word so that when you are far from home, your life will be rooted in the promises of God. If you know where in Africa God wants you, start praying now for the country and the people. If not, try praying for a different nation each week using [Operation World](#).

Ephesians 2:10 tells us that God has prepared good works for us to accomplish. We need to be prepared people so we can do those works. Start getting ready now for the incomparable things God has in store for you.

Rev. Mark Seymour

Baptist Mid-Missions Eastern Director of Enlistment

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