EKBALLO

FALL 2026



TO EVERY TRIBE

PLATFORM COMMUNITIES PAGE 3
OAXACA, MEXICO PAGE 8
PAPUA NEW GUINEA PAGE 14
OAXACA INTERNSHIP STORY PAGE 18

EKBALLO

THE MAGAZINE OF TO EVERY TRIBE - FALL 2026

1606 Headway Circle, Suite 9605 • Austin, Texas 78754
Phone & Fax (956) 233-4353 • Contact@ToEveryTribe.org

CONTENT WARNING & DISCLAIMER

Please note that *Ekballo* articles may contain sensitive material, including references to violence, death, substance abuse, mental health, trauma, and sexual content. In many cases, names, locations, descriptions, and photos have been changed or altered to protect and honor those we seek to reach and serve.

TO EVERY TRIBE'S MISSION

Extending the worship of Jesus to every tribe by equipping and sending gospel-driven disciple-makers to serve on cross-cultural church planting teams.

EKBALLO IS OUR PRAYER

Ekballo is the Greek word for "send out" that Jesus uses in Matthew 9:38 when He tells us to pray to the Lord of the Harvest to send out workers.

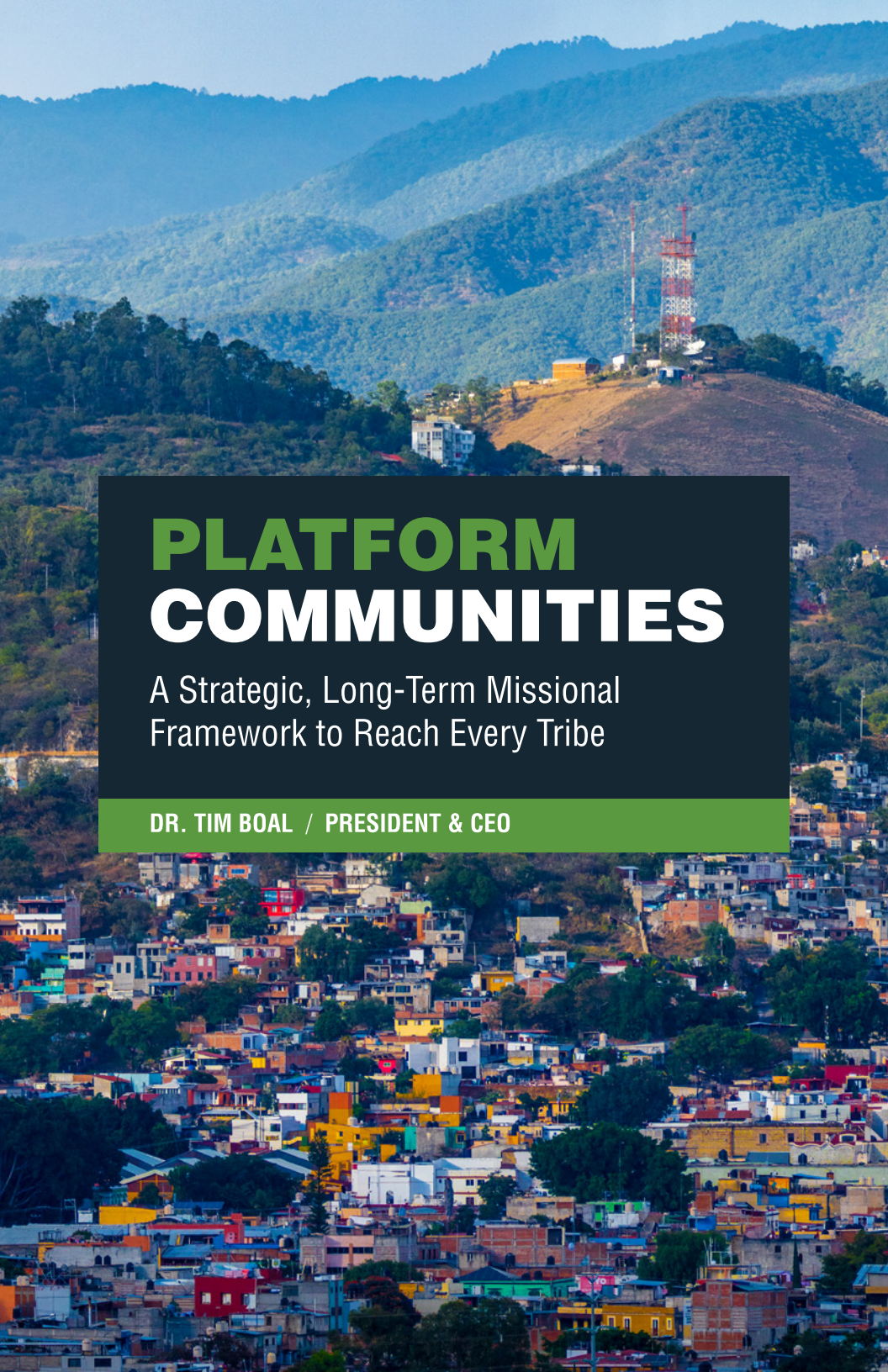
WRITING, EDITING, & DESIGN TEAM

Justin Vander Ark • *Editor in Chief & Designer*
Haley Pfundt • *Content Editor*
Emily Vander Ark • *Associate Editor*
Abigail Juarez • *Journalism Intern*

© 2026 To Every Tribe. Unless otherwise noted, scripture quotations are from The ESV® Bible (The Holy Bible, English Standard Version®), © 2001 by Crossway, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved. Cover image: From a parade in Southern Mexico

MISSIO NEXUS® MEMBER

ECFA ACCREDITED



PLATFORM COMMUNITIES

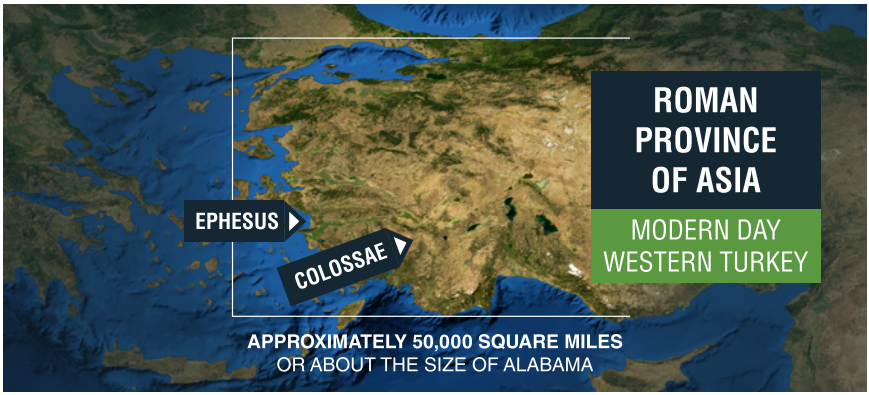
A Strategic, Long-Term Missional Framework to Reach Every Tribe

DR. TIM BOAL / PRESIDENT & CEO

For nearly 25 years, To Every Tribe has been privileged to serve in some of the most complex, isolated, and hard-to-reach places on earth. From the beginning, our unwavering vision and mission have centered on the long, laborious, and deeply rewarding work of seeing vibrant, self-sustaining local churches planted among unreached and underserved people groups. Engaging in this kind of pioneer church planting requires more than simple enthusiasm; it demands long-horizon vision, endurance, and, above all, a missional strategy firmly rooted in Holy Scripture.

When we examine the missionary journeys recorded in the New Testament, we observe that the early church employed intentional strategies to maximize gospel impact. In Acts 19, we learn that the apostle Paul targeted urban centers like Ephesus and Corinth as key strategic hubs. Paul recognized that if such central cities were reached with the gospel, their influence would extend far beyond their urban borders to touch entire surrounding geographic regions. As he traveled through the interior regions of the Roman Province of Asia and arrived in Ephesus, he saw more than just a single local ministry site; he saw a strategic platform community.

A platform community is a vital center established with a strong gospel witness that serves as a springboard for expanding the reach of the gospel into adjacent, more remote, and unreached communities. Because of its regional influence, infrastructure, and natural connections, a platform location allows disciple-makers to gather, train, and send out workers into surrounding networks and remote areas. The historical fruit of this biblical approach is astounding: Acts 19:10 records that because Paul established a strong platform community in Ephesus, "all the residents of Asia heard the word of the Lord." This dynamic model has proven time and again to be extraordinarily effective for reaching difficult places. Many other previously unreached locations were impacted from Ephesus and show up later in Scripture. As a platform community, Ephesus impacted a



broad area and many peoples. The seven churches of Revelation were founded as a result of the regional strategy and the church in Colossae is also in this region.

At To Every Tribe, targeting and establishing platform communities forms a core pillar of our missionary sending and church planting methodology. Our approach intentionally connects three tiers of ministry: establishing primary Platforms in central locations, building Networks of local believers and churches, and reaching out into neighboring Remote areas. By establishing a foundational gospel witness in these platform locations, we work side-by-side with national followers of Jesus, discipling and equipping them to lead local efforts and carry the light of Christ into surrounding unreached people groups. In this edition of Ekballo, you will be introduced to two of our field ministry leaders actively implementing this platform community model for pioneer church planting. You will read how God is moving through dedicated workers and national partners as they proclaim the gospel, nurture believers through relational discipleship, and trust the Lord to impact entire regions for His glory.

We are profoundly grateful for your ongoing partnership with To Every Tribe through your faithful prayers, generous financial support, and active engagement in gospel proclamation, disciple-making, and church planting. May God continue to encourage your heart as you read these frontline updates. »

REGIONAL APPROACH TO CHURCH PLANTING

The progressive entrance, regional approach to church planting enables missionaries to set-up a support system needed for long-term church planting in unreached and complex areas.



Platform

Communities (often churches) that serve as the base of operations for missionaries and nurture newly planted churches in remote communities.



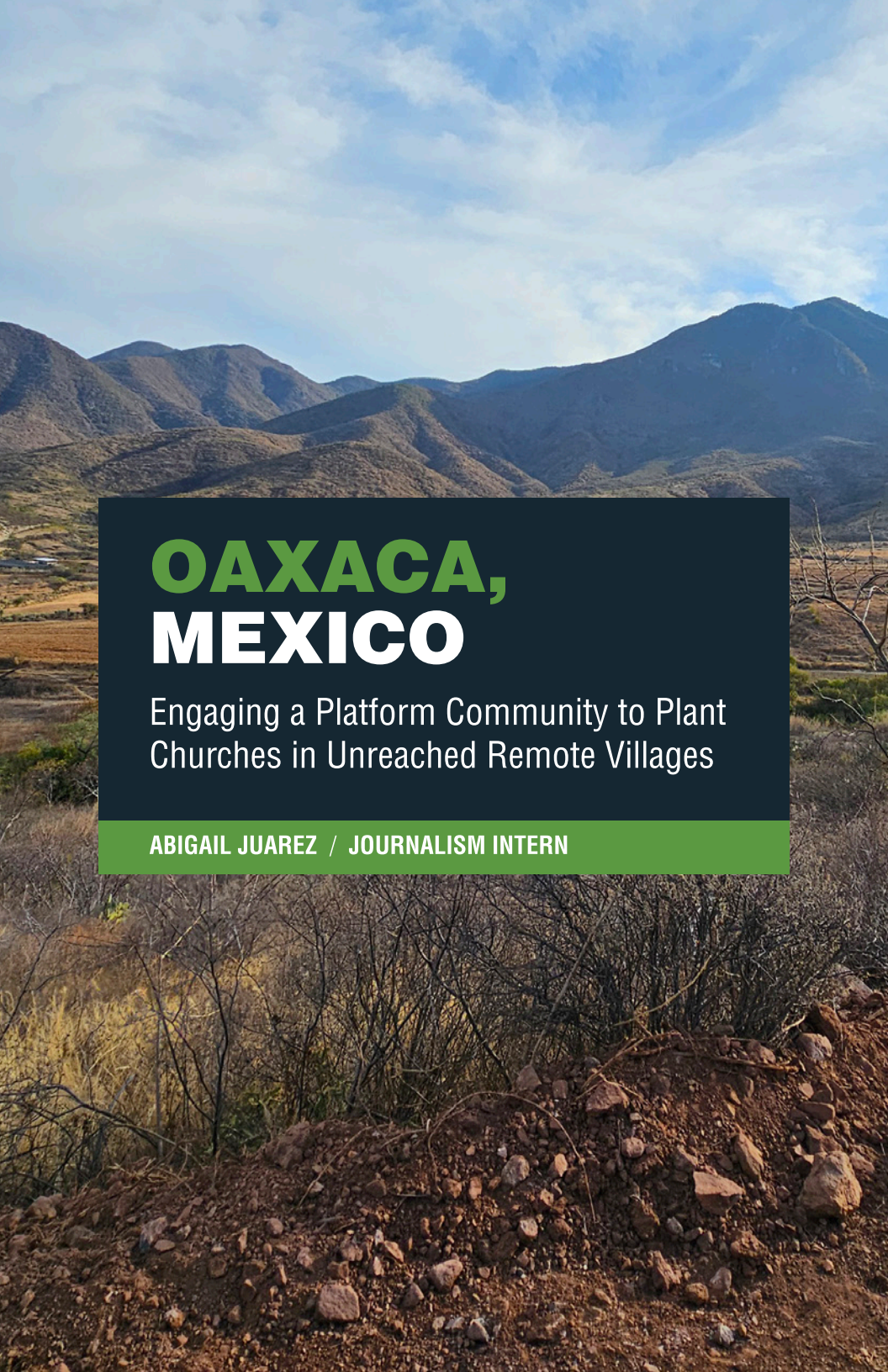
Networks

Communities where missionaries evangelize, make disciples, and gain cultural knowledge, building the relationships necessary for gaining access to remote communities.



Remote

By entering into unreached, remote communities with the support of the platforms and networks, missionaries are bringing partners from the region that will help them with outreach, disciple-making, and church planting.



OAXACA, MEXICO

Engaging a Platform Community to Plant Churches in Unreached Remote Villages

ABIGAIL JUAREZ / JOURNALISM INTERN

For the past five years, Jon and Laura have served as lead missionaries for To Every Tribe in Oaxaca, Mexico. The heart of their ministry is to walk alongside the local church in a platform community. Here, they support, strengthen, and mobilize believers to plant new churches among the least-reached language and people groups in this diverse, mountainous state.

Historically, this church practiced an unhealthy form of Pentecostalism, resulting in unbiblical habits and little grounding in Scripture. But as trust was built, Jon began leading weekly Bible studies with the church leaders, working together to exegete the Scriptures and prepare expositional sermons. As a result, God is transforming the church and its congregation, rooting them in the Bible and the gospel of salvation by grace through faith in Christ. Today, this body serves as a key partner for church planting across the region.

Over the last four years, the Lord has kept a steady hand on the hearts of the Oaxacan people. You can see this clearly in a small community of 1,800 people known as Village Q, located about an hour outside the city. Initially, there was no local church, no written or audio Bible translated into their native language, and only 12 known believers. Knowing it was crucial to establish trust during the early stages of their ministry there, Laura began teaching English at a local

JON AND LAURA ARE TET MISSIONARIES IN SOUTHERN MEXICO



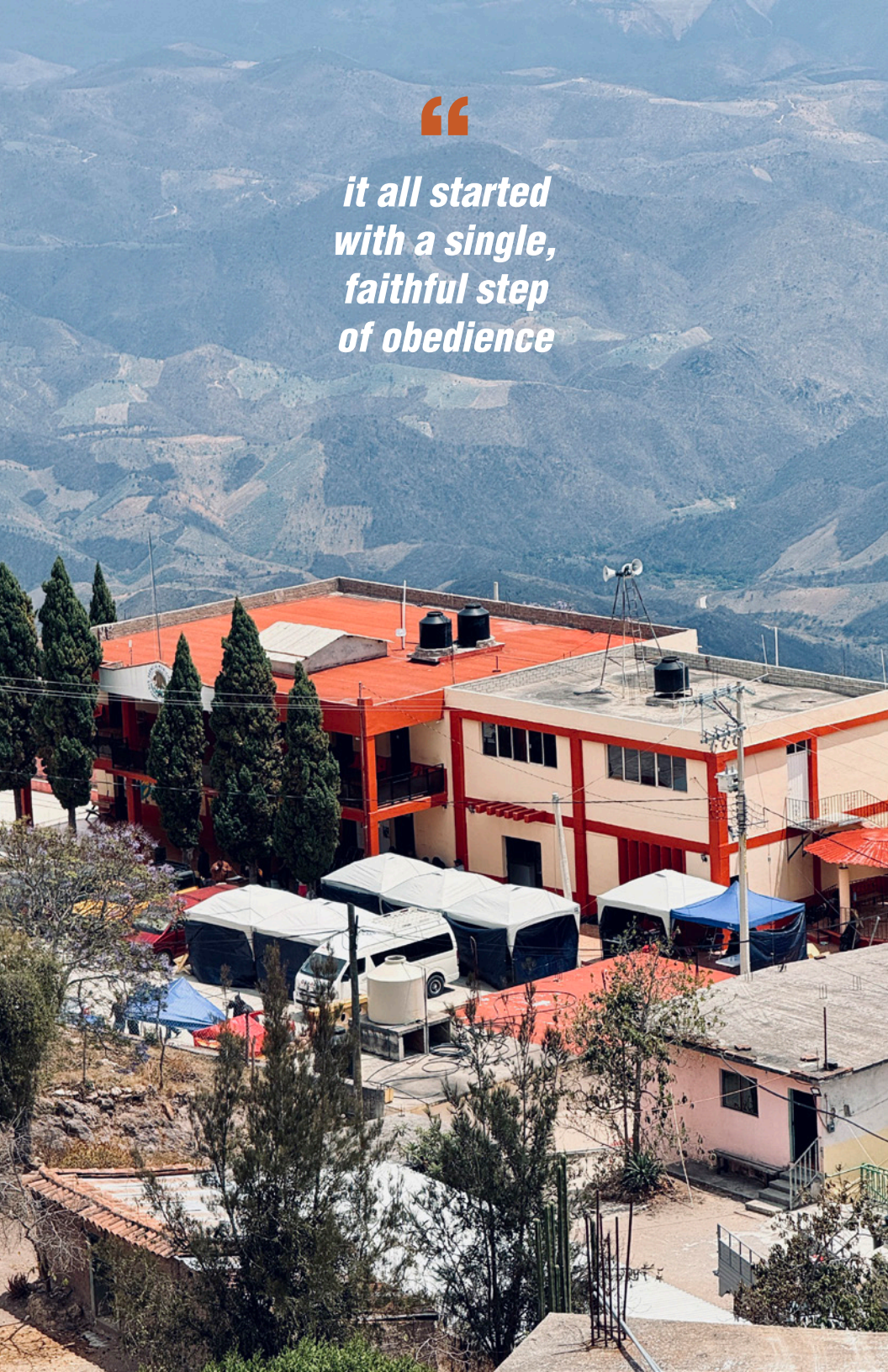
preschool. This created a natural avenue to build relationships and allowed the community to become familiar with her, Jon, and their children.

During this season, Jon and Laura connected with a local pastor named Amos, who shared that a few members of his congregation were planning to start a Bible study with a single individual in Village Q. Jon was then invited to join and lead the group. That initial visit quickly opened doors to deeper relationships, allowing Jon and Laura to walk alongside families—celebrating their greatest joys and bearing each other's sorrows. Today, that weekly Bible study has grown from just one person to approximately 25 believers and non-believers. The community has shared that they keep returning because of the genuine, Christ-like love they experience and the group's dedication to reading God's Word publicly.

This is only a small glimpse into the ongoing ministry in Oaxaca. As Jon and Laura continue to build relationships and share the gospel, their prayer is for hearts to be transformed by the love of Christ. They long for the people of Oaxaca to come to know the Lord and live lives that bring honor to Him rather than to themselves. They also hold onto the hope of seeing the Bible translated into the local language, in both written and audio formats. It is amazing to think that it all started with a single, faithful step of obedience. Praise God for what He has already done! »

GOD IS OPENING DOORS FOR SHARING THE GOSPEL





it all started with a single, faithful step of obedience

CAREER / LONG-TERM

Global Field Missionary Roles

PLAY A KEY ROLE IN GLOBAL CHURCH PLANTING EFFORTS AROUND THE WORLD

Singles, couples, and families from all generations needed to be trained, equipped, and sent to the unreached.



TOEVERYTRIBE.ORG/FIELD-OPENINGS

DISCOVER HOW YOU CAN SERVE

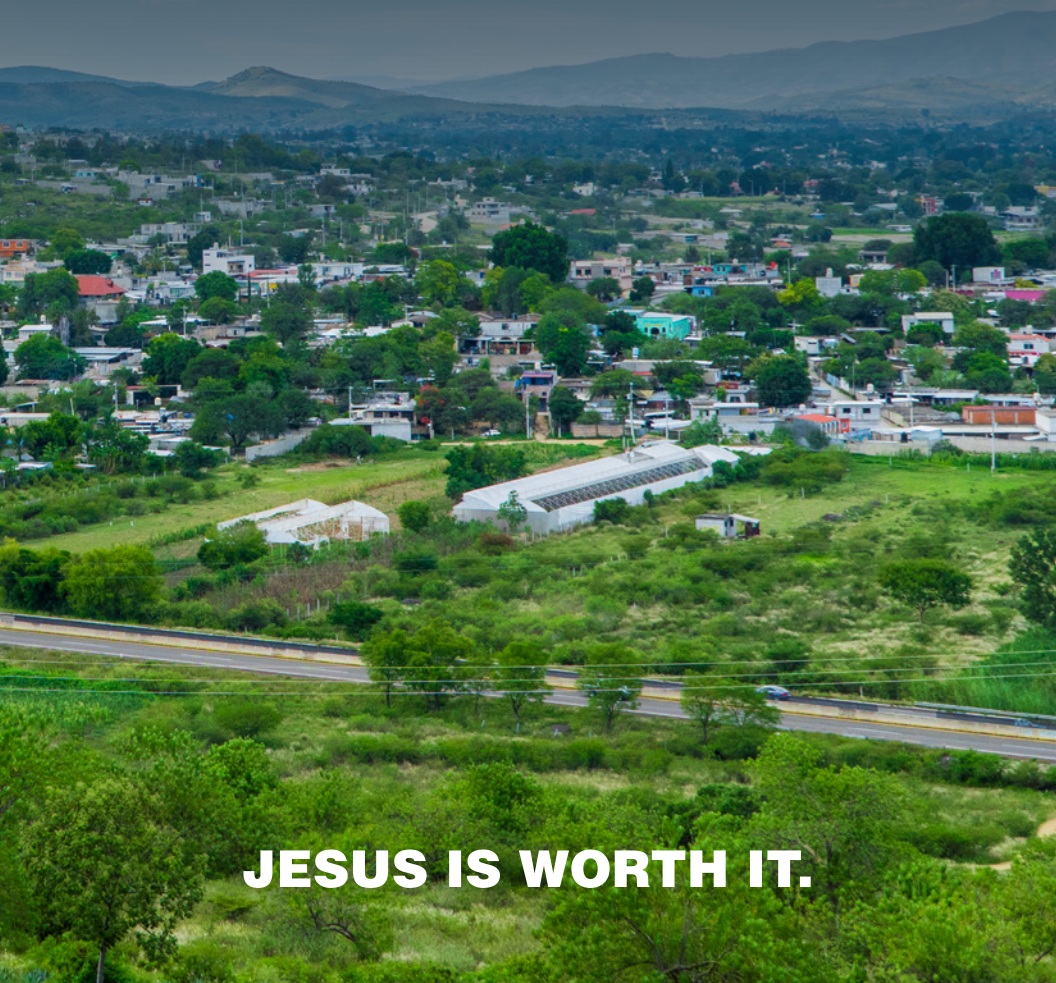
CHURCH PLANTING & DISCIPLESHIP » Partner with local believers or pioneer new works to establish healthy, self-sustaining congregations.

NATIONAL LEADER TRAINING » Come alongside local churches to train, teach, and equip national leaders and pastors for ministry.

YOUTH & NEXT GEN MINISTRY » Build robust, gospel-focused ministries for children and teens, or serve as an apprentice under veteran workers.

LITERACY & WOMEN'S MINISTRY » Lead literacy initiatives and disciple women to become pillars within their local church bodies.

FIELD OPERATIONS & ADMINISTRATION » Keep missions moving behind the scenes by overseeing daily operations or maintaining mission facilities.



JESUS IS WORTH IT.



PAPUA NEW GUINEA

Bridging the Gap of Faith and Culture and Training Leaders in a Platform Community

ABIGAIL JUAREZ / JOURNALISM INTERN

Since creation, faith and culture have shaped how people come to terms with life, purpose, and truth. In every society, belief systems are filtered through local traditions and worldviews, creating unique expressions of faith. For missionaries, this is a challenge but also a great calling to communicate the gospel in ways that honor culture, while remaining faithful to Scripture.

In Papua New Guinea (PNG), where hundreds of languages and customs define daily life, bridging the gap between faith and culture requires more than just language translation. It also requires cultural immersion, patience, and genuine relationships. For nearly two decades, To Every Tribe missionaries Alex and Kelley Sisson have learned that the most effective ministry begins not with changing people's way of life but with walking beside them. Their experiences reveal that the gospel takes root most deeply when shared through understanding, humility, and trust built over time.

In the early stages of their ministry, Alex and Kelley explained that "everything was a cultural gap." Even simple actions would carry different perspectives, such as men and women sitting on opposite sides of the church or men holding hands with other men as a gesture of friendship. They found the best way to bridge these gaps was to immerse themselves in dai-

ALEX AND KELLEY ARE TET MISSIONARIES IN PAPUA NEW GUINEA





ABOVE: PLATFORM COMMUNITY BIBLE STUDY / RIGHT: SUNSET AT MISSION STATION

ly interactions. This also includes finding universal commonalities—practices that look different across traditions but share the same underlying human meaning. Alex and Kelley dove headfirst into building intentional relationships with the people of PNG and learning their language.

Teaching in cross-cultural ministry demands patience rooted in understanding. In PNG, language, worldview, and daily life differ greatly from Western norms, and spiritual growth unfolds slowly and relationally. Alex and Kelley learned to teach not through urgency but through a slow and steady pace. They found that a more interactive style of learning has been most beneficial. For PNG, they found most of the groups they serve with have an idea of certain theological concepts but have never associated them with a specific word. This is why breaking things down is a necessity to sharing the gospel for true understanding. For PNG or similar areas, patient teaching is not a delay in progress, but the very process by which transformation becomes genuine and lasting.

Alex and Kelley serve as the field leaders in PNG, overseeing ministry efforts that center around the platform community of Goroka. This region functions as their primary source of operations, a hub for training, outreach, and discipleship. From Goroka, they coordinate ministry efforts and resources to reach surrounding areas, building relationships and strengthening local believers through consistent presence and teaching.

Outside of Goroka, the Sissons have extended their ministry into two remote communities: Village S and Village G. These locations represent the heart of pioneering work, where the goal is to establish self-sustaining churches from the ground up. Village G has begun to see growth, with a small but faithful group of about one dozen believers, while Village S remains unreached, a community still waiting for the gospel to take root. The Sissons



“patient investment and prayer will one day yield lasting fruit

trust that patient investment and prayer will one day yield lasting fruit in both villages.

The phases of ministry are not limited to local churches alone, but also focus on cultivating long-lasting, healthy communities. Communication and trust play a vital role in this process as missionaries work to empower local leaders to be bold and hold on to the truth of the gospel. A key part of this journey for Alex and Kelley is being a constant learner, adapting to cultural differences, listening before leading, and allowing experience to shape new approaches.

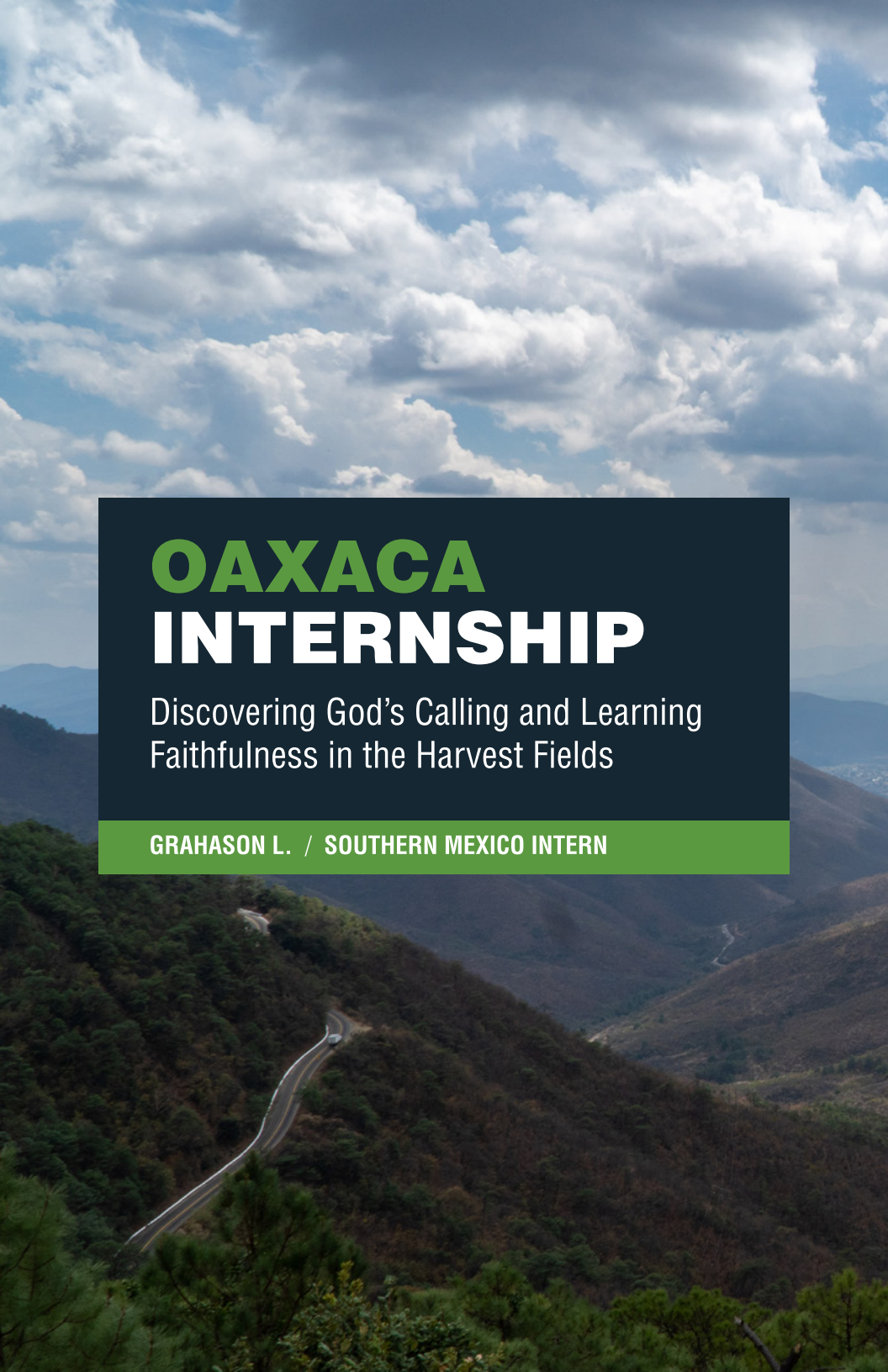
The heart behind the ministry in PNG is not for missionaries to take on every role of leading and teaching, but to equip and train local pastors and leaders to support and sustain their own churches. Alex and Kelley's focus is on discipleship that multiplies into leadership: teaching others how to equip, guiding them to take ownership of their faith in their communities, and encouraging them to lead with confidence that only comes from the Lord. By investing deeply in training and mentorship, the missionaries help create a foundation where local believers can one day lead entirely on their own, continuing the work of the gospel with strength and authenticity.

Building sustainability also means investing in both physical needs and people, training leaders who can eventually send others out to serve not just within the region but globally. The hope and prayer is to see believers grow into self-supporting leaders who carry the gospel forward with confidence and cultural understanding. The regional approach to church planting in PNG is creating communities that thrive in both faith and fellowship. »

BELOW: TRAINING LEADERS IN PLATFORM COMMUNITY / RIGHT: BAPTISMS






OAXACA
INTERNSHIP
Discovering God's Calling and Learning Faithfulness in the Harvest Fields
GRAHASON L. / SOUTHERN MEXICO INTERN

A mountain breeze greeted my arms with a cold bite. I was reclining on a piece of wood underneath a shelter on a rural farm in La Sierra Norte de Oaxaca. I had not expected this fresh, crisp air when I packed my bags for this To Every Tribe (TET) internship in Southern Mexico. Just five days after arriving in Oaxaca City, Jon L. (TET's Field Director) and I traveled up to this mountain village to gather with local pastors and assist some farmers with their sugarcane harvest. It was a simple weekend of farming work and conversations with the pastors about Bible translation projects and ministry in the churches. As a young guy who had just graduated from high school, this work appeared slow to me. And it was! But through TET's Mission Blueprint Cohort training, I had learned that cross-cultural ministry was not to be done at my pace. I was to be patient, submit to the Spirit's guidance, and be first a learner and second a doer. And so I sat there on that cool evening, mulling over a previous situation...

I was watching as Jon drove the donkey in a circle to run the machine for the farmers. They were feeding sugarcane through the creaking mechanism, squishing the sweet juices out of the stalks. Mesmerized by the beauty of this process, my thoughts wandered to what troubled me. I was struggling to discern the purpose of this internship. Jon and I had talked through some goals for the trip, but I was not sure about how God wanted to use these experiences in my life. I had graduated high school and stepped into what I believed God was calling me to do, but I did not know what this trip would mean for me.

I was burdened with these thoughts when a pastor approached me. "Buenas tardes, ¿cómo está usted?" I greeted him in simple Spanish. He was doing well. He asked me how I got here. I was going to get that question a lot, for a teenage guy from America was not a common sight in the indigenous villages of Oaxaca. I explained that I was praying for God to show me a way to serve a need in His Church. Since there were few workers in the harvest fields, I felt convicted to pursue missions. The Lord opened the door for me to work with TET

FARMERS PROCESSING SUGARCANE IN OAXACA, MEXICO





PRAYING BEFORE A WORSHIP SERVICE

in Mexico, and so here I was! I also shared with him the thoughts that troubled me. How could I know the precise needs that God wanted me to serve?

The pastor gave a glance to his left, observing a man gently stirring a pail of panela boiling over a furnace in the ground. "Look at the panela harvest," he told me. Some farmers need to harvest the cane. Others gather it up and bring it in bundles to the shelter. From there, the bundles are fed into the wooden grinder and the juice is collected. A man is needed to drive the donkeys as well. Another takes the liquid sugar and boils it down to a syrup. Another one packages the syrup to be sold at the tienda (store). "Grahason," he reminded me, "there are many needs in the harvest. There are many roles in the work. Do not worry about finding which specific need God may have you serve in your life. God might give you more than one tarea (task) at a time... or different places throughout your life! But what matters is that you are faithful to His command with what He shows you."

The Lord filled me with peace at that moment. I simply needed to view things from the big picture. After the sun set and the men stopped working, we hiked back down to the village where we slept. As I carefully descended the mountain and watched out for cacti or other dangers, I wondered, what does faithfulness look like for me right now? I remembered the story of how God led Abraham out of Ur and into Canaan. God commanded him, saying, "Go... to

the land I will show you" (Genesis 12:1). And Abraham went, but he didn't know where he was going. Usually, we use the word "go" in the context of an implied destination or end, but God simply seeks for us to act in faith, trusting Him with the end. And so I walked with Jesus through the next five weeks seeking to be faithful in each moment, encouraged by that indigenous pastor to ask God to show me more: more of what He wanted me to learn, and more of His glory.

During this internship, the Lord showed me again and again what it means to "become all things to all people" (1 Corinthians 9:22b). This is one of Paul's evangelism strategies. In every situation, he sought to be like those around him, not giving in to any sort of peer pressure, but rather identifying with his listeners in order to win them over for the Gospel. In TET's Eight Phases of Pioneer Church Planting, this is phase two: building trust. I arrived in Oaxaca with no previous relationships, no connections, and no "street cred." This meant that I needed to take every moment seriously, living like them in order to win these dear people for Jesus.

In the context of Southern Mexico, this means learning to eat an egg soup with a stiff tortilla instead of a spoon. It means traveling around the city to buy drinkable water for the next week. It means living without air conditioning. It means taking long, wiggly, and rocky roads through steep mountains. It means sipping coffee at 9 p.m. because someone offered it to you. It means staying up an extra hour into the night because you do

CONNECTING WITH STUDENTS AT A LOCAL SCHOOL



not know when an event will end.

Even more, I needed to adjust my Spanish in order to understand their regional slang. I walked into many events or parties uncertain why I was there and only knowing a few people, crying out to God: Lord, show me who to talk with, where to sit, when to eat, and what You want me to learn! I had the privilege of jumping into a cistern to clean out contamination so a family could have water for their showers. I adjusted my eating schedule and diet to fit everyone else's.

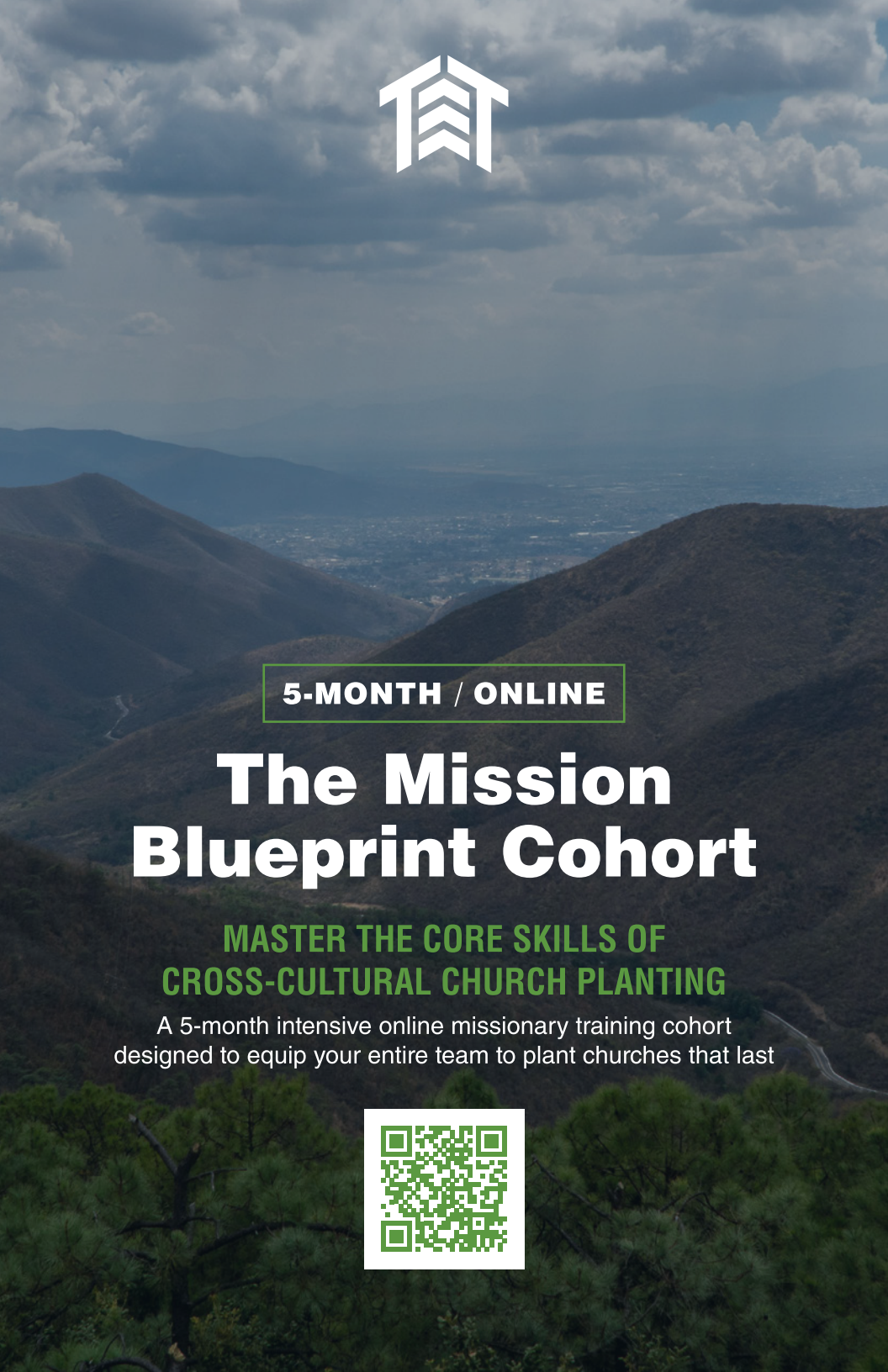
Why would someone do such things? Hopefully not out of fear, but out of love! Love can make anyone do apparently crazy things. Out of love, God sent His only Son to become a man and die on the cross for sinners. That's pretty crazy. Love rejoices with those who rejoice and weeps with those who weep (Romans 12:15). Missionaries have the high privilege of experiencing a little bit of that by living cross-culturally. How else could we show and tell others what it means to be a disciple of Jesus within their lifestyle and culture?

This is crazy indeed. But Jesus led the way by leaving heaven and becoming like us so that He might represent us before the Father. May we join Him in His mission! Let us, as the Bride of Christ, say out of love for Him, "Draw me after you; let us run" (Song of Solomon 1:4). If the Lord is inviting you to serve the Kingdom, do it! It's crazy and worth it. More workers are needed in the harvest fields. Will you take the next step in pursuing the greater use of your gifts to serve the mission? Whether it is staying, or praying, or giving, or going, or something else I cannot imagine, God has a plan for you, too. Will you be faithful? »

SHARING THE GOSPEL WITH THOSE AT A HOSPITAL




SUMMER / SHORT-TERM
Missionary Internships
PARTICIPATE IN GLOBAL CHURCH PLANTING BOTH ON THE FIELD AND BEHIND THE SCENES
College students or individuals discerning a long-term call to the nations through hands-on field experience
TOEVERYTRIBE.ORG/INTERNSHIPS



5-MONTH / ONLINE

The Mission Blueprint Cohort

MASTER THE CORE SKILLS OF CROSS-CULTURAL CHURCH PLANTING

A 5-month intensive online missionary training cohort designed to equip your entire team to plant churches that last