

Partnering to Redeem the Culture



MISSION OBJECTIVES

- A. I will learn how the Bible values, confronts, and transforms culture.
- B. I will prayerfully examine the culture of those I am discipling and examine my culture in light of Bible principles to help us grow more like Jesus.



TEAM CARE AND ACCOUNTABILITY (20 MINUTES)

1. Tell us about your experience helping your contacts grow as disciples of Jesus.
2. What other experiences have you had in following up on your international contacts. (Keep updating and referring to your *Contact Log* and/or *Disciple Log*).
3. What did you learn from study #9 in *My Favorite Missionary* and video clips?
4. What needs or challenges are you facing that we can pray for?
5. Pray together, especially for each other and the friends from other cultures whom you have met.



PRESENTATION (14:50 MINUTES)

WATCH: *Partnering to Redeem the Culture*. Take notes using the following outline:

1. By observing creation, what can we see (Romans 1:19-20)?
2. By observing humans, what can we know (Romans 2:14-16)?
3. *We can trace the line of the world's (a)_____ as far back as human records extend; but the (b)_____ was before them. As the moon and the stars of our solar system shine by the reflected light of the sun, so, as far as their teaching is (c) _____, do the world's great thinkers (d)_____ the rays of the Sun of Righteousness. Every gleam of thought, every flash of the intellect, is from the Light of the world* (White 1903, 13).

4. Four essential questions for redeeming a culture:

QUESTION #1 What excellent (a) _____ do you see in this culture that match biblical values and morals?

QUESTION #2 What aspects of this culture do you think are (b) _____, conflicting with Bible principles, or connected with (c) _____ (d) _____?

QUESTION #3 What aspects of this culture do you think take away from the glory of God as (e) _____, (f) _____, (g) _____?

QUESTION #4 What types of things could you do to (h) _____ some of those wrong cultural values and practices with something (i) _____?



DISCOVERY AND DISCUSSION (40 MINUTES)

1. How do you feel after watching *Partnering to Redeem the Culture* and what did you learn?
2. **Read Romans 12:1-2.** What can we learn from these verses to help us decide which aspects of culture to follow and which aspects to reject?
3. What good qualities have you observed in the cultures of the people of other ethnicities that you have gotten acquainted with so far?
4. What negative qualities and sinful practices have you noticed in the cultures of your international friends?
5. What about your own cultures? What good qualities and negative or sinful qualities and practices do you see?
6. Use the four essential questions for redeeming a culture to discuss what you should do in the following scenarios. Read and discuss one scenario at a time, covering all three if there is sufficient time.

A. Suppose an international friend of yours, who has come to faith in Jesus, invites you to join him and his Hindu friends to celebrate Diwali, a festival of lights celebration that originates in India. They plan to attend the Broadway style rendition of the Ramayana, the major Indian epic story of good and evil. "Please come with me," your friend says, "This is as important to us as Christmas is to you!" Afterwards they plan to go shopping and eat with family in the Little India district.

You've seen people celebrating Diwali on TV at Disneyland and other places. It looks so colorful and fun. "Tell me more what it means," you ask. Your friend says, "It is the celebration of good triumphing over evil with the clay lamps showing how our inner light triumphs over darkness." He also mentions it is an excellent time to receive blessings from Lakshmi, the goddess of prosperity.

- B.** Suppose the sister of your newly baptized friend who migrated from Laos has suddenly died. You want to comfort him and his family. He texts that they are at the Buddhist temple in downtown Vancouver and to please come and join them. You have no idea what to expect so you call a church member who used to be Buddhist. “What should I do and what should I not do?” you ask. He says, “You’ll have to figure that out, but expect that they will be offering incense and praying for the girl so that her ghost won’t stay around and she can have a better future life.”

You call your Laotian friend and ask him if there is anything you should bring. “Well,” he says, “In our culture people always bring rice or cash to feed everyone and to help pay for the monks to do the ceremony. “I don’t know what to do,” he adds. “My parents want me to shave my head and become a monk for a few days to make merit to help my sister. Can Christians do that to show their love?”

- C.** Suppose you are a third-generation Karen Seventh-day Adventist who has just moved to Australia as a refugee. You attend the local church and hardly understand anything because you are just learning English. At this church everything seems so different. The music is super modern and people wear jeans and tee-shirts and call each other by their first names, even to the pastor. None of it seems respectful.

After church one of the young people invites you to go out to eat and then to a movie. You’ve never done that on Sabbath and ask if they have a potluck or an Adventist Youth meeting that evening. Your friend says, “No, but we are going to the club tonight. Can you come?” When you look shocked, he laughs and says, “Hey, you are in Australia now. You have your culture back home and we have our culture here. Our culture is to have fun. Hey, don’t worry, God made us to have fun and besides, He’s super forgiving.”

- 7.** What have you learned today and how will you use it this week?



TEAM PRAYER (10 MINUTES)

Pray together for God’s Word and the power of the Holy Spirit to transform your culture and the cultures of your friends; for God’s people to grow to reflect Him more and more; for the unreached people groups to have their first opportunity to know the living God.

PROMISES TO CLAIM:

- ✔ *To open their eyes, in order to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who are sanctified by faith in Me (Acts 26:18).*

- ✔ *His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue, by which have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, that through these you may be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust (2 Peter 1:3-4).*
- ✔ *Prayer is the breath of the soul. It is the secret of spiritual power. No other means of grace can be substituted, and the health of the soul be preserved. Prayer brings the heart into immediate contact with the Well-spring of life, and strengthens the sinew and muscle of the religious experience. Neglect the exercise of prayer, or engage in prayer spasmodically, now and then, as seems convenient, and you lose your hold on God (White 1915, 255).*



ASSIGNMENTS (5 MINUTES)

1. What do you plan to do to follow up on any of the friendships you have developed? Use the *Disciple Log* to keep track of important areas of growth. You can now use this to replace the *Contact Log* or staple them together and use both.
2. On your own, prayerfully read the *Lesson 10 Field Activity: Search Me and My Culture*.
3. Talk with one of your friends about his or her culture and yours. Answer together the questions in *Field Report #10*. Be prepared to share what you learned and experienced with your team.
4. Mobilize and Multiply. Share with a friend or family member what you learned about valuing, confronting, and transforming culture. Encourage him or her to prayerfully go through the *Lesson 10 Field Activity: Search Me and My Culture*.
5. Complete study #10 in *My Favorite Missionary* and focus your prayers on those who are “Buddhist” in *Praying for the World Next Door*.
6. Watch the following video clip:
Dr. Conrad Vine describes the deep worldview change that must happen for each new believer.
7. Complete the form: *Field Report #10*.

LESSON 10 FIELD ACTIVITY: SEARCH ME AND MY CULTURE

REFLECT AND PRAY

Jesus, You said in Your description about the lukewarm nature of the church at the end of time, “You think you are rich, have become wealthy, and have need of nothing—and do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked” (Revelation 3:15-17). Today I don’t want to be blind just because I’m part of a certain culture. Please send me the Holy Spirit to be like medicine for my blindness (verse 18). Rebuke me and correct me (verse 19). As I contemplate Your Ten Commandments of Love, search me and my culture.

1. What do I love more than You? What do I spend my time and thoughts on to a greater extent than You? Have I lifted myself up, seeking to make myself look good to others through my achievements, degrees, talents, or even my spirituality? Is my honor more important to me than giving glory to God and serving humbly?
2. Do I spend my time on entertainment that decreases my desire to spend time in Your Word, praying or worshipping You? Are the things that I listen to, watch, or read filling my mind with images and leading to a lifestyle that is against the Ten Commandments and the example of Jesus? Are they an idol that I would struggle to lay down for a week, a day, or an hour?
3. Do I take Your name in vain, claiming to be a Christian but not living His life? Am I going along with everyone else, following the culture even when it goes against Your commands or causes me to neglect some of the things that are important to You?
4. Do I work so hard at achieving that I neglect my time with God, my family, my health, or helping others? Am I breaking Your Sabbath because I think I have to in order to provide for my family or because I want to make some extra money? Do I use the Sabbath for my own pleasure when I could be spending time with You or helping someone?
5. Do I neglect the elderly and do I tend to disrespect those in places of authority like my parents, teachers, and leaders in the church or government simply because everyone around me tends to be cynical of leadership and value independence and youthfulness more than cooperation, experience, and honor?
6. Jesus said that hatred is the seed of murder. Towards whom am I bitter and unforgiving? Is there any prejudice in my heart towards someone because they are different from me? How else have I and my culture devalued life?
7. Have I come to consider sexual immorality as normal, watching it in movies, on the internet, or even participating in it, instead of hating that which destroys marriages and the beauty of love as God created it?
8. Have I stolen something from my boss, company, or the government? Have I refused to give God my tithes and offerings? Am I using all that I have for the growth of God’s kingdom or for my own impermanent kingdom?

9. Do I excuse small lies or deceive by my actions or silence because I think it might help me in some other way or to just keep the peace and not hurt someone's feelings? Do I gossip and defame other people's reputations or make myself look better than others, putting them down? Am I afraid to speak up for the truth because someone might make fun of me or persecute me?
10. Do I covet what others have, or am I unthankful for all the blessings God has given me? Do I easily spend money unnecessarily on myself that could have been used to keep alive starving people or to share the gospel with those who have never had a chance to know Jesus? Do I think I deserve the treats I give myself when others have worked at least as hard and struggle without?

Thank You for showing me more of my ugly self. You invited me to "be zealous and repent" and promised that You stand at the door of my heart to come and be close to me. Thank You for Your promise that "to him who overcomes I will grant to sit with Me on My throne" (Revelation 3:19-21). With Your help, I choose to repent from the things You have convicted me about. Please forgive me and live in me. In Jesus' name, amen.

FIELD REPORT #10



Name _____ Date Due _____

Email Address _____ Phone _____

Home Church _____ Team Number _____

PARTNERING TO REDEEM THE CULTURE

1. Ask the following questions about cultural practices to one of your international friends who you think can be helped in his or her journey of faith by discussing such issues. You can also answer the questions for yourself about your culture and share those thoughts with your friend.
 - A. What excellent values do you see in your culture that match the values and beliefs we have been learning about in the Bible?
 - B. What aspects of your culture do you think are wrong, conflicting with biblical principles, or connected with evil spirits?
 - C. What practices in your culture do you think take away from God's glory as Creator, Protector, and Savior?
 - D. What types of things could we do to replace some of those wrong cultural values and practices with something better?
2. What I learned from the experience:

3. These are the people I spent time with this last week and what we did (keep updating a *Contact Log* or *Disciple Log* for each person or family and keep the sheets in a binder):

4. What I plan to do this next week to disciple my contacts:

5. The friend or family member with whom I shared what I learned and invited to do the same:

6. Someone or something I would like us to be praying about:

7. Things I want to remember or share with my team from the video clips, my completion of study #10 in *My Favorite Missionary*, and my focus on prayers for people who are "Buddhist" in *Praying for the World Next Door*.