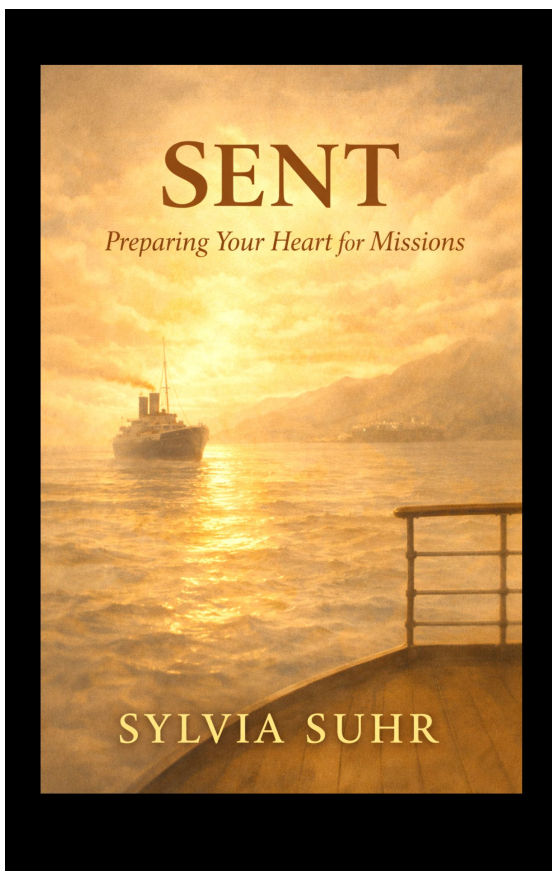




SENT

Preparing Your Heart
for Missions

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Dedication

To the Lord Jesus Christ,
who called me, prepared me, and faithfully led me through
every step of this journey.

And to all those who are sensing His call today—
may your hearts be ready when He sends you.

*Missions is not first about going.
It is about becoming.*

— *Sylvia Suhr*

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INTRODUCTION

Before You Go

Many years ago, when I first sensed the call of God toward missions, I was eager to go. I loved Jesus and I wanted to serve Him, but I did not yet understand how much preparation God would do in my heart before He sent me.

Looking back now, I often think, *I wish someone had given me a book like this.*

Not a book that simply stirred excitement about missions, but one that explained the quiet work God does in the hidden places of a life before He entrusts someone with greater responsibility.

I once imagined missions was measured by how far I was willing to go, until God showed me it begins with who I am becoming in His presence.

I believed it was about stepping onto a plane with bold faith, leaving everything behind and saying yes to adventure. I thought the measure of obedience was how far you were willing to travel.

But over the years I have learnt something deeper.

Missions is not first about going.
It is about becoming.

Before God sends a person across the oceans, He forms them in the hidden place. Before He entrusts nations, He tests surrender. Before there is public ministry, there is private obedience.

*Before God entrusts you
with nations,
He prepares your heart in
the hidden place.*

The greatest danger is not persecution — it is stepping out before God has formed your foundation.”

I have seen sincere believers burn out because they lacked discipline. I have seen passionate hearts wounded because they did not learn to hear clearly from God. I have watched gifted people stumble because they were never confirmed by mature leaders who could speak wisdom into their call.

And I have learnt that a disciplined life is not restrictive — it is liberating.

The lifestyle of a prayer warrior is not dramatic. It is daily. Total surrender is not emotional. It is continual. The baptism of the Holy Spirit is not an experience to display — it is power to endure. Praying in tongues is not a badge of spirituality — it is strength for the unseen battles.

While this book speaks directly to those sensing a call to missions, the principles within it apply to anyone who desires to follow God faithfully wherever He leads.

If you feel a stirring toward missions — whether across the world or across the street — this book will help you examine your foundation. If you already serve in ministry, it will help you strengthen your roots. If you are waiting to be sent, it will guide you in becoming ready.

God does not look for the most talented.
He looks for the surrendered.
He does not send the loudest.
He sends the prepared.

There is a holy order in the Kingdom.

You are hidden before you are revealed.
You are formed before you are sent.
You are disciplined before you are trusted.

My prayer is that as you read, the Holy Spirit will gently refine, align, and strengthen you. That He will confirm what is truly from Him and quiet what is not. That you will not strive to go — but be ready to be sent.

Because when you are prepared, you do not chase missions.

Missions finds you.

When it does, may your heart be ready.

Missions is not limited to distant nations; it is the daily willingness to carry Christ's love across the world and across the street.

CHAPTER ONE

Total Surrender: Motives in the Hidden Place

When I first sensed the call of God toward missions, I was sincere.

I loved Him.

I wanted to obey Him.

I was willing to go.

And yet, years later, I have had to ask myself some honest questions.

What was I trying to prove?

What was my true motive?

Was I going because I was sent — or because I longed to feel significant?

These are not condemning questions. They are refining ones.

The call of God is holy. But our hearts are layered. Even when we love Him deeply, there can be hidden places within us that still desire recognition, validation, or affirmation. God is not surprised by this. He simply loves us too much to leave those places untouched.

The Bible reminds us that the Lord sees beyond outward actions and looks deeply into the heart.

“Man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart.”

— 1 Samuel 16:7

Total surrender is not dramatic. It is not an emotional altar moment that lasts a weekend. It is the quiet yielding of every motive, every ambition, every need to be seen.

It is saying:

“Lord, if You send me, I will go.
If You hide me, I will stay.
If no one ever knows my name, I am still Yours.”

Jesus Himself taught this path of surrender when He said:

“Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me.”
— Luke 9:23

Before God entrusts you with nations, He prepares your heart in the hidden place.

Hiddenness is not God withholding your calling — it is God strengthening your capacity to carry it.

In the hidden place, He reveals what drives us. He exposes the subtle need to prove ourselves. He gently asks whether we are willing to serve without applause. He tests whether our obedience is anchored in love or in identity.

The psalmist prayed a prayer that every missionary should pray:

“Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me and lead me in the way everlasting.”
— Psalm 139:23

As God began to purify my motives and shape my heart in the hidden place, I soon discovered that surrender alone was not enough—He also wanted to empower me for the work ahead.

Reflection:

- What motives do I need to surrender?
- Where is God inviting me into hiddenness?

CHAPTER TWO

The Baptism of the Holy Spirit

Before Jesus sent His disciples into the world, He gave them a very clear instruction.

Wait.

They had walked with Him.

They had heard His teaching.

They had seen miracles.

They had witnessed the resurrection.

Yet Jesus knew something was still needed before they stepped into the work He was calling them to do.

So, He told them:

“Do not leave Jerusalem but wait for the gift my Father promised.”

— Acts 1:4

The disciples were not lacking sincerity. They were not lacking love for Christ. But they needed power.

Missions has never been sustained by human strength alone.

My Story:

People encounter the baptism of the Holy Spirit in many ways. Some feel fire. Some feel peace. Some feel nothing at all until their lives begin to change.

This is how the Spirit found me.

I was working in a café filled with people searching for meaning in all kinds of spiritual paths. One afternoon a woman walked in—dark hair, gentle presence, eyes bright with a joy I couldn't explain. We sat together, she told me her name was Shirley and as she spoke, she seemed almost illuminated from within. She talked about being born again, about knowing God personally, and then said with surprising boldness, "You must be born again to see the Kingdom of God."

Like Nicodemus, I didn't understand. My spirit was still asleep.

She invited me to her church, and I went. What I saw startled me—people worshipping freely, hands raised, singing in languages I had never heard. I left convinced they were strange and decided never to return.

But God had already begun His work. He knew I was searching. Like the father watching the road for his prodigal child, He waited for the moment my heart would turn.

Later, I visited Shirley at her home and found her dancing and singing in tongues. I was amazed, embarrassed, unsure—but she prayed for me. The next day, driving with my children, a song rose from my spirit in a language I did not know. I realised the Holy Spirit had come.

Joy broke over me like dawn. From that moment, everything changed. I spoke about Jesus everywhere I went. The same light I had seen in that café now burned in me.

The work of carrying the gospel into the world requires more than enthusiasm, education, or courage. It requires the empowering presence of the Holy Spirit.

Jesus said:

“You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”

— Acts 1:8

Notice the order.

Power first.

Witness second.

Many believers feel called to serve God in missions, yet they have never fully understood the gift Jesus promised to His followers — the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

The baptism of the Holy Spirit is not simply an emotional experience or a moment of spiritual excitement. It is a divine empowerment given by God to strengthen His people for service.

In the book of Acts, we see this repeatedly.

When the Holy Spirit was poured out at Pentecost, the disciples were transformed. Fear gave way to boldness. Confusion gave way to clarity. Ordinary people began proclaiming the gospel with authority.

“All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them.”

— Acts 2:4

This experience was not meant to be rare or reserved for a few. It was the promise given to all believers.

Peter declared this clearly when he said:

“The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off—for all whom the Lord our God will call.”

— Acts 2:39

Throughout the early church, believers received this empowerment as they stepped into the work of the gospel. The Holy Spirit strengthened them, guided them, and gave them courage in the face of opposition.

For anyone preparing for missions, the baptism of the Holy Spirit is not optional for those who desire Spirit-empowered ministry. It is essential.

There will be moments on the mission field when your own strength feels small. You may face discouragement, misunderstanding, spiritual opposition, or exhaustion. In those moments, it is not your ability that will sustain you, but the Spirit of God within you.

The apostle Paul reminds us:

“Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit,” says the Lord.

— Zechariah 4:6

The Holy Spirit does more than give power for ministry. He also shapes the inner life of the believer. He teaches us, comforts us, convicts us, and leads us in truth.

Jesus said:

“But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you.”

— John 14:26

Those who are called to missions must learn to walk daily in dependence upon the Holy Spirit. The mission field is not sustained by strategy alone. It is sustained by intimacy with the One who sends us.

Before you go, seek the fullness of the Holy Spirit. Ask the Lord to fill you afresh with His presence and power. The mission is great, but the One who empowers you is greater.

“As I learned to depend on the Holy Spirit daily, I soon discovered that He not only empowers us for ministry — He also strengthens us from within through gifts designed to sustain our inner life.”

Reflection:

- Am I relying on my own strength, or truly depending on the Holy Spirit?
- What areas of my life need a fresh filling of His power?
- Have I been waiting on God, or moving ahead of His timing?

CHAPTER THREE

The Strength Found in Praying in Tongues

“One of the most beautiful ways the Holy Spirit strengthens the inner life of a believer is through the gift of praying in tongues.”

For many believers, this gift is sometimes misunderstood, ignored, or even avoided. Yet throughout Scripture and the experience of the early church, praying in tongues was a powerful and personal way of communicating with God.

The apostle Paul explains:

“For anyone who speaks in a tongue does not speak to people but to God. Indeed, no one understands them; they utter mysteries by the Spirit.”

— 1 Corinthians 14:2

Praying in tongues is not meant to draw attention to ourselves. It is a private conversation between the believer and God. It is one of the ways the Holy Spirit strengthens us in the hidden place.

Paul also writes:

“Anyone who speaks in a tongue edifies themselves.”

— 1 Corinthians 14:4

The word *edifies* means to build up or strengthen. Just as our physical bodies need nourishment, our spiritual lives need strengthening. Praying in tongues allows the Holy Spirit to build us up from within.

For those serving in missions, this gift becomes especially precious.

There will be times when you do not know how to pray. You may encounter situations that are complex, overwhelming, or beyond your understanding. In those moments, the Holy Spirit helps us pray according to God's will.

Paul reminds us:

“In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us through wordless groans.”

— Romans 8:26

Praying in tongues becomes a lifeline when our understanding reaches its limit.

It also helps guard our hearts and minds. The mission field can be demanding. There may be seasons of loneliness, spiritual warfare, or deep emotional strain. The ability to pray in the Spirit strengthens the inner life of the believer and renews our spiritual endurance.

The book of Jude encourages believers:

“But you, dear friends, by building yourselves up in your most holy faith and praying in the Holy Spirit...”

— Jude 20

This is one of the ways God builds resilience in those He sends.

Praying in tongues also keeps our relationship with God fresh and intimate. It draws us back into communion with

Him, reminding us that missions is not simply about activity but about abiding in Christ.

Jesus said:

“Remain in me, as I also remain in you... apart from me you can do nothing.”

— John 15:4–5

The greatest danger for anyone serving God is not persecution or hardship. It is becoming busy in the work of God while neglecting intimacy with Him.

Praying in tongues helps protect that intimacy. It keeps our hearts connected to the source of our strength.

For missionaries especially, this quiet practice becomes a lifeline. In private prayer, in moments of worship, or even during the ordinary tasks of daily life, the Spirit of God continues to build us up and guide us.

The work of missions is not sustained by human ability. It is sustained by the Spirit of God working within us and through us.

And one of the beautiful ways He strengthens us is through the gift of praying in tongues.

“As the Holy Spirit strengthened my inner life through praying in tongues, I began to realise that His power was not only given to sustain me — it was also given to guide me. Strength in the Spirit naturally led to a deeper sensitivity to His voice.”

Reflection:

- Where do I need the Holy Spirit to strengthen me from within?
- How can I cultivate a deeper rhythm of praying in the Spirit?
- What situations in my life require prayer beyond my understanding?

CHAPTER FOUR

Hearing Clearly from God

One of the most important lessons anyone preparing for missions must learn is how to recognize the voice of God.

Missions is not simply about enthusiasm or willingness. It is about obedience. And obedience requires listening.

Throughout Scripture, we see that God leads His people by speaking to them. Sometimes His direction is very clear. At other times it is quiet and gentle, requiring patience and discernment. Jesus described this relationship beautifully when He said:

“My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me.”
— *John 10:27*

Notice the simplicity of this picture. Sheep do not follow the shepherd because they are forced. They follow because they recognize his voice. In the same way, those who belong to Christ can learn to recognize His voice.

Hearing from God does not usually come through dramatic experiences. More often it grows through a steady life of prayer, Scripture, and surrender. As we spend time with the Lord, our hearts become more sensitive to His leading.

The Word of God is the primary way He speaks to us.

“Your word is a lamp for my feet, a light on my path.”
— Psalm 119:105

The Bible anchors our understanding of God's voice. The Holy Spirit will never lead us in a direction that contradicts what God has already spoken in Scripture. This is why anyone preparing for missions must develop a deep love for the Word of God. The more familiar we become with His Word, the easier it is to recognize His guidance.

But God also leads through the quiet prompting of the Holy Spirit. Sometimes it may come as a gentle conviction. Sometimes as a deep inner peace. Sometimes as a persistent sense that God is directing your steps in a certain direction.

The prophet Isaiah described it this way:

“Whether you turn to the right or to the left, your ears will hear a voice behind you, saying, ‘This is the way; walk in it.’”

— Isaiah 30:21

Learning to hear God clearly takes time. It is not something that happens instantly. It grows as we walk with Him day by day. There will be moments when we are unsure. That is normal. Even mature believers continue to seek God's wisdom and guidance.

A vital part of learning to hear God clearly is learning to **test** what you hear. God never asks us to follow a prompting blindly. His voice will always align with Scripture, because the Holy Spirit never contradicts the Word He inspired.

His leading also carries the fruit of peace rather than pressure or confusion. Wise counsel is another safeguard; mature believers can often confirm or gently question what we believe God is saying. And over time, the fruit of

a word becomes clear—what is truly from God produces humility, obedience, and Christlike character. Testing what we hear protects us from deception, emotion-driven decisions, and premature action, and it trains our hearts to follow the Shepherd with confidence.

As we learn to test God’s voice in our own hearts, we also discover the wisdom of inviting trusted believers to help confirm what the Spirit is saying.

“As I learned to recognize the voice of God more clearly, I also discovered that His guidance was never meant to be discerned in isolation—He often confirms His leading through the wisdom and affirmation of mature believers.

Reflection:

- How is God speaking to me in this season?
- What steps can I take to test and confirm what I believe I’m hearing?
- Where do I need to slow down and listen more intentionally?

CHAPTER FIVE

The Importance of Confirmation from Mature Believers

“Throughout Scripture, we see that God not only speaks to individuals but also confirms His direction through the counsel and discernment of the wider body of Christ.”

When God calls someone into missions, He rarely confirms that calling in isolation.

While the Lord certainly speaks personally to His people, Scripture shows us that He also uses the wisdom and discernment of the wider body of Christ to confirm His direction.

The Christian life was never meant to be lived alone. God designed the church to function as a family, where believers strengthen, guide, and encourage one another.

Proverbs reminds us:

“Plans fail for lack of counsel, but with many advisers they succeed.”

— Proverbs 15:22

For those sensing a call to missions, the confirmation of mature believers is an important safeguard. It helps protect us from rushing ahead in our own enthusiasm or misunderstanding God's timing.

There is a difference between a sincere desire to serve God and a clear call to go.

Mature spiritual leaders can help discern the difference.

Throughout the book of Acts, we see that the early church recognized and confirmed those who were being sent into ministry. Paul and Barnabas, for example, were not simply individuals who decided to travel and preach. Their calling was recognized and affirmed within the church community.

Scripture tells us:

“While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, ‘Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.’ So after they had fasted and prayed, they placed their hands on them and sent them off.”

— Acts 13:2

This moment in the early church reveals something very important about the way God sends His people.

Paul and Barnabas already carried the call of God on their lives, but their mission was not launched in isolation. It was confirmed within the community of believers who were seeking the Lord together.

The church prayed.

They fasted.

They listened for the leading of the Holy Spirit.

Only then were Paul and Barnabas publicly set apart and sent.

This pattern gives us wisdom today. God often confirms His calling through the voices of spiritually mature believers who can recognize His work in our lives.

When we invite trusted leaders and mentors to speak into our calling, we place ourselves in a position of humility and protection. They can help discern whether the timing is right and whether the foundation of our lives is strong enough to sustain the work ahead.

Sometimes their counsel may encourage us to move forward. At other times they may advise patience and further preparation.

Both responses are gifts.

The confirmation of mature believers does not diminish a personal calling from God. Instead, it strengthens it. It brings clarity, accountability, and unity within the body of Christ.

Those who are truly sent are not striving to prove themselves. They are willing to wait until God confirms His direction through the community He has placed around them.

When that confirmation comes, it often brings a deep sense of peace. There is a shared recognition that the Lord is leading, and the church stands behind the one who is being sent.

Missions was never meant to be a solitary journey.

Those who go are carried by the prayers, encouragement, and support of the body of Christ.

When calling is held before God and affirmed by mature believers, we step forward not in isolation but in the confidence that the Spirit and the community are sending us together.

My First Mission Experience

My pastor often travelled to the Philippines on mission trips, and eventually a stirring grew in my own heart to join him. I signed up for a crusade with the Australian Philippines Mission — a trip focused on preaching the gospel with signs and wonders following. I had no idea then how deeply it would mark my life.

Twenty-five of us from across New South Wales gathered for six weeks of training before we left. We learned how to share our salvation stories simply and clearly, and how to preach the gospel in a way anyone could understand. At the time it felt basic — almost too simple — but those lessons became the foundation for every mission I would ever take.

We were away for ten days, and from the moment we arrived, everything felt alive with expectation. Night after night we preached the gospel in Basketball stadiums and hundreds responded with open hearts. It was as though heaven leaned close. Miracles broke out everywhere.

I will never forget praying for an elderly woman whose eyes were clouded with a grey film. As I laid my hands on her, I watched — stunned — as her eyes began to clear. The grey faded. Colour returned. She blinked, looked around, and through the interpreter said, “I can see! I can see clearly!” It was as if I had witnessed creation happening right in front of me.

Deaf ears opened as we prayed for each person in turn. People who had been lame for years stood up and walked, some taking their first steps in decades. The air was filled with shouts of joy, tears, laughter, and the unmistakable presence of God.

What moved me most was the simple, childlike faith of the Filipino people. They believed God at His word. They trusted Him without complication. Their gratitude, their closeness as families, and their joy in the small things humbled me deeply.

When I returned home, I was not the same person. Something had shifted permanently. I knew I could never settle for a comfortable or mediocre Christian life again. The fire that had been lit in me on that trip became a calling — a knowing — that I was meant to be a pioneer missionary.

That first mission didn't just change my life.

It set the course of it.

And it all began because I was sent — trained, affirmed, and covered by the community God had placed around me.

“What I witnessed in the Philippines ignited a fire in me, but it was the disciplined, daily walk with God that would determine whether that fire could be sustained.

Reflection:

- Who are the trusted voices God has placed in my life for counsel and confirmation?
- Am I willing to submit my sense of calling to the discernment of others?
- What might God be revealing through the affirmation—or hesitation—of mature believers?

CHAPTER SIX

Living a Disciplined Life Brings Freedom

The passion ignited on the mission field was powerful, but passion alone cannot sustain a calling. What God awakens in a moment must be strengthened through a lifetime of daily choices.

I began to realise that the miracles I witnessed were not the foundation of a missionary life — discipline was.

A disciplined walk with God creates the inner strength, stability, and endurance needed to carry His calling with faithfulness. Without it, even the most sincere zeal eventually fades. With it, the fire God lights in our hearts becomes steady, resilient, and able to withstand the pressures of ministry.

Many people think of discipline as something restrictive.

They imagine rules, limitations, and structures that make life feel smaller. But in the Kingdom of God, discipline does not lead to restriction. It leads to freedom.

A disciplined life creates stability. It strengthens the inner life and prepares us to carry responsibility without becoming overwhelmed.

This is especially important for those preparing for missions.

The mission field often removes the structures and comforts people rely on at home. Familiar routines disappear. Support systems may be far away. In those

moments, the habits you have built in your daily walk with God become your foundation.

*A disciplined life is not
about perfection.
It is about
faithfulness.*

The apostle Paul understood this principle well. He compared the Christian life to the discipline of an athlete.

“Everyone who competes in the games goes into strict training. They do it to get a crown that will not last, but we do it to get a crown that will last forever.”

Paul understood that those who serve God must learn to live with intentional discipline. An athlete trains their body so they can compete well. In the same way, believers train their spiritual lives so they can remain steady in the work God has given them.

Discipline creates strength.

Without it, emotions begin to lead us instead of faith. Our time with God becomes inconsistent, and our spiritual lives begin to feel unstable. But when we develop healthy rhythms of prayer, Scripture, and worship, our relationship with God becomes steady and grounded.

This is particularly important for those preparing for missions.

The mission field often requires flexibility and endurance. Schedules may change, circumstances may shift, and unexpected challenges may arise. If our spiritual life depends on perfect conditions, it will quickly become weak. But if we have developed disciplined habits, our relationship with God remains strong regardless of where we are.

Discipline in the Christian life is not about earning God's approval. We already belong to Him through Christ. Instead, discipline helps us stay close to the One who sustains us.

Jesus modelled this kind of life. Even during seasons of intense ministry, He regularly withdrew to spend time with the Father.

Luke writes:

“But Jesus often withdrew to lonely places and prayed.”
(Luke 5:16)

If Jesus made space for prayer and communion with the Father, how much more should we.

A disciplined life also protects us from burnout. Many people begin ministry with great enthusiasm but struggle to sustain it over time. Without healthy spiritual rhythms, the pressure of serving others can slowly drain our strength.

But when prayer, worship, and Scripture remain central in our lives, they become a constant source of renewal.

Discipline creates room for God to meet us daily.

And over time something beautiful begins to happen.
What once felt like effort becomes a natural rhythm.
Prayer becomes a place of rest. Time in Scripture becomes
nourishment. Worship becomes joy.

This is why discipline ultimately leads to freedom.

Instead of being controlled by circumstances, emotions, or
fatigue, we learn to live from a place of stability in Christ.

For those preparing for missions, this kind of life becomes
essential. It forms a foundation that will sustain you
wherever God sends you.

A disciplined life is not about perfection.

It is about faithfulness.

And faithfulness, practiced day by day, prepares the heart
to carry the calling of God with strength and humility.

Reflection:

- Which spiritual disciplines is God inviting me to strengthen?
- Where have I allowed emotion or circumstance to lead me instead of consistency?
- What rhythms will sustain me on the mission field?

CHAPTER SEVEN

Preparing Your Heart in the Quiet Place

Daily rhythms that shape a life ready for God's calling

Before God entrusts us with greater responsibilities, He often prepares us quietly in the hidden places of life.

These seasons are not always dramatic. In fact, they are often simple and ordinary. Yet it is within these quiet rhythms that our hearts are shaped and strengthened for the work ahead.

Many people imagine that preparation for missions involves training programs, travel plans, and practical arrangements. While those things have their place, the most important preparation happens in our relationship with God.

A missionary must first learn how to walk closely with the Lord.

During one season when I was seeking God about the next steps in my own journey, I was encouraged to begin a simple rhythm of daily preparation. The focus was not on doing something impressive for God, but on learning to spend consistent time with Him.

Each morning I set aside one hour to meet with the Lord.

This time became a space for prayer, Scripture, and quiet listening. Some mornings were deeply meaningful, while others felt simple and ordinary. Yet over time these daily moments formed a strong foundation in my spiritual life.

Regular time with God trains our hearts to recognize His voice.

Scripture became the centre of these mornings. I was encouraged to read and study several books of the Bible that reveal important principles for those preparing to serve God.

The Gospel of Matthew shows us the heart and teachings of the Kingdom of God. Jesus reveals what life under God's rule truly looks like.

The book of Acts shows how the early church lived in the power of the Holy Spirit. It reminds us that missions is not carried forward by human strength but by the Spirit of God working through ordinary believers.

Paul's letter to the Ephesians helps us understand our identity in Christ and the spiritual realities that surround the life of faith. It teaches us how to stand firm and live in the strength God provides.

Nehemiah offers a powerful picture of leadership, perseverance, and rebuilding what has been broken. His story reminds us that the work of God often requires patience, courage, and faithful obedience over time.

Alongside Scripture reading, journaling became an important part of the process.

Writing down prayers, reflections, and things I sensed God speaking helped me slow down and pay attention to His guidance. Over time, those journal pages became a record of God's faithfulness and direction.

These simple practices may not appear extraordinary, but they quietly shape the heart.

Daily time with God cultivates humility, sensitivity to the Holy Spirit, and a deeper understanding of Scripture. It also strengthens our ability to remain steady when challenges arise.

Preparation for missions rarely begins with public ministry.

More often, it begins in quiet mornings with an open Bible, a listening heart, and a willingness to let God shape our character.

These hidden moments form the foundation upon which everything else is built.

When the time eventually comes to step into new opportunities, the strength we need will not come from sudden inspiration. It will come from the quiet habits of faith that were built day by day in the presence of God.

The hidden place is where God prepares those He intends to send.

Reflection

- What daily rhythm of time with God is the Lord inviting me to establish?
- Which areas of my heart might God be shaping during this season of preparation?
- How can I create space to listen more carefully for His voice?

A Simple Daily Preparation Rhythm

1. Begin with Prayer

Invite the Holy Spirit to guide your time with God.

2. Read Scripture

Spend time in books that reveal God's heart and His work through His people.

3. Reflect and Listen

Allow space to be quiet before the Lord and listen for His guidance.

4. Journal

Write down prayers, thoughts, and anything you sense God speaking to you.

5. Commit the Day to God

Ask the Lord to shape your heart and lead you in His purposes.

CHAPTER EIGHT

The Strength of Fellowship and Accountability

No one is called to walk the Christian life alone.

From the very beginning, God designed His people to live in community. The church is not simply a place we attend on Sundays. It is a family where believers support, strengthen, and encourage one another.

For those preparing for missions, regular fellowship with other believers is essential.

Sometimes people who feel a strong calling to serve God begin to isolate themselves. They focus so intensely on their personal relationship with God that they forget the importance of walking alongside others in the body of Christ.

But Scripture reminds us that we need one another.

“And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together... but encouraging one another.”

— Hebrews 10:24–25

Fellowship strengthens our faith. It reminds us that we are part of something much larger than ourselves.

In the early church, believers shared their lives closely together. They prayed together, worshiped together, and supported one another through trials and persecution.

“They devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.”
— Acts 2:42

This kind of community creates spiritual health.

When we walk closely with other believers, we are encouraged in difficult seasons and protected from discouragement and isolation.

Accountability is another important gift that comes through fellowship. Mature believers can speak wisdom into our lives, helping us remain humble and grounded.

“As iron sharpens iron, so one person sharpens another.”
— Proverbs 27:17

Those preparing for missions need people who know them well enough to speak honestly and lovingly into their lives.

Accountability is not about control. It is about protection. It helps guard our hearts from pride, discouragement, and unhealthy independence.

God rarely sends people alone. He often sends them in community.

But sometimes the mission field becomes the place where we learn this lesson most deeply.

Kenya: The Lessons of Going Alone

When I first returned to Kenya, I thought I knew what I was stepping into. I didn’t.

The road from Nairobi to Mbita was less a road and more a pilgrimage — dust, diesel, chickens, babies who never cried, and twelve hours of jolting over potholes that felt like prayers. By the time we arrived, I was exhausted, disoriented, and strangely aware that God was turning the page on a new chapter of my life.

I had come alone.

No team.

No covering.

No familiar voices to steady my heart.

My hosts were kind, their home unexpectedly comfortable, but comfort is not the same as companionship. I felt the difference immediately.

The pastor I partnered with carried a vision that mirrored my own — preach the Word, reach the orphans, teach the children. We rode from village to village, me perched on the back of a bicycle, the gospel tucked under our tongues like wild honey.

Seven house fellowships sprang up like shoots after rain. People wept. People believed. One woman greeted us in a language I didn't know, but her eyes said, *We've waited for this.*

And then came the miracle.

A woman lay twisted on the roadside, her husband wailing beside her. Death hovered. The pastor rebuked it sharply in Swahili while I prayed in tongues until my voice cracked. Her eyes fluttered open like moth wings in sunlight.

We helped them to a clinic but never saw them again.

I walked away whispering, “Did that really happen?”

A thousand acts of grace. Only God knew which ones would take root.

But alongside the miracles, another lesson was forming in my heart.

Going alone carries a cost.

Loneliness pressed in like a physical weight.
Discernment felt harder without wise voices around me.
Spiritual warfare intensified without covering.
Every burden felt heavier because I carried it alone.

Kenya taught me something I had not fully understood before.

Passion can take you far.
But covering keeps you safe.

God can use you when you are alone, but He never designed you to live or minister in isolation.

Some lessons come through miracles. Others come through loneliness. Both are gifts.

And Kenya taught me that even the strongest calling must remain connected to the strength of community.

Fellowship reminds us that missions is never a solitary calling. God sends individuals, but He sustains them through the body of Christ.

Reflection

- Who am I walking closely with in this season?
- Where do I need to invite accountability into my life?
- How can I remain connected to the community God has placed around me?

CHAPTER NINE

Guarding Your Heart on the Mission Field

The mission field is both beautiful and challenging.

Serving God among different cultures, languages, and communities can be deeply rewarding. Yet it can also stretch the heart in unexpected ways.

Those who go into missions must learn not only how to serve others, but also how to guard their own hearts.

The Bible speaks often about the importance of protecting the inner life.

“Above all else, guard your heart, for everything you do flows from it.”

— Proverbs 4:23

Our hearts are the source of our motivation, our emotions, and our spiritual strength. When the heart becomes weary or wounded, it affects every part of life and ministry.

Missionaries may face many challenges: cultural adjustment, loneliness, misunderstanding, spiritual opposition, or physical exhaustion. These experiences can slowly wear down the inner life if they are not handled with wisdom.

Guarding your heart means learning to return regularly to the presence of God.

Jesus often withdrew from the crowds to spend time alone with the Father.

“But Jesus often withdrew to lonely places and prayed.”
— Luke 5:16

If even Jesus needed time away to renew His strength in prayer, how much more do we need that same rhythm in our lives?

Healthy boundaries are also essential for those serving cross-culturally. New environments, unfamiliar expectations, and the intensity of ministry can blur emotional, relational, and spiritual lines if we are not attentive.

Emotional boundaries help us recognize what we are responsible for—and what we are not—so we do not carry burdens God never asked us to carry.

Relational boundaries protect our integrity and prevent unhealthy attachments, especially when navigating cultural differences.

Spiritual boundaries guard the inner life, ensuring that our devotion to Christ remains central even when surrounded by competing beliefs or pressures.

Establishing these boundaries is not self-protection out of fear. It is stewardship of the heart.

Guarding the heart also means remaining honest before God.

When discouragement, frustration, or disappointment arises, we should bring those feelings openly to Him.

“Trust in him at all times, you people; pour out your hearts to him, for God is our refuge.”

— Psalm 62:8

Honesty before God keeps our hearts soft and healthy.

Another powerful protection for the heart is gratitude.

When we intentionally thank God for His faithfulness, it protects us from becoming overwhelmed by challenges.

“Give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus.”

— 1 Thessalonians 5:18

Gratitude keeps our focus on God’s goodness rather than on our difficulties.

The mission field is not sustained by strength alone. It is sustained by a heart that remains close to God.

As we guard our hearts and stay rooted in His presence, we find the strength to continue serving with joy and faithfulness.

And when the inner life remains healthy, the outward work of ministry becomes sustainable for the long journey ahead.

Reflection

- What boundaries do I need to establish or strengthen?
- Where is my heart feeling weary or vulnerable?
- How can I return to God’s presence for renewal?

CHAPTER TEN

Being Sent, Not Self-Appointed

Throughout Scripture, those who serve God in significant ways are not self-appointed. They are called and sent.

One of the clearest examples appears in the early church when Paul and Barnabas were commissioned for missionary work.

When Paul and Barnabas were sent out, it happened within the context of worship, prayer, and fasting among the believers.

“While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, ‘Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.’ So after they had fasted and prayed, they placed their hands on them and sent them off.”

— Acts 13:2

In today’s missions culture, there is a subtle but serious danger of “self-sending”—stepping out in our own enthusiasm rather than in God’s commissioning and the covering of spiritual authority.

Throughout Scripture, we see a clear pattern: those who serve God in significant ways are not self-appointed. They are called and sent.

There is an important difference between a sincere desire to serve God and a clear commissioning from Him. Both are good, but they are not the same.

*God is not looking for people
who are eager to go.*

*He is looking for hearts
He can trust to send.*

Sometimes believers feel a deep passion for missions and assume that passion alone means it is time to go. Yet in the Kingdom of God, timing matters just as much as willingness.

The apostle Paul asked a powerful question when speaking about those who proclaim the gospel:

“How can they preach unless they are sent?”
— Romans 10:15

Being sent means more than simply deciding to go. It involves God's direction, His timing, and often the confirmation of the church community.

In the early church, believers did not appoint themselves to ministry roles. They were recognized, prepared, and then commissioned by others who could see the calling on their lives.

So, after they had fasted and prayed, they placed their hands on them and sent them off.

This moment reveals something very important about the way God works. Paul and Barnabas already carried the call of God on their lives, but their sending was confirmed and recognized by the community of believers around them.

They were not simply acting on personal desire. Their mission was affirmed through prayer, discernment, and the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

This pattern provides wisdom for those preparing for missions today.

When God truly calls someone, He often confirms that calling through others who are spiritually mature. Leaders, mentors, and trusted believers can recognize the fruit of God's work in a person's life. They can help discern whether the timing is right and whether the preparation is complete.

This kind of confirmation protects both the individual and the work of the gospel.

Without it, people may move ahead too quickly, relying on passion rather than preparation. But when a person is truly sent, there is a sense of peace, unity, and agreement among those who know them well.

Being sent also carries accountability. When others have prayed for you, supported you, and affirmed your calling, you do not walk alone. You carry the strength of the community that stands behind you.

Missions is not about proving our dedication to God. It is about faithfully responding to His leading.

When the Lord sends someone, He prepares the way before them. He aligns circumstances, confirms direction, and provides the support needed for the journey.

There is great peace in knowing that you are walking in God's timing rather than your own.

For those sensing a call to missions, patience is often part of the preparation. Waiting seasons may feel slow, but they are rarely wasted. God uses those times to deepen character, strengthen faith, and refine motives.

When the moment of sending finally comes, it will not feel forced or uncertain. There will be a quiet confidence that the Lord Himself has opened the door.

And when God sends you, He also goes before you.

Reflection:

- Am I being driven by passion, or led by God's commissioning?
- What signs of God's timing and confirmation am I seeing?
- How can I posture my heart to be sent rather than to send myself?

CHAPTER ELEVEN

Sustained for the Journey

The call to missions does not end when you step onto the field.

In many ways, it is only the beginning.

Preparation is important, but the journey itself will continue to shape and refine you. The life of a missionary is not sustained by enthusiasm alone. It is sustained by the grace and faithfulness of God.

When God calls someone, He does not simply send them and leave them to manage the work on their own. He promises to walk with them, guide them, and strengthen them along the way.

Jesus gave this assurance to His followers just before He commissioned them:

“Surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”
— Matthew 28:20

This promise remains the foundation of every mission journey.

Wherever God sends you, He goes with you.

There will be moments on the mission field that feel deeply joyful. You may see lives transformed, prayers answered, and communities touched by the love of Christ. These moments remind us why the work of the gospel is so beautiful.

But there will also be seasons that feel difficult.

There may be cultural barriers, unexpected challenges, spiritual opposition, or times of loneliness. Even the apostle Paul experienced hardship as he carried the gospel to new places.

He wrote openly about these struggles:

“We are hard pressed on every side but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed.”— 2 Corinthians 4:8–9

Paul’s words remind us that the work of the gospel has always included both joy and challenge. Yet even in difficulty, God’s sustaining grace remains constant.

Missionaries are not sustained by their own strength. They are sustained by the presence of the Lord.

There will be moments when you feel tired, uncertain, or overwhelmed by the needs around you. In those moments it is important to remember that the work does not depend on your ability alone.

God never asks us to carry His mission by ourselves.

The prophet Isaiah spoke of the strength that God gives to those who rely on Him:

“Those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint.”
— Isaiah 40:31

This promise has encouraged countless believers who have served God in difficult places.

Renewal comes when we return again and again to the presence of God.

The habits developed during preparation—prayer, time in Scripture, worship, and listening to the Holy Spirit—continue to sustain us on the field. These practices are not simply part of preparation; they become the lifeline that keeps our hearts strong.

It is also important to remember that the results of mission work ultimately belong to God.

Sometimes we may see immediate fruit from our efforts. At other times the impact of our work may remain hidden for many years. Seeds planted in faith often grow quietly beneath the surface before they become visible.

Paul reminded the early church of this truth:

“I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God has been making it grow.”
— 1 Corinthians 3:6

Our role is faithfulness. God’s role is growth.

When we release the pressure to produce results and simply remain faithful to what God has asked us to do, we find peace. We are no longer striving to prove ourselves. Instead, we are partnering with the One who is already at work.

The journey of missions is not about extraordinary individuals accomplishing great things. It is about ordinary people trusting an extraordinary God.

He prepares the heart in the hidden place.
He empowers through His Spirit.
He confirms the calling through His people.
And He sustains those He sends.

If you sense the Lord leading you toward missions, remember that preparation is not something to rush. Allow God to shape your heart, strengthen your faith, and deepen your dependence on Him.

When the time comes for you to go, you will not go alone.

The One who calls you will walk with you every step of the journey.

And the God who sends you will also sustain you.

In the end, the journey of missions always brings us back to where we began: the work God is doing within us. Missions is not first about going — it is about becoming. It is about allowing God to shape a heart that can carry His love, His compassion, and His endurance into every place He sends us.

When we let Him form us from the inside out, we discover that the strength to persevere does not come from our own resolve, but from the One who walks with us, sustains us, and continues to make us more like Christ along the way.

CHAPTER TWELVE

A Life Sent:

Still Walking the Journey

When I first sensed the call of God toward missions, I could never have imagined where the journey would lead.

Like many others who feel that stirring in their hearts, I began with enthusiasm and a willingness to step out in faith. Yet over the years I discovered that the life of following God is not defined by a single moment of decision. It is a lifelong journey of learning, growing, and trusting Him more deeply.

Today, at eighty-one years of age, I find myself still walking that journey.

And I can honestly say that I love the life God has given me.

My days are quieter now than some of the earlier seasons of travel and ministry, but they are rich with the same presence of God that has guided me through every step of the path. My fellowship with Jesus has become the centre of my life, and I treasure the time I spend with Him each day.

I am also deeply grateful for the fellowship of other believers who walk alongside me. Over the years I have learned that the Christian life was never meant to be lived alone. Encouragement, prayer, and shared faith strengthen us in ways we cannot fully experience by ourselves.

Looking back, I am thankful that I chose to step out in faith when God first began to stir my heart.

There were moments of uncertainty along the way. There were challenges, cultural adjustments, and lessons learned through experience. Yet each step revealed more of God's faithfulness.

Over the years I have had the privilege of participating in more than twenty mission trips across Africa, Asia, and the United Kingdom. Each journey carried its own stories, friendships, and moments where God moved in ways that only He could orchestrate.

Those experiences shaped my life in ways I could never have planned.

Yet the adventure has never truly been about travel or activity. The greatest joy has always been walking with the Lord and seeing how He works through ordinary people who are willing to trust Him.

Even now, the sense of mission has not faded.

In this season of life, I find myself continuing the journey in new ways. Writing, encouraging others, and sharing the lessons God has taught me have become part of the calling He has placed on my life.

I still believe that God loves to lead His people into new adventures with Him.

The form those adventures take may change over time, but the heart of the calling remains the same: to love Him, to trust Him, and to serve wherever He leads.

I look toward the future with gratitude and expectation.

There may yet be more journeys ahead, more opportunities to encourage others, and more ways to participate in the work of God's Kingdom. Life with God is never static. He continues to lead, guide, and surprise us as we walk with Him.

If there is one thing I would say to anyone sensing the call of God on their life, it is this:

Do not be afraid to step out in faith.

The journey may take you to places you never expected, but you will discover along the way that God is faithful. He prepares the heart, opens the doors, and sustains those who trust Him.

And the adventure of walking with Him never truly ends.

Looking back over the years, I see not a life of my own plans, but a journey shaped by the faithful hand of God. Each step of obedience opened doors I could never have imagined, and every season brought new lessons of trust. If my story encourages you in any way, let it be this: God delights in leading ordinary people who are willing to trust Him. When we place our lives in His hands, the adventure of walking with Him becomes richer and more meaningful than anything we could have planned for ourselves.

Reflection

- Where might God be inviting me to step forward in faith?
- How can I remain open to His leading in every season of life?

- What story of God's faithfulness is He writing through my life?

A Prayer of Surrender and Commission

Heavenly Father,

Thank You for the call You place upon the lives of Your people. Thank You that before You send us into the world, You patiently prepare our hearts in the hidden place.

Lord, I offer my life to You again.

Search my heart and purify my motives. Remove any desire to prove myself, and replace it with a deep love for You and for the people You send me to serve.

Teach me to walk closely with Your Spirit. Strengthen my prayer life and help me remain faithful in the quiet places where character is formed.

Give me ears that hear Your voice clearly. Help me to wait for Your timing and to trust Your guidance in every step of the journey.

Surround me with wise and faithful believers who will encourage, support, and confirm Your work in my life.

Prepare me, Lord, not only to go, but to remain faithful wherever You lead.

If You send me far from home, give me courage and humility. If You ask me to serve in hidden places, give me joy and contentment. Let my life reflect the love of Christ in every circumstance.

And when the journey becomes difficult, remind me that I am never alone. You are the One who calls, the One who sends, and the One who sustains.

May my life bring honour to Your name and may many people come to know Your love through the work You do in and through me.

I place my life in Your hands.

Here I am, Lord.
Send me.

Amen.

Final Blessing

May the Lord prepare your heart in the hidden place.
May He strengthen your spirit through His Word and His presence.

May He surround you with wise voices that confirm His calling in your life.

And when the time comes to go,
may you walk forward with humility, courage,
and complete trust in the One who sends you.

Because the God who calls you
is the same God who goes before you,
walks beside you,
and sustains you every step of the journey.

*Before God entrusts you with
nations,
He prepares your heart in
the hidden place.*

About the Author

Sylvia Suhr has spent many years walking a life of faith, obedience, and mission. Over the course of her journey she has participated in more than twenty mission trips across Africa, Asia, and the United Kingdom, sharing the gospel, encouraging believers, and witnessing the transforming power of God in many cultures and communities.

Her passion has always been to help others discover the joy of walking closely with Jesus and responding to His call with courage and humility. Through her writing, she seeks to pass on the lessons God has taught her about surrender, spiritual formation, and the quiet preparation that takes place before God sends His people into the world.

Now in her eighties, Sylvia continues to live with a heart for missions. She spends her time writing, encouraging others in their faith, and sharing the wisdom gained through decades of walking with the Lord. Her desire is to see the next generation of believers prepared, strengthened, and ready to follow wherever God leads. She believes that the adventure of walking with God never truly ends.

Sylvia Suhr lives in Australia and continues to write and encourage others in their walk with Christ.

More Books by Sylvia Suhr

Sylvia Suhr writes to encourage believers to walk closely with God and to discover the freedom, courage, and transformation that come through a life surrendered to Christ.

From Fear to Freedom

Finding Peace in a World Filled with Fear

A gentle and encouraging guide for anyone struggling with anxiety, uncertainty, or fear. Through Scripture, personal experience, and reflections on faith, Sylvia shows how trusting God can lead to lasting peace and freedom.

Angelique

A Journey of Becoming

A powerful and moving story of faith, courage, and transformation. This true account reveals how God can reshape a life and bring hope even through the most difficult circumstances.

Connect Online

Visit Sylvia's website for encouragement, reflections,
and updates about her writing and ministry:

www.sylviasdream.com

A Note to the Reader

Thank you for taking the time to read **SENT: Preparing Your Heart for Missions**.

If this book has encouraged you or strengthened your faith, I would be grateful if you would consider sharing it with others who may benefit from it.

One simple way you can help is by leaving a short review on Amazon. Your words help other readers discover the book and allow its message to reach people who may be searching for guidance in their own journey with God.

You can also explore my other books and future releases on my Amazon author page:

<https://www.amazon.com/author/sylviasuhr>

Thank you again for reading, and may the Lord continue to guide and strengthen you as you walk with Him.

With gratitude,

Sylvia Suhr