

Heart Preparation

During college at Texas A&M University, I had recently switched my major to Sociology. I was working on a research paper titled “The Boy and the Fatherless Home”. During my research to find books about the topic, I ran across the book “Father Flanagan of Boys Town”. It was the story of a priest who began taking in orphan and troubled boys into his home in the early 1920’s. My heart felt a twinge even then.

When I moved to Texas and heard of the possibility of a mission trip to Russia, I could feel that twinge again telling me I needed to go, not knowing why or what I would do. Shortly before the announcement of the first mission trip our church took in July 1999 my prayers and thoughts were about kids that needed families. When we went that summer and as I prepared in the spring of that year, I was planning the logistics of the trip and failed to think about the impact it would have on my life. I had prepared everyone else for the ministry at hand, but failed to prepare my heart. After we left and completed our ministry, my heart was broken.

I think God wants us to have our heart broken as we travel and see for ourselves the plight of orphans in Russia and around the world. He wants to change us so we return with a greater understanding of the world around us and the wealth we have living in this country.

Preparing your heart for ministry in Russia is one of the most important things that you can be doing as you anticipate going on this mission trip. If this is your first mission trip, you will not know what to expect but return with a changed heart and a new appreciation of the privileged life that God has given us in America.

Some of the stories you will hear of the plight of children in orphanages and shelters will be difficult. You may see street children in the subways or begging for food. You will get attached to the children you meet. Some of the kids may even ask you to adopt them. This should not make you afraid to go. On the contrary, I’ve had many people come up to me and say, “I just couldn’t go, as I would just want to bring them all home”. I tell them, “...if we don’t go, who will?” Be encouraged as God has led you to go! Now prepare yourself and your heart through prayers over the next few weeks prior to our mission trip.

As you ready your heart through prayer, I have written some short devotionals in the following pages to help prepare you for the coming trip. Please include these in you daily prayer time and scripture reading and remember the following verse;

*“Be of good courage, and he shall strengthen your heart,
all ye that hope in the Lord” – Psalms 31:24*

Timing

Four Weeks until Departure

Three Weeks until Departure

Two Weeks until Departure

One Week until Departure

Devotional Title

Strategic Harvest

Strategic Change of Heart

Strategic Ways

Strategic Journey