

THE NATIONS

Collegiate Staff Training



Outline

- I. The Nations**
What are the origins of the nations? What is the role of the nations in God's plans for humanity?
 - II. Developing World Vision**
How can you reach the world through your campus?
 - III. The Nations within Our Nation**
How do we cross the cultural and ethnic boundaries within America?
 - IV. Mobilizing and Recruiting**
How did Jesus recruit? How do we go about inviting others to join our vision and mission?
 - V. The Results of Sending and Going**
What happens to a local ministry that is involved globally?
- Appendix:** When Culture, Ethnicity, and the Gospel Intersect

- I. THE NATIONS**
 - A. The Nations (on your own)**

B. The Nations (selected passages)

Using your Bible, concordance and other reference materials and software, use the following passages to study the nations. Look at race, ethnicity, peoples, and so forth. Focus your study on the *origins of the nations*, *the Gospel and the nations*, and *God's plans for the nations*. Record your observations.

Verses/Passages	Observations
Genesis 1:27, 10:1-11:9, 15:12-18, 17:5	
Exodus 19:3-6	
Leviticus 18:1-5, 24-28	
Deuteronomy 7:1-2, 6-8, 9:26, 12:29-30, 26:18-19, 32:8	
Judges 2:20-23	
1 Kings 8:59-60	
Job 12:23	
Psalms 2:1-12, 67:1-7, 72:17-19, 86:9, 96:1-10, 117:1-2	
Isaiah 11:10, 14:26-27, 19:24-25, 42:1, 45:1, 49:6, 51:4-5, 54:3, 55:5, 61:4-6	
Jeremiah 1:5	
Ezekiel 36:22-23	
Daniel 4:17, 7:13-14	
Hosea 2:23	
Amos 9:7	
Habakkuk 2:14	
Haggai 2:7	
Zechariah 2:11	
Malachi 1:11	
Matthew 12:18-21, 13:14-15, 24:14, 24:30-31, 25:32, 28:18-20	
Luke 2:30-32, 24:45-48	
John 3:16	
Acts 1:8, 2:1-12, 10:34-35, 14:16, 15:7-9, 17:26-28, 28:28-29	
Romans 1:5, 4:18, 9:23-25, 10:12, 11:1, 11-15, 25, 15:8-12, 17-19, 16:25-27	
Galatians 3:7-9, 14, 28	
1 Peter 2:9-10	
Revelation 2:26, 5:9-10, 7:9, 14:6, 21:3-4, 24-26, 22:1-2	

C. In Summary

1. First, define *nations* from the original Hebrew and Greek words used in the Bible.
2. Summarize your findings from the scriptures you studied and pick out your best 5-10 passages on building your convictions on the nations.

D. For Thought and Reflection

1. What is God's heart for the nations?
2. What are some roots of ethnocentrism?
3. What do the Scriptures say about race and ethnicity?
4. How much of your personal identity and value is in your ethnic/cultural/national background?
5. How do you feel about your ethnic identity?

E. Thinking it Through

Write out a brief summary of what you believe about the nations and the Gospel.

II. DEVELOPING A WORLD VISION

A. Looking at Where You are Being Called (Our Global Destination)

What do you learn from the following verses?

- Habakkuk 2:14
- Matthew 24:14
- Revelation 7:9, 10

B. Assessing Your Current Role (Your Current Global Positioning)

Write a paragraph about your current role in the Great Commission and what you believe your role should be.

C. From Current Role to Global Calling (Current Position to Global Destination)

In order to reach your global calling from your current role, let's consider how we might be able to incorporate the following levels of action into our lives and ministries.

1. Entry Level of Engagement:

- **Embracing**

- Matthew 9:35-36
- John 3:16
- 2 Peter 3:9
- Acts 1:8

Globalization begins with us embracing God's heart for the ethnos. Where are you in embracing the nations, people groups, and cultures around the world and in America?

- **Praying**

- Matthew 9:37-38

Embracing God's heart through prayer builds our vision for the world. How are the nations, international and local ethnic groups voiced in your prayers?

- **Giving**

- Matthew 6:19-21
- Romans 15:23-28

Where we give resources speaks to where our hearts are in our global destiny. How does your giving reflect your heart's response to the love and goodness of God? How do your giving and attitude regarding possessions reflect God's heart for the nations?

In Summary

How can you help your student friends grow in the areas of embracing the nations, praying for the nations and giving so that the Kingdom of Jesus may advance into the nations?

2. Mobility Level of Engagement:

- **Going**

- Mark 16:15
- Matthew 28:18-20

Going is to be a natural response to fulfilling the Great Commission. What are you doing or what have you done to advance the Gospel into another nation or people group (locally or internationally)?

- **Sending**

- Acts 13:2-3

Releasing and launching members of our community into the harvest field is essential. How are you designing your ministry and posturing yourself to be able to send students into the nations?

- **Taking**

- Mark 3:14–15
- 2 Timothy 4:11

We follow Jesus' model in bringing others with us. Who would you like to be with you in an opportunity to minister to the nations? How could this happen?

In Summary

What steps could be taken so that 1) your students go overseas or across the street, 2) your campus ministry helps send people locally or internationally, and 3) you as a leader take others with you as you advance the Gospel of Jesus into the nations?

3. Sustainability Level of Engagement:

- **Promoting**

- John 4:31-38

Raising the awareness and stirring the hearts of others to get involved in the harvest is necessary. How would you assess yourself as one who promotes missions, whether locally or internationally?

- **Partnering**

- Philippians 4:14–17
- 1 Thessalonians 2& 3

Participating in missions doesn't have to be a singular event. It can become a lifetime partnership with others. As a staff team, discuss what opportunities there are to form long-term partnerships globally.

- **Founding**

- Isaiah 58:12
- Isaiah 61:1-4

We can participate in laying the foundations for a new ministry in another culture. Are there any cultures, places, or people groups where you sense God may have you help lay the foundations of a new ministry?

In Summary

How can you trust God to become one who promotes our mission to the nations, one who partners with a nation, and one who helps lay foundations of the Gospel to a new nation or people group? What would help you move in this direction?

III. THE NATIONS WITHIN OUR NATION

A. Read Acts 10 and Acts 15

Focus on Acts 10 (how the Gospel grew and spread among the Gentiles) and Acts 15 (how the Apostles related to the work among Gentiles), but draw from the rest of your study as well.

1. How did the Gospel spread to the Gentiles?
2. How did the Jewish Christians re-evaluate their values, convictions and practices to help see that the Gospel spread in its purity?
3. What could have been the long-range impact if the Council in Jerusalem had come to different conclusions?

B. Life as an Ethnic Minority

Do a study on **Samaritans**.

Use a concordance or Bible software to look up and study passages on who the Samaritans were. Use other reference materials to learn about their origins, culture, and relationship to Jews. From your study and research, answer the following:

1. What may it have been like to be a Samaritan in the time of Christ?
2. What kinds of attitudes do you think Jesus' followers had towards the Samaritans? How do you think Jesus challenged their thinking?
3. How do you think the Gospel was communicated to the Samaritans? What would have been similar/different from the way it was communicated to the Jews? What would have been similar/different from the way it was communicated to other Gentiles?
4. How did Jesus interact and relate with the Samaritan culture?
5. What do you think it took for the church to move from its cultural conditioning to one of Kingdom values as it pertained to the Samaritans?

IV. MOBILIZING AND RECRUITING

A. The God Who Invites

What do the following passages teach about God's character, His nature, and what He invites people into?

- Genesis 1:27
- Genesis 12:1-3
- Matthew 28:18-20

B. The Example of Jesus

What do the following passages say about how Jesus recruited?

- Matthew 5:1-16
- Mark 1:14-20
- Luke 6:12-16
- John 1:32-51

C. People as Instruments in God's Recruiting

Look up the following passages. How does God use people to recruit others into His work?

- Exodus 4:29-31
- 1 Samuel 16:1-13
- 1 Kings 19:15-21
- Acts 13:2-3
- Acts 16:1-3
- 2 Corinthians 5:16-21
- 2 Timothy 2:1-2

V. THE RESULTS OF SENDING AND GOING

A. What Does it Mean to be Sent?

Read the following passages. What do they say regarding being sent?

- Isaiah 6:8-9
- Ezekiel 3:4-11
- Matthew 10:1-16
- Romans 10:13-15

B. Examples of Sent Ones

Abraham, Amos, Jesus, Paul, and Barnabas were all “sent ones.” Find passages of scripture related to each man that answer the following questions:

	Abraham	Amos	Jesus	Paul	Barnabas
Where did he come from?					
Where did he go to?					
Where did he end up?					
Describe his cross-cultural experiences.					
What did he learn through his experiences?					

C. From the Experience of Others

Interview at least two Navigator Staff persons who have either participated in, or led a mission trip overseas or cross-culturally in the U.S.

Ask them about:

- Their experience
- What God did in their life through the experience
- What impact it had on their campus ministry
- How it shaped or changed their view of the Gospel and of advancing the Gospel

D. In Summary

Write a short paper or 3-5 minute message, or make a meaningful video to summarize your convictions and beliefs regarding mobilizing people into the nations.

APPENDIX: WHEN CULTURE, ETHNICITY, AND THE GOSPEL INTERSECT

Setting the Stage

Culture is “an integrated system of beliefs (about God, or reality, or ultimate meaning), of values (about what is true, good, beautiful, and normative), of customs (how to behave, relate to others, talk, pray, dress, work, play, trade, farm, eat, etc.), and of institutions which express these beliefs, values and customs (governments, law courts, temples or churches, family, schools, hospitals, factories, shops, unions, clubs, etc.), which bind a society together and gives it a sense of identity, dignity, security, and continuity.” (Lusanne Committee on World Evangelism, “A Definition of Culture” in the Willowbank Report [LCWE, 1978])

*“Ethnicity is derived from the Greek word ethnos, which literally means tribe, nation or people group. It connotes sharing the same habits or customs. Ethnicity is therefore a common cultural heritage that is maintained by a group of people that distinguishes them from others. Every person has an ethnicity, which is identified by language, social views, common history, rituals, characteristics, customs and beliefs. One’s ethnicity is held in common with other members of one’s group and may be reflected religiously, racially, geographically, culturally or nationally.” (From *The Heart of Racial Justice* by Brenda Salter McNeil and Rick Richardson. InterVarsity Press, © 2004. Pgs. 160-161)*

*Race... “refers to the belief that natural and separate divisions, akin to subspecies, exist within humankind. The commonly held definition of race is ‘any of the different varieties or populations of human beings distinguished by physical traits such as hair, eyes, skin color, body shape, etc.’...” “The concept of race was a social concept used to systematically stigmatize certain people groups as inferior, thus justifying racial slavery, injustice and inequality.” (From *The Heart of Racial Justice* by Brenda Salter McNeil and Rick Richardson. InterVarsity Press, © 2004. Pg. 161)*

Principles of Intercultural Ministry

On the following pages are seven principles of relating cross-culturally. Read through, take note of, and discuss what these ideas mean to you personally and to your staff team. Note what questions emerge as you go through these.

1. The Principle of Dignity

Relating to others with dignity is rooted in the reality that each and every one of us has been created in the image of God. When relating to others of a different ethnos or culture, our default approach tends toward viewing, judging and relating through the lens of our own world view.

When we assume that our way of life, our cultural frame of mind, is the best (if not only) way of living, we fall into the trap of ethnocentrism. This only leads to devaluing others on the premise of who they are. Instead, when we choose dignity, we look at others through the world view of the Kingdom of God. This view looks at people as having an inherent

worth (even if they are fallen). When we choose dignity, we understand and acknowledge our cultural prejudices, and yet suspend passing judgment on another person just because they are different. To cross the ethnic boundaries that divide our campuses and our country, we must be servants who show and model dignity for all peoples.

A. Some Practical Expressions of Dignity

- **Communication** – Entering into dialogue with someone, learning to speak each other’s language.
- **Understanding** – Not just knowing about someone, but learning to see and feel from their point of view.
- **Contribution** – Valuing another’s input and partnership; acknowledging that they have something worthy of giving.
- **Symbolic Acts** – Tapping into the power of acts or events that are loaded with meaning for a people group because of their history.
- **Empowering Acts** – Providing the full range of what a person needs to succeed as a minority in a majority world.
- **Intent and Effects** – Realizing that something I do or say may have a very different impact than I intended.

B. Key Definitions

- **Dignity** – the state or quality of being worthy of honor or respect. ORIGIN *Middle English*: from Old French *dignete*, from Latin *dignitas*, from *dignus* ‘worthy’
- **Value** – the regard that something is held to deserve; the importance or preciousness of something
- **Respect** – a feeling of deep admiration for someone or something elicited by their abilities, qualities, or achievements. (*New Oxford American Dictionary*)
- **Ethnocentrism** – this is an emotional attitude and belief system that maintains that one’s own ethnic group, culture or race is superior to others

(From *The Heart of Racial Justice* by Brenda Salter McNeil and Rick Richardson; InterVarsity Press, ©2004. Pg. 164)

2. The Principle of Empowering

Whenever two or more cultures meet, one will rise up and become the dominate culture. This may come from war, population growth, one people group being the natives and the other travelers, etc. However this comes to pass, there is a strong potential for a power struggle between cultures. The dominant culture, the one wielding the power, will be the one setting the tone, leading in decision making, creating the environments which others live in. Even with the best of intentions, there exist various dynamics that are unconsciously determined. In ministry, this can be the subtle decisions we make– worship styles, fun events, humor, means of communication, teaching styles, etc. As ministers, we must make it one of our goals to bring empowerment to our brothers and sisters. One thing we can do is to help others recognize the inequalities that exist for minorities within the environments the dominant culture creates.

A. Some Practical Out-workings of Empowerment

- **Envisioning** – Enabling another person to birth a vision they will own and that will inspire them.
- **Relating** – Coming along side our brother or sister in Christ. Being there for them and with them. Relating in community, not isolation.
- **Resourcing** – This can include training and development, financing, providing an infrastructure for ministry to occur.
- **Sharing Authority and Power** – Involving others in leadership and decision making processes early enough to give them real ownership.

B. Empowerment in Action

Do you recall the story of Saul’s conversion and how he connected with the Apostles? When Saul, a member of the Pharisees (a dominant culture- religious and political power) tried to contact the Apostles (the sub-dominant culture), the reaction was that of fear. Now Saul, an individual, had become the sub-dominant culture, trying to associate with the Apostles (the accepted leadership of the Church). Barnabas interceded– by associating himself with Saul, listening to him, and then representing and bringing Saul before the Apostles.

3. The Principle of Thinking and Living Like a Missionary

A melting pot of cultures and ideas is only an ideal. The idea that blending multiple cultures into a single greater whole has not truly happened. The individual nations that comprise our nation are still individual nations, possessing their own unique flavors and cultures. And though these nations share our soil and time zones, we must approach relating and ministering to them as though we are crossing the ocean to a foreign nation. We adopt a mindset when relating cross-culturally; it is the attitude of being a learner and an understanding of how to plant the Gospel in and among people who are different from me. We must realize that there is a whole other world view within each person.

Thinking	Living
Recognizing that I live in a multi-ethnic society	Becoming a compassion driven person
Understanding the gap between my world and the world of my neighbor	Living authentically and attractively by the power of the Holy Spirit
Developing skills to connect in relevant and sensitive ways with people	Working with others
Taking initiative to love and befriend people	Being an outsider who has earned a sacred trust with the people around him/her
	Persevering with people
	Being empowered by prayer to reach out to my ethnic minority friends

(Modified from “*Thinking Like a Missionary and Living Like a Missionary*” by Bill Mowry, The Navigators)

4. The Principle of Understanding

“Been there, done that.” We have a shallow experience and assume that we know and understand something or someone. To minister cross-culturally, we need to have an understanding of what it means to understand. Why is it important to understand understanding?

As we seek to advance the Gospel of Jesus and His Kingdom into a very diverse world, it’s easy to oversimplify the process of getting to know others who are different from us, and to overestimate our understanding of them. We call this “assumed familiarity.” It’s easy for us to wrongly assume we know more than we do. Due to the historical influence of the Greek world, we in the West tend to approach understanding through our cognitive faculties. Thus, we read books, have a conversation or two, take a course and think we understand. This approach to understanding is effective, but incomplete. It bypasses experience. I cannot come to understand another person without experiencing them in relationship.

In the Eastern world, like that of the Old Testament Hebrews, knowledge comes through experience. I don’t know something by merely internalizing the idea mentally but rather by experiencing it. Until our understanding engages reality and survives it, our understanding is just theoretical. Genuine understanding is empathetic. Empathetic understanding means that I extend myself to know how an event or condition affects another person; not just their physical environment, but the landscape of their soul. How does a difficult event affect their sense of dignity, value and respect, and their self image? Empathetic understanding means that I choose to care how they are impacted by a condition in their lives.

In Matthew 8:1-3 Jesus chose to touch the leper. Why did Jesus do this when he could have healed him by a word spoken from afar as he did with the centurion’s servant (Matthew 8:5-13)? Touch communicates value, worth and dignity, which are priorities in the Kingdom. Our empathetic understanding touches another’s life with the power of Jesus’ love.

5. The Principle of Embracing/Empathy

Indifference, xenophobia, comfort, isolation, self-protectiveness = attitudes and emotions which are not part of the Kingdom of God. Being servants of Jesus, we cross the cultural and ethnic barriers to embrace those who are different from us. Empathy becomes a driving value and attitude in our relationships. Empathy is the ability to identify with and understand another person’s feelings or difficulties. It was embodied in Jesus – the way He would touch the lepers, or connect with an individual in their real life situations. Empathy touches people where they are, in their world.

The ABC's of Embracing/Empathy

- **Accept others** – don't simply tolerate
- **Belonging** – inviting others into community in a meaningful way
- **Culture** – letting each member influence, shape, and flavor the culture of the group

6. The Principle of Engaging

Advancing the Gospel of Jesus and His Kingdom has never been for spectators. The Great Commission is “Go to” not “Come to.” It's the mind set of apostles. It's the way of missionaries. It's the way you launch into campus ministry. The same is true of ministering across ethnic lines.

To be effective in bringing the Gospel to the ethnic minorities and building a community filled with diverse people groups, we must own the initiative. We cannot expect those we are trying to minister to and build community among to be the ones who reach out to us. We must extend the invitation and open the doors for involvement and participation.

7. The Principle of Trust

What is the key to influence in and among ethnic minorities? Relationships! In many cultures (including historical America), wealth, power, knowledge, experiences, and accomplishments are the keys to influence. But among many of the ethnic groups within our country, relationships are the key to influence. Trust is something that is earned, not assumed.

Some keys to building trust

- **Living in Integrity**– which has to do with identity and acceptance
- **Experiencing Affirmation**– which involves submission and love
- **Trusting Strengths**– which involves vulnerability and permission to speak into one's life
- **Contributing Strengths**– unity, influence, sharing authority and power
- **Protecting Limitations and Weaknesses**– looking out for one another

One reality we face is dealing with the historical sins that our forefathers brought upon the nations within our nation. From slavery and warfare to economics and industry practices, our past has greatly checkered the way we relate in the present. Bringing the Gospel into those areas of historical wounding will be essential to see the Kingdom of God grow and to ensure that trust has room to develop. The other principles, such as, respect and dignity, understanding, and empowerment all work together in helping form, earn and nurture trust.

Summary and Personal Application

Pray through, individually or as a team, each of the seven principles of inter-cultural ministry. Then write down what God is saying to you with regard to multi-cultural ministry.

What has God revealed, clarified or affirmed regarding my...

CALLING (Who I am in Christ, Who we are as Navigators)

CONVICTIONS (What I know and believe)

CHARACTER (Who I'm becoming as I follow and imitate Christ)

COMPETENCIES (What skills I already have and/or need to develop)

CONTRIBUTION (How I minister and serve- now and/or in the future)

What additional step(s) is God prompting me to take as a result of this study in any of these 5 areas?

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