

Cross Cultural Study Guide

Prepared for Travelers Beginning Engagements in
Developing Nations

By Rev. Dr. Lloyd Menke
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Leaders Background Info

Introduction

The objective of this study is to help Christians move successfully through a cross-cultural experience so that they can be better servants to the mission of the engagement. We have personally seen even sophisticated, international travelers struggle with experience of a radically different culture *with extreme poverty*. Studies show that on average, people do not increase their giving after a short-term mission trip experience, even though frequently the trip is cited as 'life changing'.

This begs the question, why engage in short term mission trips? Often the cost of travel exceeds the amount of assistance provided. Is it really some kind of 'mission tourism', sometimes even called 'poverty pornography'?

Successfully traversing this experience so that it truly is life changing – that is in the way people act – requires pre-trip preparation, careful engagement during the trip, and then a plan of debriefing and action oriented engagement after the trip. This guide attempts to address only the actual travel experience portion and from a primarily spiritual point of view.

Understanding Culture Shock

Culture shock arises from the anxiety that comes from losing all familiar signs and symbols of social interaction. These signs are the thousand and one ways in which we orient ourselves to the situations of daily life: when to shake hands and what to say when we meet people, when and how to give tips, how to give orders to servants, how to make purchases, when to accept and when to refuse invitations, when to take statements seriously and when not.

These cues, which may be words, gestures, facial expressions, customs, or norms are acquired by all of us in the course of growing up and are as much a part of our culture as the language we speak or the beliefs we accept. All of us depend for our peace of mind and our efficiency on hundreds of these cues, most of which are unconsciously learned.

When an individual enters a strange culture, all or most of these familiar cues are removed. He or she is like a fish out of water. No matter how broad-minded or full of good will he may be, a series of props have been taken away. This loss of props naturally results in a feeling of frustration and anxiety. People react to the frustration in much the same way. First they reject the environment which causes the discomfort: "the ways of the host country are bad because they make us feel bad."

Phases of Culture Shock

Culture shock (the shock of moving to a foreign country) often consists of distinct phases, though not everyone passes through these phases and not everyone is in the new culture long enough to pass through all three ^[1]:

Honeymoon Phase - During this period the differences between the old and new culture are seen in a romantic light, wonderful and new. For example, in moving to a new country, an individual might love the new foods, the pace of the life, the people's habits, the buildings and so on. During the first few weeks most people are fascinated by the new culture. They associate with the nationals that speak their language and are polite to the foreigners. This period is full of observations and new discoveries. Like many honeymoons this stage eventually ends. ^[2] (*Author's note: sometimes as people stay a few weeks, they may begin to feel that they have stayed too long – they began moving out of the honeymoon phase*)

Negotiation Phase - After some time (usually weeks), differences between the old and new culture become apparent and may create anxiety. One may long for food the way it is prepared in one's native country, may find the pace of life too fast or slow, may find the people's habits annoying, disgusting, and irritating etc. This phase is often marked by mood swings caused by minor issues or without apparent reason. This is where excitement turns to disappointment and more and more differences start to occur. ^[3] Depression is not uncommon.

Adjustment Phase - Again, after some time (usually 6 – 12 months), one grows accustomed to the new culture and develops routines. One knows what to expect in most situations and the host country no longer feels all that new. One becomes concerned with basic living again, and things become more "normal." One starts to develop problem-solving skills for dealing with the culture, and begins to accept the culture ways with a positive attitude. The culture begins to make sense, and negative reactions and responses to the culture are reduced. Reaching this stage requires a constructive response to culture shock with effective means of adaptation.^[4] (from Wikipedia)

- 1st Point Realize that you are in a different place in these phases of culture shock than your guests. In all likelihood those who stay only a week will not make it out of the Honeymoon Phase. Realizing this may give you some patience with "the ugly American" mentality. Almost everyone begins as a tourist – seeing life as quaint, exotic, and even romantic. It is hard to take people's need seriously in this stage. Have patience.
- 2nd Point 60% of all who travel abroad never make it out of the Negotiation Phase. They isolate and refuse to integrate the new culture with their own. For 60% the experience of another culture lasting longer than the Honeymoon Phase is and remains a negative experience! BUT MORE than that it is this same 60% who have the most difficult time readjusting when they come home!
- 3rd Point A review of the literature makes it seem obvious that the ability to deal with culture shock is all about INTEGRATION. Can the person who is experiencing another culture integrate in a way that makes sense for them the difference in attitudes, beliefs, behaviors, values, etc? Isolating DOES NOT help because the experience still happened and when they come home people have had the experience – you can't change that.
- Conclusion These studies are designed to help visitors with the process of integrating their experience. But realize that for a host of reasons beyond your control or mine, there are people who have more natural ability to do this than others. It appears to be a gift like athletics or intelligence

Questions for Everyday Conversations

(These will help you get a sense of what stage your visitors are in – plus help with the crucial work of integration)

- What did you find new and exciting about today?
- Did you find anything surprising or upsetting today? Why?
- Did you notice any behavior's today that suggest a different set of values? How do you think those values will impact business?
- What business opportunities did you see today?

Basically get visitor to reflect on their experiences for the day – however you can do it.

Leadership Challenges During Cross Culture Experiences

Leaders need to be prepared for group reactions that in a different setting would seem out of place. Consider the following:

- 1) Culture shock causes a strong sense of disorientation and therefore even well organized trips may seem to participants as haphazard and mismanaged. Reactions that they wouldn't normally have. These reactions arise from the changes in cultural clues and come as a result of the feelings one experiences.
- 2) People experiencing culture shock may exhibit the following symptoms:
 - Excessive concern over cleanliness and the feeling that what is new and strange is "dirty." This could be in relation to drinking water, food, dishes, and bedding;
 - Fear of physical contact with attendants or servants;
 - A feeling of helplessness and a desire for dependence on long-term residents of one's own nationality;
 - Irritation over delays and other minor frustrations out of proportion to their causes;
 - Delay and outright refusal to learn the language of the host country;
 - Excessive fear of being cheated, robbed, or injured;
 - Great concern over minor pains and eruptions of the skin;
 - And finally, that terrible longing to be back home, to be in familiar surroundings, to visit

one's relatives, and, in general, to talk to people who really "make sense."

Readiness

While it is impossible to predict who will have a positive cross cultural experience, it is possible to identify some characteristics and issues that put a person at risk for having a poor cross cultural experience. These characteristics can be broadly grouped in three major areas: Personality traits, Family Issues, and Cross Cultural Knowledge and Skills.

Personality Traits

Traits considered highly desirable, and about which there has been broad research agreement, include

- empathy
- respect
- interest in local culture
- tolerance (or, in some lists, "tolerance for ambiguity")
- flexibility
- initiative
- open-mindedness
- sociability
- positive self-image

It is important to underscore that these personality traits do not guarantee a positive experience cross cultural experience. Rather, lack of them these characteristics puts and individual at a higher risk of a poor cross cultural experience.

Those considering a cross cultural experience should honestly ask themselves, "Do I possess these traits?"

Personal and Family Issues

- When contemplating a trip, it is helpful to take into consideration one's personal situation and any family issues. A cross cultural experience is not a vacation. To engage another culture takes a lot of energy. Ask yourself:
- Are there at this time any practical issues that require my sustained attention, such as a bankruptcy, lawsuit, divorce, property sale, aged parent, or sustained illness of a close relative?
- What is my family and spouses attitude and readiness for my participation in this trip?
- Do you have a special need — medical, physical, psychological, educational, sports,

etc. — that might be very difficult to satisfy on the trip?

- What are my expectations? Do I have hopes that a novel environment will help with some other personal issue in my life?

Cross Cultural Knowledge and Skills

While not exhaustive, the list below provides some basic insight into the kind of cultural knowledge and skills that have proven helpful. Ask yourself:

- Do you have a basic understanding of how cultures are similar and how cultures are different?
- Do you have some general knowledge the structures and mental maps about cultures?
- Do you have knowledge about economic and legal systems, norms for social interaction, religious beliefs, aesthetic values, and language in different cultures?
- Do you have the capability to adapt verbal and nonverbal behavior so it is appropriate for different cultures?
- It includes having
- Do you have the flexibility to adapt your behavior to a variety of situations?
- Are you intoned to the social clues of others? Can you change both your verbal and nonverbal behavior based on clues from others in a specific interaction or a specific setting?

Bible Studies

Day 1: Burdens and Rest

Matthew 11:28-30 'Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest ²⁹Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls ³⁰For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light'

The flight over for most people is exhausting. It is good on the first night to know that God provides rest. We can rest in God's hands not only for the night, but for the whole experience. There is a natural and non-threatening tie here to luggage. Isn't it great to set the luggage down? There is a book about what it was like to be a soldier in Vietnam is entitled The Things They Carried. The author starts out by talking about what was in their packs – but as the book unfolds it is clear they carried many other burdens. Everyone comes with burdens.

Questions:

- What are the burdens we are carrying?
- What helps give your burdens over to God?
- When we are weighed down it is hard to experience something new. What helps you to be freed to open up to seeing and experiencing in a new way?
- This verse talks about setting down our burdens and taking up new ones. What do you think that means in this context?

Prayer Suggestions:

- For ease of burdens and openness to new experiences.

Day 2: Neighborly and Patronizing

Luke 10:25-37: Just then a lawyer stood up to test Jesus "Teacher," he said, "what must I do to inherit eternal life?" He said to him, "What is written in the law? What do you read there?" He answered, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbor as yourself." And he said to him, "You have given the right answer; do this, and you will live."

But wanting to justify himself, he asked Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?" Jesus replied, "A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell into the hands of robbers, who stripped him, beat him, and went away, leaving him half dead. Now by chance a priest was going down that road; and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. So likewise a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. But a Samaritan while traveling came near him; and when he saw him, he was moved with pity. He went to him and bandaged his wounds, having poured oil and wine on them. Then he put him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him. The next day he took out two denarii, gave them to the innkeeper, and said, 'Take care of him; and when I come back, I will repay you whatever more you spend.' Which of these three, do you think, was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of the robbers?" He said, "The one who showed him mercy." Jesus said to him, "Go and do likewise."

The most powerful sermon I heard preached on this was in the late 1960's in the middle of the civil rights movement in Georgia. It was by a white preacher to a primarily white congregation. The sermon simply retold the parable but the man traveling was not from Jerusalem to Jericho but from Atlanta to Selma. The man who fell among robbers was white, those who passed by on the other side were white, and the Samaritan was black. In the late 1960's, in Georgia, this was quite a sermon!

While race relations are not quite as "hot" now as they were in the late 1960's there is still power in hearing it in a modern context. If we dare to see this not as just a story about the crazy Jews of Jesus time that couldn't get along and looked down on others, the power of this parable breaks loose.

There is a "dangerous altruism" in this parable as Dr Martin Luther King first spoke about in 1958. King rejected patronizing charity in favor of compassion and respect for poor people's capacity for social action. In a 1960 sermon King had the Samaritan ask, "If I do not stop and help this man, what will happen to him?"

From a Cheetah Development travel planning document:

You need to think about why you are going. We are not going to work – they don't need laborers. We are not going with handouts – we are trying

to set people free from a culture of dependency. We are not going to give advice – we don't understand enough to do so and people aren't going to share their needs right away. We have to first earn the right to hear. After that we can earn the right to be heard. Otherwise it is just patronizing. If not to work, nor to give, nor to advise, why are you going?

Questions:

- What is the most powerful interpretation you have heard on this parable? Why?
- Does this parable change when you hear it with a black man helping a white man? How?
- In what ways do racial understandings impact your conceptions?
- What does it mean to help? Are there ways that one can help that provide dignity and honor the ability of those who are poor?
- If you do not help, what will become of the Tanzanians?
- What does it mean to help? What is your role? What do you need to do to not be patronizing?

Prayer Suggestions:

- For racial awareness and the wisdom to discover how to positively help?

Day 3: Freedom and Slavery

1 Corinthians 9:19-22: For though I am free with respect to all, I have made myself a slave to all, so that I might win more of them. To the Jews I became as a Jew, in order to win Jews. To those under the law I became as one under the law (though I myself am not under the law) so that I might win those under the law. To those outside the law I became as one outside the law (though I am not free from God's law but am under Christ's law) so that I might win those outside the law. To the weak I became weak, so that I might win the weak I have become all things to all people, so that I might by any means save some. I do it all for the sake of the gospel, so that I may share in its blessings.

Every parent knows that when a baby comes into a home a kind of slavery takes place. That may sound a little strong, but in the first year, life really revolves around a baby's needs. We don't normally think of it as slavery because parent's love their children. For the sake of love we give up some freedoms (perhaps as a result of sheer

exhaustion as well), our life style changes, perhaps even some of our values. Paul talks about giving up freedoms for the sake of the gospel. In order to communicate the gospel better he adapts himself to the people he is with. To the Jews he becomes as a Jew. Setting others needs ahead of your own is not easy. Doing what one can to understand the lifestyle, values and perspective of people who are different from you can be exhausting. But, Paul says there are things that make do so worthwhile. Love compels him – love of God – love of the gospel – love for the people he is trying to reach in the name of Jesus.

Questions:

- Did you find yourself giving up freedoms and becoming a bit of a slave when you had a baby?
- Have there been other times when you have set your needs aside for the sake of others? What helped you do so?
- What will help you to take Paul's advice and to let Tanzanians become like a Tanzanian in order that you may help them more fully?

Prayer Suggestions:

- For the openness and ability to set aside personal comfort for the sake of learning and helping the Tanzanians.

Day 4: Majesty and Poverty

(Or for a Beautiful Night in the Country)

*Psalms 8: O Lord, our Sovereign,
how majestic is your name in all the earth!*

*You have set your glory above the heavens
Out of the mouths of babes and infants
you have founded a bulwark because of your foes,
to silence the enemy and the avenger.*

*When I look at your heavens, the work of your fingers,
the moon and the stars that you have established;
what are human beings that you are mindful of them,
mortals that you care for them?*

*Yet you have made them a little lower than God,
and crowned them with glory and honour.*

You have given them dominion over the works of your hands;

*you have put all things under their feet,
all sheep and oxen,
and also the beasts of the field,
the birds of the air, and the fish of the sea,
whatever passes along the paths of the seas.*

*O Lord, our Sovereign,
how majestic is your name in all the earth!*

When you are away from all the city lights the stars just “pop” at night, especially in the ‘dark continent’ it is easy to see the Majesty of God! We can seem so small when compared to the universe – compared to the billions upon billions of stars. Yet, God has made us a little lower than the angels. This is a God who rules over ALL the earth. This is a Big God. He rules over Tanzania. He has made all the creatures of the earth. He has given dominion to ALL peoples. He has made the Tanzanian people a little lower than the angels.

Questions:

- Talk about the majesty of God
- Was there anything recently in your life that made you feel small? Why?
- What helps you know that you are honored, loved, and valued by God?
- What helps you see others who are very different from you as honored, loved, and valued by God?
- What gets in the way?

Prayer Suggestions:

- The ability to see Jesus face in the people of Tanzania.

Day 5: Culture and Mission

John 4: Now when Jesus learned that the Pharisees had heard, ‘Jesus is making and baptizing more disciples than John’— although it was not Jesus himself but his disciples who baptized— he left Judea and started back to Galilee. But he had to go through Samaria. So he came to a Samaritan city called Sychar, near the plot of ground that Jacob had given to his son Joseph. Jacob’s well was there, and Jesus, tired out by his journey, was sitting by the well. It was about noon.

A Samaritan woman came to draw water, and Jesus said to her, ‘Give me a drink.’ (His disciples had gone to the city to buy food). The Samaritan woman said to him, ‘How is it that you, a Jew, ask a drink of me, a woman of Samaria?’ (Jews do not share things in common with Samaritans). Jesus answered her, ‘If you knew the gift of God, and who it is that is saying to you, “Give me a drink”, you would have asked him, and he would have given you living water.’ The woman said to him, ‘Sir, you have no bucket, and the well is deep. Where do you get that living water? Are you greater than our ancestor Jacob, who gave us the well, and with his sons and his flocks drank from it?’ Jesus said to her, ‘Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again, but those who drink of the water that I will give them will never be thirsty. The water that I will give will become in them a spring of water gushing up to eternal life.’ The woman said to him, ‘Sir, give me this water, so that I may never be thirsty or have to keep coming here to draw water.’

Jesus said to her, ‘Go, call your husband, and come back.’ The woman answered him, ‘I have no husband.’ Jesus said to her, ‘You are right in saying, “I have no husband”; for you have had five husbands, and the one you have now is not your husband. What you have said is true!’ The woman said to him, ‘Sir, I see that you are a prophet. Our ancestors worshipped on this mountain, but you say that the place where people must worship is in Jerusalem.’ Jesus said to her, ‘Woman, believe me, the hour is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. You worship what you do not know; we worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews. But the hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father seeks such as these to worship him. God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth.’ The woman said to him, ‘I know that Messiah is coming’ (who is called Christ) ‘When he comes, he will proclaim all things to us’ Jesus said to her, ‘I am he, the one who is speaking to you.’

Just then his disciples came. They were astonished that he was speaking with a woman, but no one said, ‘What do you want?’ or, ‘Why are you speaking with her?’ Then the woman left her water-jar and went back to the city. She said to the people, ‘Come and see a man who told me everything I have ever done! He cannot be the Messiah, can he?’ They left the city and were on their way to him.

Meanwhile the disciples were urging him, 'Rabbi, eat something.' But he said to them, 'I have food to eat that you do not know about.' So the disciples said to one another, 'Surely no one has brought him something to eat?' Jesus said to them, 'My food is to do the will of him who sent me and to complete his work. Do you not say, "Four months more, then comes the harvest"? But I tell you, look around you, and see how the fields are ripe for harvesting. The reaper is already receiving wages and is gathering fruit for eternal life, so that sower and reaper may rejoice together. For here the saying holds true, "One sows and another reaps" I sent you to reap that for which you did not labor. Others have labored, and you have entered into their labor.'

Many Samaritans from that city believed in him because of the woman's testimony, 'He told me everything I have ever done.' So when the Samaritans came to him, they asked him to stay with them; and he stayed there for two days. And many more believed because of his word. They said to the woman, 'It is no longer because of what you said that we believe, for we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this is truly the Saviour of the world.'

I went to school in at the seminary in Berkeley, CA for part of my training. When I was there one night I took a wrong freeway exit by mistake and found myself in a "wrong part of town." I was in a section of Oakland that was a place few whites enter, especially that time of night. As I was stopped at a stoplight waiting to get back on the freeway, I suddenly found my car surround by a group of young black males. They were not happy. They were shouting expletives, and one pounded on my car. It didn't take me long to realize that this was not a good situation. I didn't wait for the light to turn. I "busted" the light and got out of there!

Jesus finds himself in "hostile" territory. Jews and Samaritans didn't share things in common. They generally didn't speak to one another. There was racial tension. This makes Jesus' action all the more surprising. We have all heard about the societal taboos about men and women sharing conversation in Jesus time. According to all common understandings about how people interact, this conversation with the Samaritan woman should not have taken place. Yet, Jesus breaks the societal taboos. He risks a hostile encounter and response from this woman. Why,

bother? Why complicate his life? Why risk misunderstanding, or worse? His disciples misunderstand.

For Jesus there was something more important at stake. He had "food to eat that they did not know about". Jesus had a mission that knew no cultural boundaries. He still had to deal with cultural and societal expectations and understandings, but rather than being defined by them, he found ways to carry out his mission in spite of them. The harvest was ripe!

Questions:

- Have you ever found yourself in an uncomfortable situation involving people of a different culture or race? So if, so how has that experience informed your cross cultural interactions?
- Jesus and Samaritan women had difficulty understanding each other. In part of course, because Jesus was talking about spiritual things and the Samaritan woman was thinking in earthly terms. Communication can be difficult among people of the same culture it can be doubly difficult with people who do not speak the same language. What has been your experience in trying to communicate? What has been your reaction? Do you keep trying? If so, what gives you the energy to keep trying?
- Jesus saw fields ripe with harvest? What fields do you see ripe?
- Jesus was moved by his mission AND by his love for the Samaritans. He didn't allow cultural issues to stand in his way. How is God calling you to mission and to love the people of Tanzania?
- What is your culture that you might confuse with mission?

Prayer Suggestions:

- That God might remove the barriers to communication and understanding.

Day 6: Prophets and Blindness

Amos 8:4-6

*Hear this, you that trample on the needy,
and bring to ruin the poor of the land,
saying, "When will the new moon be over
so that we may sell grain;
and the sabbath,*

*so that we may offer wheat for sale?
We will make the ephah small and the shekel
great,
and practice deceit with false balances,
buying the poor for silver
and the needy for a pair of sandals,
and selling the sweepings of the wheat"*

Abstracted from the Cheetah Development
blogspot:

We're on a mission to solve an important puzzle: unlocking the mysteries of hunger in Africa. There's not a shortage of food but people are hungry. To understand, we're drilling into one part of the value chain of maize in one region of Tanzania. When we look briefly at the maize farmers, traders, and mills, we quickly find that the farmers can't sell their product and the mill can't buy enough...and they are neighbors.

There is enough dysfunction that everyone has some blame in the problem. But notice that the farmers are growing enough and would like to sell more. Also notice that the factories are big enough to buy more and have excess demand. So the farmers and the factories are doing their job at least beyond the capacity of the current system. Therefore, at least for the moment the heaviest part of the blame needs to be placed at the feet of the traders. So let's take a more careful look at traders.

Traders fill valuable links in value chains in nearly every industry. It's kind of neat that as a factory you can open your doors and not worry about sourcing your inputs or distributing your products. Hundreds of traders will show up with baskets, bicycles and trucks filled with the inputs you need and ready to distribute your product. The factory doesn't have to lift a finger and invest in these solutions.

On the other hand, we see that trader model doesn't work to meet the needs of the value chain, at least in the case of this maize value chain in the Iringa area. It isn't that the traders aren't doing their job, even though I implied that. Actually, they are doing their job very well. They are responding to the incentives that are at work in the system. It turns out that the trader is maximizing their profit. As good capitalists, they want to buy at the lowest price and sell at the highest possible. Here's some of their strategy:

The trader can buy at the lowest price if the farmer is also a borrower and not just a supplier. Money lending schemes are common across the developing world in every industry. In this maize

example, the trader loans to the farmer either the seeds or the capital to purchase seeds. The terms of the loan require the farmer to sell their crop to the trader – at a very low price. The trader wins three ways: they have a pre-negotiated right-to-purchase, they have a lower price, and they make money on interest on the loan.

And they win a fourth way: they keep the borrower poor enough that they never break the cycle and so they are trapped indefinitely.

Clearly the trader benefits substantially from such an arrangement. Why would a farmer ever agree to such an arrangement?

Easy answer: they don't have a choice.

Life in the developing world is much more precarious than in the developed world. For example, even a small illness can wipe out one's life savings to buy medicine. Your savings includes next year's seeds. And illness and death are not uncommon. All a trader need do is find someone who has suffered a setback and requires a loan to continue. As you can imagine, needy people are common in the poorest nations on earth.

There are important things to notice about this situation: 1) The trader has an added incentive to buy low – extra low. Farmers that are kept poor are more likely to be caught in a cycle of money lending. 2) In more helpful value chains, buyers want their sellers to be productive and healthy. This gives them a supply side that they can count on. This is not true in this value chain 3) It is not surprising that there is strong distrust between traders and farmers. Indeed, many farmers hate traders because they have been caught in a money lending cycle or their neighbors have. 4) Since the trader is buying at such a low price, the farmer has added incentive NOT to sell. Of course the negotiations are long. Of course the farmer doesn't like the buyer – doesn't even want to sell to them. How can there be a successful negotiation when the parties dislike and distrust each other?

So people are left hungry while food rots.

It is easy to be critical of the traders. Their real profit comes from loan sharking in a model that keeps the poor, poor and themselves rich. The poor become bondservants. We are appropriately indignant. We think of this as stealing from the poor. But both the developing and the developed world have a rich history of doing this.

Questions:

- Does your knowledge of the “broken value chain” in any way change your understanding of why many Tanzanians are poor?
- Do you see connections between the broken value chain and the conditions in Amos’s time?
- Can you think of possible solutions to the broken value chain that treats the poor fairly?
- The words of prophets like Amos have never been appreciated by the people of their time. How do you think they apply to our own nations? Is there an Amos among us?
- Are there ways in which “good business” is also doing what God wants?

Prayer Suggestions:

- For the removal of the practices of injustice and for fair and equitable trade that benefits all.

Day 7: Experience and Change

(or when you visit the game park)

Psalm 104:1-2 (NRSV)

Bless the Lord, O my soul

*O Lord my God, you are very great
You are clothed with honor and majesty,
wrapped in light as with a garment
You stretch out the heavens like a tent,*

Psalm 104:10-24 (NRSV)

*You make springs gush forth in the valleys;
they flow between the hills,
giving drink to every wild animal;
the wild asses quench their thirst*

*By the streams the birds of the air have their
habitation;*

*they sing among the branches
From your lofty abode you water the mountains;
the earth is satisfied with the fruit of your work.*

*You cause the grass to grow for the cattle,
and plants for people to use,
to bring forth food from the earth,
and wine to gladden the human heart,
oil to make the face shine,
and bread to strengthen the human heart
The trees of the Lord are watered abundantly,
the cedars of Lebanon that he planted
In them the birds build their nests;
the stork has its home in the fir trees
The high mountains are for the wild goats;
the rocks are a refuge for the coney
You have made the moon to mark the seasons;*

*the sun knows its time for setting
You make darkness, and it is night,
when all the animals of the forest come
creeping out*

*The young lions roar for their prey,
seeking their food from God
When the sun rises, they withdraw
and lie down in their dens
People go out to their work
and to their labor until the evening.*

*O Lord, how manifold are your works!
In wisdom you have made them all;
the earth is full of your creatures.*

Cecil Alexander summarized and captured modern hearts when he echoed the sentiments of psalm 104 when he wrote:

*All things bright and beautiful,
All creatures great and small,
All things wise and wonderful:
The Lord God made them all.
—All Things Bright and Beautiful, a hymn by
Cecil Alexander*

Tanzania is an amazingly wonderful place. Here we see the glory and diversity of God creation and the danger and wildness of nature. It is a place full of great potential and devastating need.

Questions

- What lasting impressions will you take with you of your visit to Tanzania?
- Has your experience here changed you in any way? If so, how?

Prayer Suggestions:

- For openness to see how God can use this Tanzanian experience in my life back home.