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*“Relevant, megamotivational, practical and a vital message for the church in our day. I urge people not only to read it but to also get involved in distributing copies.”*

— **George Verwer**, founder and former international director of Operation Mobilization

## Effective and Fruitful Mission Requires Spiritual Discipline and Discipleship

*Ryan Shaw, author of the new book *Spiritual Equipping for Mission*, unpacks ten fundamental spiritual keys we need to practice to succeed and thrive spiritually in preparation of becoming God’s message bearers in the world. Here he answers some questions on the importance and need for such a book.*

### **Why do you think now is the time for missionaries to pay attention to their own spiritual growth?**

**Ryan Shaw:** Is it good enough to have the latest strategy or ministry technique? Or do we need more to fuel and sustain the work of crosscultural mission? The primary equipping needed, and most often overlooked, is spiritual equipping. Enabling message bearers to spiritually thrive in serving God in the great commission is the focus of this book.

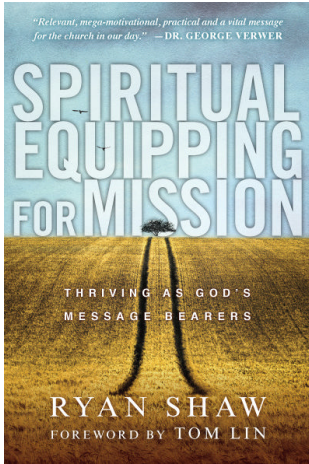
Christian individuals, leaders, ministries and organizations have at times been guilty of resorting to ministry techniques and forms instead of spiritual reality. We tend to emphasize the external in ministry at the expense of the cultivation of deep, inner spiritual life. This is nothing new. History elicits this has generally been true in some sense. Yet the prevalence presently is cause for concern. This concern is why this book has been written. The great commission is a spiritual work, not merely a strategic one. It is effectively served through spiritual people, full of the Holy Spirit, obedient to Jesus, consistently tending the garden of inner life and spiritual development.

### **What do you think your book provides for leaders in their need for attention to spiritual disciplines?**

**Shaw:** Over the last few decades considerable global momentum has been building related to the great commission. Networks, strategies, partnerships and niche ministries have been raised up focusing on specific needs. We praise the Lord for these exciting trends. However, for these trends to reach their potential, a deeper level of spirituality is needed. As a result, we have sought to focus in this book on what we are calling “essential” spiritual keys: inner life characteristics often neglected yet altogether necessary for effectively thriving as God’s message bearers.

### **Why do you place such a strong emphasis on the inner life and spiritual dynamics of the leader?**

**Shaw:** These are the foundation for the love and power of Jesus being released through a life to produce the greatest measure of fruit. This is where the great commission is won or lost. Attrition rates (leaving the field for various reasons) in the global, crosscultural mission



*Spiritual Equipping for Mission:  
Thriving As God's Message  
Bearers*

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movement are generally not from wrong ministry methods but failing to cultivate our inner lives in God.

Many inner life commonalities have been observed among effective message bearers (both historically and in contemporary circles). This book brings attention to ten core characteristics of spiritual equipping enabling God's message bearers to thrive in their calling among unreached and unengaged people groups. It aims to strengthen the awareness and commitment to these ten core characteristics, what the book calls "essential spiritual keys." We want to see devotion to Jesus as reflected in some of the areas deepened. Above all we want greater glory brought to Jesus as his people serve him among the global harvest – a producing of greater fruitfulness as God's people respond to his calling to cooperate with him according to his ways.

**Who do you think will most benefit from reading *Spiritual Equipping for Mission*?**

**Shaw:** The book's primary audience is present message bearers (an alternative term for missionary, which the book explains and coins) and those preparing to serve in the great commission. No matter if they have been serving in crosscultural mission for three months or thirty years, these principles will prove beneficial. Whether presently burned out, spiritually tired or thriving, ideas and concepts considered in the book will help them develop as God's message bearers. The book is written for the western and non-western reader alike as we together pursue "the fulfillment of the great commission."