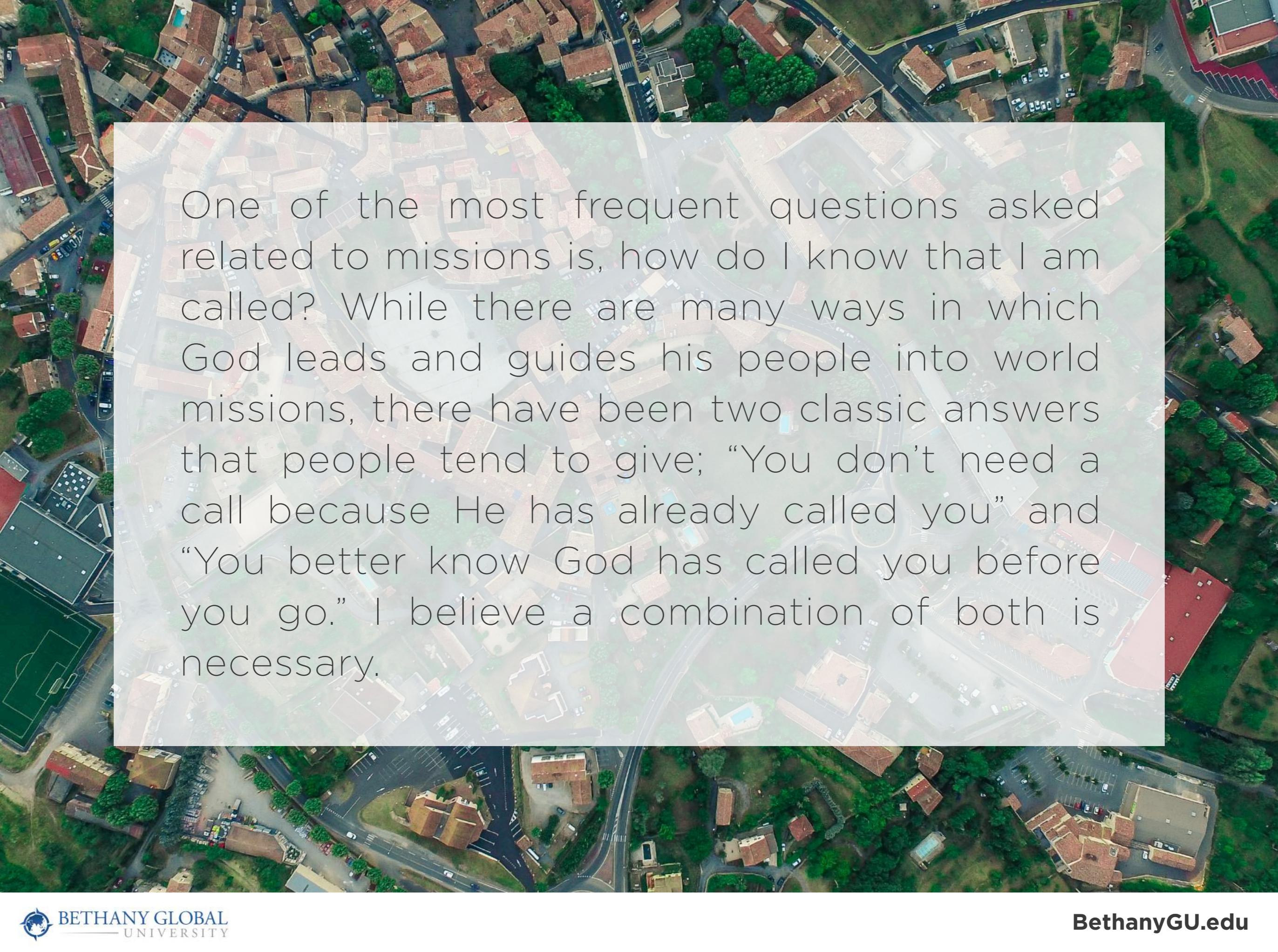




**HOW TO KNOW IF
YOU ARE CALLED
TO MISSIONS**

By: Kerry Olson

An aerial photograph of a university campus, showing various buildings, parking lots, and green spaces. A large, semi-transparent white rectangular box is overlaid on the center of the image, containing text. The text is in a simple, black, sans-serif font.

One of the most frequent questions asked related to missions is, how do I know that I am called? While there are many ways in which God leads and guides his people into world missions, there have been two classic answers that people tend to give; “You don’t need a call because He has already called you” and “You better know God has called you before you go.” I believe a combination of both is necessary.

THE “EVERYBODY IS CALLED” PERSPECTIVE

On one side of the coin, you have the often quoted line from the late singer Keith Green, who stated,

“You don’t need a call, you’re already called!”

Another person has stated that “You don’t need a call when you have a verse”, referring to the multitude of bible verses in the Old and New Testament that form part of God’s revealed will (the Great Commission) that we go to all nations and preach the gospel.

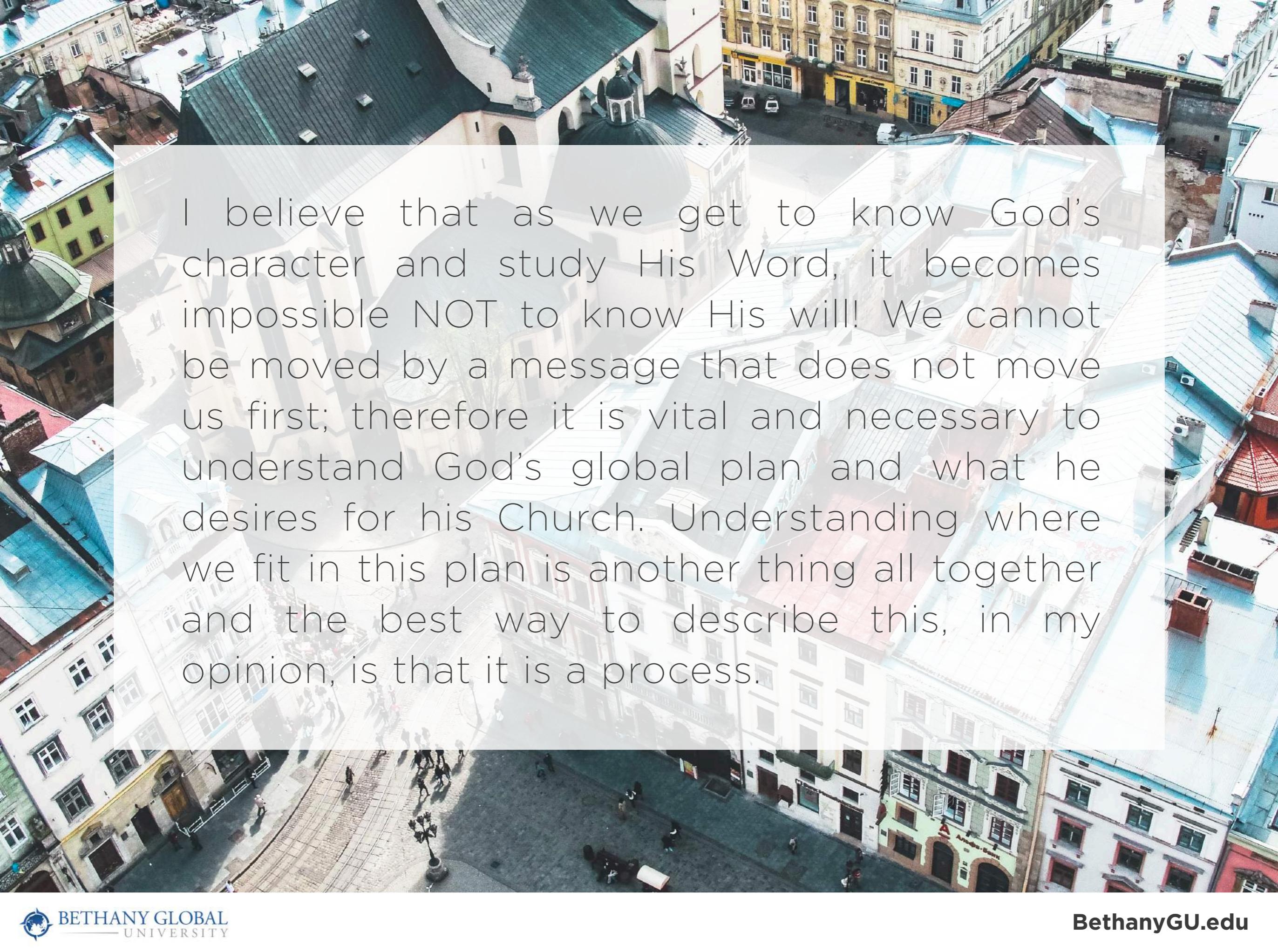
In another song, Keith Green wrote: “Jesus commands us to go, it should be the exception if we stay!”

Keith Green had to go to the extreme end of the spectrum to balance out the Church that emphasized a need for a special revelation or manifestation to go to the mission field.

Think for a minute, what the world would look like today if every Christian literally embraced God's command to 'go' and sincerely said to God,

"I am going to the nations to preach the gospel...
If it's not your will for me to go, stop me!"

I can hear many of you saying "that's too radical and extreme!" Yet to be truthful, we have gone to the other extreme, not bearing the spiritual fruit I believe the Holy Spirit desires.

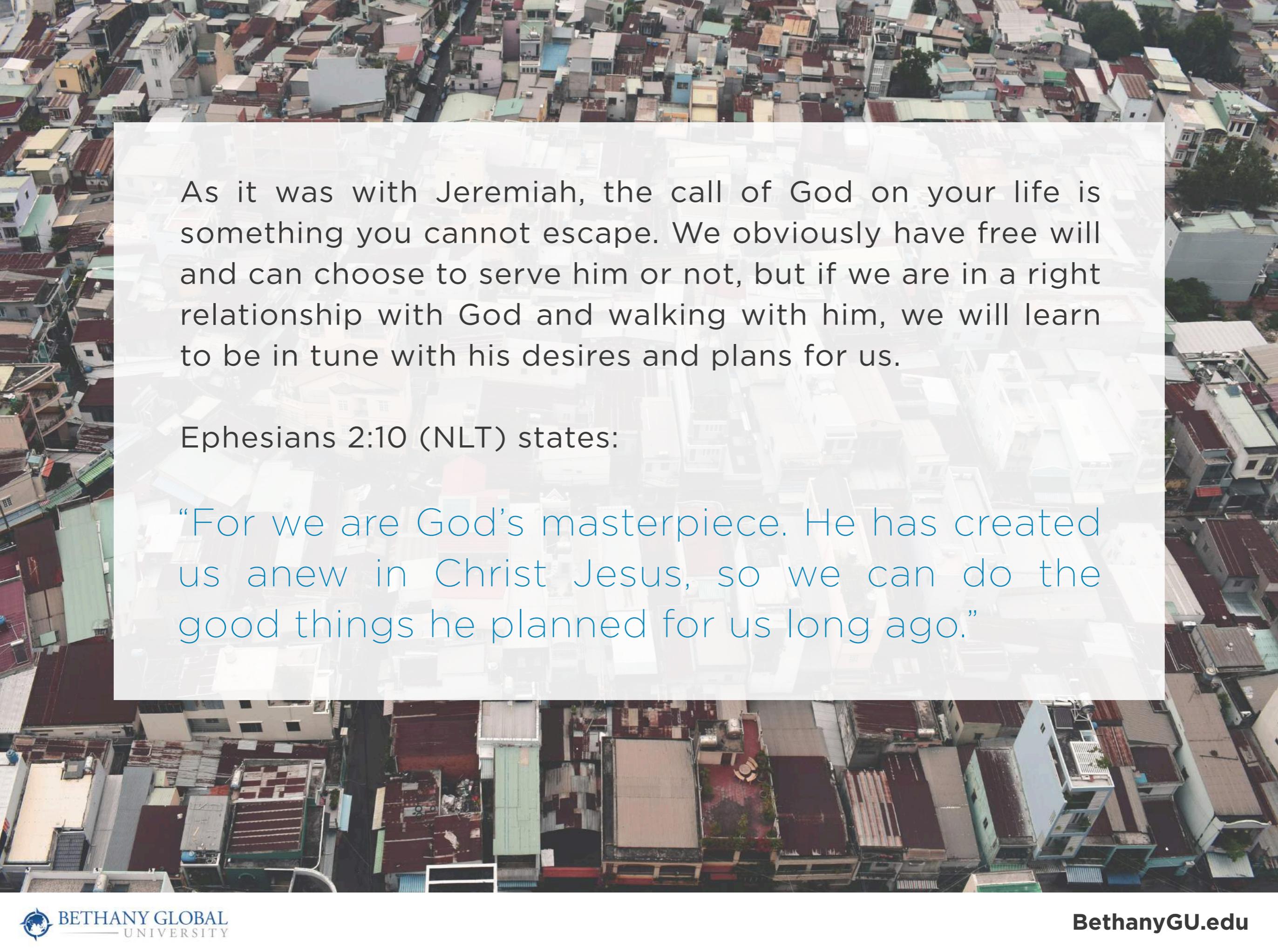
An aerial photograph of a European city square, likely in Prague, showing a church with a green roof and a dome, surrounded by colorful buildings and a cobblestone square with people walking. A semi-transparent white box is overlaid on the center of the image, containing text.

I believe that as we get to know God's character and study His Word, it becomes impossible NOT to know His will! We cannot be moved by a message that does not move us first; therefore it is vital and necessary to understand God's global plan and what he desires for his Church. Understanding where we fit in this plan is another thing all together and the best way to describe this, in my opinion, is that it is a process.

THE “SPECIFIC CALL” PERSPECTIVE

During the 30 plus years I have served as a missionary, there have been circumstances and difficulties during which the only thing that kept me on the mission field was that I knew God sent me. The prophet Jeremiah arrived at one of these cross roads in his ministry where he wanted to “throw in the towel and call it quits.” Jeremiah was thinking about returning home to the “normal” life when he cried out to God saying,

“But if I say I’ll never mention the Lord or speak in his name again, his word burns in my heart like a fire. It’s like a fire in my bones! I am worn out trying to hold on to it. I can’t do it!”



As it was with Jeremiah, the call of God on your life is something you cannot escape. We obviously have free will and can choose to serve him or not, but if we are in a right relationship with God and walking with him, we will learn to be in tune with his desires and plans for us.

Ephesians 2:10 (NLT) states:

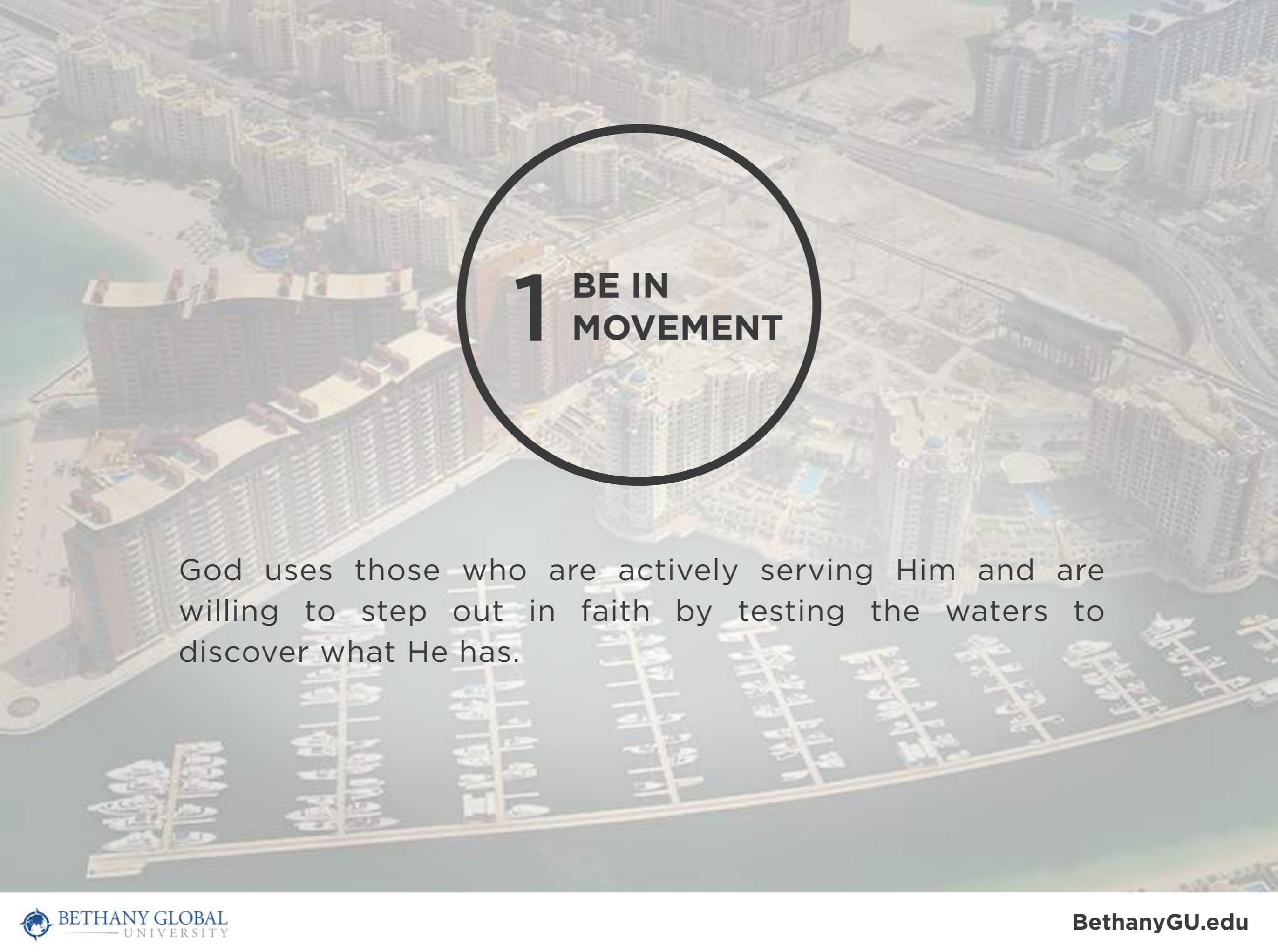
“For we are God’s masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things he planned for us long ago.”



5

TIPS FOR HOW TO DISCOVER YOUR CALLING

Finding God's direction for our lives is very personal and often subjective, yet here are a few basic principles that have helped me.



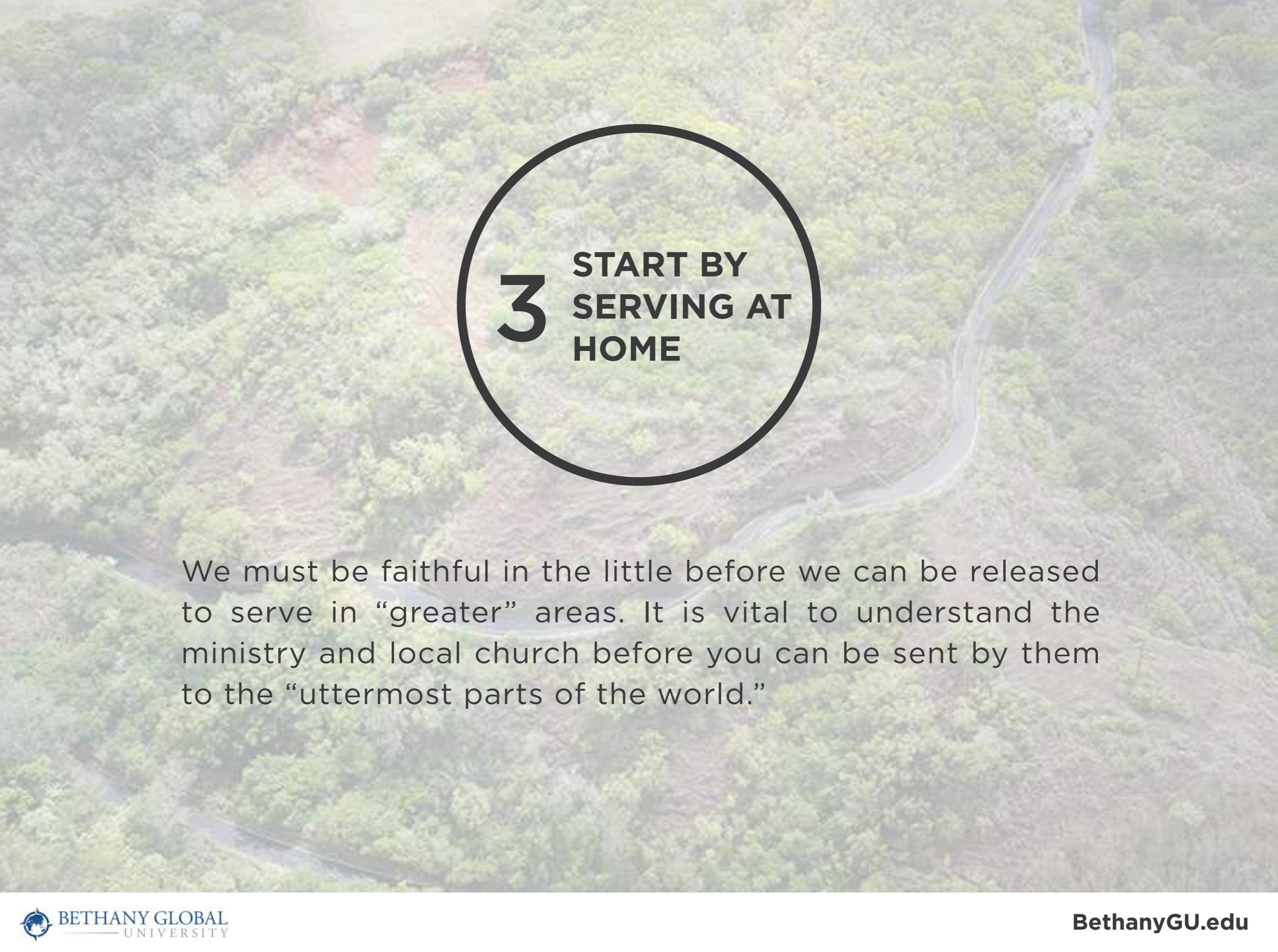
1 BE IN MOVEMENT

God uses those who are actively serving Him and are willing to step out in faith by testing the waters to discover what He has.



2 BE WILLING TO DO ANYTHING

If you really have a servant's heart, you will be willing to serve in any capacity. God will place specific desires in your heart, but don't rush to push open the door yourself. Serve, and in the process of serving God will open the door for you and he does a much better job of it!



3 START BY SERVING AT HOME

We must be faithful in the little before we can be released to serve in “greater” areas. It is vital to understand the ministry and local church before you can be sent by them to the “uttermost parts of the world.”

An aerial photograph of a city, possibly in a developing region, showing roads, buildings, and green spaces. A large black circle is superimposed on the image, containing the text '4 BE INVOLVED IN SHORT-TERM MISSIONS'.

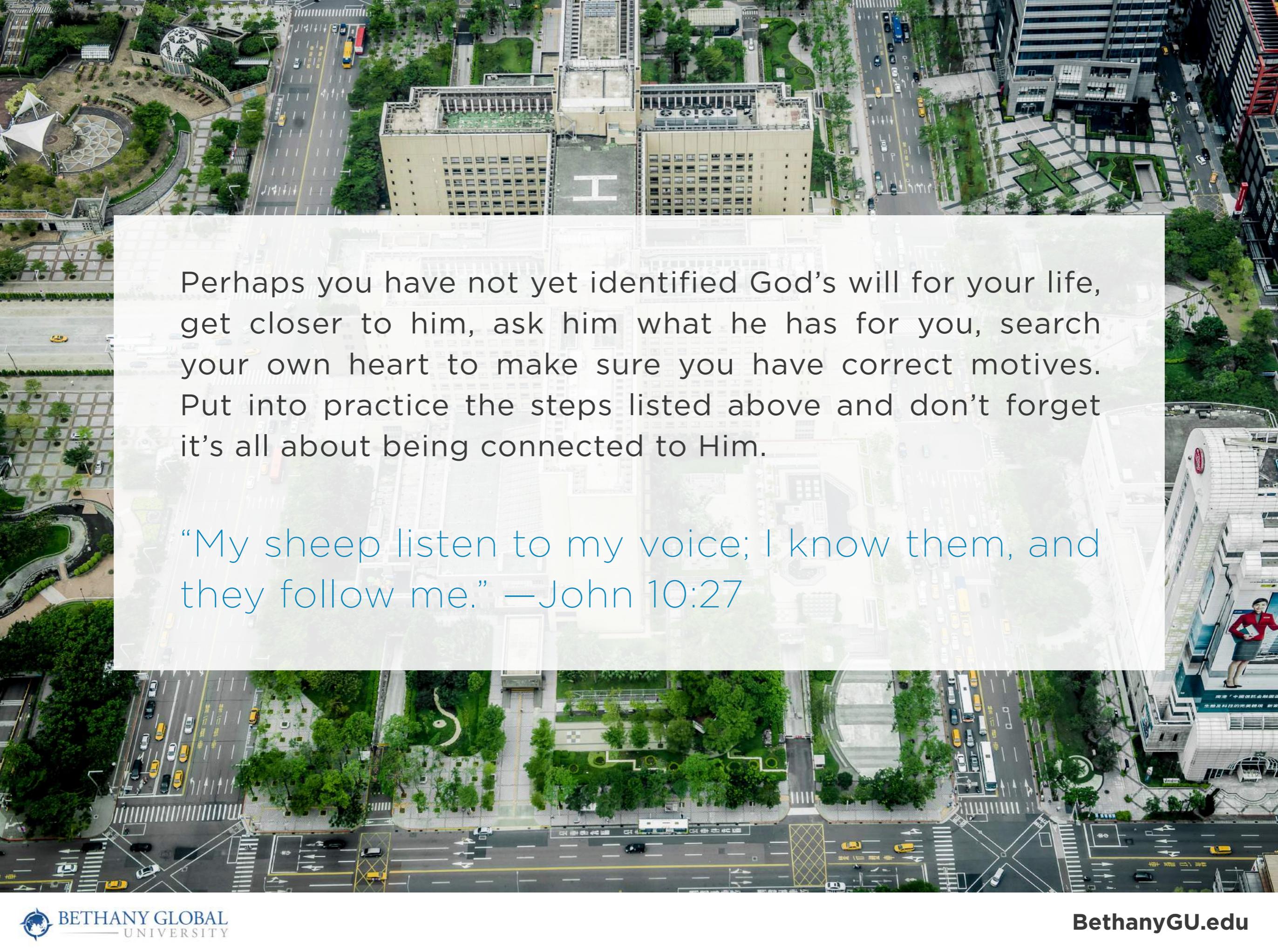
4 BE INVOLVED IN SHORT-TERM MISSIONS

Before thinking about going out full time, get some short term cross cultural experiences under your belt and better yet, mission training. Where you serve short term may or may not be an indicator of where God wants to send you long term. Be open to his leading.



**5 THE CALL
OF GOD
GROWS ON
YOU**

Many missionaries testify that when they began sensing God calling them to Thailand, for example, everywhere they turned they saw something related to Thailand.

An aerial photograph of a city street scene, featuring a large, multi-story building with a helipad on its roof. The street is lined with trees and has several cars and taxis. A large, semi-transparent white text box is overlaid on the center of the image, containing a message in black and blue text.

Perhaps you have not yet identified God's will for your life, get closer to him, ask him what he has for you, search your own heart to make sure you have correct motives. Put into practice the steps listed above and don't forget it's all about being connected to Him.

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