

# RIPE *for Harvest* WORLD OUTREACH



## APPLICANT INFORMATION PACKET

**Members of:**

**Evangelical Christian Financial Accountability (ECFA)  
and the  
National Association of Evangelicals**



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## ABOUT RIPE FOR HARVEST (RFH)

Ripe For Harvest World Outreach (RFH) began in 1979 as White Harvest Missions (KJV) but in recent years changed the name to better reflect the newer Bible translations. Our name now reflects the NIV wording of John 4:35b. Jesus said, "I tell you open your eyes and look at the fields! They are ripe for harvest."

The mission of RFH is to respond to our Lord's request when He said in Matthew 9:37-38 and Luke 10:2, "The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field." When the Lord answers our prayers and sends us qualified candidates for mission, we "send out workers into His harvest field".

Our founder, Dr. Tim A. Smith, felt that while there were many mission organizations fulfilling their respective vision objectives, there were very few that gave opportunity for the individual missionary to fulfill his/her personal vision. There are many mission opportunities that are unfilled because they do not fit the profile of an existing mission sending agency. Dr. Smith, raised on the mission field himself, wants the qualified missionary candidate to be able to answer the Lord's call, specifically for what God has called him or her to.

RFH does not lower the standard for mission candidates, but broadens the opportunities in which many qualified workers can enter the harvest with the gifts and call that God has placed on their heart. Staff members are involved in evangelism, discipleship, church planting, teaching, prison ministries, conference speaking, Bible translations, ESL opportunities, spiritual counseling, music evangelism, house parenting in mission schools and orphanages, and many other ministries that are "ripe for harvest". Currently, we have 200 missionaries serving in 30 countries around the world, including the U.S.

## A PROBLEM SOME MISSIONARIES ENCOUNTER...

There are hundreds of mission sending agencies and all have a mission statement that specifies their particular purpose and vision. If a mission candidate desires to be involved in their specific call to mission, and they meet that particular mission board's candidate criteria as to qualifications, then there is a presumed match. But, what if the candidate has a slightly different concept towards a given mission project or approach to fulfilling 'The Great Commission'?

The candidate may meet most, if not all, of the stated qualifications and he/she feels lead to that particular call on their life. They are fully qualified, gifted, trained, prepared, ready, willing, endorsed by many, such as family, friends, donors, their home church, and are ready go to the field. But, if for some reason their 'slightly different concept' or 'approach to fulfilling The Great Commission' doesn't quite match the mission organization guidelines or their personnel file is limited in some way due to their background or circumstances – then what? They may be denied the opportunity to pursue their vision.

## A PROBLEM SOLVED...

This is where Ripe For Harvest World Outreach (RFH) comes in. RFH is a non-denominational mission sending agency and one of a limited number of mission and church organizations that extend to an individual missionary the opportunity to participate in his or her mission placement.

Our vision is to put into practice Ephesians 4:12, "*to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up.*" And in so doing we are responding and fulfilling our Lord's Prayer request: "*Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field*" (Mt. 9:38, Luke 10:2).

## STATEMENT OF FAITH

1. We believe the Bible to be the inspired, the only infallible, authoritative Word of God.
2. We believe that there is one God, eternally existent in three persons; Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
3. We believe in the deity of our Lord Jesus Christ, in His virgin birth, in His sinless life, in His miracles, in His vicarious and atoning death through His shed blood, in His bodily resurrection, in His ascension to the right hand of the Father, and in His personal return in power and glory.
4. We believe that, for the salvation of lost and sinful man, regeneration by the Holy Spirit is absolutely essential.
5. We believe in the present ministry of the Holy Spirit by whose indwelling the Christian is enabled to live a godly life.
6. We believe in the resurrection of both the saved and the lost: that they are saved unto the resurrection of life and they that are lost unto the resurrection of damnation.
7. We believe in the spiritual unity of believers in our Lord Jesus Christ.
8. We believe God's plan for human sexuality is to be expressed only within the context of marriage and that the Biblical definition of marriage is exclusively the union of one man and one woman.

## VALUES

1. Ripe for Harvest places a high value on the 'call to missionary service' in which each of our missionary staff has responded. Every Christian should have an opportunity to serve the Lord with the call and the gifts that he or she has received from the Holy Spirit. We believe that it is "Our mission is to help you fulfill your mission".
2. Ripe for Harvest places a high value on applicants who are otherwise qualified to serve but have limitations in their respective personnel file that prohibits them from serving. Our stated goal is "Not to lower our standards for missionary applicants, but to broaden the base in which they can serve."
3. Ripe for Harvest places a high value on those applicants that just do not fit the typical profile of the traditional mission-sending agency. At Ripe for Harvest "We find a place for the hard to place".
4. Ripe for Harvest places a high value on accountability. We have built into our system a number of check points that lead to total accountability: We subscribe to ECFA and its 'Seven standards of responsible stewardship and best practices': A responsible board of directors and executive

staff, supporting churches, interested individual donors, compliance with IRS regulations for non-profits and churches, adherence to local state agencies and foreign government regulations, stipulations and resolutions as found in our Articles of Incorporation and By Laws, missionary staff that calls us to account for perceived discrepancies, and annual audits as required by ECFA and IRS with a recognized auditing firm. Most importantly, we are accountable to the Holy Spirit who oversees all of our activity in all of these respective areas with the belief that He will respond with a 'well done thou good and faithful mission sending agency'!

5. Ripe for Harvest places a high value on sound doctrine. We have belonged to the National Association of Evangelicals for 25 years and have adopted their Statement of Faith. In addition to this one page summary of its doctrinal position, our By Laws have an extensive multipage doctrinal statement.
6. Ripe for Harvest places a high value on the privacy of its donors and their history of giving. Ripe for Harvest does not solicit funds from names that belong to the missionary for its own purposes or expenses. We have a statement that says, "If we can not do what needs to be done on the administrative share (12%), it will not get done". We do not sell, trade, send mission letters, or use the database of donor names for solicitation of funds. The only time we communicate with the donor is to send them an acknowledgement for each gift received for a designated missionary. Periodically, we will send donors a field report of a specific mission assignment with that missionary's permission. We do this only if the President, International Field Director, Regional Director, or other home office designated representative has visited the missionary on the field and has a personal on site report.
7. Ripe for Harvest places a high value on its applicants. It has published its Criteria for Missionary Candidates on the website. This was the subject of Dr. Smith's Thesis Project in pursuit of his Doctorate of Ministry degree. Each applicant must comply with these stated criteria.
8. Ripe for Harvest places a high value on its administrative responsibilities. We maintain an up-to-date database of donors, maintain all payroll and expense reimbursements, comply with regulations regarding withholdings of state, federal, and social security requirements, issue W-4 tax statements, maintain all accounts payable, and provide any requested filings from government agencies. It has proper, comprehensive, and adequate liability insurance coverage and secure and encrypted web pages when asking for personal information.
9. Ripe for Harvest places a high value on the integrity of its own corporation and the mission and vision to which it was established. In keeping with its By Laws, it has regular Board of Director's

meetings, maintains a current and complete set of minutes, required governance, compensation, benefits, and compliance committees.

10. Ripe for Harvest places a high value on its officers, executive staff, board of directors, and every field missionary in that they are held to a higher standard of Biblical teachings, principles, commandments, and the mandate as found in the Great Commission.

## ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

Ripe For Harvest World Outreach is incorporated as a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization and has received a ruling by the IRS as tax-exempt. RFH's Federal ID number is 20-2322235. A Board of Directors (serving without pay) governs the organization's policies and procedures. The ministry leadership consists of the President, Mr. Steve Hines, Founder and Executive Director, Dr. Tim A. Smith, and V.P. Field Operations, Mr. Gregg Vurbeff. In addition, we have regional field directors around the world to provide encouragement and support to those serving in ministry for Ripe For Harvest.

## CRITERIA FOR A RIPE FOR HARVEST MISSIONARY CANDIDATE

1. Need to demonstrate via written and verbal testimony your allegiance to Jesus Christ as personal Savior and Lord and to the submission and control of the Holy Spirit.
2. Need to demonstrate via written and verbal testimony your call to mission and the spiritual gifts that God has given you to embark on such mission.
3. Need to sign the *Ripe For Harvest World Outreach* statement of faith.
4. Need to demonstrate via references from individuals such as pastors, church staff, friends, neighbors, peers in mission, and spouse that your personal lifestyle is one which embraces not only the general principles and practices of Christian living, but because of your professional status in mission, demonstrates a high level of Christian behavior and practices.
5. Need to demonstrate via current and previous work and ministry experience a willingness to be responsive to a local committee of advisers or accountability team, pastoral counsel, and *Ripe For Harvest World Outreach* board of directors and its designated executive or field director.
6. Need to demonstrate a history of skill, experience, education, and spiritual gifts or an aptitude and willingness to obtain such toward your respective mission objectives.
7. Need to be physically, emotionally, academically and spiritually capable of fulfilling your respective mission objectives.
8. Need to submit a written profile of your respective mission objectives and your personal involvement in such objectives which in turn must adhere to the established purpose of *Ripe For Harvest World Outreach*.
9. Need to be in agreement with the financial policies of *Ripe For Harvest World Outreach* and be accountable for all income and expense both to your respective donors and to *Ripe For Harvest World Outreach*.
10. Need to be willing to submit written reports of mission activity on a timely basis to *Ripe For Harvest World Outreach* and any donor mission constituent who requests such reports.

## WHAT RIPE FOR HARVEST CAN DO FOR YOU?

### Relationship

Ripe For Harvest World Outreach (RFH) is a missionary sending organization providing you with an option to go into the ministry of your calling. While we remain fairly “hands off” we do want to have a common purpose in furthering the Kingdom as brothers and sisters for Christ. You are not alone. As commanded by our Lord, we are to love one another, pray for one another, and remain accountable in both an employer/employee relationship and as a Christian family. We are committed to pray for and encourage you in fulfilling your calling in Christian service. We can provide counsel, advice, and direction. And occasionally correction if deemed necessary. All this is done in love and following our Lord’s direction. We also will provide resources that will help you in ministry and in cross-cultural settings. Each region has a regional director that will regularly keep in contact with you to see how you’re doing and offer support and encouragement.

### Handling of Funds

Each missionary, through the Lord’s calling, has the freedom to choose the country and project or ministry they feel they are being called into. RFH helps you respond to this call.

Each missionary is responsible for his or her prayer and financial support. When God calls a missionary, He also calls a support team to surround that missionary with love, prayer, and finances. These circles of individuals, family members, business acquaintances, and churches affirm each person in their calling to missions and assures them that they will provide the necessary encouragement and support for them to serve in the harvest field.

RHF takes seriously our obligation to those who donate to our missionaries and is a recognized member of the **Evangelical Council for Financial Accountability** and the **National Association of Evangelicals**. We provide tax receipts for each donation with a running total so that at the end of the year you will have the documentation to file with your taxes. We do not share/sell/trade names or addresses, nor do we solicit funds for RFH. Each missionary shares in the administrative costs and expenses of running the organization with 12% of all donations. As donations are received for missionaries, monthly reports are sent to indicate the source of the funds and how much was given towards particular projects and personal support. Budgets for all mission projects and salaries must be approved by the Board of Directors.

RFH oversees the ministerial and financial accountability required of a church and non-profit ministry. We require the staff person to account for their time and finances via quarterly activity reports and expense statements with accompanying documentation. Periodic field visits, bi-annual staff conferences/retreats, written reports, and individual counsel is provided which keeps us in compliance with government requirements and regulations.

### Donor Relations

We have a secure, on-line system that allows donors to easily give single or recurring gifts by electronic funds transfer or credit card.

## WHAT RIPE FOR HARVEST WILL NOT DO

We trust that you are a responsible, mature Christian individual that prayerfully makes decisions and follows the Lord’s leading in His will for you. Therefore, we will not prescribe to you what type of ministry you should be involved in, provided it does not contradict or conflict with Biblical principles and is in keeping with the general guidelines of our corporate bylaws. While we recommend all of the following, we will also not dictate as to what or how much health care you must carry, what sort of retirement plan you must have, or how much you should set aside for emergency situations.

## WAYS YOU CAN SERVE THROUGH RIPE FOR HARVEST

### Full-Time Missionary

A full-time missionary is one that raises their own financial support with funds being sent through RFH so donors can receive tax-deductible receipts. RFH then works with the missionary to choose a set salary that the missionary will receive each month, provided funds are in their RFH account. We take care of deducting required taxes and fees from those funds. Missionaries receive W2 statements at the end of each calendar year for funds distributed to them as salary.

### Volunteer

A volunteer is one that raises their own financial support with funds being sent through RFH so donors can receive tax deductible receipts. Volunteers do not receive a set salary, but may receive reimbursements for ministry expenses when their RFH account has sufficient funds.

### Bi-Vocational

A Bi-Vocational missionary is one that subsidizes his ministry expenses while working in a full or part-time paid position. The funds that the missionary raises are sent through RFH so donors can receive tax-deductible receipts. The missionary can withdraw funds from his account through Expense Reports to subsidize his ministry expenses. When these reimbursed funds fall within the approved ministry expenses, the funds are then non-taxable.

### Business As Mission (BAM)

A BAM missionary elects to work within a particular area of the world as a business owner. The BAM missionary can raise funds to either receive a full salary or supplement their salary and or ministry expenses as they conduct business with the purpose of sharing the Gospel within their area of influence.