

# DISCIPLING PARTICIPANTS OF A SHORT TERM MISSION TRIP

Used in conjunction with the  
book:

## SHORT TERM MISSIONS

a practical guide to prepare  
you for your mission trip

Asia  
Europe  
Africa  
Australia  
North America  
South America

by Mark Schaufler

# **DISCIPLING PARTICIPANTS OF A SHORT TERM MISSION TRIP**

A discipleship course to prepare participants for  
short term missions worldwide

By Mark Schaufler

ISBN #1-886904-69-3

Copyright 2009

mstgo.com

Finish-the-race.org

This course will help you to make the most of the opportunities that a Short Term Mission trip creates. People understand that there will be a focus and some extra time will be devoted both before you go and after it's over.

You can utilize the material in this course (along with the Students Preparation Manual) to challenge and equip your students whether they go or don't go on a Short Term Mission trip. These lessons equip them to work together and share their faith with those around them here at home as well as on the STM.

We all live in a mission field and we all face relationship challenges. This course will equip you to disciple your people in these key areas.

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	5
Flexibility	7
Devotions before you leave	9
What to Bring	13
Travel Documents	15
Getting a Passport	16
No News is Good News	18
Slaying the Money Monster	19
Health and Food	20
Travel Considerations	22
Camera Etiquette	23
Your Puppet	24
Challenging Areas in a STM	25
Personal Anger Management	28
Conflict Styles/Test	29
Our Gifts	30
Group Conflict Dynamics	31
Prayer	32
Personal Prayer Time	33
Group Prayer	34
Altar Ministry	35
Cross Cultural Factors	36
Personal Evangelism	37
Your Testimony	38
The Ladder and the Gospel	39
The Cults	40
Five Colored Hearts	41
Surveys	42
Group Evangelism	43
Coming Home	44
Devotions after you return	46
Resources	47



# INTRODUCTION

If you are going to be involved in a Short Term Mission (STM) experience (from an afternoon to multiple weeks), you have a time when students understand that preparation is a part of the experience. This makes it easier for them and their parents to devote the extra time you now have with them.

You can also train the others in your group who aren't going because the topics covered in this manual are general growth principles that every Christian should master at some point in their lives. Working in these areas will mature your students and a STM will cement that maturity into a lifestyle as they get the opportunity to live out these principles that are a part of the adventure.

Anytime you look at impacting a student's life, you have to bring several concepts into the picture to maximize the impact of the opportunity. First and foremost is the climate for change that you create in your group. Just like Jesus and Peter, you have to make change a positive experience remembering that change, by definition, includes failure.

We see in Jesus' interaction with Peter and his mistakes, the key for Peter's growth and ultimate leadership of the early church, correction but not rejection. As leaders we need to understand this for ourselves but also for the students we minister to. In this manual are topics and challenges that guarantee failure for some. We need to learn how to correct without rejection.

We need to learn how to correct without rejection

If this is an understood part of the life of the students and leaders you work with there is a chance that everyone involved will grow. If this isn't a consistent theme of your people (leaders or students) you will not see people participate as they should and could if that obstacle of failure is removed.

Next, is the process that this change takes as people begin to implement these issues in their lives. First, they have to be **Exposed** to the idea or concept or truth. Some will never have heard it before. Exposing doesn't mean just a five minute verbal description. It means helping them to understand it from their context. Jesus was a carpenter but because he worked with fishermen he used examples from their world to help them understand. "Follow me and I'll make you fishers of men", not follow me and we will "plane down a rough cut." If that doesn't make sense to you ask someone who works with wood.

I grew up in a very cold climate (45° below zero Fahrenheit or about 22° below zero Celsius). So when I use the word "cold" it has that as an example in my mind but maybe not that of the person hearing me. If you are from the Dominican Republic cold is 55° Fahrenheit or 9° Celsius. Help them to really grasp the concept using examples they understand.

Once people think they understand they need an opportunity to **Experiment** with their new knowledge. This is where the first expressions of failure may happen. Without this phase, it will only be something they think they understand.

When our son was learning to drive he remembered watching all the mistakes that his older sister made. He knew how easy it was to drive on the computer games he had. He thought he would drive better and quicker than his big sister.

After half an hour of failures with the clutch and first gear he sheepishly remarked that this was “harder than I thought it would be.” He failed often and was corrected when needed. Soon he was doing just fine but not without a chance to experiment with the knowledge that he thought he already had.

He was also given a safe place to make his failures. We didn’t head to the busy road right away. He practiced in an undeveloped housing development in our county where he could make his mistakes without endangering our lives on the road or any passing cars. This gave him the opportunity to gain **Experience**. This third phase can be attained by anyone. If you have experience in an area you can help others to follow the path you have already traveled to get there.

Exposure Experiment Experience Expert
--

Some, people because of their gifting and calling, may become **Experts** but that won’t be a high percentage of people. Most people can become competent if they have a good start and get the opportunity to develop in an area by making their mistakes and getting corrected but not rejected.

Your Short Term Mission experience can be one of those opportunities. Projects and outreaches you plan at home can also add this same opportunity for those who don’t go on a STM but live out a part of it here at home.

Remember the process that all learning has to go through. First, you must be **EXPOSED** to the information. You follow this as you **EXPERIMENT** with the knowledge that you think you have. In a perfect world someone will help you with that part of the process and debrief you and any questions you might have. Now you will gain some level of **EXPERIENCE**. You can then help others on the first three stages of the process. Some will have the right gifting and calling to enable them to achieve the final phase, **EXPERT**.

# FLEXIBILITY

*1 Corinthians 9:19-23 Though I am free and belong to no man, I make myself a slave to everyone, to win as many as possible. To the Jews I became like a Jew, to win the Jews. To those under the law I became like one under the law (though I myself am not under the law), so as to win those under the law. [21] To those not having the law I became like one not having the law (though I am not free from God's law but am under Christ's law), so as to win those not having the law. [22] To the weak I became weak, to win the weak. I have become all things to all men so that by all possible means I might save some. [23] I do all this for the sake of the gospel, that I may share in its blessings.*

*Philippians 4:10-13 I rejoice greatly in the Lord that at last you have renewed your concern for me. Indeed, you have been concerned, but you had no opportunity to show it. [11] I am not saying this because I am in need, for I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances. [12] I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. [13] I can do everything through him who gives me strength.*

In general, people like to know what is going on. They like plans that they can rely on and things being predictable. None of these accurately describe a mission trip. To equip people to flourish in an ever-changing environment they need to have principles at their core and remember them every time they want to react or respond without Christ's love in their actions.

We see Paul enacting these two principles that he describes in scripture. First, the trip is not about you, it is about everyone else. It is about the others on the trip and the people you minister to and for. Our flexibility will enable us to work with others who aren't flexible and to people who need our flexibility so they can understand the priceless message we bring to them.

Paul also exhibits contentment through the prisons he frequented, the ships that sank under him, and the people who deserted him. His contentment was in his fulfillment from Jesus and not from his circumstances, success, or human relationships.

As we expose people to this concept, we can help them begin to put that concept into practice by helping them practice through scenarios. Here are a couple of examples:

ONE-The team is ready to go at 9:00am in front of their lodging. The bus is supposed to be there then. But it isn't. It is now 9:15am, then 9:30am, etc. How would different people respond to this? How would an administrator respond to this? How does a mercy respond? How could you utilize the hour and a half delay that ultimately results to make this a stronger team or how could it dissolve into serious problems?

TWO-You go to your evening ministry site only to find out that the Pastor of the local church is sick and has cancelled the service. You are now on your own. What would you do next? There are homes in the area around the church and the deacon who came to tell you about the pastor's illness is still there.

THREE-The team is hungry and you meet the missionary at the restaurant for dinner. He has already ordered for everyone, and when the plates start arriving, not everyone is happy with what they are seeing. What kind of responses do you think you might hear? What should flexible people do instead?

PS ... all of these examples have happened to me while on Short Term Mission trips.

## **EXERCISE**

Have someone volunteer. You will tie them with a rope around their wrists and then lead them around with the rope. Have them struggle a bit and a bit of pain will come into an otherwise pain-free experience. Now have them relax and just follow. No pain or inconvenience results and a great lesson for life and the STM coming up can be learned.

You could also tie half a dozen people at the wrist but have all their ropes connected at the middle like the spokes of a wheel. If they work together and move together there is no pain or inconvenience but if they get their own ideas or move their own way, everyone pays a price of pain and inconvenience.

## **DEVOTIONS BEFORE YOU LEAVE**

*John 15:1-8 "I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener. [2] He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes so that it will be even more fruitful. [3] You are already clean because of the word I have spoken to you. [4] Remain in me, and I will remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me. I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing. [6] If anyone does not remain in me, he is like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned. [7] If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be given you. [8] This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples."*

By following a plan, people can begin to make daily devotions a part of their lives. Giving them this plan is a good start but you must also help people to learn how to manage their time as well. The combination of the two can result in a changed life.

*Ephesians 5:15-17 Be very careful, then, how you live--not as unwise but as wise, [16] making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil. [17] Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord's will is.*

Helping people to establish good time usage in their lives can help develop a flourishing spiritual life if it is coupled with a consistent devotional life. By helping them establish a consistent devotional life before the trip, they will be more flexible and able to face the challenges the trip will bring.

You can help people to take a survey of how they spend their time now and where a devotional portion would fit. It may mean changing some things. The key is that people need to learn to live a balanced lifestyle that supports their faith rather than wearing it down. A mission trip's schedule should reinforce that concept with enough time for devotions, sleep, and personal maintenance.

Too often, when people come home from a trip, they are exhausted, crabby, and not able to readjust to their normal schedule. You want to avoid that if at all possible. In addition, if the schedule on the trip was too unrealistic, you can't translate that into normal life after coming home. You should learn things on a trip that can become a part of your changed Christian life, not have them be just a memory that they can never experience again.

As they begin to read the scriptures, it will take some guidance for them to get the most out of their reading. First, they need some basic concepts that you can pass on to them as they begin to read the scriptures for themselves.

The context of any story helps us to get the most accurate understanding of the information. In the introduction we gave numerous examples of the context of a statement. The Bible is no different. To understand much of the scripture you need the context of the example. For example:

*Romans 12:17-20 Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everybody. [18] If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone. [19] Do not take revenge,*

*my friends, but leave room for God's wrath, for it is written: "It is mine to avenge; I will repay," says the Lord. [20] On the contrary:*

*"If your enemy is hungry, feed him;  
if he is thirsty, give him something to drink.  
In doing this, you will heap burning coals on his head."*

*Romans 12:21 Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.*

In their day, they didn't have matches or lighters so burning coals were put into a basket full of ashes and then safely carried home to start a fire. Thus the burning coals on the head is just another blessing not be nice twice and then fry them. I have heard that conclusion from people who didn't understand the context of the day in which it was written.

Some Bible stories need Bible times background information to understand. It may be as simple as explaining a seed and planting story to someone who lives in the city or a bit more complex when you explain the fact that one coin could be worth a days pay (denarii).

Each parable that Christ used had one or several points to it. It was not meant to be dissected and have each word of the story have a point. Here is an example.

*Matthew 13:1-9 That same day Jesus went out of the house and sat by the lake. [2] Such large crowds gathered around him that he got into a boat and sat in it, while all the people stood on the shore. [3] Then he told them many things in parables, saying: "A farmer went out to sow his seed. [4] As he was scattering the seed, some fell along the path, and the birds came and ate it up. [5] Some fell on rocky places, where it did not have much soil. It sprang up quickly, because the soil was shallow. [6] But when the sun came up, the plants were scorched, and they withered because they had no root. [7] Other seed fell among thorns, which grew up and choked the plants. [8] Still other seed fell on good soil, where it produced a crop—a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown. [9] He who has ears, let him hear."*

You can try to make a lot of points out of this text. You can say that the birds represent many different things, or that the path is like the highway of life, or that the rocky soil is like a hard heart, or etc. But we would probably be wrong especially when Jesus gave us the points that his parable was told to clarify.

*Matthew 13:18-23 "Listen then to what the parable of the sower means: [19] When anyone hears the message about the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what was sown in his heart. This is the seed sown along the path. [20] The one who received the seed that fell on rocky places is the man who hears the word and at once receives it with joy. [21] But since he has no root, he lasts only a short time. When trouble or persecution comes because of the word, he quickly falls away. [22] The one who received the seed that fell among the thorns is the man who hears the word, but the worries of this life and the deceitfulness of wealth choke it, making it unfruitful. [23] But the one who received the seed that fell on good soil is the man who hears the word and understands it. He produces a crop, yielding a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown."*

Using the Bible to understand the Bible was just illustrated by the parable example above.. Too often we ignore the simple plain meaning for one that we like better or heard first.

Here is an example of the “mark of the beast” found in Revelation.

*Revelations 13:11-17 Then I saw another beast, coming out of the earth. He had two horns like a lamb, but he spoke like a dragon. [12] He exercised all the authority of the first beast on his behalf, and made the earth and its inhabitants worship the first beast, whose fatal wound had been healed. [13] And he performed great and miraculous signs, even causing fire to come down from heaven to earth in full view of men. [14] Because of the signs he was given power to do on behalf of the first beast, he deceived the inhabitants of the earth. He ordered them to set up an image in honor of the beast who was wounded by the sword and yet lived. [15] He was given power to give breath to the image of the first beast, so that it could speak and cause all who refused to worship the image to be killed. [16] He also forced everyone, small and great, rich and poor, free and slave, to receive a mark on his right hand or on his forehead, [17] so that no one could buy or sell unless he had the mark, which is the name of the beast or the number of his name.*

I have heard this described as a computer chip, a tattoo, a scar, etc. The concept has helped make some movies pretty scary. But if we look at scripture to understand scripture the “mark” concept is not new and may even be invisible to us.

*Ezekiel 9:3-6 Now the glory of the God of Israel went up from above the cherubim, where it had been, and moved to the threshold of the temple. Then the LORD called to the man clothed in linen who had the writing kit at his side [4] and said to him, "Go throughout the city of Jerusalem and put a mark on the foreheads of those who grieve and lament over all the detestable things that are done in it." As I listened, he said to the others, "Follow him through the city and kill, without showing pity or compassion. [6] Slaughter old men, young men and maidens, women and children, but do not touch anyone who has the mark. Begin at my sanctuary." So they began with the elders who were in front of the temple.*

In the scripture we just read the “mark” was invisible and used to distinguish between followers and those who weren’t. It may be that this is a more accurate understanding of the Revelation mark than the popular movie versions.

## EXERCISE

Buy a cheap plant or bring a sacrificial one from home. Display it and at the start of your discussion praise the plant and how great it is and how much you like it and put it in a place where everyone can easily see it. Praise it every time you can. Then neglect it completely until it dies. Keep it in the prominent place and then act surprised that it is failing in health. Once it is obviously dead, draw their attention to it.

The parallel between our lives with Christ and this plant is, no maintenance equals no fruit. We need to learn how to grow from his word. What that looks like can be different for everyone. It has a lot to do with how long have they been followers of Christ and the season of their lives. But there are certain characteristics that should apply to everyone.

1. Devotions should be as long as it takes to be different. Interacting with a holy and awesome God changes you. It makes you humble, thankful, guilty (if necessary), etc. For some who have been out

of touch with God for awhile this may take some time. But if you have been in relationship with him already then you are only continuing what has been started and it won't take as long.

2. Devotions should open or maintain the communication channels between you and God.
3. You should be exposing yourself to his word as a part of it.

## WHAT TO BRING

*Exodus 35:20-29 Then the whole Israelite community withdrew from Moses' presence, [21] and everyone who was willing and whose heart moved him came and brought an offering to the LORD for the work on the Tent of Meeting, for all its service, and for the sacred garments. [22] All who were willing, men and women alike, came and brought gold jewelry of all kinds: brooches, earrings, rings and ornaments. They all presented their gold as a wave offering to the LORD. [23] Everyone who had blue, purple or scarlet yarn or fine linen, or goat hair, ram skins dyed red or hides of sea cows brought them. [24] Those presenting an offering of silver or bronze brought it as an offering to the LORD, and everyone who had acacia wood for any part of the work brought it. [25] Every skilled woman spun with her hands and brought what she had spun—blue, purple or scarlet yarn or fine linen. [26] And all the women who were willing and had the skill spun the goat hair. [27] The leaders brought onyx stones and other gems to be mounted on the ephod and breastpiece. [28] They also brought spices and olive oil for the light and for the anointing oil and for the fragrant incense. [29] All the Israelite men and women who were willing brought to the LORD freewill offerings for all the work the LORD through Moses had commanded them to do.*

The Israelites received a very detailed list of what they needed to build the Tabernacle. Receiving a detailed list for an outreach enables you to do your part well and build the best outreach that you can. Leaving items off the list creates potential problems that can impact your trip negatively.

For example, we typically ask people to bring a flashlight and a battery powered alarm clock. Those who don't obey get up late and stumble to the bathroom at night when the power goes out. Either of these experiences can be a personal and group problem. It is always sad when something not included creates an unnecessary problem. At that point we see why sometimes we need to be obedient even if we don't understand why or want to be bothered with the inconvenience of it.

*Luke 11:27-28 As Jesus was saying these things, a woman in the crowd called out, "Blessed is the mother who gave you birth and nursed you." He replied, "Blessed rather are those who hear the word of God and obey it."*

You can set up several scenarios to help people see that little areas of obedience and disobedience can in the long run produce much bigger problems than someone would anticipate. Often those little areas of disobedience betray a bigger problem or attitude that needs to be changed.

*Song of Solomon 2:15 Catch for us the foxes,  
the little foxes  
that ruin the vineyards,  
our vineyards that are in bloom.*

## EXERCISES

To see how serious this small area of disobedience can be, ask if any the students going have medication that they take regularly, or need to take in a crisis (bee sting kit etc). If none of them have anything, then ask if they know friends who fit that category. What would happen if they didn't have those meds? If they

went on a trip and forgot them what would happen (assuming they can't get them there) to that student, team, etc.

Follow it through to the full conclusion of not just being sent home but the fact that a leader would have to go with them. What would the costs be like? How would that impact the team? How would that impact that student or leader when they missed the whole trip or could they catch back up? What would be the cost for that? How would that student/leader feel when everyone else got home? Really help them to see how important a "forgotten item" can be.

An additional area of concern would be for the forgotten flashlight and battery operated alarm clock. Help them think through a scenario where their not getting up in time can ruin their day as well as the teams. For example, for their day off they must leave by 5 am to catch the only train to the incredible destination but it's missed because some people aren't ready in time.

The power goes out and the way to the restroom is difficult to navigate at night. Thus they must blindly stumble their way there and risk cuts and bruises to feet (because they forgot to put their shoes on).

# TRAVEL DOCUMENTS

*2 Timothy 4:13 When you come, bring the cloak that I left with Carpus at Troas, and my scrolls, especially the parchments.*

Paperwork has always been important. Today it is even more important and imperative that you have people get started early on obtaining all the proper signatures and passports in a timely manner.

I have been with groups where they have assured me that they had all their paperwork done only to have students turned back from their flight because they didn't have the second parent's signature on their permission slips. Fortunately for this group there was a leader coming down two days later who could escort them to the team. Otherwise their failure to follow instructions would have resulted in the loss of the experience they had worked so hard for.

The area of obedience was already covered but it illustrates again how important small areas of obedience can be. It also rolls over into the care that is given to the documents. Team members who were careless have lost tickets and passports on trips. Needless to say the extra expense (\$200 to replace a passport, \$150 to replace a ticket) was unnecessary and the hassle an unwanted addition to the trip. But carelessness is a problem no matter where it crops up.

*Matthew 12:33-37 "Make a tree good and its fruit will be good, or make a tree bad and its fruit will be bad, for a tree is recognized by its fruit. [34] You brood of vipers, how can you who are evil say anything good? For out of the overflow of the heart the mouth speaks. [35] The good man brings good things out of the good stored up in him, and the evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in him. [36] But I tell you that men will have to give account on the day of judgment for every careless word they have spoken. [37] For by your words you will be acquitted, and by your words you will be condemned."*

## EXERCISES

For the next scenario let them think through the results of not getting the right signatures for the mission trip, losing a passport, or a ticket. See if they can come up with the way it really is.

For example, without both parents signature (under age eighteen students) students can't leave the country. The airlines won't let them on the plane (I have seen it). For a lost passport or ID (for example on the plane) they won't let them in the country (I've seen it). A lost passport costs about \$200 to replace and it can only take place at an American Embassy quickly. Lost airplane tickets can sometimes be replaced (with a substantial cost) while other times a full new ticket must be bought at the last minute rate (often two to three times what was originally paid).

Now have them not pay any attention to their boarding pass and have them try to get on a plane without it. That can be sticky especially if the first person on the plane has the tickets or e ticket information.

## GETTING A PASSPORT

*Exodus 20:4-6 "You shall not make for yourself an idol in the form of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters below. [5] You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, punishing the children for the sin of the fathers to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me, [6] but showing love to a thousand generations of those who love me and keep my commandments."*

We tend to become just like our parents unless we keep his commandments. Getting a passport means we may have to deal with our parent's issues. It may also be a good time for students going to recognize and begin to work on the areas of their lives that were passed down to them that are going to hurt them in the long run. People that come from divorced, alcoholic, or criminal homes tend to walk in that same path when they grow up.

It also is a good time to recognize the benefits of parents who are stable and growing Christians. Too often students don't appreciate what they do have. It also shows the result of long term obedience and working through the challenges that life throws at us.

Students often don't see a big difference between themselves (Christians) and some of their non Christian friends. Only time will show the giant gap that exists as the challenge of getting a passport or signed permission slips can become.

*Psalm 1:1 Blessed is the man  
who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked  
or stand in the way of sinners  
or sit in the seat of mockers.*

*Psalm 1:2 But his delight is in the law of the LORD,  
and on his law he meditates day and night.*

*Psalm 1:3 He is like a tree planted by streams of water,  
which yields its fruit in season  
and whose leaf does not wither.  
Whatever he does prospers.*

*Psalm 1:4 Not so the wicked!  
They are like chaff  
that the wind blows away.*

*Psalm 1:5 Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment,  
nor sinners in the assembly of the righteous.*

*Psalm 1:6 For the LORD watches over the way of the righteous,  
but the way of the wicked will perish.*

*Romans 12:2 Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is--his good, pleasing and perfect will.*

Your mind is like a file cabinet that has been filling up with information since your conception. How you deal with anger, stress, change, conflict, being wrong, ignorance, or pain is all recorded from your past experiences. That is why "that is just what my mom or dad would say" is often uttered out of a student's mouth in shock and terror. They are mini-versions of their parents often.

## EXERCISE

Have the participants put down on a 3x5 card how people normally react at home when they get angry, there is stress, finances aren't good, or they don't know the answer, or there is a crisis about something. Have it be anonymous so no one is embarrassed by the next part.

You land in your foreign country and the hotel where you have reservations acts like you don't exist, aren't in the computer, and could care less about you. What do you do? Pull from the 3x5 cards and see if that helps or not. What do the scriptures say instead? Thus the need for the renewing of the mind and meditating on God becomes apparent so you can have the proper responses.

For your next scenario you are ministering on the streets and an angry local person comes up to you, very mad and screaming at you about what you are doing. Again pull from the 3x5 cards and see how it will go. Then look for a good scriptural answer to show the contrast. In each of these scenarios follow out their progression from the right or wrong responses

# NO NEWS IS GOOD NEWS

*Matthew 6:25-27 "Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more important than food, and the body more important than clothes? [26] Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they? [27] Who of you by worrying can add a single hour to his life?"*

This verse is more for the parents than the student but it can apply to all of us at anytime. Worrying and jumping to the wrong conclusion can result in serious harm to all involved. Having learned this lesson the hard way it has become apparent that this kind of policy is necessary to prevent problems from arising.

One of the challenges is the context of any statement that a student on a mission trip makes. The listening parent has no context in which to frame the statement and no balance of another person's perspective to give the statement its correct meaning.

*Proverbs 18:17 The first to present his case seems right, till another comes forward and questions him.*

You will have ways to communicate if it is needed but you may have to lay down some tough rules for some to follow to maximize the trip and the team experience.

We have been the victim of rumors that have almost destroyed the youth ministry when we returned home because of the talk that existed while we were gone and an American Embassy was almost contacted over a nonexistent event because of a call home from a student.

## EXERCISE

Start a statement relay and see how twisted it gets as each person whispers the statement to the person next to them. Have it go full circle until it gets back to you, as you were the one who started it and then compare the two. Here is one example you can use, "My dog Marvin eats all the neighborhood cat food and steals the mail. I am hated and rich."

After you see how twisted it becomes you can do the next exercise.

Blindfold one person and have another person describe a photo to them. Then ask the blindfolded person to describe the same photo to someone else who is blind folded. Note the changes that take place by the third person in the sequence. Now imagine what would happen if we call home and parents start talking to each other. How accurate would their conversations be? You can even do this with parents if you like to help them understand the "No News is Good News" concept.

# SLAYING THE MONEY MONSTER

*Matthew 6:24 "No one can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and Money.*

*Romans 8:15-17 For you did not receive a spirit that makes you a slave again to fear, but you received the Spirit of sonship. And by him we cry, "Abba, Father." [16] The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children. [17] Now if we are children, then we are heirs--heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory.*

*Matthew 6:31-34 So do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' [32] For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. [33] But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. [34] Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.*

Every culture has its challenges. One of America's challenges is how to respond to money and its part in our lives. Too often it produces a fear and/or an unrealistic view of its power and need in our lives. A mission trip gives Father God a chance to use money to teach us some key lessons about his character and life.

Because we are all different there is no one way to predict the path for each individual but there are a number of topics that this opportunity can bring up. First may be the four letter word, "work." Some people have had life handed to them on a silver platter. Others may need to humble themselves and ask. For some it will be working together as a team to get something done. Selling something of value can also help fund a mission trip.

## EXERCISES

Arrange for a work day where you work as a team.

Arrange for a work day where people go individually or in small groups to work.

Have a letter writing day.

Start a sell-it on E-bay or Craigslist account.

Keep track of each individual's progress, and gather money every time you are together. Students see a lot of money go through their hands, you need to help them use it wisely.

# HEALTH AND FOOD

*1 Corinthians 3:16-17 Don't you know that you yourselves are God's temple and that God's Spirit lives in you? [17] If anyone destroys God's temple, God will destroy him; for God's temple is sacred, and you are that temple.*

Before people go on a trip it is good for them to be in good physical shape, rested, and ready for more walking and activity than many of them are used to in a normal day. For some of them it may require a training program because they don't walk at all or only from the car to the mall.

Being rested means they will be ready for the strains that the trip may bring. If they are pushing too hard before the trip and not getting enough sleep or eating right they are more likely to get sick on the trip.

Food is also a challenge for many because of dietary restrictions, preferences, or their level of pickiness. Addressing this ahead of time can help with some of the following suggestions.

1. New foods could end up being some of your favorites if you try them.
2. You can't expect to eat what you now like or want at all times.
3. If you have strict dietary issues bring things with you.
4. Try new foods especially if it is a setting where you could offend someone by their refusal.
5. Being in good physical shape now will help you through your entire life not just on the trip.
6. If someone needs to end any habits it is good to do it before you get on the trip (i.e. smoking, drugs, caffeine, etc.). I have seen students go through withdrawals on trips and it isn't fun, pretty, or good for anyone.

Taking time for people to do a quick evaluation of their world now can help them get on a healthy path for the rest of their lives.

## EXERCISES

Take a can of corned beef and switch the label with a dog food can. Then open it before the students and eat it out of the can. Letting them know that being flexible on their eating habits can be very important on a mission trip. Ask if any want to try it?

For the people who refused, ask them why. Then let them know that the label was switched and that it is quite good and a lot of people eat this. Sometimes what something looks like or what we think it might taste like is all in our heads, just like this example. If possible have them try the corned beef.

You can also go to a foreign market or restaurant that serves the local food of your destination. One exception would be that most Mexican restaurants don't serve the same kinds of food you would eat in Mexico and nowhere in Central or South America. Spain does not eat Mexican type food either so you may want to visit the internet for some real recipes of the countries.

Remind them that the local people enjoy these foods and can be offended if you turn up your nose without even a taste. Ask your local missionaries that you will be working with how that works where you are going.

## TRAVEL CONSIDERATIONS

*Acts 21:1-6 After we had torn ourselves away from them, we put out to sea and sailed straight to Cos. The next day we went to Rhodes and from there to Patara. [2] We found a ship crossing over to Phoenicia, went on board and set sail. [3] After sighting Cyprus and passing to the south of it, we sailed on to Syria. We landed at Tyre, where our ship was to unload its cargo. [4] Finding the disciples there, we stayed with them seven days. Through the Spirit they urged Paul not to go on to Jerusalem. [5] But when our time was up, we left and continued on our way. All the disciples and their wives and children accompanied us out of the city, and there on the beach we knelt to pray. [6] After saying good-bye to each other, we went aboard the ship, and they returned home.*

Your travel schedule probably won't look like this one but you need to consider it and plan and prepare for it so it is an enjoyable and profitable part of the trip. You may have a multiple day road trip, or long flights with long layovers in airports, or any number of options and combinations.

Think through that so that you can make the most of those times and the word "bored" doesn't need to be used. Part of any experience is the journey not just the destination. Making the most of yours can be something that becomes a life-long attitude and experience.

*Ephesians 5:15-17 Be very careful, then, how you live--not as unwise but as wise, [16] making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil. [17] Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord's will is.*

## EXERCISE

You will spend some time getting to where you are going. What could you do during that time to grow and gain a new talent, knowledge, or experience? If you learn how to take good advantage of your time what will the end result of your life be? What happens if you get in the habit of wasting time, how could life be different?

# CAMERA ETIQUETTE

*Matthew 7:12 So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you, for this sums up the Law and the Prophets.*

Today we have cameras like we've never had them before and can do so much. We need to remember that the people we meet are people first and not animals in a zoo. How we treat them in that potential process is important. It gets down to how we like to be treated as well.

Do we want to be a spectacle or do we like to be pointed at? Remember in all things how you treat others will, in time, be how you are treated.

*Galatians 6:7-10 Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows. [8] The one who sows to please his sinful nature, from that nature will reap destruction; the one who sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life. [9] Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up. [10] Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers.*

This can be a good time for people to look at how they are treating others and how they are being treated. Often the connection between the two is missed by a student who doesn't realize that how they treat people will come back to influence their future.

## EXERCISES

As a part of your training process, make an announcement that they are to bring two cans of food for a food drive. Do it a couple of times so they are without excuse if they forget. Once the day arrives make sure you bring two cans of food you like to eat and then note who forgot and what the others brought. Then announce that the cans were to feed the team for two meals. See how the team would fare and then remind them of the scripture from Galatians.

It will be the same on how they interact with others and the pictures they take. Have they earned the right to take them by relationship? Or did they force themselves on the people? What would it be like if a stranger was looking through our windows and taking pictures of us and then distributing them on the internet?

# YOUR PUPPET

*Matthew 19:13 Then little children were brought to Jesus for him to place his hands on them and pray for them. But the disciples rebuked those who brought them.*

*Matthew 19:14-15 Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these." [15] When he had placed his hands on them, he went on from there.*

WC Fields was an actor who said a famous line to a child while he was playing his part in a movie, "get out of here son, don't bother me." That is the exact opposite of Jesus. It needs to be the exact opposite for us too. Jesus loves children and your puppet will give you opportunities to express that love to them.

You don't have to wait for a mission trip to love children. You can do that almost anytime. Here are some hints that can increase your love to children and your interaction with them.

Get small, if possible squat down so you are closer to their height. Living in a land of giants can be intimidating for anyone. Be patient enough to listen to them and realize that your investment in their lives will help shape their future.

If they are grabby towards the puppet you may want to give it to them when you leave. Remember when you bless a child, you also bless the parents and other family members.

## EXERCISE

Have a "Make the Puppets Day" if you are going to use them in your outreach. Then work on a short program you can use at church or somewhere soon. Once you have done your children's ministry, debrief your team. Ask these two questions and get their input.

1. What makes children easy to work with?
2. What makes children difficult to work with?

Are the kids completely responsible for who they are or are the parents a big influence (good, bad, or not there at all).

# CHALLENGING AREAS IN A STM

**#1 FEAR** *Matthew 14:27 But Jesus immediately said to them: "Take courage! It is I. Don't be afraid."*

Fear looks different for everyone. But the results are the same, panic, paralyzed, or other behavior that doesn't help. What are some of the things that people are afraid of? Go ahead and make a list. Learning how to respond to fear is a key part of growing and meeting the challenges of a STM.

*Romans 8:15 For you did not receive a spirit that makes you a slave again to fear, but you received the Spirit of sonship. And by him we cry, "Abba, Father."*

Here are a few tricks to help us remember key aspects about fear.

FEAR = Forgetting Every Available Resource

FEAR = False Evidence Appearing Real

## EXERCISES

Get a 4x4 post about four feet long. Lay it on the ground then have someone blindfolded get on it. Get four larger folk on the ends ready to raise it off the ground with the person on it. Note how easy it is to stay balanced when it is on the ground first then begin the raising process (not really). Instead of really raising it have the four people bend their knees as they raise it an inch or less off the ground. This will simulate the False Evidence Appearing Real side of Fear.

Now simulate an accident where someone would puncture their foot on a rusty nail. Don't really do it obviously but then describe in detail the results of getting tetanus, or lock jaw as it has also been called. See if anyone gets nervous about that. Hopefully someone will remember that they already have a tetanus shot so they don't have to worry about it. If they don't you can remind them of their tetanus shot. That would show a side of the Forgetting Every Available Resource aspect of fear.

For some students there is an additional spiritual element that relates to the scripture from Romans 8:15. For them it would be good to memorize that scripture and let it become a part of who they are.

**#2 GRACE** *2 Corinthians 12:9-10 But he said to me, 'My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.' Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me. That is why, for Christ's sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong."* 2 Corinthians 12:9-10

Grace is a key component in our growth, in all that Jesus asks us to do. Paul understood that his life was based on it. Peter understood its importance so it appears in the last recorded words we have from him.

*2 Peter 3:18 But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and forever! Amen.*

## EXERCISES

Pick the biggest strongest guy in your group and smallest girl in the group to come up for a demonstration. Once they are up there, let them know that where they are going, arm wrestling is often the way they determine who is the strongest, so they need to be culturally relevant and know how to do that. Then get them ready to arm wrestle.

In a professional arm wrestling competition, the judge puts his hands around the hands of the competitors before the match starts. The outcome would be obvious assuming the big guy tries and you don't help. But that is where the demonstration of grace is seen. This time the judge (you) doesn't let go and make sure the girl wins. In a real arm wrestling match the judge let's go. In our live HE doesn't.

Grace is what we get when we try, give it our best, and then, like Paul, we can talk about being who we are because of it. She won by grace not her ability but she would not have won anything if she had not carried through with the demonstration.

The mission trip will be full of opportunities to grow and do by the grace of God or just sit on the sidelines and watch. If they participate they grow in the grace, if they don't they won't.

**#3 SELFISHNESS** *Acts 2:44-47 All the believers were together and had everything in common. [45] Selling their possessions and goods, they gave to anyone as he had need. [46] Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, [47] praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.*

## EXERCISE

Do a quick exercise, to show them what they can do together versus alone. Have them write on a piece of paper how much money they have with them right now. Tally the results. See how long you could live off of that amount with \$3 a piece at McDonalds. It will be longer together than it would have been alone as some probably had no money or very little.

You can also have a meal together and start all the food at one end of the table. There should be enough for everyone if people aren't piggy at the beginning. How well they do on this will be seen at the opposite end of the table. Just make sure you don't pray until everyone has the food on their plates. It may take some readjusting and make for some teachable moments.

**#4 MATURITY** *Hebrews 5:11-14 We have much to say about this, but it is hard to explain because you are slow to learn[12] In fact, though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you the elementary truths of God's word all over again. You need milk, not solid food! [13] Anyone who lives on milk, being still an infant, is not acquainted with the teaching about righteousness. [14] But solid food is for the mature, who by constant use have trained themselves to distinguish good from evil.*

As the students are arriving to one of the meetings have a small box or two that says "don't touch" on a table. Don't be in the room. If possible have a video camera rolling with the boxes in view so you can see

who does touch them. When they are all there and you finally come in tell them that today we are going to learn about some of the things to be aware of in foreign countries. Tell them that you ordered an anthrax kit and a sterilization kit that can only be handled with gloves. Putting gloves on, pick up the boxes and turn and ask if any of them had touched the boxes before you came in. Look concerned. You should see the maturity level of the individuals by their reaction and can verify it with the video tape.

The lesson is clear, the mature have learned from the *elementary truths* and others are still learning. On this mission trip they will get a chance to make a lot of decisions. Learning from them will help them to eventually be mature and ready for even more growth.

# PERSONAL ANGER MANAGEMENT

*Ephesians 4:26-27 "In your anger do not sin" : Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry, [27] and do not give the devil a foothold.*

*James 1:20-21 for man's anger does not bring about the righteous life that God desires. [21] Therefore, get rid of all moral filth and the evil that is so prevalent and humbly accept the word planted in you, which can save you.*

At some point in life everyone is challenged in this area. On a mission trip the chances are even greater that this will happen as they are facing new challenges and situations. By being proactive in this area you can give them life skills that will help them throughout their lives not just on the mission project.

After they have read the material it can be very helpful to act out some scenarios that they may face on the trip or probably face at home or school.

## PERSONAL ANGER MANAGEMENT

Give a quick review of the six levels of the anger maturity scale. Then have them write anonymously how they would normally respond to the following scenarios.

1. Someone eats the last piece of chicken before you had a chance to get any because you were helping the local pastor unload his truck.
2. Someone in your room snores loudly.
3. One of the vans is air conditioned and one isn't.
4. The local pastor changes the plan after you have been there three days.
5. You notice you're missing your camera.
6. You forgot to bring enough underwear for the trip and you still have three days to go.

After they have written down a response come up with a mature response as a group, one that can be done at the right time, place, and be a Godly solution. They will probably face many of these and this practice run will help them to respond correctly instead of like their original responses.

Compare the results of the mature response to some of the ones they wrote down on their papers (which you will have collected).

# CONFLICT STYLES AND TEST

*Matthew 5:9 Blessed are the peacemakers,  
for they will be called sons of God*

Jesus' last recorded prayer was for unity among his followers.

*John 17:20-23 "My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, [21] that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me. [22] I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one: [23] I in them and you in me. May they be brought to complete unity to let the world know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me."*

For that to happen, someone has to take the initiative and be a peacemaker. By mastering the skills that it takes to work out a difficult situation you are preparing people for the rest of their lives.

## EXERCISES

After people have taken the test create this scenario. This is a family vacation with Dad (a turtle), Mom (a shark), and the kids (shark, turtle, fox, and owl). As they are sitting in the van have them decide where they are going to eat lunch. What the role playing develops based on each style should be interesting.

Evaluate what vacation will be like if they stick to their style and don't adjust. How could it be better?

How could this relate to the mission trip? How could this relate to what happens at home?

## OUR GIFTS

*Romans 12:3-8 For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the measure of faith God has given you. [4] Just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, [5] so in Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. [6] We have different gifts, according to the grace given us. If a man's gift is prophesying, let him use it in proportion to his faith. [7] If it is serving, let him serve; if it is teaching, let him teach; [8] if it is encouraging, let him encourage; if it is contributing to the needs of others, let him give generously; if it is leadership, let him govern diligently; if it is showing mercy, let him do it cheerfully.*

Every gift has a very different view of life. Learning to work together is one of the joys and challenges in any group of people. On this trip you can find out ahead of time what gifts people have and are developing. This will enable a candid discussion on how to respond in a mature way given who the team is.

Each gift takes time to mature as it begins to interact with others and life.

## EXERCISES

Give everyone one minute to look at something (then hide it) and five minutes to write down everything that they can about what they saw. From these pick the best description and then make it even better by adding information from what others saw. What if only one set of eyes had described it? How much better with all sets of eyes? So it is with the gifts we all have and can contribute to the overall good of the team and life.

Have the students give examples of mature and immature uses of the gifts they read about. Just because it is a gift is the idea it generates always right? Or does it need all the other gifts to really be the "right" way to do something?

Now solve the following problem the same way you did with the item description as above. After you have read it to them give them five minutes to solve it on paper. Then pick the one single best one and a compiled best from all.

The bus that is supposed to pick you up at 9am is late. There are noisy kids near by and it's hot outside but air-conditioned in the hotel. But it is hard to see the bus and when it arrives from inside the hotel.

Solve it.

Best case scenario solution is that you organize a quick children's outreach and minister to them until the bus arrives.

See what they come up with and compare and note where each gift adds to the best-case scenario solution.

# GROUP CONFLICT DYNAMICS

*Acts 6:1 In those days when the number of disciples was increasing, the Grecian Jews among them complained against the Hebraic Jews because their widows were being overlooked in the daily distribution of food.*

This could have been the first church split. But Peter had been trained by Jesus to be a peacemaker and so the action that followed solved the problem.

*Acts 6:2-4 So the Twelve gathered all the disciples together and said, "It would not be right for us to neglect the ministry of the word of God in order to wait on tables. [3] Brothers, choose seven men from among you who are known to be full of the Spirit and wisdom. We will turn this responsibility over to them [4] and will give our attention to prayer and the ministry of the word."*

*Acts 6:5-6 This proposal pleased the whole group. They chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit; also Philip, Procorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolas from Antioch, a convert to Judaism. [6] They presented these men to the apostles, who prayed and laid their hands on them.*

*Acts 6:7 So the word of God spread. The number of disciples in Jerusalem increased rapidly, and a large number of priests became obedient to the faith.*

Unity enables the message of Christ to go forth with much more strength and power than infighting and division. Being a peacemaker on the trip is all part of the impact that the team will have. The more peacemakers there are; the greater the chances of success and people going again the next time they have an opportunity.

We can learn a number of things from this example that we can apply to any situation.

1. No one was defensive. *There was a problem.*
2. The solution created ministry for others. *Everyone needs a place in the Kingdom.*
3. Even a simple task has some basic qualifications to be done well.
4. The solution had a unity factor about it in that everyone was happy with the solution.

## EXERCISES

Take these problems and solve them. After each session see how they could have been done to the best solution.

1. Someone forgot the balloons for the drama back at the hotel and it is too far away to go back and get them.
2. You are caught in a rain shower and some of the team member's cameras get wet and die.
3. One of the students finds out that their Grandma dies at home (they snuck into an internet café and got the news) and the rule police in your group start to get all over them and give them a bad time for breaking the rules (you've seen rule police in action haven't you?).

## **PRAYER**

*Matthew 26:36-38 Then Jesus went with his disciples to a place called Gethsemane, and he said to them, "Sit here while I go over there and pray." [37] He took Peter and the two sons of Zebedee along with him, and he began to be sorrowful and troubled. [38] Then he said to them, "My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death. Stay here and keep watch with me."*

*Matthew 26:39 Going a little farther, he fell with his face to the ground and prayed, "My Father, if it is possible, may this cup be taken from me. Yet not as I will, but as you will."*

*Matthew 26:40-41 Then he returned to his disciples and found them sleeping. "Could you men not keep watch with me for one hour?" he asked Peter. [41] "Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the body is weak."*

Prayer has certain challenges that we will all face at some time.

## **EXERCISES**

Go ahead and go through the "Lord's Prayer" one verse at a time. Find the areas that cause people problems like, "Father", "Your will be done", "Forgive our debtors." Help students to work through those areas.

You can also help them examine the following challenges in prayer.

Falling asleep

Wandering thoughts

Fear of God

Doubt

## PERSONAL PRAYER TIME

*Matthew 6:9-12 "This, then, is how you should pray:*

*" Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come,  
your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us today our daily bread.  
Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.*

*Matthew 6:13 And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one. '*

*Matthew 6:14-15 For if you forgive men when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. [15] But if you do not forgive men their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins.*

This prayer can be said in less than a minute but it can take a long time to have it mean what it meant to the disciples as they were learning to pray. You have already worked through the difficult passages on this prayer.

### EXERCISES

Now take the time to have the students journal their prayer attempts for the next two weeks. As they journal their prayers and the answers to them, have them reexamine the issues from the last lesson on doubt, fear, falling asleep, and wandering thoughts.

## GROUP PRAYER

*Acts 12:5 So Peter was kept in prison, but the church was earnestly praying to God for him.*

*Acts 12:6-7 The night before Herod was to bring him to trial, Peter was sleeping between two soldiers, bound with two chains, and sentries stood guard at the entrance. [7] Suddenly an angel of the Lord appeared and a light shone in the cell. He struck Peter on the side and woke him up. "Quick, get up!" he said, and the chains fell off Peter's wrists.*

*Acts 12:8-10 Then the angel said to him, "Put on your clothes and sandals." And Peter did so. "Wrap your cloak around you and follow me," the angel told him. [9] Peter followed him out of the prison, but he had no idea that what the angel was doing was really happening; he thought he was seeing a vision. [10] They passed the first and second guards and came to the iron gate leading to the city. It opened for them by itself, and they went through it. When they had walked the length of one street, suddenly the angel left him.*

*Acts 12:11 Then Peter came to himself and said, "Now I know without a doubt that the Lord sent his angel and rescued me from Herod's clutches and from everything the Jewish people were anticipating."*

*Acts 12:12-14 When this had dawned on him, he went to the house of Mary the mother of John, also called Mark, where many people had gathered and were praying. [13] Peter knocked at the outer entrance, and a servant girl named Rhoda came to answer the door. [14] When she recognized Peter's voice, she was so overjoyed she ran back without opening it and exclaimed, "Peter is at the door!"*

*Acts 12:15 "You're out of your mind," they told her. When she kept insisting that it was so, they said, "It must be his angel."*

*Acts 12:16-17 But Peter kept on knocking, and when they opened the door and saw him, they were astonished. [17] Peter motioned with his hand for them to be quiet and described how the Lord had brought him out of prison.*

Group prayer accomplished more than they thought possible. It is something that we almost always underestimate. During this trip you will have opportunities to pray as a group that can help change the people on the team, as well as the circumstances that you will face. This activity can be planned into each day and should be a part of the preparation as you prepare for greater things than you probably realize will happen.

## EXERCISE

Take some time in your planning process to pray as a group for the following things.

- 1-The location and people you will be working with. Write down anything that seems to be a theme or issue.
- 2-The unity of the team, have each person pray for each of the other people on the team.
- 3-Pray for the families of the people going on the team.
- 4-Prayer for the church you are a part of.

# ALTAR MINISTRY

*Luke 10:17 The seventy-two returned with joy and said, "Lord, even the demons submit to us in your name."*

*Luke 10:18-20 He replied, "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. [19] I have given you authority to trample on snakes and scorpions and to overcome all the power of the enemy; nothing will harm you. [20] However, do not rejoice that the spirits submit to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven."*

All areas of life have a learning curve to them.

## EXERCISES

This area of ministry has a lot of variables in it that are hard to nail down but if people are good at the basics you can at least realistically prepare for it. Here are the key basics that you can prepare people in regardless of the many possible outcomes.

1. They need to work with people of their own gender.
2. They need to ask why they came down and not assume anything.
3. They need to be ready to ask for help if something is bigger than their comfort zone. Here is something we have used that has been effective. You designate one or two people as floaters who monitor the altar ministry action and are there for the more challenging situations. When those situations are faced the initial worker simply lets the person know that "Your situation needs a little more help than I can provide so I am going to invite . . . . . over to make sure you get the best opportunity with God on this" They raise their hand and . . . . .comes over asap.
4. Their biggest help for the person is to listen first and then, and only then, offer scriptural advice or pray for them.
5. When praying for the person take the time that is necessary to actually enter into God's presence when they pray and not just say words to move it along (popcorn prayer).
6. Get any information that is pertinent for follow up if that is a part of the process (sometimes the people are already known).
7. Explain anything that does happen to the person involved.
8. Help the person they prayed for to take the next steps, i.e. new believers, reconciliation with others, obeying the call of God, etc.

To help them learn how to do this have some simulated altar calls where you prepare the person who will be prayed for with certain circumstances. Coach them through the process as needed and progress to other potential scenarios.

This will help them when the time comes to pray for others.

# CROSS CULTURAL FACTORS

*Acts 17:22-23 2 Paul then stood up in the meeting of the Areopagus and said: "Men of Athens! I see that in every way you are very religious. [23] For as I walked around and looked carefully at your objects of worship, I even found an altar with this inscription: TO AN UNKNOWN GOD. Now what you worship as something unknown I am going to proclaim to you.*

Because Paul took the time to understand the culture he was able to minister to people he had never met and who thought very differently than he did. It is no different with you today. Take some time to get to know the people you will be working with before you assume anything about them.

## EXERCISES

There are a lot of things that we assume that make it difficult for us to really see what is going on and how to respond to it. Paul took the time to look and learn before he ministered to the men of Athens. Use this exercise to help the students see that they will need to look and learn as well before they minister to the people they will encounter on this mission trip.

Have them write down their definition of the following terms on a piece of paper independently of each other.

Hot  
Cold  
Family  
Food  
Travel  
Stress

Then show them what these mean where for your intended location so that they can begin to see the difference before they get there and how they might deal with the actual situations/circumstances.

# PERSONAL EVANGELISM

*Romans 10:14 How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them?*

Each of us has a different audience that will listen to us. That means that each of us have someone who is waiting for us.

## EXERCISE

Have them make a list of eight of their friends (people who they rub shoulders with) who they can make a short description of. Then do some role playing so they can practice sharing their testimony and faith with them. Get input from each of the team members as far as the best and most effective way to do this.

# YOUR TESTIMONY

*Galatians 1:22-24 Later I went to Syria and Cilicia. [22] I was personally unknown to the churches of Judea that are in Christ. [23] They only heard the report: "The man who formerly persecuted us is now preaching the faith he once tried to destroy." [24] And they praised God because of me.*

There are people who will, *"they praised God because of me"*. Everyone's testimony has an audience. Helping students to see that and being ready to share it will pay big dividends on the trip and before and after it as well.

Organizing and practicing will put that tool in your hand ready for the first opportunity that comes with it.

## EXERCISE

Have them learn how to share their testimony in two minutes, five minutes, and fifteen minutes. Then have the other students help analyze the testimony to see the audience it would hit. Do this for everyone and see how large of an audience your team will hit.

## THE LADDER AND THE GOSPEL

*1 Corinthians 3:5-9 What, after all, is Apollos? And what is Paul? Only servants, through whom you came to believe--as the Lord has assigned to each his task. [6] I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God made it grow. [7] So neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but only God, who makes things grow. [8] The man who plants and the man who waters have one purpose, and each will be rewarded according to his own labor. [9] For we are God's fellow workers; you are God's field, God's building.*

Success in evangelism is not measure by conversions but by obedience.

### EXERCISE

Now that you have been pushing people towards evangelism have them list where some of their friends are that they have talked to. Celebrate their obedience and the fact that seed has been planted and watered by their efforts. Their efforts will be similar in their mission experience and they will add to what others have already done.

Help them to continue at home and be ready to instigate this same action on their mission opportunity.

## THE CULTS

*Romans 1:16 I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile.*

Religious people have some specific ideas that they have embraced which always includes the idea that they are right in their thoughts and everyone else is wrong. Talking to them can be a challenge but we have found as we have worked worldwide with almost every kind of group, that these five topics are universal issues that we all deal with.

If we can become proficient in their use, then we have a tool to speak to people's hearts no matter how sure they are that they are right and we are wrong. You can't argue with your own experience. Instead you use people's experience to lead them to the truth.

## EXERCISES

Have them memorize the phrase and the scripture that goes with it from the participants manual.

Later have people in the group become a Muslim, Buddhist, Atheist, Mormon, etc. Then one by one have them interact with the class. It would be good for the students to remember this scripture as well so they keep a good attitude throughout the process of sharing Christ with the different religions.

*2 Timothy 2:25-26 Those who oppose him he must gently instruct, in the hope that God will grant them repentance leading them to a knowledge of the truth, [26] and that they will come to their senses and escape from the trap of the devil, who has taken them captive to do his will.*

# FIVE COLORED HEARTS

*Luke 19:9-10 Jesus said to him, "Today salvation has come to this house, because this man, too, is a son of Abraham. [10] For the Son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost."*

Having a strategy will enable participants in the mission to be successful when they normally wouldn't be. Making people evangelistic even though they lack the evangelists gifting is a key part of any mission. Most people do not have the gift of an evangelist so they need a strategy and those with the gift need some tools. This is a proven way to keep people on task and give them a chance to share the gospel.

## EXERCISES

This is like a script for students. It gives them a place to start (lost) which people everywhere understand and don't like. From that point they can share the Gospel. Have them practice using the five colored hearts script. Practicing is a key component to effective evangelism.

You can also practice in the real sense by doing a children's service or a youth service where you focus on using the five color script.

## **SURVEYS**

*Acts 8:26-29 Now an angel of the Lord said to Philip, "Go south to the road--the desert road--that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza." [27] So he started out, and on his way he met an Ethiopian eunuch, an important official in charge of all the treasury of Candace, queen of the Ethiopians. This man had gone to Jerusalem to worship, [28] and on his way home was sitting in his chariot reading the book of Isaiah the prophet. [29] The Spirit told Philip, "Go to that chariot and stay near it."*

*Acts 8:30 Then Philip ran up to the chariot and heard the man reading Isaiah the prophet. "Do you understand what you are reading?" Philip asked.*

*Acts 8:31 "How can I," he said, "unless someone explains it to me?" So he invited Philip to come up and sit with him.*

Philip asked a question and before long there was a conversation and a conversion. Surveys can give you the questions to ask that may result in people opening up and allowing you to plant, water, and potentially harvest in their lives.

## **EXERCISES**

Have each outreach participant do ten of these surveys with people they know aren't Christians. You can do both surveys and then note the kinds of opportunities that developed and how well they followed up on those opportunities. Depending on how well your students are doing with evangelism, you may want to practice with them before they go out. If they are progressing well in this area, they could be ready to go now.

## GROUP EVANGELISM

*Acts 9:36-38 In Joppa there was a disciple named Tabitha (which, when translated, is Dorcas), who was always doing good and helping the poor. [37] About that time she became sick and died, and her body was washed and placed in an upstairs room. [38] Lydda was near Joppa; so when the disciples heard that Peter was in Lydda, they sent two men to him and urged him, "Please come at once!"*

*Acts 9:39 Peter went with them, and when he arrived he was taken upstairs to the room. All the widows stood around him, crying and showing him the robes and other clothing that Dorcas had made while she was still with them.*

*Acts 9:40-43 Peter sent them all out of the room; then he got down on his knees and prayed. Turning toward the dead woman, he said, "Tabitha, get up." She opened her eyes, and seeing Peter she sat up. [41] He took her by the hand and helped her to her feet. Then he called the believers and the widows and presented her to them alive. [42] This became known all over Joppa, and many people believed in the Lord. [43] Peter stayed in Joppa for some time with a tanner named Simon.*

What Dorcas and Peter did together was far greater than what they could have done on their own. Each played a part in opening the hearts of the people and drawing them together and eventually in the lives of the new believers as the message was preached.

## EXERCISES

This will depend completely on what kinds of gifts and talents you have in your group. If you have a lot of servants then a good works project (painting a house, cleaning up a neighborhood, collecting for a food drive or clothing drive, etc.) with opportunities that develop out of the new relationships. If you worked at a senior citizen trailer park you could invite them to a meal afterwards (a couple of days later) and share the five colored hearts script with them and/or testimonies.

If your community has a special celebration day(s), you could have a booth that sells pieces of pie and gives out literature as well.

You could do a literature table at a fun event you plan for kids in the park.

Again, what you do will depend on your group of students and your setting. Just remember to do both parts of the outreach well. Do your research and then see what happens with your group evangelism effort.

## COMING HOME

*Matthew 13:53-57 When Jesus had finished these parables, he moved on from there. [54] Coming to his hometown, he began teaching the people in their synagogue, and they were amazed. "Where did this man get this wisdom and these miraculous powers?" they asked. [55] "Isn't this the carpenter's son? Isn't his mother's name Mary, and aren't his brothers James, Joseph, Simon and Judas? [56] Aren't all his sisters with us? Where then did this man get all these things?" [57] And they took offense at him.*

*But Jesus said to them, "Only in his hometown and in his own house is a prophet without honor."*

When someone comes home from a mission trip so much has happened in a participant's life that it is sometimes hard to fit back into their normal life. It can be almost impossible for those who didn't go to understand. While the participant was gone their life was probably the same from day to day to day as it had been. You need to prepare students for that reaction, or lack of one, from the "hometown" people.

## EXERCISES

You won't do this until you are getting ready to come home. But make sure you do prepare them for the cold stonewall that they may encounter when they come home. Many people want to know the results when you get home, "How many people got saved?" That will be heard by many, but your trip may not have been all about evangelism or you may have been in a country where they weren't ready for the harvest (like the USA) because there has been very little planting and watering.

Keep track of how many people you minister to during the entire trip. For example we have been in low harvest places (Thailand, Australia, England, Spain, etc) where we ministered to thousands of people but only saw only a few people accept Christ. Teams that come back from there come back with a good answer to the inevitable question. "We ministered to over eight thousand people and while we were there seven of them accepted Christ." If it is a building project then describe the success of that and then share how many you were able to minister too as well.

Keeping track is your task so that the students get a good perspective on their efforts. I can also honestly say that more people will come to Christ from their work just not in their presence. We were in Thailand with a team one year where we saw three come to Christ in one location where that group had ministered for a week. But the missionary told me that within two months twenty-five more had come to Christ because of what was started while our team was there. Feel free to share this story with your team if you need to.

The other challenge when you come home is sharing the stories that you experienced with people who haven't had the same experience. Students will have more success if they just share one story at a time not the whole trip. You can also help the process if you write a short summary of each day and mail that to the parents. It will help the parents to understand the stories they get when they understand the bigger flow of the trip. This shouldn't be a detailed account but a paragraph per day description that is easy to follow and understand.

The final challenge you often face is that these students lived a Jesus lifestyle for an extended period of time and now they walk into a vacuum where each day is not planned out for them. You can help this with

some additional opportunities for your participants as well as ways for the students who didn't go but need to catch the same fire they have.

If your ministry location had extended services with lots of worship and time for God to move then, maybe, you can modify some of your normal events and meeting to include a portion of these aspects that they remember from their ministry experience.

## **DEVOTIONS AFTER YOU RETURN**

*Matthew 12:33-37 "Make a tree good and its fruit will be good, or make a tree bad and its fruit will be bad, for a tree is recognized by its fruit. [34] You brood of vipers, how can you who are evil say anything good? For out of the overflow of the heart the mouth speaks. [35] The good man brings good things out of the good stored up in him, and the evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in him. [36] But I tell you that men will have to give account on the day of judgment for every careless word they have spoken. [37] For by your words you will be acquitted, and by your words you will be condemned."*

Having begun devotions before the trip and had them during the trip it is important to keep that part of the trip going.

### **EXERCISE**

You may need to help them find devotion strategies or give them options that they can experiment with and find what works for them. You can also have some of the devotion tracks that help them to process the experience that they had on the trip and how that now relates to what they are living when they get back.

There are devotions in your preparation manual for Short Term Mission trips.

## RESOURCES

*Proverbs 23:23 Buy the truth and do not sell it;  
get wisdom, discipline and understanding.*

This is true for the trip but also for life. We need to invest in our futures and realize that it will cost something. Don't be cheap on the trip with the potential resources you may use. It is often impossible to get more of any of them once you have arrived in your ministry location.

It is also important to invest in your team before they go. That can be through materials, individuals, or tools that they can use on the mission.

## EXERCISE

Think through your trip on both the personal level and the team ministry level. What would be the maximum tools you could use? Make a list and then start to pray and ask around for that list. You may find that some would enjoy being able to give that tool or money for it if you have thought through its usefulness and cost and have the courage to ask.

Make sure that they get to hear how much of a difference that tool did make during the outreach. Include pictures if possible.