

## **PREPARING YOUR HEART FOR MISSIONS (WITH YOUTH) // ADULT GUIDE**

**So you've signed up to attend a mission trip with your church's youth group...how do you feel? Ok, how do you honestly feel? You may have signed up as a first time volunteer or savvy veteran of missions. You might be one of those parents who are just super skeptical of what this crazy youth ministry does and you're keeping your eye on things. You may have been guilted into going on this trip because some cute little middle school tricked you into coming along and now you're regretting it. Or maybe you just really want to go. If this is you, welcome! This is more than just a mission trip you know that right? There's the added element of youth ministry involved and so we have a lot of work to get through. So you ready? Good...let's go.**



### **FIRST THINGS FIRST // HEART CHECK (Check the following that applies)**

\_\_\_\_\_ **I'm excited to see God move through these teenagers**

\_\_\_\_\_ **I'm nervous about all that could go wrong on this trip**

\_\_\_\_\_ **I'm just there to make sure nothing goes wrong**

\_\_\_\_\_ **I'm ready to work and put these students to work**

\_\_\_\_\_ **Whatever needs to be done, let's go**

\_\_\_\_\_ **Why in the world did I sign up?**

\_\_\_\_\_ **I'm actually in a dry spot spiritually**

\_\_\_\_\_ **I'm not perfect but by God's grace I'm moving forward**

\_\_\_\_\_ **(other):**

**As the adult volunteer on this trip, I need you to be honest with yourself first. Where are you spiritually? Where's your heart? What's your attitude towards this trip? Would you say it's more skeptical than optimistic? Are there things you're looking forward to?**

**The last thing I want you to do is find yourself at the eve of the mission's trip and you've haven't done the work of internal processing. Especially as adults we feel like we can wing it or this trip**

is for the students and not so much for me. And I can unequivocally say that you are wrong. It would be a massive fail if you didn't stop and reflect, process, and strategize. Of all people, adults leaders need to have a good pulse on where their hearts are prior to this trip. Why? Because where your heart is, your actions will overflow from it. Where your heart is, motives will manifest.

**ACTION ITEM // PRAYER OF EXPOSURE:** Spend time praying over these topics:

1. **Your current status with the Lord Jesus Christ. In your relationship, how close are you right now? Are there things that need to be brought up in the relationship? Things confessed?**
2. **Your view of the youth. Pray for God to give you his heart for these students. Not just that they may do great things, but that He gives you eyes to see them as individuals with their own journeys, own struggles, own needs for the Gospel. Pray that he places a desire in your own heart to truly love each and every one of the youth going on this trip.**
3. **The Gospel proclaimed and demonstrated with power. Pray for the locals there, the local churches, the pastors and the leaders there. Pray that he gives you the spirit of power and not of fear or shame as you practice now proclaiming the Gospel with words. Pray that you actually believe that He can and will accomplish his will to seek and save the lost...through you first and the youth secondly.**

## **TO LEAVE THE HEART **UNCHECKED** IS DANGEROUS, FOOLISH, AND IRRESPONSIBLE**

**BUILDING UP // STANDING FIRM :** To join together in the mission of God, we must first have the same purpose, plan, and philosophy. Let us consider the deep things of the Lord in order to ground our own hearts, help shape our students, and minister with confidence.

**THE MISSION IS...:** The mission of God is forming a family for Himself, from all people. This is made plain throughout the scriptures, and is fulfilled in Revelation 21:3. God is at the center of the passage, and His being physically present with His people is the product of his redemptive work in the world. Our participation in His forming His family for His glory is to invite people to know God through Jesus. Jesus is God, and it is through Jesus that God will be known, that His family will be formed, and His mission of redemption will be accomplished. Jesus is the agent by which

the knowledge of God is communicated; and he is the very content of that communication.<sup>1</sup>

***“Jesus is central to the mission of God, therefore people meeting Jesus is the mission.”***

When we talk about the mission trip, we have better focus on Jesus than on what we do. Jesus is the point and the purpose. To help you think through this, mission will involve these 3 things:

1. **WORD:** We must verbalize the gospel to others. “How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching?” (Romans 10:14)
2. **WORK:** We must put our faith into action. “What good is it, my brothers, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can that faith save him? If a brother or sister is poorly clothed and lacking in daily food, and one of you says to them, “Go in peace, be warmed and filled,” without giving them the things needed for the body, what good is that? So also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead. (James 2:14-17)
3. **WITNESS:** It is not only our words and our actions, but also how we go about speaking and acting. The way we treat one another, the way we have fun, forgive, encourage, handle stressful situations....that is the christian’s apologetic to the world. “A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.” (John 13:34-35)

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.acts29.com/mission-people-meeting-jesus/>

**TEAM BUILDING // WORKING WITH STUDENTS:** As adult leaders, I need to be upfront on how we view youth ministry and what we expect from our adults.

### **THE DO NOT's and DO's**



- **DON'T let the youth do all the work. While this is a “youth” missions trip, think of this as the youth want you to come and have invited you to join them in their ministry. Don't just sit back and watch them do all the work. Your role is to JOIN them in the ministry. Don't just sit back and tell them what to do, go do it with them...and while you're partnering in ministry, coach them along the way. Give them tips on how to do things better. Encourage them along the way. Help them see the bigger picture at times.**
- **DON'T keep highlighting what is wrong with the trip. There's nothing more discouraging on a missions trip than a person who only sees the negative. Look, i'm pretty sure when things go “wrong” everyone notices it...we don't need/want you to highlight it. Besides, a lot of times when our eyes are focused on what is wrong it just reveals that our heart is actually saying, “if things happened according to me, it would be better...” Don't do this...esp. In front of the youth. Things will go wrong at times (hopefully not because we're not wise nor responsible) but the students will ALWAYS be watching how you respond to things. They are being disciplined by your actions and learning from them. However, they will also pay attention to how you repent and confess as well.**
- **DON'T get wrapped up in the logistics and forget about receiving and enjoying. There are too many times where I catch leaders in the background trying to do things and flat out miss opportunities to learn themselves. Engage in the lessons. Be present in prayer. Don't think you're too old to relax and enjoy and laugh. One of the best apologetics for this real genuine faith for the students is watching actually have fun and learn also.**
- **DO get to know each and everyone one of our students. In youth ministry we always say that the passing periods are always the best venues for ministry. It is when we can informally go deeper with them and foster open, honest conversation. If you're coming with your own students, DON'T forget to spend quality time with them at least once a day. Leaders, you'll have heaps of time with the students - airplane rides, meals, down time, at the sites, etc. Remember, while this is only a short time during the mission trip, the relationships we're trying to build is actually long-term discipleship for when we go back home.**

- **DON'T forget that you are working are teenagers/adolescents. What does that mean? Glad you asked. Well, part of it means remembering that they do not have your wisdom, age, experience, knowledge, and vantage point. Also, don't forget about adolescent development. That means that they are currently in the process of developing their physical brain, trying to make sense of the world and their worldview, and dealing with hormones (lots and lots of hormones). So please be patient with them. Allow them to make mistakes without initially calling them out. I'm not saying letting them get away with whatever they want, but do consider who we're working with yes?**

**So from here we wait and we pray. We prepare the best we can and we trust the Lord with results. Use this time now before the trip to pray for each of the students. Spend some time talking with the students and their families to see where they are at. Ask their discipleship group leaders how they're doing. Before the trip, get as much rest as you can. Thanks for joining us for this trip, we are certain that you will be blessed many times over.**