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# Welcome!

Welcome to this incredible experience! We hope this journal will help make it a lot easier to write the story of your mission experience, and it's a valuable thing to do. Those who return year after year as a part of a short-term mission team will often talk about how extremely challenging and difficult the experience was, but then in the next breath, they'll say something like, *"It had to be one of the best experiences of my whole life!"*

## Why is that?

### **1) It's because we were created for God's mission in this world!**

When we actually roll up our sleeves and get involved in mission, we have this strong feeling that we're doing what we need to be doing. Yes, we're becoming the people God always meant us to be, and that's a great feeling!

### **2) It's also because we were designed by our Creator to serve others!**

One of the most noticeable things about our Lord, Jesus Christ, is that he served God and others all the time. He didn't come to be helped, served and loved by others. He came to help, serve and love others (Mark 10:45). When we follow His example and serve others, we find out what love really is, and that's a great feeling!

### **3) It's because we were made to enjoy loving community!**

What happens when we work, worship, sing, study, eat, live and pray with those involved in the same mission? **LOVING COMMUNITY** happens! We all need it! And it has to be one of the best things about life.

So, welcome to this incredible mission experience! Hopefully, the experience will last a lot longer than just a few days, and become another step toward a lifetime of commitment to God's mission, service to others, and loving community. Mission is what life is all about!

# This journal guides you in writing *your own story...*

## The pre-trip journal pages...

During the 7 days before departure, take 10-15 minutes each day to write in this journal. If you miss a day, try to make up for it on the next day.

Note: Writing is an important activity of learning. There will be times you don't feel like writing, and that's OK, but try to write at least a word for each item in the journal. When you do, you'll find that it really helps you focus on what you are experiencing.

## The on-site journal pages...

It's important to have a daily devotional time at the mission site. This journal offers you three pages of writing space for each day. Two of the pages will guide your reflection, but the third page is open and blank. Use this page for taking notes during some of the talks you'll be hearing, or write down words to songs, draw sketches, write poetry or whatever else you want to fill that space.

Note: Carry this journal with you. You never know when a thought will come that you want to remember. Also, bring the journal to your group gatherings. Groups have found the journal to be very helpful as they come together to debrief the experience, and your journal entries will help you know what to share with others.

## The backhome journal pages...

After the trip, it's a great idea to continue the discipline of writing your story daily. The 7 backhome pages will get you started, but after that, why not buy a notebook or diary for the months and years beyond the trip.

The journal pages of this book will be your personal, written record of one of the best experiences of your life. It will remind you of things you will want to tell others about the trip. It will also be a keepsake that you'll want to return to again and again in the future. And when the time comes to prepare for your next short-term mission trip, you'll find it very helpful to review the insights and learnings you have recorded in this journal.

This journal will be the record of all that God is about to do in your life because you said "Yes!" to this mission opportunity!

*In everything you do, look to God, trust God, and know that  
God is with you... God is the one who will always be your best guide...  
God will give you the direction you need in life.  
(Based on Proverbs 3:5-6)*

## 2 Corinthians 5:14-21

As I read this scripture, this is what I hear God saying to me...

Dear God, as a part of the mission team, help me to be more like Jesus Christ in my attitudes and in the way I love and serve the other members of the team. Help our team to represent Christ to all the new people we will soon be meeting. Amen.

Think about what it means for you to represent Jesus Christ.

These are some of my reasons for going on the mission trip...

Express words of praise, adoration and thanks to God. Confess any personal failure or sin, and receive God's forgiveness. Name a situation where you need God's help. Yield your life to God's purposes as you prepare for the trip.

Take a piece of paper and write a promise to yourself to complete the daily journal/devotion assignments for the next 7 days. Tape the paper to your mirror as a reminder.

*Mission Day 3*

help!!!


Today's Date: \_\_\_\_\_


Today's Weather:     


Today's Mood:      


What's something you have...

 seen?

 tasted?

 heard?

 smelled?

 touched?

Psalm 121:1-8

List some of the ways God has helped you on this trip. Think also about some of the ways you will need God's help in this day.

Sometimes I forget, Lord, that you made the mountains and You also made me. I'm never out-of-range from Your watchful eye. I'm counting on it today and every day, Lord, Amen.

# notes | *doodles* | drawings

Use this open space for anything else. Jot down notes, sketches, scripture verses, words to songs and new insights and learnings you want to include in your journal story.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Today's date: \_\_\_\_\_ Day 1



1 Peter 2:1-10

What is my foundation for life? For what purpose was I given my life? How am I doing with that purpose?

Dear Lord, thank you for the incredible experience of growth during the past few days. Help me to use all that I have learned as I live my life as a servant in my back home setting. Teach me to continue to build my life on the solid rock of Jesus Christ - always. Amen.

Think about verse nine and try to memorize it. Think about how much God must need you as someone chosen to live for Christ in your community.

Express words of thanks and praise to God. Pray for those you have left behind. Think of those God is calling you to serve in your community and yield your life to God's will.

Write a note of encouragement (email or letter) to someone you met during the mission trip.

back home