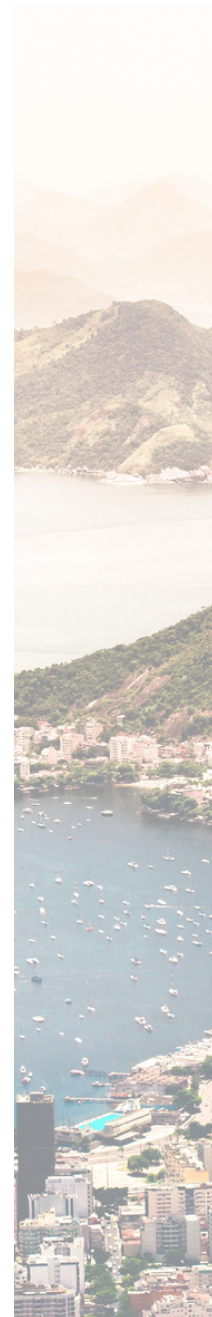
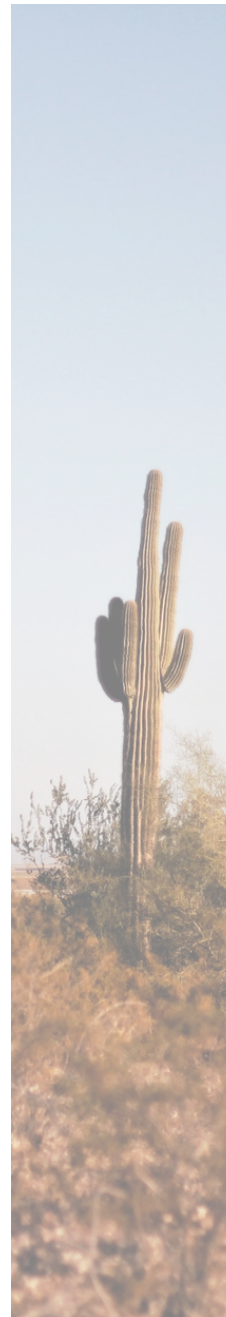
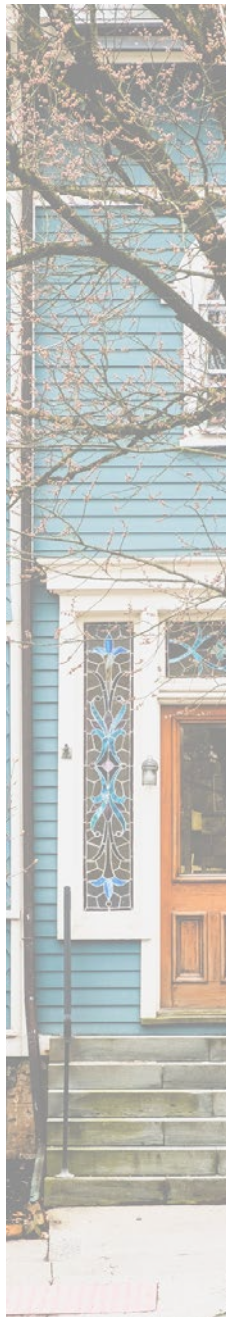


YOUTH MISSIONS

prefield training guide



Hey Friends!

We are so excited that you have partnered with us for your short-term mission experience! We know that missions is not a small value or work load on your shoulders. We are thankful that you have trusted us to help you on this journey.

Apex Missions exists to serve the local church by mobilizing the next generation of gospel influencers who take the gospel from here to everywhere. We don't take "serving the local church" lightly. As you begin to roll up your sleeves and get to work in preparation for the summer, we wanted to give you some insight and direction on what our heart is for this experience.

As you will see throughout this manual, Apex has four main values for our mission experiences. It is our goal to prepare your students to fulfill this 1 week mission with a gospel fluency that helps them grow in experiencing and articulating the gospel, gives them a posture of learning, sends them into discipling action, and gives them missional partnerships that will stick. Our vision goes WAY beyond that, though. Not only do we want your students to have this 1 week experience, it's our prayer and hope that we will set them up for a missional lifestyle to carry these values with them for the next 51 weeks of their year and beyond. We call this 1 for 51. As you work through all the details of this guide and as you spend the next months preparing your students, would you join us in setting the goal of this mission to go beyond the 1 week, and into the other 51 weeks and beyond?

You should find everything you need to prepare your students for the summer mission in this guide...we hope. There is a ton of prep ahead but hopefully we have given you all you need to make this as easy, clear, and organized as possible. Please take this preparation seriously. Your ministry partners are depending on you to have your students prepared and ready.

One quick reminder. As you know, it's our job as the body of Christ to do the work of ministry but it's only God who changes hearts. Please make it a priority to ground yourself and your group in prayer, depending on our Savior Jesus for the fruit. John 15:5 (NIV) Jesus said, "I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing."

Would you also join us in one more prayer request? Luke 10:2 (NIV) Jesus told them, "The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field." Would you join us in praying that God would plant seeds of missions in your student's hearts, that some of them would be sent to God's harvest field in the future?

Thank you! Thank you for investing in the next generation. Thank you for being a follower of Christ bringing the gospel to your student's world and now bringing your students to the world with the gospel! Thank you for partnering with Apex Missions.

Advancing the gospel in missions and advancing missions in the next generation,



The Youth Missions Team
Dan Sommer
Mackenzie Balmer

overview



OUR ORGANIZATION

Apex Missions is a division of the Evangelical Free Church of America. We mobilize high school and college students to short term missions.

OUR MISSIONS

Serving the local church by mobilizing emerging leaders who advance the gospel from here to everywhere.

OUR YOUTH MISSIONS

Mobilizing students for global gospel influence and missional living.

OUR 1 FOR 51 EMPHASIS

Helping students to increase in living with, living like, and living for Jesus.

OUR VALUES

- Gospel Fluency
 - We will equip our participants to celebrate, speak, and apply the gospel in all of life.
- Bold Curiosity
 - We will teach our participants to enter missions/ministry as learners first.
- Disciplemaking Catalyst
 - We will give our participants action steps to intentionally live, overflow, and foster a Jesus way of life
- Missional Relationships
 - We will be stronger through the sum of our teams and partnerships.

OUR YOUTH MISSION MINISTRY

- Consists mainly EFCA high school youth groups registered through Apex Missions.
- We work through the EFCA, ReachGlobal and EFCA friends for our ministry partnerships.
- We build 3 types of mission options at sites:
 - A1 Missions: Serving needs – Feed the hungry, facility maintenance, etc...
 - A2 Missions: Care ministries – VBS, park ministries, visitation ministries, etc...
 - A3 Missions: Gospel Missions – Street evangelism, student testimonies, outreach events etc...
- Our High School groups serve for one week: Saturday to Saturday.
- Our partners host between 4-7 weeks of groups.

overview



OUR OBJECTIVES

- Always being gospel focused.
- Empower students to experience God working in and through them to change the world with the gospel.
- Give students a vision and ability to live missional in all aspects of life.
- Give students the opportunity to fulfill the great commission beyond their local community.
- See students develop a heart and value for missions and missional living.
- Strengthen and expand global missions through the training, equipping, encouraging, and sending of the next generation of missionaries.

OUR YOUTH MISSION GOALS

- Take students out of their comfort zone allowing them to see God working in and through them.
- Teach students that God is working way beyond their own community with different people, cultures, and generations.
- Gives students experience and vision for life as they grow in living with Jesus, like Jesus, and for Jesus in all aspects of life.
- Show students the beauty of other cultures and that God loves, is active, and is working with all people everywhere.
- Missional relationships between the local church student ministries and missionaries.
- Call students to consider a possible call to full-time missions.
- Give students a next step to a missional lifestyle and potential calling.

OUR TEAM

- Dan Sommer – Youth Missions Director
 - dan.sommer@efca.org
 - 269-921-5491
- Mackenzie Balmer – Youth Missions Administrative Assistant
 - mackenzie.balmer@efca.org
- Mark Kato – College Age Director
- Kelly Zuehlke – College Age Administrative Assistant
- Travis Holtan – Advancement Director
- David Boerema – Lead Director

OUR WEBSITE

www.apexmissions.org

youth pastor preparation list

This list is essential to the success of your missions experience. Please pay close attention and complete all steps in the preparation list.

REVIEW

Read all the materials included in this packet carefully.

GATHER YOUR PRAYER TEAM

Continue asking students, parents, and your church to pray for your group. Consider planning a "Day of Prayer and Fasting" for your group and/or church. See Prayer Team page for more information.

PRAY

Begin to pray for the ministry and community you will be serving. Pray that God will prepare their hearts and minds to receive and grow in the gospel of those you will be serving. Also be praying for God to prepare the hearts and minds of your participants as they get ready to serve in ministry. As you know, stepping into ministry often makes us a target of spiritual attack. Also be praying for God to work in your participants planting seeds and passions for lifelong missional living.

MINISTRY PREPARATION

Prepare any ministry requirements for VBS, ESL, games, and/or sports your group will be leading at your mission site.

PRE-FIELD TRAINING

Lead your group through the pre-field training materials to equip them for missions and missional living.

CONNECTIONS

Be prepared for video conference calls with Apex Missions and your missions partner. It's important to begin to build relational connections and ministry alignment before arriving at your site.

RECRUITING

A 10:1 STUDENT TO LEADER RATIO, per gender is required. For example, if you have 4 females and 6 males attending an Apex Mission experience, you will need at least one leader of each gender. We recommend that you do not include yourself in the ratio to be able to manage any necessary situations without having to leave part of your group without an adult leader. Confirm you have the necessary number of adult leaders. Ensure that you include them into your total number of participants you have signed up to attend.

FINAL PAYMENTS

Your registration balance is due 1 month before arrival at mission site.

FINAL NUMBERS

Your final invoice will be emailed to you on (or around) May 15. This invoice confirms your final numbers. You will not be allowed to change participants past this point. All attendees must be registered and you may not arrive with unregistered attendees (students or leaders).



administration

financial policy

REGISTRATION AGREEMENT

The cost for Apex Missions: National Youth Missions: \$425 + travel per participant. International: \$990 + travel per participant. A \$100 deposit is required for each participant at the time of registration. Your dates and spots are officially held once we receive your deposit, and this signed agreement. A minimum group size for an Apex Missions trip is 12. (If your group is less than 12, we would be happy to discuss with you the option of joining another group at your preferred site.) Participants can be added at any time if space at the site allows. Apex Missions requires a 10:1 student to leader ratio per gender with a minimum of three leaders. All payments to Apex Missions are nonrefundable.

GROUP SIZE REDUCTION POLICY

While we all wish that every student in your ministry could participate in an Apex mission, we know that is not a reality. At times it can be difficult to estimate how many participants you could have months prior to going public with your own registration. We understand that dilemma. We strongly encourage you to use your best estimate, maybe a few less, to avoid the monetary responsibility for unused spots. We do allow you to make reductions to your number, but the closer we get to your trip dates the more difficult and expensive it becomes. Our registration reduction dates are as follows:

UP TO NOVEMBER 19 (PAST) – Unused registration funds will be applied to trip final balance.

NOVEMBER 19 – Forfeit \$100 deposit per participant reduction.

*If this reduction drops your group below the minimum group number you are responsible for 100% of the participants registration.

MARCH 14 – Forfeit \$100 deposit per participant reduction and responsible for 50% of participants remaining balance.

*if this reduction drops your group below the minimum group number you are responsible for 100% of the participants registration.

MAY 15 (AND AFTER) – Responsible for 100% of participant cost (\$425 total) and invoices are sent.

International Missions registration closes February 1st + U.S. Missions registration closes March 1st

travel plans

U.S. SITES

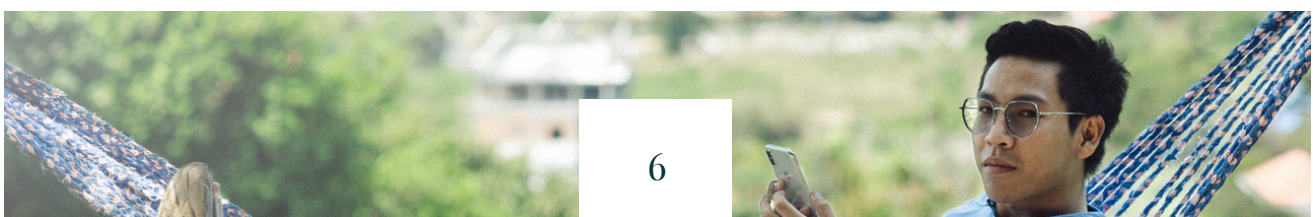
You are responsible for 100% of your group's transportation needs.

INTERNATIONAL SITES

- You are responsible to get your group to the closest international airport to the site and the missionary partner will help you from there.
- Passports are required. The U.S. State Department says it takes 6-9 weeks to get your Passport. If anyone already has their Passport you need to make sure that it does not expire within 6 months of your mission trip. If it does it must be renewed.
- Before departing make a copy of everyone's passport and give to the leader.

PLANES, TRAINS, BOATS, AND AUTOMOBILES

- There are all kinds of ways for you to get your group to and around your mission site. Here are some things to keep in mind as you plan your travel.
 - Boats – Don't do it! It's not going to work. LOL!
 - US Site Transportation Cost – The cost of your transportation is not included in your group registration with Apex. The more expensive option you choose the more you will have to charge your students. The earlier you arrange your transportation the cheaper it will likely be.
 - International Site Transportation Cost – The cost of your transportation to/and from your mission site is not included in your group registration with Apex. The more expensive option you choose the more you will have to charge your students. The earlier you arrange your transportation the cheaper it will likely be. All necessary site transportation is included in your registration cost.
 - Time – How much time do you want to spend traveling. If you are ok with longer trips you might be able to save some money.
 - Energy – If you are going to be driving make sure to allow time for your drivers to be well rested before driving. It's not easy to serve all week only to drive home for hours... and you know that everyone in the bus/van is going to sleep and not help keep the driver awake.
 - Adventure – Do you want to add any extra elements onto your trip? This will obviously affect your transportation methods.
 - Supplies – Packing ministry supplies can be difficult, especially when flying. Keep in mind that you will need extra bags and will most likely be paying extra for those extra bags.
 - Flying – If you are flying you will need to book that as early as possible. The earlier you book the flights the better deal you can get (usually).
 - Arrival Date – You have been giving a starting date for your mission. This date is the day you should arrive. If possible, try to arrive after the local lunch hour to allow time for group turnover of the site and lodging.



sos emergency plan

Apex Missions and our ministry partners take safety and health very seriously. It is a top priority for our participants. Obviously, it is our constant prayer that we have no emergencies of any kind, however, situations can and do occasionally happen. With that in mind, we work hard, in partnership with you, to set up systems and plans to deal with such occasions. There is no perfect system or plan but we want to be as prepared as possible for any issue that may happen.

REQUIREMENTS

- All participants must sign and return a Condition of Participation (COP) form before arriving at their mission site.
- Churches are expected to check with their insurance company to confirm coverage for anything may happen while participating with Apex Missions.
- Group leaders are expected to be the primary guardian and overseer of their students and leaders safety, health, and medical needs.
- Group leaders are expected to bring a list of emergency contact information, medications, allergies, family insurance policy number, and any other necessary medical information with you for each participation.
- Group leaders are expected to communicate any pertinent medical, emotional, and/or allergy information with Apex Missions before arrival at mission site.

INTERNATIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS

- We highly encourage you to purchase travel insurance for each participant.
- We highly encourage you to register your participants with the US State Department STEP International Travel Program.
- We highly encourage you to research medical facilities in and around your country of destination. There are always hospitals but often there are different levels of service in different countries. You need to know the closest country with the highest medical care should someone need more advanced services.
- We highly encourage you to look up the 911 emergency number equivalent for the countries you are traveling to.

student forms

The following is a list of forms that each participant will need to complete to participate with Apex Missions. Each form has a deadline and all forms are required before arrival at your mission site. Scan the QR Code below for digital access to the forms or print the following pages.

- Condition of Participation (COP)
 - This is the release of liability for Apex Missions and the EFCA.
 - Pages 9-11 are for minors and Page 12-14 is for participants 18 years of age and older.
 - Once your group has submitted all COPs to you, please scan and forward these to Apex staff.
- Background Check
 - This is required of all participants who are or will be 18 years of age or older by the end of their service at an Apex Missions site.
 - If a participant has a current (within the last year) background check on file with your church, you may submit this via email to Apex staff.
 - If a participant does not have a current background check on file, click [here](#) to submit a background check.
- Child Protection Plan Program
 - This is required of all participants who are or will be 18 years of age or older by the end of their service at an Apex Missions site.
 - A link will be sent to you later via email.
- Covenant of Commitment
 - This is required of all participants as accountability and clarity on posture, attitude, and service while at an Apex Missions site.
- Student Information Form
 - Name, Address, Home/Cell, Personal email, Age, Graduation year, Emergency contact, EC Phone, EC Email, T-shirt size, Food/Other Allergies
 - Please use the link provided by our Admin to access your group's online Smartsheet document. You will share the form electronically with participants and/ or guardians to submit all information, which will automatically update for your convenience. Apex staff and you as the youth pastor will have access to this information.

Use this link or QR code below to download this and other important documents for 2023
<https://helps.efca.org/bundles/apex-leader-resources>



A Ministry of the Evangelical Free Church of America (EFCA)
Conditions of Participation
Assumption of Risk and General Release Agreement for a Minor

- Complete the blank lines found in the first paragraph of this form
- Print the completed form before signing page 3 in front of one witness of your choosing OR in front of a notary.
- Provide your Child’s team leader with this completed form with required signatures—must be original form, no photocopies.

1. Parental Consent. I, _____, the undersigned, being the parent or legal guardian of _____, my child (hereafter “my Child”) do hereby enter into this Conditions of Participation, Assumption of Risk and General Release Agreement for a Minor (“Agreement”) for the purpose of authorizing my Child’s participation in in a short-term mission trip, sponsored, organized, and operated by ReachGlobal, a ministry of the Evangelical Free Church of America, to _____ on or about _____, 20____ to _____, 20____, to serve with the ReachGlobal team serving there, and includes, but not is limited to, travel, team training, construction, outreach ministry, sightseeing, sports, recreation, and other similar activities customarily associated with ReachGlobal team Mission Service (hereafter, collectively referred to as “Mission Service”). I acknowledge that this is a voluntary activity for which I freely give my permission for my Child’s participation.

2. Risks of Missionary Activities. I am aware of the hazards and risks associated with my Child serving in a missions capacity, such hazards and risks include, without limitation, injury; accidents; disease; inadequate medical services and supplies; criminal acts (including terrorism); natural disasters; weather conditions; government action; the risks of traveling to or from my mission destination; death; damages to personal property; and other undefined harm or damage which may not be readily foreseeable, and other present unknown risks and dangers (collectively, “Risks”). I recognize that the Risks have always been associated with Mission Service and cannot be eliminated.

3. Assumption of Risks, Release and Hold Harmless. In consideration for the privilege of my Child’s participation in Mission Service, I freely and voluntarily, and with full awareness, assume the Risks as my Child’s parent or legal guardian. I understand that ReachGlobal and the EFCA are not responsible for matters beyond their control and that they cannot warrant the safety or convenience of the circumstances under which my Child will be living or working.

I promise and hereby agree to waive, release, absolve, and covenant not to sue ReachGlobal; and the EFCA; and all of their respective officers, employees, volunteers, and agents (collectively, “Releasees”), for any and all claims, including claims for equitable or injunctive relief, damages, loss or injury of any kind resulting from or in any way arising directly or indirectly out of my Child’s participation in Mission Service.

I further promise and agree to indemnify, defend and hold harmless the Releasees from and against all liability, claims and expense, including reasonable attorneys’ fees and costs, in connection with any and all claims whatsoever for personal or bodily injury or death, including loss of use, or property damage of any kind and character in connection with and arising directly or indirectly out of my Child’s participation in Mission Service, except for claims resulting from or arising out of ReachGlobal or the EFCA’s sole negligence. This indemnity agreement encompasses all damages and claims, including claims for equitable or injunctive relief, arising out of my Child’s participation in Mission Service.

4. Standards of Conduct. I understand that while my Child participates in Mission Service, my Child must conduct himself or herself in a manner compatible with local laws and regulations; with all of ReachGlobal's and the EFCA's policies and guidance; and the orders and directives of my Child's Mission Service team leaders. I further understand that my Child must refrain from conduct that is improper, offensive, disruptive, or otherwise inappropriate for the Mission Service, or that is potentially detrimental to my Child's or others' health or safety, or potentially detrimental to ReachGlobal or the EFCA. I understand and affirm that ReachGlobal and the EFCA have may terminate my Child's participation in the Mission Service at any time and for any reason, including violations of this paragraph. I further understand that if my Child's participation is terminated, I will not receive any refunds, and I will be responsible for arraigning and paying all costs associated with my Child's termination, including without limitation, travel costs.

5. Health Status; Medical Care; Other Emergencies. I certify that my Child is physically fit and adequately prepared to participate in Mission Service. ~~I agree that it is my responsibility to determine whether my Child is sufficiently fit and healthy enough to participate in the Mission Service. I understand that I am responsible for notifying ReachGlobal of any health issues or diagnoses that restrict my Child's ability to participate in Mission Service. I further understand that I am responsible for obtaining any required vaccinations and immunizations for my Child.~~

I understand that ReachGlobal and the EFCA require me to maintain medical insurance for my Child throughout his or her Mission Service. I further understand that I am solely responsible for paying for all medical care received by my Child.

I understand that I will be notified in the case of a medical emergency involving my Child. However, in the event that I cannot be reached, I authorize the providing of necessary medical services in the event my Child is injured or becomes ill. I further authorize agents of ReachGlobal or the EFCA to make emergency medical care decisions on behalf of my Child, if required by law or a health care provider. I agree to hold harmless and indemnify ReachGlobal and the EFCA for any and all actions taken by ReachGlobal and the EFCA to obtain or provide emergency medical care for my Child.

6. Photograph & Video Release. I hereby grant ReachGlobal and the EFCA permission to use my Child's image, likeness, and sound of my voice as recorded on audio or videotape without payment or any other consideration for any lawful purpose. I understand that my Child's image may be edited, copied, exhibited, published, or distributed, and I expressly waive the right to inspect or approve the finished product wherein my Child's likeness appears. Additionally, I waive any right to royalties or other compensation arising or related to using my Child's image or recording. There is no time limit on this photographic and video release's validity or any geographic limitations. 5 By checking this box, I wish NOT to have my photo used for ministry purposes.

7. General Provisions. I agree that should any provision or aspect of this Agreement be found to be unenforceable, all remaining provisions hereof shall remain in full force and effect.

I understand and agree that no oral or written representations can or will alter the contents of this document. I agree that this Agreement shall be governed by the laws of the State of Minnesota (excluding its conflict of laws principles), which shall be the forum for any lawsuits filed under or incident to this Agreement.

I, the undersigned parent and/or legal guardian, affirm that I am freely signing this Agreement. I have read this form and fully understand that by signing this form I am giving up legal rights and/or remedies which may otherwise be available to myself or my Child. I further attest to the truthfulness, accuracy, and validity of the foregoing statements under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of _____.

Legal signature of team member’s parent or legal guardian: _____

Date: _____

Printed Parent/Guardian Name: _____

Printed Child Name: _____

Witness Signature: _____

Date: _____

Printed Witness Name: _____

OR


AUTHORIZATION OF NOTARY PUBLIC

STATE OF: COUNTY OF:

On , of 20 , before me, , a Notary Public in and for said county, personally appeared , known to me to be the person who executed the within agreement and acknowledged to me that he/she executed the same for the purposes therein stated.

Legal signature of team member’s parent or legal guardian: _____

Date: _____

Printed Parent/Guardian Name: _____

Notary Public Signature:

My commission expires:

Affix Stamp Here:

A Ministry of the Evangelical Free Church of America (EFCA)

Conditions of Participation

Assumption of Risk and General Release Agreement

Complete the blank lines found in the first paragraph of this form

Print the completed form before signing at the bottom of page 2 in front of one witness of your choosing OR on page 3 in front of a notary.

• If serving with a team, provide your team leader with this completed form with required signatures—must be original form, no photocopies.

IN CONSIDERATION for my participation in a short-term mission trip, sponsored, organized, and operated by ReachGlobal, a ministry of the Evangelical Free Church of America, to _____ on or about _____, 20____ to _____, 20____, to serve with the ReachGlobal team and will include without limitation, travel, team training, construction, outreach ministry, sightseeing, sports, recreation, and other similar activities customarily associated with ReachGlobal team mission service (hereafter, collectively referred to as “my Mission Service” or “Mission Service”), I agree to all the terms and conditions set forth in this agreement (“Agreement”):

1. General Risks of Missionary Activities. I am aware of the hazards and risks to me and my property that are associated with serving in a missions capacity, such hazards and risks including without limitation, injury; accidents; disease; inadequate medical services and supplies; criminal acts (including terrorism); natural disasters; weather conditions; government action; the risks of traveling to or from my mission destination; and other undefined harm or damage which may not be readily foreseeable, and other present unknown risks and dangers (collectively, “Risks”). I recognize and understand that the Risks have always been associated with Mission Service and cannot be eliminated. I knowingly, voluntarily, and willingly assume the Risks.

I understand that ReachGlobal and the EFCA are not responsible for matters beyond their control and that they cannot warrant the safety or suitability of the circumstances under which I will be living or working. I acknowledge that it is my responsibility to take every precaution to safeguard my health and protect my personal belongings from damage or theft.

2. Standards of Conduct. I agree to conduct myself in a manner compatible with local laws and regulations; _____ with all of ReachGlobal’s and the EFCA’s policies and guidance; and the orders and directives of my Mission Service team leaders. I will refrain from conduct that is improper, offensive, disruptive, or otherwise inappropriate for the Mission Service, or that is potentially detrimental to my own or others’ health or safety, or potentially detrimental to ReachGlobal or the EFCA. I understand and affirm that ReachGlobal and the EFCA have sole right and discretion to terminate my participation in the Mission Service, including violations of this paragraph. I further understand that if my participation is terminated, I will not receive any refunds and I will be responsible for arraigning and paying all costs associated with my termination, including without limitation, travel costs.

3. Health Status; Medical Care; Other Emergencies. I certify that I am physically fit and adequately prepared to participate in Mission Service. I agree that it is my sole responsibility to determine whether I am sufficiently fit and healthy enough to participate in the Mission Service and notify ReachGlobal of any health issues or diagnoses that restrict my Mission Service participation. I hereby release ReachGlobal and the EFCA from any and all claims, damages, injuries, or loss arising out of my failure to disclose such health issues or diagnoses.

I understand that I am solely responsible for obtaining any required vaccinations and immunizations prior to my Mission Service.

I understand that I am required to maintain medical insurance throughout my Mission Service and that I am solely responsible for paying for any and all medical care related to my Mission Service.

I authorize ReachGlobal and the EFCA to obtain and render appropriate emergency medical care or treatment for me as may be necessary should any injury, harm, or accident occur during my Mission Service.

4. Photograph & Video Release. I hereby grant ReachGlobal and the EFCA permission to use my image, likeness, and sound of my voice as recorded on audio or videotape without payment or any other consideration for any lawful purpose. I understand that my image may be edited, copied, exhibited, published, or distributed, and I expressly waive the right to inspect or approve the finished product wherein my likeness appears. Additionally, I waive any right to royalties or other compensation arising or related to using my image or recording. There is no time limit on this photographic and video release's validity or any geographic limitations. By checking this box, I wish NOT to have my photo used for ministry purposes.

5. I agree that should any provision or aspect of this Agreement be found to be unenforceable; all remaining provisions hereof shall remain in full force and effect.

6. I certify that I am age 18 or older. I have carefully read and freely signed this Agreement. I understand and agree that no oral or written representations can or will alter the contents of this document. I agree that this Agreement shall be governed by the laws of the State of Minnesota (excluding its conflict of laws principles), which shall be the forum for any lawsuits filed under or incident to this Agreement.

7. GENERAL RELEASE. Knowing the risks described above, I voluntarily agree, on behalf of my family, heirs, and personal representative(s), to assume all the risks and responsibilities surrounding my participation in the Mission Service. To the maximum extent permitted by law, I release and forever discharge, hold harmless and agree to indemnify ReachGlobal; and the Evangelical Free Church of America; and all of their respective officers, employees, volunteers, and agents (collectively, "Releasees") from any and all present or future claims, demands, actions, or causes of action, losses, liabilities, costs and expenses for injury to person or property, or for any other damage, which I may suffer, or for which I may be liable to any other person, related to my participation in the Mission Service (including periods in transit to or from my Mission Service destination), resulting from any cause, including but not limited to negligence on my part or on the part of any of Releasees. I do hereby expressly covenant and agree to refrain from bringing suit or proceedings at law or in equity or otherwise as provided by law, against any of the Releasees on account of any and all such claims, demands, actions, or causes of action.

8. I expressly agree that this Assumption of Risk and General Release Agreement is intended to be as broad and inclusive as permitted by law. I further state that I HAVE CAREFULLY READ THIS AGREEMENT AND UNDERSTAND ITS CONTENTS, AND THAT I AM VOLUNTARILY GIVING UP SUBSTANTIAL LEGAL RIGHTS.

I attest to the truthfulness, accuracy, and validity of the foregoing statements under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of _____.

Legal signature of team member: _____

Date: _____

Team Member's Printed Name: _____

Witness Signature: _____ Date: _____

Printed Witness Name: _____

OR Notary Stamp on page 3

AUTHORIZATION OF NOTARY PUBLIC

Legal signature of team member: _____

Date: _____

Team Member's Printed Name: _____

STATE OF: COUNTY OF:

On , of 20 , before me, , a Notary Public in and for said county,
personally appeared , known to me to be the person who executed the within
agreement and acknowledged to me that he/she executed the same for the purposes therein stated.

Notary Public Signature:

My commission expires:

Affix Stamp Here

mission planning sheet

HIGH SCHOOL MISSION MEETING PLANNING SHEET

This planning sheet is descriptive not prescriptive. Your context and systems might have a different way to accomplish all that needs to be done in preparation. That is totally fine. Do what works best for you to be fully prepared to serve on mission when you arrive.

MEETINGS AND THINGS TO ACCOMPLISH

Date 1 - Introduction

- Team Prayer
- Overview of mission, ministry preparation and fundraising plans
- Team Building activity

Date 2 - Support Letters

- Team Prayer
- Support Letter training and writing
- Ministry prep overview

Date 3 - Primary Ministry

- Team Prayer
- Support letter accountability
- Fundraising/account status
- Primary ministry team assignments and brainstorming

Date 4 - Primary Ministry Details

- Team Prayer
- Support letter accountability
- Fundraising/account status
- Primary ministry details including supplies, assignments, and team practice
- Travel details



mission planning sheet

HIGH SCHOOL MISSION MEETING PLANNING SHEET

This planning sheet is descriptive not prescriptive. Your context and systems might have a different way to accomplish all that needs to be done in preparation. That is totally fine. Do what works best for you to be fully prepared to serve on mission when you arrive.

MEETINGS AND THINGS TO ACCOMPLISH

Date 5 - Ministry Details

- Team Prayer
- Support letter accountability
- Fundraising/account status
- Primary ministry details including supplies, assignments, and team practice
- Travel details and expectations
- Mission schedule review and secondary ministry prep
- Packing list

Date 6 - Final Prep

- Team Prayer
- Fundraising/account status
- Account balance/amount due
- Primary ministry final practice
- Packing list
- Team building activity

Date 7 - Packing Party

- Team Prayer
- Pack ministry supplies
- Review account balance/amount due
- Review student packing list
- Travel, mission, and team expectations
- Travel Pod Group assignments
- Housing assignments



group leadership

pod group leaderships

One of the big hurdles of missions (or any trip with students) is keeping track of where your students are and equally important is making sure that all of your students are with you when you are on the move. We all know the analogy that leading students is like herding cats. Pod Group Leadership is a proven method to take almost all of the stress out of keeping your group together and making sure that 'that one kid' does not get away.

HERE'S HOW IT WORKS

- Divide your students into smaller groups and assign one group to each adult leader.
- It's best to divide your students into same gender groups with same gender leader.
- Do not assign a group to yourself.
- Each Pod Group leader is responsible to keep track of their students. If a student has to go to the bathroom they will ask their Pod Group leader. When you load vehicles each Pod Group Leader will verify that all of their students are present.
- As the leader of all Pod Groups you will confirm that each of your Pod Group leaders are present and get an affirmation from each of them that their students are present and ready to go.

BENEFITS OF POD GROUP LEADERSHIP

- Many hands make light work. If your leaders are trustworthy, you will be trusting them to manage the students. It's much cleaner for you to manage 3 leaders instead of 20 students.
- If there is an issue that you need to tend to you are available to do so without having to leave your own Pod Group without a leader or overwhelming an adult leader by doubling their group without notice.
- You are free to connect with all students equally as opportunity allows and not tied down to one group of students.
- Parents will have more confidence in your leadership because there are multiple adults leading their kid. One is their Pod Group Leader and you are the other.
- It helps your volunteer adult leaders step up and take ownership.
- It builds unity on your leadership team.

mission and leadership team

WHAT IS THE MISSION AND LEADERSHIP TEAM?

MLTs will serve directly with the local missionary in advancing the gospel mission in their ministry as well as mentor, train, and serve youth groups in gospel influence and missional living through bold curiosity, gospel fluency, disciplemaking catalyst, and missional relationships. The MLT's are not the leaders of the mission project, but help the local ministry/mission to host youth groups while at the same time working as Apex Leadership in training and equipping students for missional living.

WHO ARE THEY?

MLT's are college students recruited by Apex. They are students who are excited to serve in missions as well as mentoring and equipping the next generation in Christ. They are recruited from previous Apex Missions experiences (former high school students), Christian colleges, and youth and missions conferences. All MLT's go through an application and interview process to affirm alignment with Apex and the EFCA as well as affirm qualifications to work with students.

WHAT WILL THEY DO?

The MLT will help host your group at their mission site, facilitate communication between your group, the ministry partner, and Apex Missions. They will bring the Apex training to your group. Most importantly they will be participants in the ministry you are doing as role models and encouragers for your students. Our goal is to have 3 MLT's at every site. We cannot always guarantee their presence. MLT involvement is based on college recruiting. The MLT is not the ministry partner. You can depend on the MLT to help with things but your main relationship is with the ministry/church partner.



prefield training

APEX TOOL

The purpose of this tool is to slow us down to see what we did not see before.

First things first, catch the video for this training tool here



A _____

What has happened or is happening?

P _____

What is God revealing to you?

Name 2 or 3 Christian friends with whom you can discuss what you're seeing & hearing.

E _____

What is God calling me to be & do in light of who He is & what He has done?

X _____

How & when will I act in faith on this Kairos moment?

Name 2 or 3 disciplemaking friends that will assist in holding you accountable:

APEX TOOL

The purpose of this tool is to slow us down to see what we did not see before.

ANSWER KEY:

To turn a **chronos** moment into a **kairos** moment we must take the steps to go below the surface.

A cknowledge

What has happened or is happening?

P robe

What is God revealing to you?

Name 2 or 3 Christian friends with whom you can discuss what you're seeing & hearing.

E tch

What is God calling me to be & do in light of who He is & what He has done?

X plore

How & when will I act in faith on this Kairos moment?

Name 2 or 3 disciplemaking friends that will assist in holding you accountable:

relational sphere of influence

YOUTH LEADER

Apex Missions is asking participants to take some time to reflect on their community and the places and people they frequently spend time daily. We have created this exercise for you to help your youth participants become aware of their relational sphere of influence. The following information will help you walk them through the exercise which will end with a decision they need to make before they arrive this summer. You will need to print out a copy of the RSI diagram for each participant to complete this exercise.

YOUTH LEADER READ

We believe that the Holy Spirit is actively working through each of us as a witness to the Good News of Jesus Christ. As a disciple of Jesus Christ, God commands us to share the Gospel with others in all of life. To help you identify who God is asking you to share the Gospel with, we will conduct an exercise that assists you to see who you spend time with daily. (Pass out the RSI diagram sheet.)

Place your name in the center square of the diagram. We are going to look at the places and people that surround you personally. Ask yourself the following question, "What can I do to cooperate with God in the spiritual journeys of those in my relational sphere of influence?" Take a moment to reflect. Choose the places or activities you spend the most time in. We have already placed "home" in one of the boxes, so pick three other places you connect with on a regular basis such as: church, school, sports team, work, club.

Now think about the people you encounter at the four places you have identified. This could be the people you know that attend a club, teammates on a sports team, people who you work alongside, or people you share a common activity with. Some examples: best friends, people you eat lunch with, classmates, teachers, parents, siblings, grandparents, and cousins. Once you have the places and names filled in, pray! Ask the Holy Spirit to help you identify one person. If everyone you wrote is a Christ follower, think again about the people you encounter. Ask the Holy Spirit to help you identify a non-Christian you may encounter in one of these places. Once a person comes to mind, write his or her name on the line. Bring this name on your Apex Missions trip so we can all pray that week for the holy Spirit to help you share the Gospel with that individual when you return home.

relational sphere of influence

Who are your personal and extended connections?
Fill in the blank rectangles with the best options:
church, schools, sports, work, clubs, etc.

home

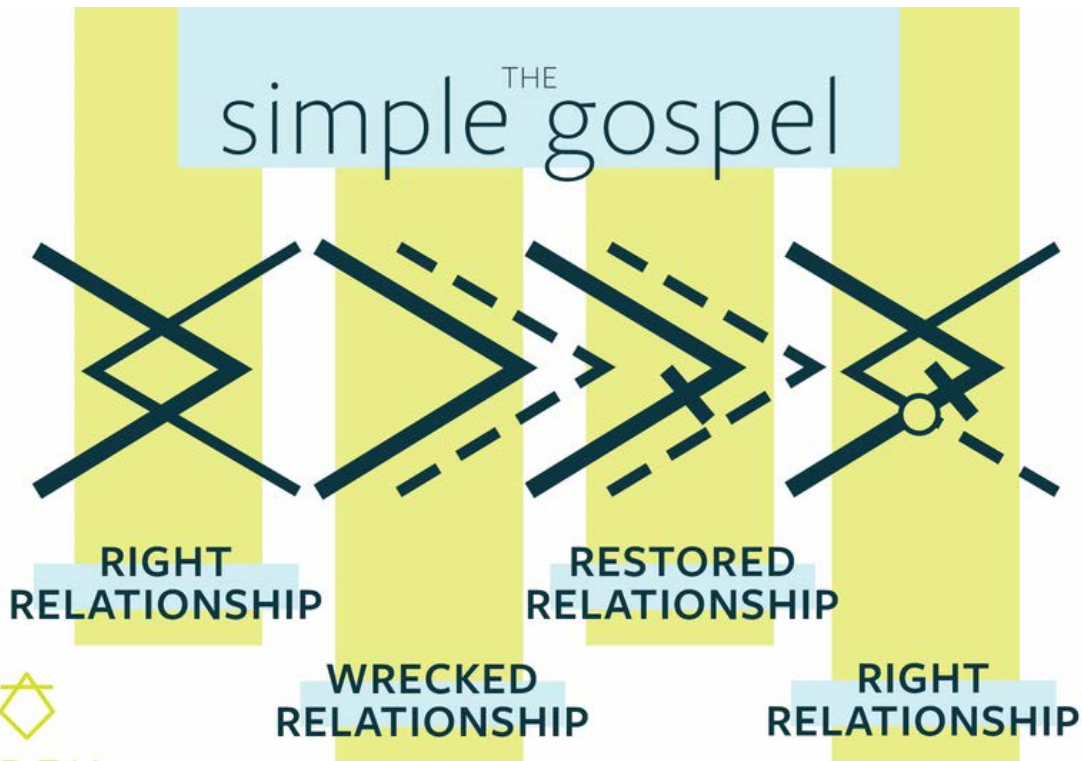


your name


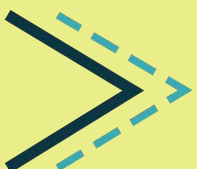
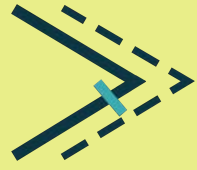



name of individual

simple gospel

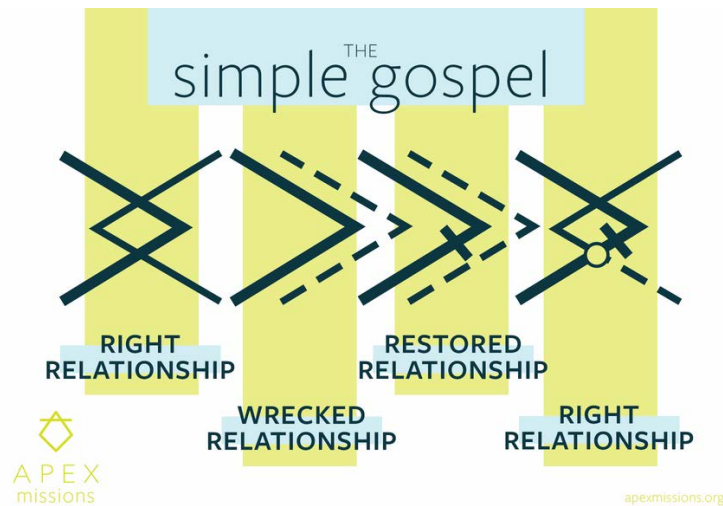


apexmissions.org

<p>God created us to be in a...</p> <p>RIGHT RELATIONSHIP with HIM.</p>  <p>The thick arrow always represents God and thinner represents us. Overlapped represents a right relationship with God.</p>	<p>Sin came into the world and caused a...</p> <p>WRECKED RELATIONSHIP with GOD.</p>  <p>The broken arrow represents us in our sin which has caused relational separation. We changed. God's hasn't.</p>	<p>God sent His Son Jesus to offer a...</p> <p>RESTORED RELATIONSHIP with HIM.</p>  <p>A new element to the story has been added... the cross. Even in our brokenness God pursues us and provides a way for restoration through the finished work of Jesus on the cross.</p>	<p>When we choose God's gift through Christ, it restores us to a present and eternal...</p> <p>RIGHT RELATIONSHIP with GOD.</p>  <p>The overlapping arrows represent that we are back where we were created to be. Our arrow starts broken but when it intersects God at the cross (the circle) we are made whole, sent as His ambassadors to the world.</p>
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simple gospel: full training

The Simple Gospel is a tool to articulate the gospel message of Jesus. It provides the basic handles to communicate the gospel to others.



Jesus sums up the point to our faith, the fruit of the gospel, and the hope of eternity in His statement on the greatest commandment in all of Scripture. Our relationship with God is built on love. The greatest commandment could have been to obey God or serve God. Both obeying and serving God are important commands to follow but God made the greatest command a relationship command. Our command is to love God which only comes through relationship.

Mark 12:28-31 “One of the teachers of the law came and heard them debating. Noticing that Jesus had given them a good answer, he asked him, ‘Of all the commandments, which is the most important?’ ‘The most important one,’ answered Jesus, ‘is this: ‘Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.’ The second is this: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ There is no commandment greater than these” .

Evangelical Convictions “Loving God is not only our supreme duty but our highest privilege and the source of our deepest joy, as we respond to the God who has first loved us”.

A Right Relationship with God is the reason for the gospel and the results of our faith.

simple gospel: full training

God created us to be in a RIGHT RELATIONSHIP with Him.

Scripture is clear that our faith in Christ leads us to eternal life. We can look forward to heaven and eternal life but what does it really mean to have eternal life? Jesus gives us gospel clarity on what eternal life has always been. To have eternal life means to know God. At creation Adam and Eve knew God perfectly it's because of Jesus that we can know God again.

- John 17:3 “Now this is eternal life: that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent.”

RIGHT RELATIONSHIP

The thick arrow always represents God and thinner represents us. Overlapped represents a right relationship with God.



Sin came into the world and caused a WRECKED RELATIONSHIP with God.

Our RIGHT RELATIONSHIP with God was WRECKED through sin. The term “sin” is used to describe God’s perfect standard in which humanity in action, deed, and word falls short. Sin is not only something we do but it’s part of who we are in our very nature, apart from Christ.

- Ephesians 2:1–3 “As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins, 2 in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient. 3 All of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of our flesh and following its desires and thoughts. Like the rest, we were by nature deserving of wrath.”
- Romans 3:23 “for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God”
- Isaiah 59:2 “But your iniquities have separated you from your God”
- Proverbs 14:12 “There is a way that appears to be right, but in the end it leads to death.”

simple gospel: full training

WRECKED RELATIONSHIP

The broken arrow represents our sin which has caused relational separation. We changed. God has not.



God sent His Son JESUS to offer a RESTORED RELATIONSHIP with Him.

But God...in His great love for us, showing His great mercy offers us the hope of eternal life by grace through faith in His son Jesus taking the penalty for our sin on the cross.

- Ephesians 2:4–9 “But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved. And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus, in order that in the coming ages he might show the incomparable riches of his grace, expressed in his kindness to us in Christ Jesus. For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast.”
- Romans 5:8 “But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.”
- 1 Peter 3:18 “For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. He was put to death in the body but made alive in the Spirit.”
- John 14:6 “Jesus answered, “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.”
- Acts 4:12 “Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to mankind by which we must be saved.”

RESTORED RELATIONSHIP

A new element to the story has been added... the cross. Even in our brokenness God pursues us and provides a way for restoration through the finished work of Jesus on the cross.



simple gospel: full training

When we choose God's gift through Christ, it restores us to a present and eternal RIGHT RELATIONSHIP with God.

It's our opportunity to receive this gift through faith in Christ Jesus. When we choose God's gift of Jesus atonement on the cross it restores us to the RIGHT RELATIONSHIP in which God created us to be.

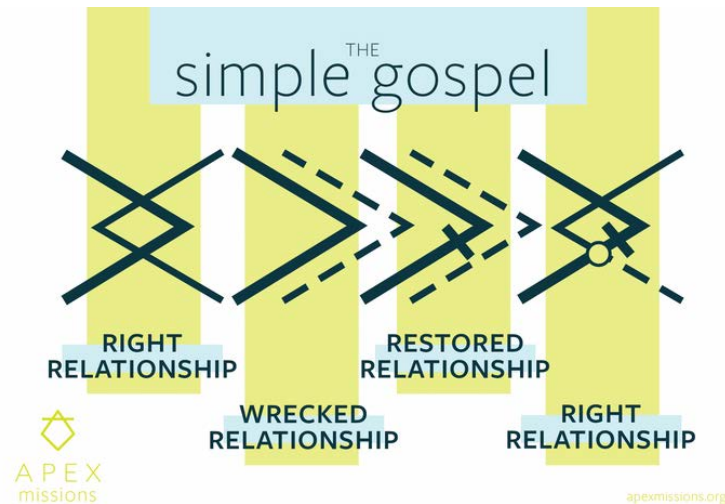
- 1 Corinthians 6:11 (NLT) Some of you were once like that. But you were cleansed; you were made holy; you were made right with God by calling on the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.
- John 1:12 "Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God"
- Romans 6:23 "For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."
- John 3:16 "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life."
- John 5:24 "Very truly I tell you, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be judged but has crossed over from death to life."
- Ephesians 2:6 "And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus"

RIGHT RELATIONSHIP

The overlapping arrows represent that we are back where we were created to be. Our arrow starts broken but when it intersects Jesus at the cross (the circle) we are made whole, sent as His ambassadors to the world.



simple gospel: full training



TRAINING THE SIMPLE GOSPEL

1. The Simple Gospel is meant to be kept simple. To know Christ personally, it's necessary to understand the gospel. The hurdle that most believers struggle with is knowing how to articulate the gospel to others. The Simple Gospel gives us 4 simple handles to use to organize the gospel in a way that is easy to communicate with other.

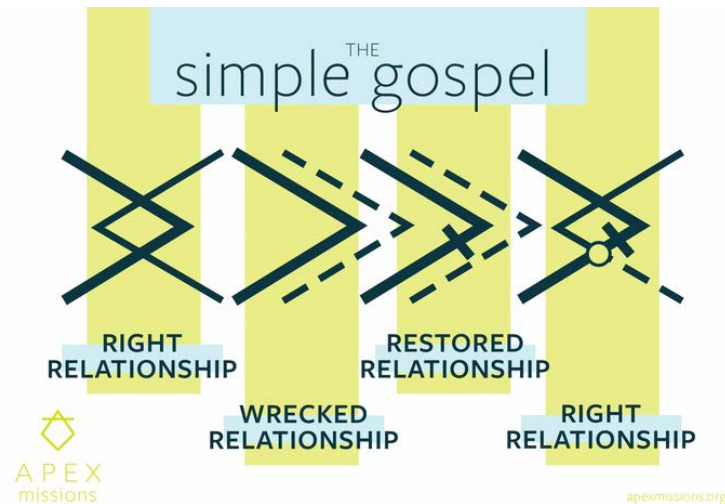
- a. RIGHT RELATIONSHIP
- b. WRECKED RELATIONSHIP
- c. RESTORED RELATIONSHIP
- d. RIGHT RELATIONSHIP

2. The Simple Gospel does not and will never save anyone. This is a tool to communicate the reason for the Gospel and the result of our faith. Only the Holy Spirit can change someone's heart.

3. The Simple Gospel does not answer all questions and does not communicate all important Biblical and theological truths. It is simply 4 handles for believers to hold on to as they communicate the Biblical and theological truths of salvation.

4. The word "RELATIONSHIP" is very important. A lot of people are lost in beliefs of religion and trusting their good works. The word relationship keeps us focused on the truth that the gospel and our faith in Jesus results in a relationship with God as our Creator, Father, Savior, Friend, etc...

simple gospel: full training



5. Repetition is the key to mastery. The Simple Gospel: RIGHT RELATIONSHIP, WRECKED RELATIONSHIP, RESTORED RELATIONSHIP, RIGHT RELATIONSHIP ... is not hard to remember. It's literally 8 words (technically 5). When training the Simple Gospel, it is easily mastered by anyone no matter how old they are or how good/bad their memory may be. As you train the tool, have those you are training repeat it back to you.

6. When training the Simple Gospel to groups of students, invite individuals to repeat it to the rest of the group. It demonstrates the simplicity and gives all the students confidence to use the tool.

7. The Simple Gospel intentionally leaves out the method of receiving Christ as savior, the prayer. There is not a specific prayer of salvation described in Scripture. The words that a person may use to express to God their believe in Christ and acceptance of His gift can vary. We trust that words from their heart, founded in a right understanding of the gospel, will be more meaningful than repeating a specific sentence or two.

8. The Simple Gospel's purpose is to give a very simple and memorable tool to believers in their conversation with other about Jesus. The heart behind the Simple Gospel is to give believers a clear, simple, and memorable tool to confidently communicate the Gospel to others without fear of knowing how to articulate what they believe.

*All Scripture is from the 2011 New International Version unless otherwise indicated

prayer team

We think of prayer as a preparation for work, or a calm after having done work, whereas prayer is the essential work.” *Oswald Chambers*

The work we have before is work that is only possible through the transforming work of the Holy Spirit. As a team, prayer is essential. There is no substitute. No amount of preparation, skill, expertise, or wisdom will ever accomplish what God wants to do in and through you this week. In order for us to offer the hope of the gospel, we must rely on God in prayer to direct, speak through, and use us for His purposes.

When we pray, we know God moves. At Apex, students will be stretched in their faith and challenged to be a gospel influence from here to everywhere. During your week with Apex you will be doing the essential work of prayer. While following God’s call to offer hope, mercy, and justice to those around you.

We strongly encourage you to develop a prayer team back home to be praying for your group while you are with us at Apex. Some ideas for communicating prayer requests and praises: email, group texts, Facebook page, etc. (Idea: Some groups have created an “Adopt a Student” prayer card for their church family to use as a prayer reminder to pray. These cards contained a picture, contact info and specific prayer requests for their student.



My prayer team:

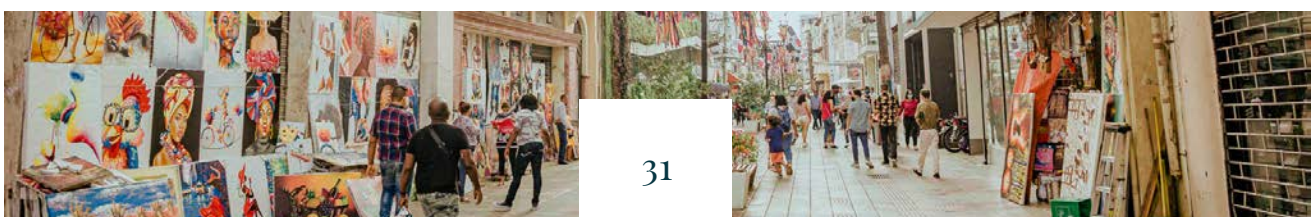
why we value prayer walking

God is stirring us to take our prayers beyond the walls of our church buildings. As we put feet to our prayers, we are beginning to pray with huge kingdom-sized hope for entire cities. Many Christians have been learning to quietly pray in the places that they live, work or play. This is not the kind of prayer where you sit with your eyes closed and your hands folded. This is active. Our eyes are open while we pay attention to our surroundings and pray as the Holy Spirit give us eyes to see as God sees. We have come to call this sort of on-site intercession “prayer walking.”

Prayer walking is simply praying in the very places we expect God to bring forth his answers. Prayer walking is usually a low-profile affair in that friends and/or family stroll two-by-two through their own neighborhoods, schools, and workplaces, praying as they go. Occasionally the prayers can be demonstrative, but most prayer walking is fairly quiet. This usually means being on the scene without making one. As you pray God’s promises with specific homes or worksites in view, you will find that hope for those people begins to grow. You will begin to see people as God might view them. You will likely find yourself becoming more interested in the welfare of the people you are praying for. In other words, you might find yourself becoming the kind of neighbor that you always wanted to be.

Watch for the ways God impresses you to display His love in practical acts of kindness. Be ready to go on a prayer walk while you are serving on your Apex Missions week-long experience and when you return home, be ready to offer to pray with your neighbors as opportunities may arise.

For a deeper challenge that engages people in your neighborhood through prayer, Go to the June 25, 2020 EFCA Blog post, Praying with Proximity , by Sara Joy Proppe, <https://blogs.efca.org/posts/praying-with-proximity>





ministry
preparation

support letter steps

PRAY

Keep in mind that God is the only one who can provide this money for you!

ACTION

God will provide for our needs, but we need to take responsibility and put ourselves to work too! Remember that raising prayer supporters is EQUALLY important to raising financial supporters!

STEP 1: BRAINSTORM LIST

You are going to give people an opportunity to invest in eternity by sending you on this mission trip. In missions, there are goers and there are senders. Both positions are equally important! Start by building a list of people who could possibly support you either in prayer or financially for the trip. Don't decide for yourself if someone will be interested in supporting you or not. If you limit yourself to those you feel will or can give, you may be eliminating those God may want to support you!

Here are some ideas to get you thinking:

Parents

Siblings

Former employers

Relatives

Friends of Parents/ Parents' co-workers

Teachers

Family attorney

Close Church friends

Businesses you visit often

Neighbors/former neighbors

Retired friends

Coaches + Teammates

Those who have influenced you spiritually/ Former Sunday School teachers

Christmas card lists

People you have led to Christ

Peers/ Parents of friends

*Some parts adapted from the Campus Crusade brochure "Raising Your Funds"

support letter steps

STEP 2: CONTACT LIST

Transfer the names from your name list to the contact sheet and fill in their address. Keep track of whether or not you have written them and how they respond.

STEP 3: SUPPORT LETTER

Students who handwrite their support letters typically see a great deal of success. It would be best to do this, but if you can't handwrite them all, you could type a general letter as well. If you send a typed letter, add a short personal note at the bottom and sign the letter. When contacting potential supporters, send:

- 1 – Your handwritten letter (or typed with a personal note)
- 2 – A response card
- 3 – A church-addressed, stamped envelope (make the process as easy as possible for them)

STEP 4: THANK YOU NOTES

ALWAYS send a thank you note when someone replies with a decision to support you, either in prayer or financially. The thank you note should be handwritten, no matter how many you need to send! Send it the day you receive their reply; thank you notes should never be postponed. Make a note on your contact sheet when you receive their reply, indicating how they are supporting you. Also note when you sent a thank you.

STEP 5: TURNING IN \$\$\$

All checks from sponsors should be made payable to your church. Make sure to communicate to your donors whether or not to write your name in the memo line of their check. You may need to verify with your church's financial secretary his or her preference. If not on the memo line, that is what the response card is for.

STEP 6: PRAYER POSTCARDS

Prior to the trip, send a prayer postcard to those who will be supporting you. Giving them a schedule of the trip is a good idea too, so they know exactly what you're doing and when!

STEP 7: FOLLOW-UP LETTERS

Always send a follow-up letter after the trip. Supporters are more than happy to send you on the trip, but they also want to hear about how everything turned out! Write all your supporters, telling them what you did, what you learned, and how God worked on the trip. Thank them again for their prayers and financial support!

support letter template

Recreate this letter in your own words, using the information provided.

Explain the purpose in detail, but be brief! Try not to write more than one page.

Dear **NAME**,

An exciting opportunity has come up for me to take part in a ministry and service project sponsored by Apex Missions. I will be going to **LOCATION** from **DATE** through **DATE**. Our team consists of high school students and adult leaders.

On this trip, we will bring the life-saving message of Jesus Christ to people in the city of **LOCATION** through **ACTIVITIES**.

I am excited to go on this trip because **LIST REASONS**.

In order to make this all possible, I am looking for a team of supporters who will have a huge part in sending me on this trip. This is a great opportunity to join with me in making a difference in the world and for God's glory.

First, I need people who will commit to praying for me and my team prior to and on the trip. We cannot do anything without God's help. Prayer is vital in making this trip a success for the Lord. If you can help me in this way, I will send a list of prayer requests for the trip prior to our leaving.

Second, I have a financial need for the trip as well. Each member of the team needs to raise money for transportation, lodging, and meals. All gifts are tax deductible, so all checks should be made out to **CHURCH NAME**. My funding is due by **DATE**. I appreciate any financial contribution, and I am grateful for your gift so that I can partake in the Great Commission.

Thank you for considering joining my team of supporters to send me on this trip. It is incredible that we can influence the world for Jesus Christ! It would be great to have you be a part of the journey.

Sincerely,
NAME

*“And he said to them, “The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few.
Therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest.”
Luke 10:2*

To learn more about Apex Missions, please visit their website <https://www.apexmissions.org/>.

vbs prep information

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

Many of the ministry sites use a form of Vacation Bible School or Backyard Bible Clubs as their primary ministry. If this is your site you can use this information as a resource to draw from as you prepare your students of the mission. Please remember, your students are on mission. It's their responsibility to lead the event on site. You and your leaders are also on mission, but your primary mission is to equip, encourage, and hold accountable the students as they implement the ministry. To build a healthy VBS for the mission field you will need the following roles filled.

VBS COORDINATOR

The VBS Coordinator is most likely going to be you as the Pastor/Director/Leader of the student ministries. It can be assigned to another leader but it must be someone that all participants see as the final authority for the ministry event.

VBS LEADERSHIP TEAM

Your leadership team members are most likely your volunteer adult leaders who will oversee groups of students in different sections of the VBS. It would be wise to have at least one adult leader to oversee each area of the VBS.

- Lessons
- Crafts
- Games
- Music

vbs prep information



MATERIALS/CURRICULUM

Most ministry partners request that you bring your own materials. Here are a couple of big picture things to remember:

1. Make sure to have a Gospel focus in at least one of the lessons.

2. Use a curriculum. You can piggyback on your church VBS by using the same materials they are using. Many people will take their church VBS materials from the year before since they were just put into storage and your students will be familiar with it. You can also use a hodgepodge of materials from Sunday School curriculum by picking 5 lessons from the curriculum and then adding your own games, crafts and music.

3. International - You will have a translator most of the time which means you get about half the time for content.
 - a. Keep things simple and basic. Translation slows things down and complicates things so basic is usually good.
 - b. If possible, find a worship song or two in the language of the country you are going to.

LESSONS

You will need 5 lessons. Each lesson should be led by at least one student (if possible). Make sure the student is well prepared and has practiced the lesson in front of peers. When leading a VBS in missions there are often kids as young as 4 or 5 up through middle school. It would be beneficial to prepare for kids around 4th – 5th grades and be ready to adjust for both younger and older age group. Lessons are typically 20-30 minutes long.

vbs prep information

MUSIC

Bring about a dozen of your favorite children's worship songs. You will need the music recording (unless you have a band to lead them) and lyrics printed or in a PowerPoint. Check with Apex Missions about your sites technology options.

CRAFT

You will need 5 days of crafts for multiple age groups. When leading a VBS in missions there are often kids as young as 4 or 5 up through middle school. It would be beneficial to bring crafts for both younger and older age group.

GAMES

You will need 5 days of Games for multiple age groups. When leading a VBS in missions there are often kids as young as 4 or 5 up through middle school. It would be beneficial to bring games for both younger and older age group.



esl prep information

ENGLISH AS SECOND LANGUAGE

Many of the ministry sites use a form of English as Second Language as their primary ministry. If this is your site you can use this information as a resource to draw from as you prepare your students of the mission. Please remember, your students are on mission. It's their responsibility to lead the event on site. You and your leaders are also on mission, but your primary mission is to equip, encourage, and hold accountable the students as they implement the ministry. To build a healthy ESL for the mission field consider the following options.

ESL COORDINATOR

The ESL Coordinator is most likely going to be you as the Pastor/Director/Leader of the student ministries. It can be assigned to another leader but it must be someone that all participants see as the final authority for the ministry event.

ESL LEADERSHIP TEAM

Your leadership team members are most likely your volunteer adult leaders who will oversee groups of students in different sections of the ESL. It would be wise to have at least one adult leader to oversee each area of the ESL.

- Ice Breakers
- Conversational Games
- Idioms
- Testimonies/Lessons
- Music in English
- Get Creative

LESSONS

There is not a specific curriculum for ESL classes. We would like you to have students prepare approx. 15 minute messages for the ESL participants. Make sure there is at least one day with a gospel focus. This is also a great time to use student testimonies. It allows the ministry participants to hear personal stories in English and ask questions/interact with your students in English.

- Make sure to have a Gospel focus in at least one of the lessons.

esl prep information

ICE BREAKERS

You will need 5 ice breakers. These are youth group type games to get students interacting with each other. It's great for building relationship as well as giving nationals opportunity to practice using English in a non-threatening way.

CONVERSATIONAL GAMES

You will need 5 days of games for multiple levels of English ability. There are a ton of great games that require speaking and vocabulary. Examples: Apples to Apples, Head Bands, Scrabble, Would You Rather, Heads Up, Taboo, Pictionary, Catch Phrase, etc...

- CAUTION: Make sure to go through any games and remove inappropriate content.

IDIOMS

You will need 5 days of Idioms for multiple age groups. Idioms are a ton of fun to discuss with international students. You will likely be surprised as the English competency, but the students are taught technical English in their schools. A large percentage of our conversational English consists of Idioms. Students love to learn these and it can be fun to learn their Idioms as well.

TESTIMONIES

Having your students share their testimony with the students in the ESL class is a great way to get your students out of their comfort zone while also introducing the ministry participants to the Gospel.

MUSIC

Bring about a dozen of your favorite youth group songs. Things that are upbeat, active, and help students continue to practice English as well as get introduced to Christian music.

GET CREATIVE

You could prepare other things like: Vocabulary, Skits, Personality Tests, Read Books Out Loud Together (Like Narnia), etc...Bring things that will give participants the opportunity to practice and grow in their English skills...and always look for ways to weave in the gospel.

sample schedule

100,000 Foot View Schedule:

This is a very basic overview of what most weeks look like at your mission site. This will be updated and contextualized as we approach the mission dates.

The Monday-Friday timeline MIGHT look something like this:

- 7:30 AM **Breakfast at Housing Site**
- 8:00 AM **Devo's**
- 9:00 -12:00 **Primary Ministry**
- 12:30 **Lunch at Ministry Site**
- 2:00 – 4:00 **Secondary Ministry**
- 6:00 **Dinner**
- Evening:
 - **Apex Training**
 - **Pack lunches for next day**
 - **Down time**

Saturday	Sunday	Monday-Friday	Saturday
Groups arrive and get situated at housing location. Meal out (paid for by youth pastors). Welcome and Orientation by Apex site leader, and MLT's.	Church service. Lunch Welcome and Orientation with missionary/ministry partner. Ministry prep time for teams. Dinner Prayer, final prep and relational time.	Breakfast Lunches - Pack sack lunch while working in ministry. Dinner – Most dinners at housing site except for Cultural Event and any other prearranged meals at other places. Devo's and Apex training. Primary Ministry - This is the foundational mission project for the team that ideally will happen every day...like a VBS or park ministry. Some sites do not have a primary ministry meaning they will do different projects every day. Secondary Ministry – This are projects that could be different each day to help support the community, ministry, or partner in some way. There may not be secondary ministries every day. Prayer walks. Cultural Event - This is a fun activity and/or meal that introduces the groups to the community/food of their site.	Breakfast. Devo's. Closing from Apex On the Road Before Lunch. Lunch on your own.

cross cultural relationships

CROSS CULTURAL RELATIONSHIPS

By Pastor Michael Rice

Christ has given us a great privilege in calling us to share His gospel and be His ambassadors across cultural lines. You are part of a truly great work of God! To facilitate that work requires navigating the waters of serving and leading for Christ in a culture other than the one to which you are accustomed. What I've learned about cross-cultural relationships doesn't come from any exhaustive research or compilations of best practices from around the country or the world, but primarily from two things: the way God wired me and on-the-job training. God just wired me as a bridge kind of guy, so I bridge more by instinct than by anything else. Growing up in a predominately white community, in predominately white schools, as often the sole African American in just about everything I did, I had to learn how to navigate two worlds. Additionally, for the last decade I have served in cross-cultural leadership, the foundation of which was built from God's Word. Let's start with a word about valuing one another across cultures from Paul's words in 1 Corinthians 12, where he talks about the unity of the Body of Christ.

Read 1 Corinthians 12:12-20 (NIV)

Ask: What is his main point regarding the value of all believers?

Cross cultural inclusivity is this: we are all one in Christ, and because we are one in Christ, each one is valued. Each one is welcomed. Each one is needed. Each one is necessary. Each one is vital to the life of the church. No one who belongs to Christ is insignificant. Because we are one in Christ, each one is valuable. Every single person who has put their faith in Jesus Christ is one with every other follower of Christ. It doesn't matter our racial background (Jews or Greeks), our social or economic standing, (slave or free), our culture, our education level, whether we are men or women, our work, or anything else that might divide. Everyone who calls themselves a follower of Christ is part of one church—capital “C” church. Sure there are a lot of little “c” churches, but even so, Christ unites us. If we are one, how can we let the little, petty things divide us? That just shows the sinfulness of our own hearts: When I insist on everything being my way, and I put serving my wants and comforts over serving Christ, and over loving my brother or sister in Christ; when I insist on always getting my own way, or else parting company, that shows I got tripped up back at lordship.

I've forgotten who is Lord and I still operate like life is about pleasing me rather than pleasing Christ. I'm still at the center. Paul labors that point. In just the first 2 verses, he says the word “one” five times. Then he comes back and repeats himself a sixth time in verse 20. He wants us to know that in Christ, we are one. That serves as the basis of everything else he's going to tell us.

cross cultural relationships

CROSS CULTURAL RELATIONSHIPS

By Pastor Michael Rice

Ask: What are some of the petty things that divide the church? How can we know whether these things are from a gospel perspective or our own cultural perspective?

As you go out this summer, you're going to encounter people of different cultures and you're going to have to bridge between cultures. Value people and let them see their own value in God's kingdom and plan.

Read Revelation 5:13 & 7:9-10, and Ephesians 2:11-22.

Ask: What picture of the worshipping community do these verses present?

The Bible says that the worshipping community is to be a culturally diverse one, and because we are serious as we pray "Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven," we commit to welcoming people from a variety of cultural backgrounds and to welcoming their culturally specific contributions to benefit the entire church. When we believed in Jesus we were forged together with Christ and with each other by the Holy Spirit living in each of us.

Paul then gives a masterful illustration of what he means when he says we are one body. He's talking about something profoundly spiritual, but he brings it down to our level by comparing it to what we do understand: our natural physical bodies. He says, "I'm talking about the body of Christ here, but think about your own body." You've got all these parts making up one body, and Paul says that each part is valuable—each part is crucial to the right functioning of the body.

I experienced this firsthand when I had to have foot surgery a couple of years ago and because of complications, I was on crutches for almost a year: from one December to the next November. It was a long time to be on crutches! The part needs the body for sure. But what happens to the body without the part? In my case, my hands couldn't be hands, to carry stuff and open doors because they had to pick up the slack for my foot. I had to hold onto crutches so my hands couldn't be all they're meant to be. The rest of my body was tired and slow because everything that was usually done without a thought by comparatively huge leg muscles had to be taken on by much smaller weaker arm and chest muscles. Can you imagine if it was the hand I lost and I had to learn to try and manipulate and hold things with my feet?

cross cultural relationships

Paul is saying that every part of the body of Christ is crucial for it to be all it is supposed to be. In the context Paul's talking about various spiritual gifts, but it can also apply to wisdom and perspectives and other things about us that are culturally conditioned. Because I grew up in an African American home that had a love for the Lord but saw some things differently than maybe a lot of you, God can use me to speak into your life - things about yourself and about the Scriptures you just would never see because you only have your own lens. Same thing with you - you can speak into my life things that are un-Christ-like in me, things I would never see because I have my own cultural lens.

Together, as we are open to iron sharpening iron in each other, we can help each other grow into a more perfect image of Christ. That's talking individually, but that also makes the church more perfect as all Christ's gifts are more perfectly represented in His body. I am convinced that God does not give all the gifts to any one individual so that we would need each other. Similarly, God lavished particular gifts on particular people groups that He might have given more sparingly to other people groups so that we would come together across dividing lines and be the true church. We need diverse cultural representation to become fully-developed, well-rounded believers that translate to a fully- developed, well-rounded church. With that as a backdrop, here are a few tips I've come away with for leading in an intercultural environment where every contribution is valued with a bit of explanation where warranted:

1. Lead with the gospel. The Christian life is about transformation! The stated mission of the church is seeing Jesus make a difference in the lives of people. That means first leading with the gospel. Be a gospel people; let the gospel be seeping out through your pores. Let the gospel get where you're going before you do, like the perfume or cologne you wear. Look for opportunities to share the gospel with those who don't know Jesus.
2. Serve with grace. Be quick to forgive, overlook offenses, when somebody on your teams messes up. Don't come down hard, but pick them up. You'll give them confidence to succeed next time.
3. Serve in love. Seek the good of those you are serving with your main goal to see the people grow in Christ. Do everything you can for their development, treating them with dignity and care rather than simply as projects. Ask yourself how can I show the love of Christ in this exchange? (Second great commandment: love neighbor as self).
4. Avoid patronizing. Don't come in like you've got all the solutions but come in looking to learn. Together we might come up with better solutions than either of us might on our own. Be willing to listen, humble yourself, and go with another person's idea; it might be better than yours.

cross cultural relationships

5. Ask questions rather than making assumptions.

6. Don't be afraid to ask (dumb) questions regarding culture. If you ask in love, it will probably be received in love.

7. Value and celebrate culturally conditioned contributions to the team and ministry. Spiritual gifts and insights given in abundance to different peoples makes the church together more like Jesus and requires us to need each other.

8. Reserve judgment. Consider Naaman in 2 Kings 5:12. If he had gone with his initial pre-judgment, he would not have been healed. Consider also the parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37); what would have happened if the Samaritan had been unwilling to rise above the pre-judgment he had suffered as a cultural outcast to the Jewish people? The wounded victim may have died there along the road uncared for by anyone.

9. Listen!

10. Listen! (reflexively). This is not a mistake; this is so important, it's worth saying twice. Don't pretend to "hear" while you're actually trying to think of your response, but listen completely. Listen to more than just words, but tone and body (e.g. an enthusiastic "Great!" means something totally different than a sarcastic "great.")

11. Recognize privilege/ intimidation. Other cultures might be reluctant to speak because of your color and their experience. There may be a certain level of mistrust given you because of experience or teaching, so take the time to win people's trust.

12. Be inviting Draw people out. Don't assume silence means people have nothing to say, add, or contribute. Silence may not indicate agreement or indifference.

13. Know yourself! Take a personality inventory - it helps to understand who you are, your strengths, weaknesses and preferences. You can begin to sort out personal values from biblical values and you can begin to hold some personal things less tightly for the sake of grace, and developing others in Christ.

cross cultural relationships

14. Realize “my way isn’t necessarily the right or godly way. There is good possibility it is just the way I’ve always done it because it was what I was taught in my family, church setting, social context, culture. Sometimes another way is just different and nothing more. (Different is not necessarily better or worse, just different.)
15. Challenge assumptions and assume the best.
16. Understand that minorities live in a bi-culture by necessity. Anything that is required of you to serve in a bi-cultural setting is nothing ethnic and cultural minorities are unwilling or inexperienced with themselves. This is also a great opportunity to learn empathy!
17. People are individuals.
18. People are part of groups.
19. Get to know people on their own merits.
20. Include people. Look for fringe people and take responsibility for bringing them center.
21. Funny isn’t universal.
22. Waste isn’t universally funny. Be careful of wasting food as an object lesson, because some of the people you minister to may be suffering from real hunger and poverty.
23. Be Careful of inside jokes and non-shared experience; it fosters exclusion.
24. Recognize that you have blind-spots in your own character.

cross cultural relationships

25. Be a Culture broker. A cultural broker is someone who acts as a bridge, link, or mediator between individuals or groups of differing cultural backgrounds for the purpose of reducing conflict or producing change (Jezewski & Sotnik, 2001).

26. Remember EGR – Extra Grace Required. You may be called on to work with someone who is really hard to work with; they are an EGR needing extra grace from me. I need extra grace for them. EGR isn't bad; it breeds dependence on God. Besides, chances are pretty good that I am an EGR to someone else!

27. 1 Peter 3:15-16. But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect, keeping a clear conscience, so that those who speak maliciously against your good behavior in Christ may be ashamed of their slander.

28. You make it right (leave your gift...). Matthew 5:24 Whether you have something against someone else, or they have something against you, you have the responsibility to make it right.



gearing up

posture in missions



APEX EXPECTATIONS

“DON’T BREAK THE EGG!” Somewhere along the way we learned the phrase, “Don’t break the egg!” You are bringing groups of students to serve with our ministry partners. Please remember that the ministries you will be serving are local ministries working hard to build Kingdom relationships and impact. Our ministry partners are excited to partner with you and your students. Please do your absolute best to prepare your students with the posture of stepping into someone else’s community with an open handed posture of humbly serving. Prepare your group to not break the egg.

ATTITUDES AND ACTIONS

The Apex Missions experience should have positive results, not only for yourself and your team, but also for those to whom you are ministering. It is primarily your attitudes and actions which will either positively or negatively influence others for Christ (even when you are not aware of it). To a large extent your attitude will determine the kind of experience you will have. To make your time more fruitful for the Kingdom, please evaluate your attitudes and behaviors carefully and consider how others may interpret them.

A SERVANT HEART

Remember that Christ left Heaven to be a servant to others. Let Philippians 2 (the humility of Christ) be your guide as you seek to put the needs of others above your own. You should arrive at your site eager to do whatever is needed, having a servant's heart. The pastor/missionary and the church leaders on site will do all they can to make your experience positive. However, things may not go the way you had expected. Therefore, be FLEXIBLE and roll with the punches. Submitting to His Lordship in this way will often lead to greater fruit through a better way.

posture in missions

TEAM UNITY

While you are on an Apex Missions team you will need to function as a team, as one unit. For this reason, pairing off in exclusive relationships or dating is not appropriate behavior during the mission trip. We ask that you make a conscious effort to get acquainted with all team members, including the church staff and ministry leaders that you will be working with. The group dynamics of each team plays a large part in the effectiveness and impact of this mission experience

CULTURAL SENSITIVITY

When you are in another culture, you need to remember that others will evaluate the appropriateness of your behavior by the standards of their culture, not yours. Therefore, when you enter their neighborhood, you must be aware of what is and what is not appropriate to them. Carefully follow the advice of the church staff on site. They undoubtedly understand the local culture far better than we do

RELATIONSHIPS

You are viewed as representatives of the local ministry while you are working with them, and your behavior will leave an impression that will be remembered long after you are gone. It is your responsibility to help guard the good reputation they have earned in the community. Be very careful how you relate to others in the community. In many cultures' men and women, for instance, do not touch each other in public. We ask that you minister, as much as possible to people and children of your own sex and that you NEVER go alone with any adult of the opposite sex or any child of either sex. The best rule of thumb is to listen to the site leaders, and follow their lead.



posture in missions

CONDUCT

We expect all people involved with Apex Missions to have a conduct which is becoming to a Christian. The Bible says, "Live a life worthy of the call you have received" (Ephesians 4: 1). As a missionary, you carry a great responsibility - many people will be watching you as you show courtesy and consideration to each other and those you are working with. Therefore, Apex Missions reserves the right to send home, at their personal expense, anyone who is unwilling to comply with the rules and standards of the EFCA, Apex Missions, and the site ministry. As representatives of Jesus and His Church, throughout the entire Apex Missions experience, we require each participant to agree to abstain from:

- Tobacco in any form, drugs, alcohol.
- Culturally questionable or inappropriate behavior including profanity and vulgar language.
- Follow the Dress Code
- Arguing, fighting, gossiping, or other behavior not edifying to the team.
- Excessive cell phone use
- Inappropriate cell phone usage.

You will be at Apex Missions to serve the local church, and people of the community. Ask God to begin giving you a servant's heart as you prepare for Apex Missions. You should be prepared for hardship without whining or non-cooperation, and you should be willing to do whatever it takes and whatever is asked of you for Christ's sake. You **MUST** be willing to submit yourself to your youth worker and the site and Apex Missions leaders. (Romans 13:1).

posture in missions



DRESS CODE

We ask that you lead by example by following the guidelines we set for youth groups. As you pack, prayerfully consider your mission for the week, remembering that in many cross-cultural environments messages through dress can be received quite differently than intended. We are here to attract people to the gospel, not initiate other controversial conversations or judgements.

- **ON SITE:** We ask that you not alter Apex shirts in any manner during the Apex week.
- **TOPS:** Shirt may not have more than a 3 finger gap below your neck and may not have spaghetti straps or be strapless. No cut off shirts.
- **BOTTOMS:** Shorts may not be form fitted or shorter than fingertip length. If you are not sure if they are Apex appropriate, basketball shorts or Bermuda-length shorts are usually fine.
- **SLEEPWEAR:** Must be modest.
- **SWIMWEAR:** Must be modest and no bikinis of any kind allowed.

packing list

Everything you pack should fit into one suitcase. US based sites need to be prepared for 7 days and international sites need to be prepared for 7 days plus travel days.

BE SURE TO BRING

- A Servants Heart
- Bible, notebook/journal, and pen
- Water bottle to fill during the day
- Sunscreen, hat, and sunglasses
- Traveling money in small bills
- Pain relievers, Pepto, Dramamine, antiseptic, prescribed medication, etc...
- Personal toiletries
- Towels
- Picture ID
- Twin size air mattress with fitted sheet, blanket, and pillow. (Most sites)
- Mask
- Work Gloves

EXTRA ITEMS FOR INTERNATIONAL

- Electrical adapters...if you are bringing anything that plugs in.
- Passport and a copy of passport

packing list

CLOTHES

See the dress code policy described in the Pre-Field Training Guide. Pack light. You will likely need to wear some clothes more than once.

- Shorts
- T-Shirts
- Modest Swimwear
- Swim Towel
- Pajamas
- Tennis shoes, flip flops or sandals, and church shoes
- Sweatshirt

CHURCH CLOTHES

Guys:

- One pair of dress pants
- One button up dress shirt

Girls:

- Nice slacks or skirt (at least to your knee) and a blouse. NO low cut tops. Sleeves are required.

LEAVE BEHIND

- Expensive jewelry.
- Large amounts of cash.
- Tobacco of any kind, illegal drugs, anything related to marijuana, alcohol, etc..
- Pocket knives and/or any other weapon.
- Headphones are not allowed on mission sites. (exception would be for travel to/from mission site depending on your groups policies)

*Apex Missions is not responsible for items lost or broken.



apex family

our team

IN GOD'S STRENGTH AND FOR GOD'S GLORY!

OUR PRAYER FOR YOU AND YOUR STUDENTS THIS SUMMER.

Colossians 2:6-7 (NIV) "So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live your lives in him, rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness."



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