

Mustard Seeds & Mountains



Team Packet

Be the Best Leader- Avoid the

6 Top Mistakes Leaders Make

- 1. Didn't Read the Entire Packet!**
- 2. Didn't share contents of the packet with team leaders.**
- 3. They take the Mission As Life Preparation too lightly!**
- 4. Failure to get deposits or forms in on time.**
- 5. Fail to properly debrief after the trip or use the debriefing guide supplied.**
- 6. Fail to implement service in their communities once they return.**

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Introduction to Mission As Life

Mission As Life Trips seek to take the whole experience of short term mission trips to another level. We seek to use pre-trip team preparation, experiential learning activities, evening devotions, team debriefing times, and post-trip follow-through commitments to minister in your own area to transform your experience into a lifestyle.

Research by Robert Priest at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School has shown that for the most part, short-term trips are often a form of religious tourism. His research reveals that participation in standard short-term trips tends to produce a sense of gratitude for the participants' wealth and living conditions (which is a nice but insufficient response), but does little or nothing in relation to how participants end up spending their money, time, or express their talents in relation to God's Kingdom once they return home. The often highly emotional time on the trip is much like a fever, followed by a chill. Once home, the participants continue to live as the rest of society lives, reflecting the values of American Culture more completely than the values of the Kingdom of God.

Mission As Life trips are designed to transform short term mission trips from an experience to a lifestyle.

Mission As Life trips involve greater preparation, commitment and follow-up than regular short-term trips.

When you commit to participating in a **Mission As Life** trip, you are committing to more than a single week in the beauty and poverty of West Virginia. Participation in a **Mission As Life** trip involves a much more comprehensive commitment for team members and their preparation, as well as to the creation and follow through with ministry opportunities once you return home. Our goal is simple. We want to awake 100 sleeping firemen. We want to stir church after church, small group after small group, individual after individual into action in their own community. The things done on the Mission As Life trip are hopefully a "jumpstart" into creative, locally anchored ministry for each group.

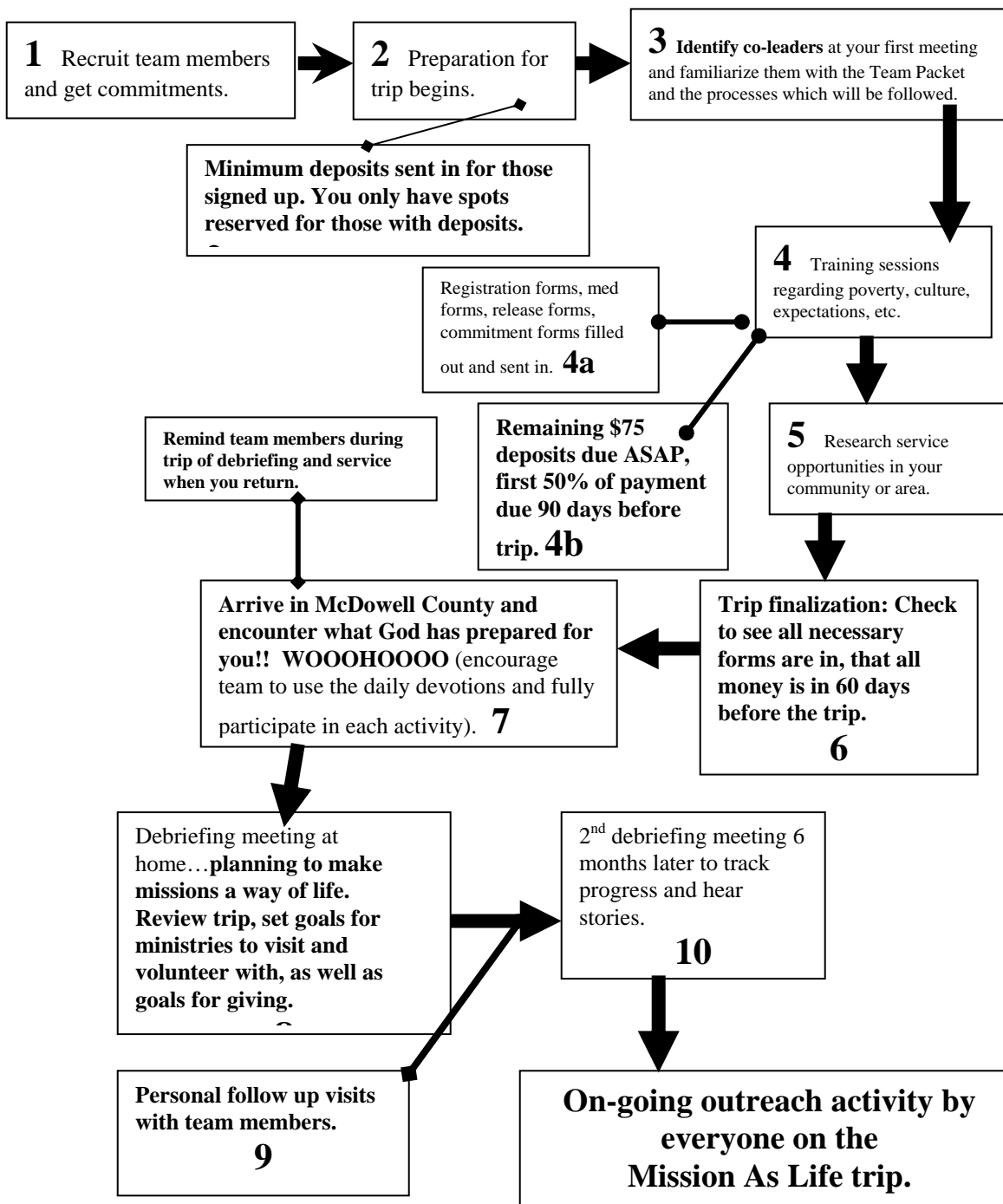
Mission As Life trips require a greater commitment by leadership in the preparation and post-trip reentry of participants. We fully expect **Mission As Life** participants to do the following before they arrive in West Virginia:

1. Research Appalachian Culture so that they will have a greater understanding of the people and the area.
2. Become proficient in "friendship" or "conversational evangelism". (**Reimagining Evangelism: Inviting Friends on a Spiritual Journey** by Rick Richardson)
3. Research 7-9 possible ministry opportunities that exist in a 25 mile radius of their church. This familiarizes each member with potential areas of service when they return from the trip.
4. Study, with their group, passages referring to God's preferential concern for the poor, widows, orphans, the fatherless and immigrants.
5. Break up into smaller groups focused on particular local ministry interests and facilitating their follow through in regular weekly or monthly service.
6. After trip follow through: debriefing and implementation of plans for ministry in their own area and commitments to greater giving.

Your commitment as a leader to these principles and activities can do much to help transform your youth group, small group or church once you have completed the trip. We at Mustard Seeds realize that we are totally dependent upon you as leaders to fully prepare your team for the ministry experience God has prepared for you here in West Virginia. The impact and quality of your experience on your Mission As Life Trip is dependent upon how well you prepare your team before hand and what you do to build on the experience afterward.

This Team Packet is designed to help you work through the nuts and bolts of organizing the trip as well as preparing the team.

Mission As Life Process



Directions to Mustard Seeds and Mountains

Mission As Life Volunteer facilities

1. Whether coming North or South on **Interstate 77**, **get off at Exit # 1, the Bluefield exit.**
2. At the Stop sign **turn Right** and follow the road to the US460 intersection and **take the off ramp toward Bluefield.**
3. Follow the 460 toward Bluefield and watch for the Maryland Avenue Exit (at a traffic light). **Turn Right onto Maryland Avenue.**
4. Maryland Avenue takes a slow 90 degree turn to the left. Follow to the stop sign that says *stop unless turning Right*. **Turn Right at the stop sign.**
5. **You will follow this road for about 13 miles.** You will go through traffic lights before arrival, just continue on the same road with no turns. You will pass Bluefield Regional Medical Center, cross a large bridge over rail road tracks, pass Bluefield State College, and later on, Pinnacle Rock State Park. **You are on Route 52**, the road that takes you into McDowell County.
6. Continue on this road through a number of small towns until you reach Northfork (roughly 45 minutes from Bluefield).
7. In the town of **Northfork**, watch for the **Pioneer Bank** on the Left hand side of the road. There is an intersection about 20 yards after the bank. A large brick building has a red and white sign that says *Nick's Famous Liver Sandwiches*.
8. **Turn Right** and go over the bridge **and park in the parking lot by the creek.**
9. Exit vehicles and walk back across Route 52 and **proceed up the street by the Nick's Famous Liver sign.**
10. Follow the street to the dead end. Look up at the large White house with the sign that says **EMMAUS**. This is the main facility for housing volunteers. Fifty yards up the hill is the other house called the **IONA** house which is also used for housing volunteers. Go to the Emmaus house where Mustard Seeds Staff awaits you.

How to Use This Manual

Thank You for scheduling a Mission As Life Trip with Mustard Seeds and Mountains. In this packet you will find much of what is needed to prepare for your trip. **Begin by carefully looking through the materials enclosed to familiarize yourself with where certain forms are located.**

We have included a **Team Leader's Checklist (page 8)** for you to use in your planning process.

1 Copy the **Registration/Medical Release (pages 10 and 11)** form and the **Activities Release Form** (back to back on one page if possible, but if not please attach the two pages together). Hand out the forms to team members. Each person on your team must have these forms filled out and signed (by a parent or guardian if the person coming is under 18). When they are returned, **make enough copies so that each 5-7 person team has a set AND so that one set is sent to Mustard Seeds no later than 60 days before you arrive.**

2 Copy the **Individual Work Experience Inventory Form (page 12)**. Give a copy to each person coming on the trip and have them complete the form and return it to you. Please note the 2 extra questions at the bottom of the page.

3 Copy the **Team Mission As Life Skills Summary Form (page 13)**. You will use this to list the names, ages, genders of people on your team and record the numbers for each of the tasks listed on the Individual Inventory form. There are spaces for 20 names. If your group is larger, just make another copy of the form and continue listing names and report their skill levels until all team members are listed. When you have finished, send the Summary form to Mustard Seeds. **This must arrive in Mustard Seeds' office no later than 60 days before your team is to arrive, along with your final payment.** This helps us match jobs with the skills of your group. If you add on people after that date, their skills summary must arrive with payment.

4 Copy the **Personal Commitment Form (page 14)**. Each team member must read and sign this form. It reinforces the seriousness of the mission your group is on and helps each person make a commitment to making your trip the best possible. These should be **sent to Mustard Seeds no later than 60 days before you arrive.**

5 Copy the **What Do I Bring on The Trip (page 19)** form and hand it out to each team member.

6 Set aside a meeting to review with the group **The Core Values, Mustard Seeds' Approach to Ministry, Mission As Life Policies, Volunteer Rules, Stewardship and Safety Issues and Sensitivity Issues.** To address Sensitivity Issues, you may want to use role-playing games like Bafa Bafa, Star Power or similar tools (see **page 26**).

Tools for Your Use

Included in the manual are two study tools for you to use. **First**, there are **three studies on the poor (See page 23!)** you may want to use in preparing your group for the trip. **Second**, there is a week long, **daily devotional** you may want your team members to use during their Mission Trip (See **page 37**). You will need to carve out time around the scheduled meetings.

Share this manual with all your team leaders!!

Preparing for your trip

The time and care you put into preparing your group for the trip will determine the kind of experience you have when you arrive. I often tell groups that what they encounter in WV is what they bring with them. The pressure of the spiritual warfare, the challenge of the work, the personal stretching of comfort zones while here brings out both positive and negative traits of team participants. Expectations play a major part as well.

I have found it best to **schedule 3-5 meetings in which team members are exposed to what they may encounter, trained in how to handle various circumstances and sensitized to the whole issue of ethnocentricity (cultural arrogance).**

The more completely you prepare, the greater impact your **Mission As Life** trip will have.

Key topics to cover:

Servanthood
Conversational evangelism
Expectations
Cultural sensitivity
Registration requirements
Spiritual Preparation for each person
Preparation for when you return to minister in your area

Some **key topics** you should not only cover but emphasize are: Servanthood, Going the Extra Mile, not having “romantic” notions about the work, realizing that God has prepared for them just what they need, that working with the poor is most often not glamorous or fun, that the work is a vehicle for them to use to minister to people, that sarcasm and cutting speech will do much to harm the group and hurt people here, and that their expectations are the source of their greatest disappointments (this covers things like, “It doesn’t look so poor here”, “How come we can’t be working with a family with little children?”, “These people sure don’t seem to be thankful. I feel like a chump”, or finally, “Why don’t these guys just change the way they live?”)

Having your group go over these points, come to grips with their unrealistic expectations, and above all gain God’s perspective on their involvement on this trip will provide the ground work for God to work in them while they are here. Whenever a group comes to work here and has difficulty within the team it can usually be traced back to taking the preparation for the trip too lightly.

Each team member should realize that the work Mustard Seeds expects them to do is spiritual as well as physical. Work done on houses and land will pass away but investment in lives will go on through generations. Each person should be trained in how to share their faith and how to pray for the families they serve.

A final reminder about items which must be sent in no later than 60 days ahead of your arrival:

The Registration/Medical Release and Activities Release Forms, one copy for each participant
Commitment Form
Skills Summary
Final Payment

Review the Team Leader Checklist for when payments, registration forms, medical releases and skill summaries are due.

Failure to meet deadlines can jeopardize your trip.

Team Leader's Checklist

Items needing Attention	Handed out	Returned	Task Completed
Deposit sent to Mustard Seeds to Secure Date of trip #1:\$75 per person. Payments #2: \$100/person 90days. #3: \$100/person 60 days before arrival.	Number signed up	Number returned 1 2 3	
Individual Work Experience Inventory completed by each person.			
Mission As Life Skills Summary summarizing whole team, completed and sent to Mustard Seeds to arrive at least 60 days prior to your arrival date.			
Medical Release Form and Activities Release Forms completed by each person.			
Personal Commitment form completed by each person and sent 60 days prior to arrival.			
What to Bring form handed to each person.			
Reviewed Volunteer Rules with all team members.			
Handed out copies of Contextual Orientation (pages 21-22) to each member.			
Menus completed for week. Include extra lunches for local families.			
Secured travel transportation.			
Secured tools to bring (see page 19).			
Purchase food to take.			
Led group in studies provided on poverty in Scripture.			
Each person on team trained in basics of sharing faith.			
Made enough copies of Release and Medical forms so that each team has a copy in vehicle as well as one copy for Mustard Seeds, sent 60 days prior to arrival.			
Created Phone Tree so few calls to home base are necessary and so parents are filled in on arrival and key information.			
First Aid Kits available for each team with each kit having its own bee sting kit.			
Purchased wasp and hornet spray for each team.			
Researched possible areas of service for when we return.			
Notify Mustard Seeds as soon as possible if you plan to attend Bluegrass. Send check of \$3 per person x number of people 60 days before arrival. Make checks payable to Mustard Seeds and Mountians			

Core Values of Mustard Seeds & Mountains

Servanthood

Jesus calls us to servanthood. As servants we seek not to elevate ourselves but to focus on the needs of others. We treat others with humility, respect, and integrity. We strive to provide exemplary service. And as faithful servants we exhibit careful stewardship of our gifts, time, finances, and material resources.

Quality

To give our best to the Lord we serve, we deliver excellence in our work, products, services, and relationships. When excellence is our goal, "good enough" is simply not good enough. To build our reputation of legendary quality we assume nothing. To avoid errors and improve efficiency we strive to "do it right the first time." We value the opinions of others, and welcome the review and critique.

Innovation

The Mustard Seeds environment is one of constant change. We're always looking for "a better way", in our products as well as in our internal operations. We're not afraid to take calculated risks, acknowledging that some of our pioneering efforts will result in failure. But we learn from our failures and press on. Never satisfied with "the way we've always done it," we're willing to challenge the status quo. And we're dedicated to moving quickly to bring our innovations to our customers.

Authentic Learning

Mustard Seeds' resources focus on learning, rather than simply teaching. Education is effective only when the learner is actively involved in the process. Through active (learning by doing) and interactive (talking with others) learning, Mustard Seeds' learners experience God's truths and apply them to their lives. We concentrate on the essentials of the Christian faith, helping learners of all ages to know, love, and follow Jesus Christ.

People Friendliness

We believe our work environment should be friendly, fun, fair, and forgiving. We communicate directly with one another, sharing our concerns with those who can best affect the situation. We handle our differences with love and tact, without raising our voices or lowering our integrity. We encourage continual self-improvement, allowing each individual to grow in value, effectiveness, and self-fulfillment. And together we work hard, enabling fair salaries, benefits, and the sharing of financial success.

REGISTRATION INFORMATION/MEDICAL RELEASE FORM

(Make enough copies for each 5-7 person team. The **Statement of Activities and Release** (next page) must be on the backside of this page or attached to it. **One set must be sent to Mustard Seeds & Mountains' office 60 days before arrival**, the others are to be kept in each team vehicle at all times.)

Name _____ Phone _____ Birthdate _____
Last First M.I.

Address _____
Street City State/Zip Code

Church Name _____ Phone() _____

Church Address _____
Street City State/Zip Code

Relative in case of emergency:

Father's name _____ Daytime Phone () _____
Evening () _____

Father's address _____
Street City State/Zip Code

Mother's name _____ Daytime Phone () _____
Evening () _____

Mother's address _____
Street City State/Zip Code

Other relative or responsible person:

Name _____ Relationship _____ Day Phone () _____
Evening () _____

Address _____
Street City State/Zip Code

Medications you cannot take: _____

Allergies/ special health problems or concerns: _____

Insurance Co. _____ Policy # _____ Phone () _____

Address _____
Street City State/Zip Code

Policy Holder's I.D. Number _____

Doctor's name _____ Phone () _____

Address _____
Street City State/Zip Code

Have you participated in work camps before? Yes _____ No _____

Copy to back of or attach to Statement of Activities and Release Form (next page)

Individual Work Experience Inventory

Check box here if you are a returning volunteer

Use the number guide to show your experience in each category. Check the statement that best describes your work experience in each of the areas listed. Please give an accurate assessment of your experience as our job assignments will be based on this information	1-No experience	2-Low experience	3-Medium experience	4 Experienced	5-Advanced Experience
Roofing <input type="checkbox"/>	Carpentry <input type="checkbox"/>	Drywall <input type="checkbox"/>	Painting <input type="checkbox"/>	Plumbing <input type="checkbox"/>	Other skill areas <input type="checkbox"/>
1. I have little or no roofing experience.	1. I have little or no experience in carpentry.	1. I have little or no drywall experience.	1. I have little or no experience in painting.	1. I have little or no experience in plumbing.	
(No Experience)	(No Experience)	(No Experience)	(No Experience)	(No Experience)	(No Experience)
2. I have some roofing experience. I have worked with an experienced roofer.	2. I have hammered nails, cut boards and assisted a person experienced in carpentry.	2. I have helped an experienced person hang drywall or make repairs.	2. I have helped with painting but am not familiar with preparations work.	2. I have changed the washers in faucets to stop leaks.	
(Low Experience)	(Low Experience)	(Low Experience)	(Low Experience)	(Low Experience)	(Low Experience)
3. I can patch a leaky roof using roll roofing, roof cement or aluminum roof coat.	3. I am familiar with carpentry tools and can measure and cut boards according to instruction or plans.	3. I can patch a hole in a wall myself. I have used drywall tape and mud to repair or install new drywall.	3. I can prepare a site to be painted, and paint the interior or exterior of a house.	3. I can repair leaks in PVC water and drain pipes. I have installed a sink.	
(Medium Experience)	(Medium Experience)	(Medium Experience)	(Medium Experience)	(Medium Experience)	(Medium Experience)
4. I can remove and install rolled roofing and felt paper.	4. I can build a wall from scratch, remove an existing porch and build a new one.	4. I can remove and install drywall and tape and mud the seams.	4. I can repair surface defects with wood or spackling for painting the interior or exterior of an entire house.	4. I can remove and replace a toilet, tub or sink. I can repair leaks in faucets or drain lines.	
(Experienced)	(Experienced)	(Experienced)	(Experienced)	(Experienced)	(Experienced)
5. I can remove and install rolled roofing, felt paper, sheathing and replace rafters that are broken.	5. I can remove and repair damaged floors, replace roof rafters, jack up floors, walls and roofs and repair and rebuild them if necess. I can hang windows, doors and do cabinetry work.	5. I can lead a team in drywalling a house and have high quality work done.	5. I can prepare and complete difficult painting tasks including all trim work.	5. I can repair or replace any plumbing problem in a house. I can repair or replace water heaters.	
Advanced Experience	Advanced Experience	Advanced Experience	Advanced Experience	Advanced Experience	Advanced Experience

Yes or No: I have been on a Mustard Seeds & Mountains Mission As Life Trip in the past.

Yes or No: I have worked on a Mustard Seeds & Mountains facility in the past.

Mission as Life Team Skills Summary Form

Contact Person _____ Church/group Name _____

Address _____ City _____

Phone () _____ Trip Dates _____

Total Number registered (include adults) _____

Name	Age	Sex	Drywall (1-5)	Roofing (1-5)	Carpentry (1-5)	Painting (1-5)	Plumbing (1-5)	Return Person*	Prev. Facil* *
1.									
2.									
3.									
4.									
5.									
6.									
7.									
8.									
9.									
10.									
11.									
12.									
13.									
14.									
15.									
16.									
17.									
18.									
19.									
20.									

***Yes or No: Return Person** means someone who has been on a Mustard Seeds Mission As Life Trip in the past.

****Yes or No:** Previously worked on a Mustard Seeds facility.

See Work Experience Inventory for rating guide.

List special skills on back of form



My Personal Commitment

I realize that this trip is more than a vacation or get-a-way to have fun. In going on this trip, I am joining with Almighty God in ministry. In doing so I not only represent my family or my youth group but God Himself. I also realize that by stepping out in faith to follow God, I anger His enemy the devil, who seeks to disrupt Gods work and sabotage His goals. I also understand that although I expect to have a lot of fun, I am also expected to work hard to accomplish the work God puts before us.

I have been informed of the rules of conduct expected by Mustard Seeds and my group and have read them as well.

I agree to abide by the rules put forth by Mustard Seeds and Mountains as well as those outlined by the group. I will cheerfully obey those in authority over me and always strive to be helpful.

I will strive to do not only what is asked of me, but also seek ways to be helpful on my own initiative, always trying to “go the extra mile”.

I agree to maintain daily devotional readings on my own and daily prayer. I agree to attend all planned functions and cooperate fully and cheerfully.

I will put aside teasing, sarcasm, a critical/complaining spirit and practical jokes knowing that the evil one uses them to destroy team unity and efficiency.

If I fail to follow through with this commitment I agree that the team leaders may send me home at my expense.

Date

_____ *print participant's name on line above*

Parent's or guardian's signature for those under the age of 18

Participant's Signature



Trip Policies For Participants

Program Attendance Requirements

- All participants must attend all evening programs and special activities.
- Failure to cooperate with the planned program may require a request that a group or individual return home.

Prohibited Items or Actions

- Smoking is not allowed in Mustard Seeds buildings or in client's homes at any time.
- **Alcohol, non-prescription drugs, and fireworks are prohibited.**
- Lack of cooperation may require that a person or group be sent home at their expense.
- NO—cell phones (not for every person, leaders may have one or two), Ipods, handheld video games, computers, Walkman, portable stereos. **These items should Not be brought.** Consider this a fast from technology. (Be strong here leaders!)

General Issues

Sleeping Rooms-You are Guests!

- Room occupants are responsible for the condition of their room.
- Damage to the building, furniture, or equipment will be charged to the team.
- A Mission As Life Staff Member will check all groups into and out of their rooms.
- Guys are not allowed in the girls' rooms or halls, and girls are not allowed in the guys' rooms or halls.
- Food and drinks are also not permitted in the sleeping rooms.

Lights out

- Lights out time applies to all participants-young people and adult chaperones.
- Lights out time is 11:00 p.m. every night. The work we do is dangerous and requires that people be alert.
- Enforcement of lights out is the responsibility of the adult chaperones. Please follow through with this.

Phone use. *Form a Phone Tree* in which one home family calls one person in the church who relays messages to others in the church to convey information while you are here. Phones at the facility are to be used **only for emergency** and for leaders to periodically call the phone tree you established before you left. No personal phone calls are permitted and all long distance calls must be either collect or **on your own personal phone card. No use of phones for internet is permitted.**

Phones are not available on the Spring trips. Pay phones and their locations will be identified for teams to use.

VOLUNTEER RULES

Discipline of Mission As Life Participants

Discipline of participants is the responsibility of adult chaperones.

- 1) Anyone found with drugs or alcohol will be sent home.
- 2) Participation in any sexual activity will be cause for being sent home.
- 3) Smoking is allowed only outside the housing facility or homes where volunteers are working.
- 4) For your own safety, shoes of relative completeness (no open toes, etc.), complete t-shirt-type tops and long, sturdy pants are required at the work sites (no sweats or other baggy pants, no shorts, no sandals).
- 5) Please respect the privacy and property of our neighbors. Be sensitive to noise and parking issues.
- 6) We want you to be rested and happy during the day, so lights out at 11:00 PM is to be enforced.

Safety Issues

- 1) Use power tools safely. Unplug them when they are not in use.
- 2) Take breaks throughout the day and drink plenty of water.
- 3) Use ladders safely and take them down when not in use.
- 4) Avoid snakes, ticks, and other creatures, as well as poison ivy and oak.
- 5) No goofing around!
- 6) Have a first aid kit and copies of Medical Release Forms in each vehicle.
- 7) Be wary of dangerous curves and coal trucks.
- 8) Do not play in or use water from creeks, it may be polluted.

Stewardship Issues

- 1) No paint-mud-water fights or food fights.

- 2) Plan ahead to use materials in the most economical way. Measure twice, cut once.
- 3) Check with Mustard Seed staff before agreeing to do anything we haven't already talked about. Do not commit your team or Mustard Seeds to any work.
- 4) Clean tools after use, including mud knives, paint brushes, etc. **DO NOT CONTAMINATE A FAMILY'S WATER SOURCE.**
- 5) Use the right tool for the right job.

Sensitivity Issues

- 1) Take time to meet and talk with the family before beginning to unload.
- 2) Ask for their ideas and advice, and encourage them to join in the work.
- 3) Keep reactions to yourself that might hurt or insult the family.
- 4) Be sensitive to the family's need for space and privacy. Ask before venturing into new areas of the home; remember, you are a guest.
- 5) **Don't bring out cameras until a relationship has been established.** Take pictures of people you want to remember, not before-after shots of the work. You won't need cameras until Wednesday or Thursday.
- 6) Have lunch at the site, it's an important part of developing a relationship. Pack extra sandwiches if necessary.
- 7) Be sure to cover a family's belongings before working in a room and put things back the way you found them.
- 8) Ask before throwing away trash. It might not be considered trash by the people who live there.
- 9) Have fun and enjoy yourselves.

Team Leader's Responsibilities

The **primary responsibilities** of team leaders during your week with Mustard Seeds and Mountains are:

- 1) To be in charge of your volunteers, at the youth/adult facility and work site.
- 2) To supervise repairs at the home you are assigned.

Team Leader's (T.L.'s) Volunteer Supervision and Leadership responsibilities include:

- 1) Make sure teenage and adult volunteers from your church/group abide by the rules and guidelines for conduct, safety, sensitivity, and stewardship set by Mustard Seeds and Mountains and common sense.
- 2) See that chores are performed satisfactorily at the housing facility.
- 3) Assist with devotions and meal blessings.
- 4) Transport your volunteers during the week.

T.L.'s Construction Supervision responsibilities include:

- 1) Follow the repairs on the work order to the best of your ability.
- 2) Be honest about your ability, not taking on more or less than you are capable of doing.
- 3) Abide by work site instruction of the mission staff.
- 4) Bring/take as many supplies to your work site as possible.
- 5) Return complete supply sheets each evening.
- 6) Report progress and special concerns during the week.
- 7) Complete an accurate work summary sheet at the end of the week.
- 8) Attempt to keep all members of your work crew busy without jeopardizing quality.
- 9) Strive to remain within the budget set for your task.
- 10) Make sure no ministry tools are left at the work site and no unsafe conditions remain at the end of the day (such as ladders left against buildings or holes left open).



WHAT DO I BRING? Needs

Plenty of work clothes: Plan enough for each day of your stay. Laundry facilities are not available.

Work Shoes: sturdy and comfortable hard-soled shoes. Tennis shoes or sandals for play (not work).

Casual clothes for evening when work clothes are dirty.

Personal toiletry items-include towels, wash clothes, soap, etc.

Light jacket, for cool nights.

Pillow and sleeping bag or blanket and sheet.

Insect repellent and sun block lotion.

Work gloves, dust masks, safety glasses.

At least one long-sleeved light-weight shirt. This will be helpful when working with fiberglass insulation.

New Testament.

Small spiral notebook journal or a diary or journal type book, pen or pencil, to use for recording your thoughts and reflections during the week.

Tools each person should bring.

Hammer and nail apron.

Measuring tape

Safety Goggles/glasses

Dust Masks...at least 5

Utility Knife

Carpenter's pencil

Scraper

Mark your tools well in any color other than orange. We use bright orange paint for M&M tools. Colored electrical tape is a good choice.

Things You Might Find Useful

Alarm clock

Musical instruments

Fan

Camera and film

Hat or cap with broad brim

Raincoat or poncho

Flashlight

Teddy bear

Frisbees, football, volleyball or other recreational items

Favorite poetry, songs, devotions, stories, games, skits, etc., to share for morning devotions or a special activity in the evening.

You Will Not Need

Stereos, TV's, Valuables (expensive jewelry, excess money), fireworks, walkman, radios, laptops, hair dryers. The wiring in our facilities is safe but **we discourage bringing hair dryers since the wiring may overload.**

When packing, make sure all of your personal items are marked. You might not want to bring the best of something you have. Things have a tendency to be misplaced when you are living with 20-40 people all week.

We discourage groups from wearing things like halter tops, short-shorts, etc. You will be working and living in a somewhat conservative community and representing Mustard Seeds & Mountains as volunteers. **All people on the work site must have sturdy pants and shoes. NO SHORTS for work sites.**



Typical Daily Schedule

6:30 Rise and shine

7:00 Breakfast

7:30 Clean up

8:00 Experiential Learning Session.

8:30 Prepare to go to work site.

9:00-9:30 Arrive at work site and begin work.

12:00 PM Lunch/ Devotions with family at site.

1:00 Resume work at site.

4:00 Clean up site and return to center.

6:00 Dinner.

7:00 Clean up after dinner. Daily cleaning chores at Center.

8:00 Evening gathering/Bible study by Mustard Seeds staff.

11:00 Lights out.

The weekly Schedule is as follows:

Sunday-Travel day. Arrive and settle at housing facility by 6 p.m. Orientation at 8 p.m.

Monday-Begin work at site. Monday night Bible study.

Tuesday-Continue work at site. Tuesday night Bible study.

Wednesday-Continue work at site. Special *optional* cultural activity (Bluegrass music). *Note, \$3 per person; advance notification necessary and check for group fee made out to Mustard Seeds and sent 60 days prior to arrival along with final payment,* or free evening.

Thursday-Complete work. Thursday night Bible study.

Friday- Clean up house, inspection by staff, and leave for home by 9 a.m.

Mission As Life

Thumbnail Sketch of Appalachian Culture and History

THUMBNAIL SKETCH OF THE APPALACHIAN REGION

Appalachia is a geographic region which encompasses a mountain range extending from Connecticut to Mississippi. It contains some 397 counties, part of 12 states and all of West Virginia.

Central Appalachia was settled primarily by Scots-Irish who were brought to the colonies as indentured servants. After they had completed their servanthood, they left the lowlands ruled by the wealthy and headed westward to the mountains where they would be able to obtain land and freedom. They carved out of the wilderness a home and lived fairly self-sufficient lives. They were instrumental in obtaining new lands for the country and taming wilderness areas. They were known for their resourcefulness, loyalty and courage. It was Appalachian mountaineers who won the crucial battle at Kings Mountain during the Revolutionary War. They were awarded land as repayment for their contribution to the cause.

Appalachia remained undeveloped economically for years due to the terrain and difficulty related to transportation. Development has followed two main cycles. First, timber companies entered the region and purchased trees from the mountaineers. Prices paid were very low since the mountain economy was not based on cash. The small amounts of cash offered were more than the people in the region saw in years. Timber rights were sold and logging of old growth hardwood forests began. Soon the railroad began to build tracks into the region to more easily bring out logs. This change altered the economy of the area and made the mountaineer dependent on outside goods. This new dependence caused the people to begin to abandon practices which had made them self-sufficient. The logging also damaged the environment. Runoff from the clear cut hills damaged fragile farm land and streams.

The second major change involved mineral rights. The mountains were now becoming accessible to developers since the railroad was building track into the region. Representatives were sent into the region to purchase mineral rights from the inhabitants. The majority of the population was illiterate and ignorant of legal issues related to mineral rights. Through questionable means mineral rights were purchased at the rate of about \$.50 per acre in most cases. To the mountaineer this was a great cash windfall. They could earn more money than their forefathers had seen simply by signing the paper the representative placed before them. What they didn't know was that in the case of coal, some 200,000 tons may reside in one acre. Even at \$.10 a ton the mountaineer would lose thousands of dollars per acre. The same was true if natural gas was discovered. What also wasn't told to the mountaineer was that the contracts also stipulated that the owner of the mineral rights could use any means necessary to get to the minerals including the total destruction of the landowners land. The owner could be evicted from the land. Courts later upheld the right of the mineral owners to do this. Companies involved in mining used the men in the area as cheap labor, established towns owned by the companies and erected company stores so that the money earned by the miners would remain in the company.

These two cycles of development created some of the root causes for the condition of the Appalachian region today. For instance, about 72% of the land in the region is owned by outside interests, usually corporations involved in timber or mining. These outside interests work diligently today to protect themselves by manipulating tax structures, politics and local laws. It has been in the interest of the companies to keep the people dependent. It has also led to the mind-set of the people to distrust outsiders and be suspicious of change.

Differing Worldviews

MIDDLE CLASS VALUES	TRADITIONAL VALUES
Acts define the self. A person is defined by what they have done. We use cues like clothes, property, etc. to determine this.	Self determines one's acts. Who you are determines what you are able to do.
Object orientation. Value is placed on things. How much you have and what you have determine your relative worth or value as a person.	Person orientation. You are valued based upon who you are in a family. A frequent question asked strangers is "Who are your people?". Things exist for the purpose of use and are not that valuable.
Time Orientation. Time is money. You must keep to a schedule and use time wisely in terms of productivity. Unproductive time is wasted time.	Event orientation. What is happening is what is important. Schedules are to be flexible. Time is used for relationships.
Routine seeker. Likes things predictable and planned.	Action seeker. Dislikes routine. Seeks episodes of action which give meaning to life.

Addressing Our Concepts of Poverty

WE GENERALLY SEE POVERTY AS A STIGMA. This has been a label attached to certain groups of people for ostracism. The poor have been characterized as lazy, ignorant, inefficient, drunkards, immoral and promiscuous, degenerate, untrustworthy, genetically inferior, and undisciplined. They have been seen as riffraff and undesirables who are best kept out of sight. They have been blamed for creating their own condition and expected to lift themselves out of it since they got themselves into it.

By maintaining this view of the poor, we do a number of things. **First**, we justify our own lifestyle. "It is obviously the result of our labor". **Next**, we justify our unconcern. "It is foolish to attempt to help those who do not want to help themselves". **Third**, we provide a convenient argument for laying blame. "The poor are poor because of their own devices". This exonerates any individual or entity of responsibility for creating conditions which may force a people into poverty. **Fourth**, this view perverts justice as portrayed in Scripture. "The just are those who have, the unjust are the have nots". Justice becomes not a means of right living among our fellow humans so as to fulfill the two fold Law of Love as spoken by Jesus, but a means merely for punishing wrong doers. **Fifth**, it distorts our concept of sin from being both corporate and individual in nature and practice to only being individual. We deny structural evil in terms of principalities and powers and rulers of this world. **Finally**, we perpetuate the idea that we must do something "for" the poor, that the poor are helpless and we must rescue them as opposed to work with them recognizing that they have something to offer. It places us in a superior position instead of placing us in a servant's position.

Ideas for Preparing Your Team

Most people are woefully ignorant of what the Scriptures teach regarding the poor. When you discover the number of verses and chapters devoted to the poor and compare it with the amount of time spent studying them in classes, sermons and studies, you find that we don't spend nearly the time we should on the subject. Consequently, we begin to adopt the values, misconceptions and prejudices of our culture in relation to the poor.

Bible Studies Related to Poverty

Study A. Who Are You? The poor in Scripture and God's preferential disposition toward them.

In your packet you will find a list of verses related to poverty in the Scripture (**pages 34ff**). This list has been condensed from a total of about 428 verses. Use this as a source for the study to follow.

Hook. Brainstorming Activity. (You need a flip chart or large blackboard or dry erase board.) Divide the board in half. Tell your group that you want them to sound off to you the words that come into their mind when you say the word "poor". List these on one side of the board. After a few minutes, tell them that now you want them to tell you why the poor are poor. List these responses on the other half of the board. (If you are using a flip chart, tape the pages on different halves of a wall.) Now, for the final part of brainstorming, ask the group to tell you what God says about the poor (tell them they have to refer to specific verses). List the ones mentioned. In no time at all you may find that they have little idea what God says or where He says it.

Book. Divide your group into four smaller groups. Assign them verses from the Word Study supplied. Have each group read the verses and summarize what they find. Each group should have a secretary or spokesperson who will be ready to share these with the larger group. Look carefully over the verses, some occur in the midst of whole sections of scripture which should be read to capture the whole context. Be sure you expand these verses to encompass context. After they have spent 20 -30 minutes on this activity call time and have them report their findings. List their findings on the flip chart.

Look. As each group reports on what they found, ask them questions to draw out their understanding of the verses. Your questions should help them discover the implications these verses reveal as to how we act or think toward the poor. You should also draw their attention to any consequences or results revealed in the verses. An example would be Prov 19:17. "He who gives to the poor lends to the Lord and He will repay him." In this verse God states that He will be in debt to the person who is kind to the poor. What are the implications of this? A contrast to this would be Prov 21:13. Be prepared for discussion on these issues.

Took. Go back to the lists you originally started on the poor and what makes them poor. How many of those observations or assumptions agree with what is found in scripture? How many of those observations or assumptions are harsh and judgmental in tone?

Focus their attention on your observations in the various verses you studied. Now, guide the whole group in coming to some practical actions they can do to follow through on what they have learned from these verses. What can they do to counter these harsh stereotypical judgments?

Study B. Hangin’ with the Homies. A look at those with whom Jesus decided to associate.

Hook. Brainstorming. (You will need a blackboard, dry erase board or flip chart). Divide your board in half. Ask your group to begin to list for you the type of people who are considered losers and undesirables in society. List these on one side of the board. (You can play with this a little and get them stirred up or laughing. “What about people who squeeze toothpaste in the middle? etc. Loosen them up). You should get answers like “hookers” ,“drug dealers”, etc.

Book. At this point you will divide the large group into smaller groups. Have them pick a leader/spokesperson. Assign each group some of the following scriptures. They are to *read each selection and determine what kind of person Jesus is dealing with.* They are to list these on a sheet of paper and be ready to share observations with the group. *They are also to observe how Jesus treated these same people.* You may add other Scriptures if you like. Take time to research the stigma associated with each of the categories below.

Tax Collectors	Sinners	Lepers	Murderers	Thieves	Poor	Gentiles
Mt 9:10-13	Mt 21:31-32	Matt. 8:1-4	Acts 7:57-60 and 8:1-3 with 9:1-9	Luke 23:43	Luke 4:18-19	Mark 5:1-15
	Luke 7:36-50	Mt 26:6-13		Luke 19:1-10	Mt 25:31-46	Luke 7:1-10
	Luke 15:1-7					

Look. Once they are finished with their group study, have each group present what they found in the text. List their findings on the other half of the board. Once this is done, you must draw these varied scriptures together and relate them to today. You need to guide the group into finding if certain types of people they brainstormed as being undesirable can be placed in groups or categories. Take some time with them to do this. You may have categories like the sick, the mentally unbalanced, etc. When you have finished, see how many of these categories are similar to the ones they discovered in the scriptures. You may want to point out some dynamic equivalents such as leprosy being similar to AIDS, etc. The purpose of this exercise is for them to see that Jesus made it a point to be among and befriend some very unsavory people and that he treated them with respect and gentleness.

Took. What are the implications of the scriptures above? What do they say about how Jesus views “sinners” or undesirables? What do they say about how Jesus views those who treat these people with contempt? What are the practical lessons we can take from this? (Be sure that you guide the group to going beyond merely thinking or feeling rightly into acting rightly. Who are the despised they know at work or school and what should they do to minister to them?) Now they should examine how what they’ve studied may affect how they act on the Mission As Life Trip.

Study C. The Way Up is Down. Ambition in the Kingdom of Heaven.

Hook. (You will need a blackboard or dry-erase board or flip chart. You will also need an assortment of magazines like Forbes, Sports Illustrated, Vogue, Teen, Business Week, Time, etc. You will also need some poster board and glue along with some magic markers.) Divide your group into smaller groups. Pass out magazines so that each group has about three or four different ones. The assignment for the groups is to go through each magazine and pick out pictures that represent greatness or success. They are to cut these out and make a collage on their poster along with words or slogans which relate to why the photos represent greatness or success. Each group will present their poster and explain it to the whole group.

Book. Once each group has shared their poster. Pin them up around the room or display them so all can see them. Assign each group the following Scriptures (do not give them the explanations listed below with them). You may want to take some time and add more if you like.

Luke 16:13--servants are devoted to one master.

Luke 17:7-9--Servants who only do their duty are considered unworthy servants.

Luke 22:27--Jesus as the model servant

John 13:14-16--Servant is not greater than his lord

Phil 2:5-12--Jesus the servant

Matt 18:2-4--Greatest in heaven is a child

Matt 20:26--Whoever is to be great must be a servant

Matt 23:12--humility leads to honor

Luke 18:13--Publican & Sinner

Luke 22:24-27--Servanthood the model for Christians

II Cor. 3:5--the servant's strength

Rom 12:1-3--the servant's view of himself

Eph 4:1-5--the servant's life style

Col. 3:12-17--the uniform of a servant

Each group is to look up these scriptures and determine what they say and how what is said relates to greatness or success. They are to list these on paper and be ready to share them with the group.

Look. Once each group has had time to read and comment on each scripture, get the full group's attention and begin to go through the scriptures with them extracting their insights and comments. Write the scripture reference down and their comments on the flip chart or board. Once you've finished with the scriptures, stand back and ask them if there are patterns they see.

You should guide them to understand that for the Christian, servanthood is not an option. To be great in the Kingdom and to gain God's favor, humility and servanthood are essential. As you look at the scriptures again with them, see if you can draw responses similar to any of the explanations listed after the scriptures above.

Took. So, now they must begin to generate practical ideas on how these concepts can be applied in their lives now and on the Mission As Life Trip. Have them **focus on the area of attitudes**--hurt feelings---not getting my way---responses when asked to do something, etc. Then have them **focus on actions** related to servanthood and humility---always trying to get the best seat in the vehicle---running to be first in line---taking the best pieces of food---how they do the work they are given, either well or slipshod---name calling and gossip---cliques---leaving the hard jobs for someone else, etc.

Movies to Stir Thought

You may want to rent one of these movies at your local video store. Read the **Thumbnail Sketch of Appalachian Culture** and then preview the movies, making notes about scenes which illustrate issues or characteristics listed in the article. Once the movie is over, you should create a series of questions alerting and highlighting key points to hand out to your team members when they watch the film. Have them take notes during the film. Once the film has ended have a time of discussion going over each of the points.

Matewan. This is a film about the struggle coal miners had in the 1920's against coal companies. It presents one incident of many related to what history refers to as the Redneck Wars of 1924 (coal mine union wars). It takes place in Mingo county, a county next door to McDowell. Looking closely at this film gives insight into attitudes and practices you may still encounter in Southern West Virginia.

The War. Although filmed in the South, it still captures the struggle, stigma and dignity of the poor. It helps people see how often forces outside the control of families shape their lives. Your group should pay special attention to how the poor maintain their dignity and strive to succeed. *Caution*, this film has children using foul language.

The Grapes of Wrath. A grand picture of the struggle of Okies during the dust bowl and the struggles they encountered trying to survive. Careful attention will uncover issues of structural evil and oppression. I think the version done in the forties with Henry Fonda is the best.

October Sky. An actual story of youth in McDowell County in the latter 1950's. Provides insight into youth rising above their limitations and achieving greatness. Good look into where you will be serving.

Games to Simulate Culture Stress.

Bafa Bafa (or the LUNA game) --cross cultural role play which can bring to light stresses, misunderstandings and wrong assumptions about how we naturally view others.

Bargna. Card game which creates the type of misunderstandings common in cross cultural situations.

Books

You may want to read one or more of the following to familiarize yourself with Appalachian Culture, the culture of poverty and working among the poor.

Night Comes to The Cumberland. Harry Caudill. Overview of the systematic exploitation of the Appalachian Region and the culture of the Appalachian people.

Restoring At Risk Communities. John Perkins. An overview of Christian Community Development and how its principles are essential to breaking the cycle of poverty in communities.

Compassion. Henri Nouwen. An insightful look at what true compassion really is and how it was reflected in the life of Jesus. Must reading to understand how to lead your group into true, life changing servanthood.

Making the Most of Morning and Evening Sessions

Things Team and Site Leaders Can Do To Maximize Learning

Mustard Seeds takes seriously its responsibility to minister to teams during their week here. Part of that is providing experiential learning exercises in the mornings to prepare and sensitize teams to local culture as well as provide new perspectives on poverty and how it affects the poor. These exercises are designed to not only inform, but to provoke reflection and discussion during the day. For them to be effective we need the help and support of team and site leaders. Below is a description of each activity and its goals. Listed in bullets under it are ways you and your team and site leaders can enhance the impact of each activity. **Please share**

Your leaders' understanding of and involvement in the morning sessions is crucial.

this with each team and site leader before you arrive and discuss how you can help your team leaders assist us in increasing understanding of poverty and its effects.

Cultural Sensitivity Activity. This activity takes on various shapes and forms over the summer depending on whether or not teams have been here before. Generally it involves the group being divided into 3-4 smaller groups. Each small group receives instruction on the characteristics of their culture and how they are to act toward others. They are to practice that activity among themselves for a few minutes. All groups are brought back together and told to interact with one another. The groups are also told to discover the key differences in the other groups compared to their culture. When the groups come together, they encounter many reasons for misunderstandings, misperceptions and confusion about the other groups. A time of debriefing follows in which the differences are not only identified, but the reasons for why that particular culture behaves in that particular manner revealed.

† **Goals for this activity**

- Sensitizing groups that cultural differences are OK.
- Helping groups understand that there are logical reasons for most of the ways people choose to act.
- Helping groups understand that they must suspend judgment of others until they have interacted with them sufficiently to understand their perspective.
- Sensitize the group to be on the lookout for cultural differences.

† **How you and your Leaders can help increase understanding and session impact.**

- During the activity, make sure that each team person is fully engaged and active.
- Model the activity so team members catch on to the idea and overcome shyness.
- After the activity, while traveling to the site, ask team members what they learned from the activity.
- At the site during the day, help team members discover differences in culture here compared to where they live. Ask them questions that help them clarify what they see.

The Race. This is one of our most powerful activities. It never fails to generate much discussion and deep reflection. All team members are lined up in a field or park so that they are shoulder to shoulder forming a straight line. A series of questions are read. Each member responds to the question read by stepping forward one or two paces (based on the instruction with the question) or stepping backward one or two paces. The game continues until all questions are complete. At this time, people should be scattered all over the field or park. Some will be in the very front, some will be in the very back. Where the person is depends upon how they answered the questions. The questions have been formulated based upon issues of gender, race,

socioeconomic status, education and resources. The majority of the questions involve things over which the individual has no control, such as whether or not their parents attended college. The focus is on these issues to illustrate that whoever is born into the world has been given gifts, opportunities, barriers or hindrances that have nothing to do with their personal ability, but have much to do with the level of effort they must expend to “succeed” as we define success today. Once the questions are complete, we debrief the group with a series of questions related to our goals for the session.

† **Goals for this activity**

- To help team members realize that not everyone starts out with the same opportunities, resources or abilities.
- To point out that often the reasons for lack of success or motivation may have nothing to do with things in a person’s control.
- To help people understand that stigma or status are often attached to things over which we have no control and these things can hinder our ability to be accepted in society and to succeed in the way society is structured.
- To point out that not everyone starts on a level playing field in the game of life and that life is not “fair”.
- To visually depict these inequalities in opportunity.
- To help people discover why some people in the back of the group lose motivation to compete with those in the front.

† **How you and your leaders can maximize understanding in this exercise.**

- Help team members understand that this does not reflect positively or negatively upon individuals but merely illustrates that some people have been given tremendous gifts beyond their control and that some have tremendous obstacles they must overcome.
- During the day, help team members reflect on their responsibility to those who start life farther back in the race, lacking the opportunities, benefits and head start of others.
- During the day help team members understand that to whom much is given, much is required.
- Help team members reflect that the starting position revealed at the end of the race is no guarantee of success. Each person must develop their particular God given abilities and discipline themselves in order to be successful.
- Help team members understand that in God’s economy, the last shall be first and the first last. Direct their attention to Luke 6:20-26.

The Sign. This is a variation on The Race and sometimes done on rainy days. In this activity teams are divided into groups and sent to different parts of the facility. Each group is given a box of supplies and told to make a creative sign for Mustard Seeds. The best sign will be awarded a prize. The key factor is that each group receives different supplies for the sign. One group receives a tremendous amount of material to work with. One group receives much less and the final group receives hardly any materials. One person from each group is allowed to visit other groups and report back to their group halfway through the activity. The groups are brought together and signs compared. There is a debriefing that queries participants attitudes toward the project, the dynamics of their group interaction and feelings and thoughts.

† **Goals of the activity.**

- To help team members realize that not everyone starts out with the same opportunities, resources or abilities.
- To point out that often the reasons for lack of success or motivation may have nothing to do with things in a person’s control.
- To help people understand that stigma or status are often attached to things over which we have no control and these things can hinder our ability to be accepted in society and to succeed in the way society is structured.

- To point out that not everyone starts on a level playing field in the game of life and that life is not “fair”.
- To experience these inequalities in opportunity.

† **How you and your Leaders can help increase understanding and session impact.**

- During the activity, encourage your group to perform. If they are reluctant, harass them...asking what’s wrong with them...why they don’t rise to the occasion.
- Be attentive to negative attitudes and perceptions in the two groups who have fewer resources...you may want to emphasize them or capitalize upon them.
- Help team members understand that this does not reflect positively or negatively upon individuals but merely illustrates that some people have been given tremendous gifts beyond their control and that some have tremendous obstacles they must overcome.
- During the day, help team members reflect on their responsibility to those who start life lacking the opportunities, benefits and head start of others.
- During the day help team members understand that to whom much is given, much is required.
- Help team members understand that in God’s economy, the last shall be first and the first last. Direct their attention to Luke 6:20-26.

Prayer Walks. This seems like the most simple activity yet it is one of the hardest since the average church attendee hardly ever prays for more than their personal needs. Teams are divided into groups and sent in specific directions to walk through town and pray for the needs of the area. A general list is provided for each group. Each group returns to the housing facility at a specified time and prepares to leave for the worksite.

† **Goals of this activity.**

- To bathe the area and its residents in prayer, seeking an outpouring of God’s Spirit.
- To provide a basic understanding of “warfare” prayer for team members.
- To allow God to touch the hearts of team members as they come before Him on behalf of others.
- To kindle a desire for prayer in the group which will be taken back to their home church.

† **How your team leaders can help focus understanding and facilitate the activity.**

- Have team leaders study the following passages during their preparation time
 - Ephesians 6: 10-20
 - Matthew 18:10-22
 - Ephesians 1:15-23
 - Colossians 1:9-14

These passages outline different things for which to pray in relation to those who do not know Christ or those who follow Him

- Instruct team leaders in the **ACTS** of prayer
 - A= Adoration---a time of praising God for who He is
 - C= Confession—a time of soul cleansing
 - T= Thanksgiving for what God has done
 - S= Supplication—for self and others. Specific prayers not general “bless them” talk.
 - Instruct team leaders in the use of “sentence prayers”. They will teach their particular group to pray one sentence prayers on a specific topic. One person will pray one sentence and another person can pray on the same topic but only one sentence. When they feel a topic is exhausted, the leader will raise another topic for the group to pray for. For instance, a series of sentences related to God drawing people to himself...a number of people may

pray...They may focus on the house they are passing as they walk, the store and the people in it and so on.

- Have prayer walk leaders enforce a code of silence during the walk with only those praying doing any talking. This keeps a feeling of reverence and seriousness in the task.

Thursday Planning for return. This is the day in which you prepare to take your **Mission As Life** experience and expand it to serving Christ in your own community.

† **Goals of this activity**—To prepare your team members for service when they return home. It is a time of brainstorming in which every person talks about possibilities for ministry. You will also draw from the list of ministries researched in your area during the preparation phase for this trip.

† **How your leaders can help focus understanding and facilitate the activity.**

- Encourage team members to think creatively regarding ministry in your home community.
- Don't pass judgment on any suggestions... you don't know what God wants done and you don't want to shut down suggestions.
- Make sure each person contributes something... don't allow adults or individuals to dominate the conversation.
- Praise suggestions made.
- Help people think outside the box... not to fall into ruts in what they list.
- Have them list interests they personally have in relation to serving when they get home.
- Be familiar with the various ministries your team identified during the preparation phase so that you can remind the team members during this exercise.

Make sure your leaders get copies of this section on morning and evening sessions before the trip so they know how to prepare!

Word Study on Poor in Scripture

OT words used

POOR (PERSON), WEAK (PERSON)

`ani OT:6041, "poor; weak; afflicted; humble." This word, which also appears in early Aramaic and post-biblical Hebrew, occurs in biblical Hebrew about 76 times and in all periods.

This noun is frequently used in synonymous parallelism with **'ebyon** ("needy") and **dal** ("poor"). It differs from both in emphasizing some kind of disability or distress. A hired servant as one who is in a lower (oppressive) social and material condition is described both as an **'ebyon** and **`ani**: "Thou shalt not oppress a hired servant that is poor and needy, whether he be of thy brethren, or of thy strangers that are in thy land within thy gates: At his day thou shalt give him his hire, neither shall the sun go down upon it; for he is poor, and setteth his heart upon it: lest he cry against thee unto the Lord, and it be sin unto thee" Deut 24:14-15. If wrongly oppressed, he can call on God for defense. Financially, the **`ani** lives from day to day and is socially defenseless, being subject to oppression. In its first biblical occurrence the **`ani** is guaranteed (if men obey God's law) his outer garment for warmth at night even though that garment might be held as collateral during the day: "If thou lend money to any of my people that is poor by thee, thou shalt not be to him as a usurer, neither shalt thou lay upon him usury" Ex 22:25. The godly protect and deliver the "afflicted" Isa 10:2; Ezek 18:17, while the ungodly take advantage of them, increasing their oppressed condition Isa 58:7. The king is especially charged to protect the **`ani**: "Open thy mouth, judge righteously, and plead the cause of the poor and needy" Prov 31:9.

`Ani can refer to one who is physically oppressed: "Therefore hear now this, thou afflicted, and drunken, but not with wine" Isa 51:21. Physical oppression is sometimes related to spiritual oppression as in Ps 22:24: "For he hath not despised nor abhorred the affliction of the afflicted; neither hath he hid his face from him...." Outward affliction frequently leads to inner spiritual affliction and results in an outcry to God: "Turn thee unto me, and have mercy upon me; for I am desolate and afflicted" Ps 25:16. Even apart from outward affliction, the pious are frequently described as the "afflicted" or "poor" for whom God provides: "Thy congregation hath dwelt therein: thou, O God, hast prepared of thy goodness for the poor" Ps 68:10. In such cases spiritual poverty and want are clearly in view.

Sometimes the word means "humble" or "lowly," as it does in Zech 9:9, where it describes the Messiah: "Behold, thy King cometh unto thee: he is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass..." (cf. Ps 18:27; Prov 3:34; Isa 66:2).

Related to **`ani** is the noun **`oni**, "affliction." It appears about 36 times and in all periods of biblical Hebrew. **`Oni** represents the state of pain and or punishment resulting from affliction. In Deut 16:3 the shewbread is termed the bread of "affliction" because it is a physical reminder of sin, the cause of "affliction" Ps 25:18, the hardship involved in sin (especially the Egyptian bondage), and divine deliverance from sin Ps 119:50.

`Ani is also related to the word **`anawah**, "humility, gentleness." This word occurs only 5 times, setting forth the two characteristics gained from affliction. Applied to God, it represents His submission to His own nature Ps 45:4.

dal OT:1800, "one who is low, poor, reduced, helpless, weak." This noun also appears in Ugaritic. It occurs in biblical Hebrew about 47 times and in all periods.

Dal is related to, but differs from, **`ani** (which suggests affliction of some kind), **'ebyon** (which emphasizes need), and **rash** (which suggests destitution). The **dallim** constituted the middle class of Israel-- those who were physically deprived (in the ancient world the majority of people were poor). For example, the **dallim** may be viewed as the opposite of the rich Ex 30:15; cf. Ruth 3:10; Prov 10:15.

In addition, the word may connote social poverty or lowliness. As such, **dal** describes those who are the counterparts of the great: "Ye shall do no unrighteousness in judgment: thou shalt not respect the person of the poor, nor honor the person of the mighty: but in righteousness shalt thou judge thy neighbor" Lev 19:15; cf. Amos 2:7.

When Gideon challenged the Lord's summoning him to deliver Israel, he emphasized that his clan was too weak to do the job: "And he said unto him, Oh my Lord, wherewith shall I save Israel? behold, my family is poor in Manasseh..." Judg 6:15; cf. 2 Sam 3:1. God commands that society protect the poor, the lowly, and the weak: "Thou shalt not follow a multitude to do evil; neither shalt thou speak in a cause to decline after many to wrest judgment: neither shalt thou countenance a poor man in his cause" Ex 23:2-3; cf. Lev 14:21; Isa 10:2. He also warns that if men fail to provide justice, He will do so Isa 11:4.

A fourth emphasis appears in Gen 41:19 (the first biblical appearance of the word), where **dal** is contrasted to "healthy" or "fat": "And behold, seven other kine came up after them, poor and very ill-favored and leanfleshed...." Thus, **dal** indicates a physical condition and appearance of sickness. It is used in this sense to describe Amnon's appearance as he longed for Tamar 2 Sam 13:4.

Dal is used (very infrequently) of spiritual poverty (in such cases it is sometimes paralleled to 'ebyon): "Therefore I said, Surely these are poor; they are foolish: for they know not the way of the Lord, nor the judgment of their God" Jer 5:4. Some scholars argue that here the word means "ignorance," and as the context shows, this is ignorance in the knowledge of God's word.

Another noun, **dallah**, is related to dal. Dallah, which appears about 8 times, means "poverty; dishevelled hair." The word appears in 2 Kings 24:14: "...none remained, save the poorest sort of the people of the land," where dallah emphasizes the social lowliness and "poverty" of those people whom it describes. In Song 7:5 the word refers to "dishevelled hair" in the sense of something that hangs down.

B. Verbs.

dalal OT:1809, "to be low, hang down." This verb appears only 8 times in the Bible and always in poetical passages. It has cognates or near cognates in Arabic, Ethiopic, Akkadian, and extra-biblical Hebrew. The word appears in Ps 79:8: "O remember not against us former iniquities: let thy tender mercies speedily prevent us; for we are brought very low."

ʿanah OT:6031, "to afflict, oppress, humble." This verb, which also appears in Arabic, occurs about 74 times in biblical Hebrew and in every period. The first occurrence is in Gen 15:13: "Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years."

C. Adjective.

ʿanaw OT:6035, "humble; poor; meek." This adjective, which appears about 21 times in biblical Hebrew, is closely related to ʿani and derived from the same verb. Sometimes this word is synonymous with ʿani. Perhaps this is due to the well-known waw-yodh interchange. ʿAnaw appears almost exclusively in poetical passages and describes the intended outcome of

affliction from God, namely "humility." In its first appearance the word depicts the objective condition as well as the subjective stance of Moses. He was entirely dependent on God and saw that he was: "Now the man Moses was very meek, above all the men which were upon the face of the earth" Num 12:3.

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NT words used

POOR

A. Adjectives.

1. **ptochos** NT:4434, for which see BEG, B, has the broad sense of "poor," (a) literally, e. g., Matt 11:5; 26:9,11; Luke 21:3 (with stress on the word, "a conspicuously poor widow"); John 12:5,6,8; 13:29; James 2:2,3,6; the "poor" are constantly the subjects of injunctions to assist them, Matt 19:21; Mark 10:21; Luke 14:13,21; 18:22; Rom 15:26; Gal 2:10; (b) metaphorically, Matt 5:3; Luke 6:20; Rev 3:17.

2. **penichros** NT:3998, akin to B, "needy, poor," is used of the widow in Luke 21:2 (cf. No. 1, of the same woman, in v. 3); it is used frequently in the papyri. In the Sept., Ex 22:25; Prov 28:15; 29:7.

B. Noun.

penes NT:3993, "a laborer" (akin to penomai, "to work for one's daily bread"), is translated "poor" in 2 Cor 9:9.

C. Verb.

ptocheuo NT:433, "to be poor as a beggar" (akin to A, No. 1), "to be destitute," is said of Christ in 2 Cor 8:9. (from Vine's Expository Dictionary of Biblical Words, Copyright (c)1985, Thomas Nelson Publishers)

Scripture references

OT words

ANI

Lev 19:9-10 Do not go over your vineyard a second time or pick up the grapes that have fallen. Leave them for the poor and the alien. I am the LORD your God.

NIV

Lev 23:22 "When you reap the harvest of your land, do not reap to the very edges of your field or gather the gleanings of your harvest. Leave them for the poor and the alien. I am the LORD your God." NIV

Deut 15:11 There will always be poor people in the land. Therefore I command you to be openhanded toward your brothers and toward the poor and needy in your land. NIV

Ps 12:5 "Because of the oppression of the weak and the groaning of the needy, I will now arise," says the LORD. "I will protect them from those who malign them." NIV

Ps 35:10 My whole being will exclaim, "Who is like you, O LORD? You rescue the poor from those too strong for them, the poor and needy from those who rob them." NIV

Ps 72:12 For he will deliver the needy who cry out, the afflicted who have no one to help. NIV

Isa 41:17 "The poor and needy search for water, but there is none; their tongues are parched with thirst. But I the LORD will answer them; I, the God of Israel, will not forsake them. NIV

Isa 58:7 Is it not to share your food with the hungry and to provide the poor wanderer with shelter-- when you see the naked, to clothe him, and not to turn away from your own flesh and blood? NIV

Ezek 16:49-50 "Now this was the sin of your sister Sodom: She and her daughters were arrogant, overfed and unconcerned; they did not help the poor and needy. NIV

DAL

Ex 23:3 and do not show favoritism to a poor man in his lawsuit. NIV

Ps 41:1 Blessed is he who has regard for the weak; the LORD delivers him in times of trouble. NIV

Prov 14:31 He who oppresses the poor shows contempt for their Maker, NIV

Prov 19:17 He who is kind to the poor lends to the LORD, and he will reward him for what he has done. NIV

Prov 21:13 If a man shuts his ears to the cry of the poor, he too will cry out and not be answered. NIV

Prov 22:9 A generous man will himself be blessed, for he shares his food with the poor. NIV

Prov 22:16 He who oppresses the poor to increase his wealth and he who gives gifts to the rich--both come to poverty. NIV

Prov 29:7 The righteous care about justice for the poor, but the wicked have no such concern. NIV

Prov 29:14 If a king judges the poor with fairness, his throne will always be secure. NIV

Amos 4:1 Hear this word, you cows of Bashan on Mount Samaria, you women who oppress the poor and crush the needy NIV

NT verses

PTOCHOS

Matt 5:3 "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. NIV

Matt 11:4-6 The blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cured, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the good news is preached to the poor. NIV

Matt 19:21 Jesus answered, "If you want to be perfect, go, sell your possessions and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me." NIV

Mark 10:21 Jesus looked at him and loved him. "One thing you lack," he said. "Go, sell everything you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me." NIV

Mark 12:41-42 But a poor widow came and put in two very small copper coins, worth only a fraction of a penny. NIV

Luke 4:18 "The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed, NIV

Luke 6:20 "Blessed are you who are poor, for yours is the kingdom of God. NIV

Luke 7:21-22 So he replied to the messengers, "Go back and report to John what you have seen and heard: The blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cured, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the good news is preached to the poor. NIV

Luke 14:13 But when you give a banquet, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind, NIV

Luke 16:20-21 At his gate was laid a beggar named Lazarus, covered with sores NIV

Luke 18:22 When Jesus heard this, he said to him, "You still lack one thing. Sell everything you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me." NIV

Gal 2:10 All they asked was that we should continue to remember the poor, the very thing I was eager to do. NIV

James 2:2-3 Suppose a man comes into your meeting wearing a gold ring and fine clothes, and a poor man in shabby clothes also comes in. NIV

James 2:6 But you have insulted the poor. Is it not the rich who are exploiting you? Are they not the ones who are dragging you into court? NIV

PENICHROS

Luke 21:1-3 He also saw a poor widow put in two very small copper coins. 3 "I tell you the truth," he said, "this poor widow has put in more than all the others. NIV

RICH, RICHES, RICHLY, RICH MAN

A. Adjective.

plousios NT:4145, akin to B, C, No. 1, "rich, wealthy," is used (I) literally, (a) adjectivally (with a noun expressed separately) in Matt 27:57; Luke 12:16; 14:12; 16:1,19; (without a noun), 18:23; 19:2; (b) as a noun, singular, a "rich" man (the noun not being expressed), Matt 19:23,24; Mark 10:25; 12:41; Luke 16:21,22; 18:25; James 1:10,11, "the rich," "the rich (man)"; plural, Mark 12:41, lit., "rich (ones)"; Luke 6:24 (ditto); 21:1; 6:17, "(them that are) rich," lit., "(the) rich"; James 2:6, RV, "the rich"; 5:1, RV, "ye rich"; Rev 6:15 and 13:16, RV, "the rich"; (II), metaphorically, of God, Eph 2:4 ("in mercy"); of Christ, 2 Cor 8:9; of believers, James 2:5, RV, "(to be) rich (in faith)"; Rev 2:9, of spiritual "enrichment" generally; 3:17, of a false sense of "enrichment."

B. Verbs.

plouteo NT:4147, "to be rich," in the aorist or point tense, "to become rich," is used (a) literally, Luke 1:53, "the rich," present participle, lit., "(ones or those) being rich"; 1 Tim 6:9,18; Rev 18:3,15,19 (all three in the aorist tense); (b) metaphorically, of Christ, Rom 10:12 (the passage stresses the fact that Christ is Lord; see v. 9, and the RV); of the "enrichment" of believers through His poverty, 2 Cor 8:9 (the aorist tense expressing completeness, with permanent results); so in Rev 3:18, where the spiritual "enrichment" is conditional upon righteousness of life and conduct (see GOLD, No. 2); of a false sense of "enrichment," 1 Cor 4:8 (aorist), RV, "ye are become rich" (KJV, "ye are rich"); Rev 3:17 (perfect tense, RV, "I... have gotten riches," KJV, "I am... increased with goods"), see GOODS, Note (3); of not being "rich" toward God, Luke 12:21.

2. **ploutizo** NT:4148, "to make rich, enrich," is rendered "making (many) rich" in 2 Cor 6:10 (metaphorical of "enriching" spiritually). See ENRICH.

C. Nouns

ploutos NT:4149 is used in the singular (I) of material "riches," used evilly, Matt. 13:22; Mark 4:19; Luke 8:14; 1 Tim. 6:17; Jas. 5:2; Rev. 18:17; (II) of spiritual and moral "riches," (a) possessed by God and exercised towards men, Rom 2:4, "of His goodness and forbearance and longsuffering"; 9:23 and Eph 3:16, "of His glory" (i. e., of its manifestation in grace towards believers); Rom 11:33, of His wisdom and knowledge; Eph 1:7 and 2:7, "of His grace"; 1:18, "of the glory of His inheritance in the saints"; 3:8, "of Christ"; Phil 4:19, "in glory in Christ Jesus," RV; Col 1:27, "of the glory of this mystery... Christ in you, the hope of glory"; (b) to be ascribed to Christ, Rev 5:12; (c) of the effects of the gospel upon the Gentiles, Rom 11:12 (twice); (d) of the full assurance of understanding in regard to the mystery of God, even Christ, Col 2:2, RV; (e) of the liberality of the churches of Macedonia, 2 Cor 8:2 (where "the riches" stands for the spiritual and moral value of their liberality); (f) of "the reproach of Christ" in contrast to this world's treasures, Heb 11:26.

2. **chrema** NT:5536, "what one uses or needs" (chraomai, "to use"), "a matter, business," hence denotes "riches," Mark 10:23,24; Luke 18:24; see MONEY, No. 2. D. Adverb.

plousios NT:4146, "richly, abundantly," akin to A, is used in Col 3:16; 1 Tim 6:17; Titus 3:6, RV, "richly" (KJV, "abundantly"); 2 Peter 1:11 (ditto).

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Key NT Verses.

PLOUTEO

Luke 1:53 He has filled the hungry with good things NIV

Rom 10:12-13 For there is no difference between Jew and Gentile-the same Lord is Lord of all and richly blesses all who call on him, NIV

2 Cor 8:9 For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, so that you through his poverty might become rich. NIV

1 Tim 6:8-10 But if we have food and clothing, we will be content with that. 9 People who want to get rich fall into temptation and a trap and into many foolish and harmful desires that plunge men into ruin and destruction. NIV

1 Tim 6:18 Command them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to share. NIV

PLOUTOS

Matt 13:22 The one who received the seed that fell among the thorns is the man who hears the word, but the worries of this life and the deceitfulness of wealth choke it, making it unfruitful. NIV

2 Cor 8:1-3 Out of the most severe trial, their overflowing joy and their extreme poverty welled up in rich generosity. NIV

1 Tim 6:17 Command those who are rich in this present world not to be arrogant nor to put their hope in wealth, which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment. NIV

Luke 21:1-3

He also saw a poor widow put in two very small copper coins. 3 "I tell you the truth," he said, "this poor widow has put in more than all the others.

MAMMON

(mam'-un) (Mamonas): A common Aramaic word (mamon) for riches, used in **Matt 6:24** and in **Luke 16:9,11,13**. In these passages mammon merely means wealth, and is called "unrighteous," because the abuse of riches is more frequent than their right use. **In Luke 16:13** there is doubtless personification, but there is no proof that there was in New Testament times a Syrian deity called Mammon. The application of the term in Matthew is apparent and requires no comment. In Lk, however, since the statement, "Make to yourselves friends out of the mammon of unrighteousness," follows as a comment on the parable of the Unjust Steward, there is danger of the inference that Jesus approved the dishonest conduct of the steward and advised His disciples to imitate his example. On the contrary, the statement is added more as a corrective against this inference than as an application. 'Do not infer,' He says, that honesty in the use of money is a matter of indifference. He that is unfaithful in little is unfaithful in much. So if you are not wise in the use of earthly treasure how can you hope to be intrusted with heavenly treasure?' The commendation is in the matter of foresight, not in the method. The steward tried to serve two masters, his lord and his lord's creditors, but the thing could not be done, as the sequel shows. Neither can men serve both God and riches exalted as an object of slavish servitude. Wealth, Jesus teaches, does not really belong to men, but as stewards they may use wealth prudently unto their eternal advantage. Instead of serving God and mammon alike we may serve God by the use of wealth, and thus lay up treasures for ourselves in heaven. Again, the parable is not to be interpreted as teaching that the wrong of dishonest gain may be atoned for by charity. Jesus is not dealing with the question of reparation. The object is to point out how one may best use wealth, tainted or otherwise, with a view to the future.

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West Virginia Mission As Life Trip

Daily Devotionals

Day 1: Monday

Good Morning!! Welcome to West Virginia!!

We have come to West Virginia to be servants. Today is the first day of a week long journey in which we will serve our God and our fellow brothers and sisters.

The New Testament clearly shows us that servitude is central to the Christian life. Jesus' life was an example of servitude. His words, actions and deeds revolved around service.

Consider these verses:

"...just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many" (Matthew 20:28)

"Dear children, let us not love with words or tongue but with actions and in truth." (1 John 3:18)

Jesus also said, "Yet I am among you as the One who serves..." (Luke 22:27)

We somehow have the idea that a person called to the ministry is called to be different and above other people, but according to Jesus, he is called to be a "doormat" for others - called to be their spiritual leader, but never their superior.

Paul understood the spirit of servitude that Jesus spoke about in Luke 22. Paul said, "I know how to be abased..." (Philippians 4:12)

We have been called to the ministry this week. We have been called to be "doormats" for Christ. We come in a spirit of servitude and humility.

Paul's idea of service was to pour his life out to the last drop for others. And whether he received praise or blame made no difference. As long as there was one human being who did not know Jesus, Paul felt a debt of service to that person until he did come to know Him. But the chief motivation behind Paul's service was not love for others but love for his Lord. If our devotion is to the cause of humanity, we will be quickly defeated and broken-hearted, since we will often be confronted with a great deal of ingratitude from other people. But if we are motivated by our love for God, no amount of ingratitude will be able to hinder us from serving one another.

Examine your motives for coming to West Virginia:

Are you truly ready to serve?

Are you truly ready to be a doormat for others?

Are you here to serve humanity or to serve Christ?

What is your true motivator?

Day 2: Tuesday

Good Morning!! Welcome to your second full day in West Virginia!! Hopefully, you had a restful sleep and are ready to serve the Lord today!!

How was your first day??
Was it anything like you expected??

List some of the ways in which you were surprised by what you saw or by what you did:

How does what occurred on your first day here match with what your expectations were??

Natural human love expects something in return. But Paul says, "It doesn't really matter to me whether you love me or not. I am willing to be completely destitute anyway; willing to be poverty-stricken, not just for your sakes, but also that I may be able to get you to God." "For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor.. ." (2 Corinthians 8:9)

Paul's idea of service was the same as our Lord's. He did not care how high the cost was to himself - he would gladly pay it. It was a joyful thing to Paul.

We have not been called to become destitute this week in physical or monetary terms. We did not have to sell our possessions and empty our bank accounts before leaving home. But we have been called to give unselfishly of ourselves this week.

Examine yourself.
During the first day did you give unselfishly??
Were you able to leave your wants and needs behind and focus on the needs of your brothers and sisters in West Virginia??

The institutional church's idea of a servant of God is not at all like Jesus' idea. His idea is that we serve Him by being the servants of others. Jesus actually "out-socialized" the socialists. He said that in His kingdom the greatest one would be the servant of all (see Matthew 23:11-12). The real test of a saint is not one's willingness to preach the gospel, but one's willingness to do something like washing the disciples' feet - that is, being willing to do those things that seem unimportant in human estimation but count as everything to God.

It was Paul's delight to spend his life for God's interests in other people, and he did not care what it cost. But before we will serve, we stop to ponder our personal concerns:

What if God wants me to go over there?
What is the climate like there?
Who will take care of me?
What will it be like?

All of that is an indication that we have reservations about serving God.

The apostle Paul had no conditions or reservations about serving God. Paul focused his life on Jesus' idea of a New Testament saint; that is, not one who merely proclaims the gospel, but one who becomes broken bread and poured out wine in the hands of Jesus for the sake of others.

So, once again, how was your first day??

Were you ever uncomfortable??

Were you ever asked to do something that you didn't want to do??

Take some time to meditate on the Lord and his mission for you here. Pray that as you step outside of your comfort zone that you will feel his presence surround you. Be bold and ask the Lord to place you in situations where you can minister to the people here in West Virginia.

Have you committed this week of service to Him in prayer?

The key to the missionary's difficult task is in the hand of God, and that key is prayer, not work - that is, not work as the word is commonly used today, which often results in the shifting of our focus away from God. The key to the missionary's difficult task is also not the key of common sense, nor is it the key of medicine, civilization, education, or even evangelization. The key is in following the Master's orders - the key is prayer.

We stay busy at work, while people all around us are ripe and ready to be harvested; we do not reap even one of them, but simply waste our Lord's time in over-energized activities and programs. A Christian is called to be Jesus' own, "a servant who is not greater than his master: (John 13:16), and someone who does not dictate to Jesus what he intends to do. Our Lord calls us to no special work - He calls us to Himself. "Pray the Lord of the harvest", and He will engineer your circumstances to send you out as His laborer.

Commit today and the remainder of this week to Him in prayer.

Ask that He will present you with opportunities to share and that you will be bold enough to act on them.

Day 3: Wednesday

Good morning!!

Joy comes from seeing the complete fulfillment of the specific purpose for which you were created and born again, not from successfully doing something of your own choosing. The joy our Lord experienced came from doing what the Father sent Him to do. He says to us, "As the Father has sent Me, I also send you" (John 20:21).

Have you received your ministry assignment from the Lord?

If so, you must be faithful to it - to consider your life valuable only for the purpose of fulfilling that ministry. Knowing that you have done what Jesus sent you to do, think how satisfying it will be to hear Him say to you, "Well done, good and faithful servant" (Matthew 25:21).

We each have to find a niche in life, and spiritually we find it when we receive a ministry from the Lord. To do this we must have close fellowship with Jesus and must know Him as more than our personal Savior. And we must be willing to experience the full impact of Acts 9:16 - "I will show him how many things he must suffer for My name's sake."

Jesus said, "Do you love Me?" Then "Feed My sheep" (John 21:17) He is not offering us a choice of how we can serve Him; He is asking for absolute loyalty to His commission, a faithfulness to what we discern when we are in the closest possible fellowship with God. If you have received a ministry from the Lord Jesus, you will know that the need is not the same as the call - the need is the opportunity to exercise the call.

The call is to be faithful to the ministry you received when you were in true fellowship with Him. This does not imply that there is a whole series of differing ministries marked out for you. It does mean that you must be sensitive to what God has called you to do and focus singly on that.

A Christian worker has to learn how to be God's man or woman of great worth and excellence in the midst of a multitude of meager and worthless things. Never protest by saying, "If only I were somewhere else!"

All of God's people are ordinary people who have been made extraordinary by the purpose He has given them. Unless we have the right purpose intellectually in our minds and lovingly in our hearts, we will very quickly be diverted from being useful to God. We are not workers for God by choice. Many people deliberately choose to be workers, but they have no purpose of God's almighty grace or His mighty Word in them. Paul's whole heart, mind, and soul were consumed with the great purpose of what Jesus came to do, and he never lost sight of that one thing. We must continually confront ourselves with one central fact "Jesus Christ and Him crucified" (1 Corinthians 2:2)

"I chose you..." (John 15:16). Keep these words as a wonderful reminder in your theology. It is not that you have gotten God, but He has gotten you. God is at work bending, breaking, molding, and doing exactly as He chooses. And why is He doing it?

He is doing it for only one purpose - that He may be able to say, "This is my man, and this is my woman." We have to be in God's hand so that He can place others on the Rock, Jesus Christ, just as he has placed us.

Never choose to be a worker, but once God has placed His call upon you, woe be to you

if you "turn aside... to the right or the left..." (Deuteronomy 28:14). He will do with you what He never did before His call came to you, and He will do with you what He is not doing with other people. Let him have His way - this week and forevermore.

Pray that the Lord will reveal to you your personal ministry both for this week and beyond. He has placed each of us here on earth to fulfill a special mission for Him.

Are you fulfilling God's purpose for your life?
Do you understand what your special ministry is?

We are not here to work for God because we have chosen to do so, but because God has "laid hold of" us. And once He has done so, we never have this thought, "Well, I'm really not suited for this." What you are to preach is also determined by God, not by your own natural leanings or desires. Keep your soul steadfastly related to God, and remember that you are called not simply to convey your testimony but also to preach the gospel. Every Christian should testify to the truth of God, but when it comes to the call to preach, there must be the agonizing grip of God's hand on you.

Never water down the Word of God, but preach it in its undiluted sternness. There must be unflinching faithfulness to the Word of God, but when you come to personal dealings with others, remember who you are - you are not some special being created in heaven, but a sinner saved by grace.

Close in silent prayer for someone that you have met this week while serving here. Pray that God will use you to influence this person for Christ.

Day 4: Thursday

Good Morning!!

A Christian worker's greatest need is a readiness to face Jesus Christ at any and every turn. This is not easy, no matter what our experience has been, This battle is not against sin, difficulties, or circumstances, but against being so absorbed in our service to Jesus that we are not ready to face Jesus Himself at every turn.

The greatest need is not facing our beliefs or doctrines, or even facing the question of whether or not we are of any use to Him, but the need is to face HIM.

Jesus rarely comes where we expect Him; He appears where we least expect Him, and always in the most mundane situations.

Has Jesus appeared to you this week?
Were you surprised?
What was the situation?

I repeat:

Jesus rarely comes where we expect Him; He appears where we least expect Him, and always in the most mundane situations.

The only way a servant can remain true to God is to be ready for the Lord's surprise visits. This readiness will not be brought about by service, but through intense spiritual reality, expecting Jesus at every turn.

This sense of expectation will give our life the attitude of childlike wonder He wants it to have. If we are going to be ready for Jesus, we have to stop being religious. In other words, we must stop using religion as if it were some kind of lofty lifestyle or some kind of identifier that we attach to our character or personality - we must be spiritually real.

If you are avoiding the call of the religious thinking of today's world, and instead are "looking unto Jesus" (Hebrews 12:2), setting your heart on what He wants, and thinking His thoughts, you will be considered impractical and a daydreamer. But when He suddenly appears in the work of the heat of the day, you will be the only one who is ready. You should trust no one, and even ignore the finest saint on earth if he blocks your sight of Jesus.

Are you ready for Jesus to appear to you today?

The first thing that happens after we recognize our election by God in Christ Jesus is the destruction of our preconceived ideas, our narrow-minded thinking, and all our other allegiances - we are turned solely into servants of God's own purpose. The entire human race was created to glorify God and to enjoy Him forever. Sin has diverted the human race onto another course, but it has not altered God's purpose to the slightest degree. When we are born again we are brought into the realization of God's great purpose for the human race, namely, that He created us for Himself. This realization of our election by God is the most joyful on earth, and we must learn to rely on this tremendous creative purpose of God. The first thing God will do is force the interest of the whole world through the channel of our hearts. The love of God, and even His very nature, is introduced into us. We see the nature of Almighty God purely focused in John 3:16 - "For God so loved the world"...

We must continually keep our soul open to the fact of God's creative purpose, and never confuse or cloud it with our own intentions. If we do, God will have to force our

intentions aside no matter how much it may hurt. A missionary is created for the purpose of being God's servant, one in whom God is glorified. Once we realize that it is through salvation of Jesus Christ that we are made perfectly fit for the purpose of God, we will understand why Jesus is so strict and relentless in His demands.

He demands absolute righteousness from His servants, because He has put into them the very nature of God.

Pray that you will be open to Him and to His presence today, for the rest of this week and after you return home from West Virginia.

Pray that you will reflect God in your life.

Pray that you will focus on God's intentions and not your own.

Pray that you will be open to His will.

Pray for our mission team.

"Beyond Belief" West Virginia Mission Trip

Day 5: Friday

Good Morning!!

Beware of any work for God that causes or allows you to avoid concentrating on Him. A great number of Christian workers worship their work. The only concern of Christian workers should be their concentration on God. This will mean that all the other boundaries of life, whether they are mental, moral, or spiritual limits, are completely free with the freedom God gives His child; that is, a worshipping child, not a wayward one.

Has anything happened this week that has allowed you to take your eyes off of Jesus?
Are you proud of your accomplishments so far this week?
Have your accomplishments been yours or the Lord's?

A worker who lacks this serious controlling emphasis of concentration on God is apt to become overly burdened by his work. He is a slave to his own limits, having no freedom of his body, mind, or spirit. Consequently, he becomes burned out and defeated. There is no freedom and no delight in life at all. His nerves, mind, and heart are so overwhelmed that God's blessing cannot rest on Him.

Are you tired?
Do you need God's strength to complete your mission here?
Or, are you refreshed each day because you feel His presence near you?

Do you have even the slightest reliance on anything or anyone other than God?
Is there a remnant of reliance left on any natural quality within you, or on any particular set of circumstances?
Are you relying on yourself in any manner whatsoever regarding any plans, missions or ministries which God has placed before you?

Examine yourself by asking these probing questions.

It really is true to say, "I cannot live a holy life", but you can decide to let Jesus Christ make you holy. "You cannot serve the Lord..." (Joshua 24:19) - but you can place yourself in the proper position where God's almighty power will flow through you.

Is your relationship with God sufficient for you to expect Him to exhibit His wonderful life in you?

Pray for His strength.
Pray for His life to flow through you.
Pray for your need to rely completely on Him.

"The people said to Joshua, 'No, but we will serve the Lord!' (Joshua 24:21). This is not an impulsive action, but a deliberate commitment. We tend to say, "But God could never have called me to this. I'm too unworthy. It can't mean me." It does mean you, and the more weak and feeble you are, the better. The person who is still relying and trusting in anything with himself is the last person to even come close to saying, "I will serve the Lord."

However, once our concentration is on God, all the limits of our life are free and under the control and mastery of God alone. There is no longer any responsibility on you for the work. The only responsibility you have is to stay in living constant touch with God, and to see that you allow nothing to hinder your cooperation with Him.

The freedom that comes after sanctification is the freedom of a child, and the things that used to hold your life down are gone. But be careful to remember that you have been

freed for only one thing - to be absolutely devoted to your co-worker, Jesus.

We have no right to decide where we should be placed, or to have preconceived ideas as to what God is preparing for us to do. God engineers everything; and wherever He places us, our one supreme goal should be to pour out our lives in wholehearted devotion to Him in that particular work. Remember this as you embark on today's assigned tasks.

Pray that you will be humble and accept His will today.

Pray for the freedom that He so loving gives us.

If you are weary today, pray for His strength.

Pray that His love will be reflected through you to everyone you encounter today.

Pray for someone on our team that seems tired or frustrated or frazzled. Pray that God will give them strength today.

Day 6: Saturday

Good Morning!

"Do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rather rejoice because your names are written in heaven" (Luke 10:20)

In this verse Jesus is saying: "Don't rejoice in your successful service for Me, but rejoice because of your right relationship with Me."

The trap you may fall into in Christian work is to rejoice in successful service - rejoicing in the fact that God has used you. Yet you will never be able to measure fully what God will do through you if you have a right-standing relationship with Jesus Christ.

If you keep your relationship right with Him, then regardless of your circumstances or whoever you encounter each day, He will continue to pour "rivers of living water" through you (John 7:38).

Once you have the right relationship with God through salvation and sanctification, remember that whatever your circumstances may be, you have been placed in them by God. He uses the reaction of your life to your circumstances to fulfill His purpose, as long as you continue to "walk in the light as He is the light" (1 John 1:7).

Our tendency is to put the emphasis on service. Beware of the people who make their request for help based on someone else's usefulness. All direction and guidance come from God Himself, not from our measures of usefulness. It is the work that God does through us that counts, not what we do for Him.

All that the Lord gives His attention to in a person's life is that person's relationship with God - something of great value to His Father. Jesus is "bringing many sons to glory..." (Hebrews 2:10)

It is only a faithful person who truly believes that God sovereignly controls his circumstances. We take our circumstances for granted, saying God is in control, but not really believing it. We act as if the things that happen were completely controlled by people. To be faithful in every circumstance means that we have only one loyalty, or object of our faith - the Lord Jesus Christ.

Being faithful to Jesus is the most difficult thing we try to do today. We will be faithful to our work, to serving others, or to anything else; just don't ask us to be faithful to Jesus. Many Christians become very impatient when we talk about faithfulness to Jesus. Our Lord is dethroned more deliberately by Christian workers than by the world. We treat God as if He were a machine designed only to bless us, and we think of Jesus as just another one of the workers.

The goal of faithfulness is not that we will do work for God, but that He will be free to do His work through us. Did we learn that lesson this week?

God calls us to His service and places tremendous responsibilities on us. He expects no complaining on our part and offers no explanation on His part. God wants to use us as He used His own Son.

Do you feel humbled by what God has accomplished through you this week?

Did you feel Him working through your life?

What have you learned about servitude through your experiences here in West Virginia?

Pray for a spirit of humility as we depart the mission field.

Pray that God will continue to work in your life to mold you as a true servant.

Ask God to rid you of any feelings of pride that you feel about what He accomplished

through you.

Offer thanks to God for allowing you to come here to serve Him and our brothers and sisters here.

Pray for the brothers and sisters that you have met here in West Virginia. Pray that God will continue to work in their lives.

Pray for the "Mustard Seeds and Mountains" mission. Pray that God will bless this ministry.

Acknowledgment: This week's devotions were adapted from "My Utmost for His Highest" - Special Updated Edition, by Oswald Chambers, 1995

Special thanks to Dan Miller for allowing us to use this devotional.

Team Debriefing Process

The quality and impact of your **Mission As Life** experience is greatly enhanced by planning follow up debriefing sessions. **They are so important that it must be emphasized during the recruitment of team members that a commitment to the trip also involves a commitment to attending the debriefing sessions.**

What does debriefing accomplish?

Debriefing forces participants to not only remember, but follow through on what God taught them during the trip and on decisions or commitments they made as a result. Debriefing moves the **Mission As Life** experience from “holy tourism” to “discipleship training”. During the debriefing process people revisit often powerful emotions and impressions they experienced and make concrete plans and commitments to follow through in ways that lead to life change and new habit formation.

What do you cover in debriefing?

First, the team reflects on the how they encountered God during the trip and what they felt the Lord was seeking to teach them. Once people return home, the busyness of life distracts them. Debriefing helps to insure that the important lessons of God are again brought to the forefront.

Next, the leader helps people move beyond superficial issues to deeper spiritual truths and challenges. Often, the first thing people feel on a **Mission As Life** trip is gratitude for what they have in comparison to the people they served. While this is nice, they must move beyond this to deeper truths that call for their sacrifice and life change. Leaders help to guide team members to consider ways they can:

- Change their living patterns to free up God’s money for use in the Kingdom.
- Change their living patterns to free up personal and family time to serve their community.
- Identify and use the gifts and talents God has given them to advance His Kingdom.
- Look at their community, neighborhood, or church with new eyes, seeing opportunities for serving those God particularly cares for such as widows, orphans, the poor, the outcast, and immigrants.
- Enable team members to see that they can function as a team once they return home, that it is not necessary that they try to serve as a “Lone Ranger”.
- Challenge team members to take on significant tasks that require faith and are bigger than what one person alone can do.

Some key points related to debriefing.

Emphasize the importance of debriefing throughout the Mission As Life trip, from early prep through mission experience.

Be realistic with time allotment.

Use the time to direct attention to the deeper, priority issues associated with spiritual formation and overall Mission As Life goals.

Guide team members to commitment to specific, measurable goals over the next year in serving your existing community.

Try to meet one on one with each team member to discuss how they will follow through in relation to service in the community.

What does the process look like?

Plan your debriefing night as a “potluck” dinner night. You can even have a theme for the meal. Have

1

some pictures from the trip printed on a color printer and use them to decorate tables, walls, etc. Make sure pads of paper and pens are available on each table or with each family in attendance.

2

Provide a time for people to share their stories from the trip. What were the high points, what were the challenges? How did you learn from them?

3

Have a flip chart available and **have them begin to list the spiritual truths or lessons they learned on the trip.** Remind them of the morning sessions...what did they learn from them? Remind them of the evening sessions...what did they learn from them? What did they learn from the people they served? Have one or two people pray, thanking God for these items, for Him meeting them and challenging them. Have them pray for the families they served and thank God for what they learned from them.

4

Take the papers or charts the team created on Thursday morning of the last day of the trip. Read through the various ministry ideas they listed.

A. On the pads of paper available, **list 3 specific ministries each person will investigate** in relation to service over the next year.

B. Once this is complete, have each person **commit to at a minimum of 4 specific times they will set aside for community outreach in the next year** (this can be times such as taking their family to serve the homeless together 4 times a year, etc.). This should be apart from service in the church or on a mission trip. **The focus should be on outreach in your community.**

C. Have each person reflect upon their current giving. **Challenge them to write down an amount above and beyond what they currently give, an amount that will require sacrifice for them to meet,** which they will give to missions over the next year.

D. **Have each person write down the name of another person on this team whom they trust and to whom they will be accountable.** This person will be their prayer partner and will help keep their goals in front of their eyes over the next year.

5

Tell them to fold these papers. Have a team member pray for the group and the commitments they have made, asking God to help them be faithful. Inform the members to keep these papers because they will need them at the second team meeting to be held in 6 months. Set a date for that meeting.

6

The **second team meeting** should also be a potluck. Its focus will be a celebration and reporting of what team members have done in relation to their community service. Team members will revisit their commitments and rejoice in how God has led them. You may find at this point that some key areas of community ministry have been uncovered that can become a vital part of your church life.

7

Schedule times to meet individually with team members for prayer and guidance in their service.