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A rejected woman by a well. A blind man on the street. Disciples lacking faith. Hungry people on a hill. Day after day, crowd after crowd, Jesus interacted with people and responded to their needs. He healed them, challenged them, and loved them. As you head out to the mission field we're going to take an up-close look at Jesus' ministry. You'll see his face to face encounters with a hand full of people and you'll see his heart. Hopefully as you look at Jesus' ministry up close, you'll be challenged to love and minister as He did!

How to Use This Journal

Between all the conversations and miracles, Jesus was always off by himself somewhere spending time with the Father. (Matt. 14:23; 26:36; Mark 1:35) He knew that staying connected with him was vital to accomplishing anything (John 15:5). This book is meant to be a guide for your personal time with God each day during your mission trip. There are 5 days of pre-trip material to be done the week before you leave, 10 days for while you are on your trip, and 5 days of post-trip material for the week you return home. Each day includes:

Scripture to read and think about. Read the listed scripture over a couple of times. Ask the Holy Spirit to help you understand what the passage is saying. Think about how all the different characters in the passage might have felt during the events described. Try to put yourself in their shoes. Pay special attention to what you learn about Jesus in the passage. *What does he say or do? How does he treat people?* Some of the scriptures may be stories you've heard a million times. Ask God to give you a new perspective on them.

Questions to answer. Each day has questions to get you thinking about how the passage applies to your own life and ministry. Resist the urge to just slap down a quick answer and move on. Spend some time really thinking about the questions, and seeking God for the answers.

Space to journal. Short term mission trips are often once in a life-time, life-changing events so get down on paper all that God is teaching you and doing in your heart! Each day has space to journal your thoughts and response to the scripture and questions, prayers and also to record all that you're learning during your trip. Once you are on the field, there are special "trip update" sections that ask some specific questions about your experience.

Close-ups on the World. As you look at Jesus' ministry and as you're ministering yourself, hopefully your desire to reach out to the world with the Good News will grow in huge ways. Every few days there will be a special assignment or information to get you thinking more about the world around you and how you can pray for needs across the globe.



Your heavenly Father
already knows all your needs,
and he will give you all you need
from day to day if you live for him
and make the Kingdom of God
your primary concern.

Matthew 6:32-33

up-close



an eXtreme miSSion

Read and think about John 1:14

John 1 says that, “The Word (that’s Jesus) became flesh (that means just like us...skin and bones) and dwelt among us (right here on earth).” (NIV) Jesus laid down his crown, got off His throne and went on the most extreme mission trip of all of time. You’d be hard pressed to find a greater cultural gap than the one between heaven and earth. Think about it: trading a place of beauty, joy, no tears, no pain, no worries, for what we see all around us. Take a look at today’s news and it’s easy to see that this world is no paradise. But Jesus gave it all up. He knew what was ahead. He knew the cost. But he decided making a way for you, and everyone else, to know him was worth it. There’s no greater example of someone who lays it all down so that others might come to know the Lord. You’ve got a great role-model to look to as you head to the mission field.

- ⊙ **What does it mean to you personally that Jesus left heaven and came to dwell on earth for your benefit?**
- ⊙ **Read Philippians 2:1-11. What stands out to you about Jesus attitude in coming to earth?**
- ⊙ **Jesus sacrificed it all to allow us to experience God’s love. What is God calling you to sacrifice as you go on this mission to share his love with others?**

close-up on the world

Take some time this week to research the location you are going to. Find out a little bit about current events, holidays they celebrate, popular sports teams, religious beliefs, important figures in their history, etc. Continue to have this “learner” sort of attitude while on your mission trip. People will appreciate the time you have taken to learn about their culture!



whatever you have to offer

Read and think about John 6:1-15

A few fish, a few hunks of bread. A meager lunch for 3 at best. Not even a small snack for 5000 plus. Who knows what the young boy was thinking, but even though the size of his lunch seemed so lacking for the need at hand, the boy decided to give everything He had to Jesus anyway. Jesus took it, and blessed it, and passed it around...to every single man, woman and child seated on the hillside, and bring baskets full of leftovers back to the feet of Jesus. Soon there isn't one of the multitude that isn't full, and a disciple that isn't stunned as they gather the leftovers. There was no magic in the tiny lunch, just power in the hands that took it and multiplied something so small into something GREAT.

- ⊙ **What's something in your life that you need to offer up to Jesus to be used for His purposes?**
- ⊙ **What do you think Jesus can do with it when you allow Him to use it?**
- ⊙ **Spend some time praying and surrendering yourself to God and His purposes. Remember: they are GREAT!!!**

...give your bodies to God,
Let them be a living and holy sacrifice.

Romans 12:1



...and they all ate until they were full.

John 6:11



up-close



...be strong and courageous!
Do not be afraid or discouraged,
For the Lord your God
is with you wherever you go.

Joshua 1:9



UP CLOSE a test of faith

Read and think about Matthew 14:22-33

Jesus had told them to get into the boat and cross to the other side. “Thanks a lot Jesus,” was what they were probably all thinking as they were pelted and jolted by the violent storm. What were they supposed to do now? They did what the disciples (and all of us) seem to do so well: they forgot. They forgot about the people they’d seen healed, the dead they’d seen raised, the demons cast out, and even the food multiplied. They forgot, and they freaked. But Jesus sees them in the middle of their fear, and he comes to them miraculously on the water. “Take courage! It is I. Don’t be afraid!” Peter, always quick to act, follows the command to come, and he steps out of the boat. But the raging wind around him draws his attention from Jesus, and he begins to sink. Jesus’ arm is quick to grab him. They both climb into the boat the sea is instantly calm. “Why did you doubt?”

- ⊙ **What does the fact that Jesus sent the disciples out into a sea he knew would turn violent show you about Jesus’ character?**
- ⊙ **What does it mean to you that Jesus came to them in the middle of their fear and doubting?**
- ⊙ **What will it mean for you to “step out of the boat” this week? What will help you keep your focus on Jesus as your faith is being tested?**

You will keep in perfect peace
all who trust in you,
whose thoughts
are fixed on you!

Isaiah 26:3



...when I am afraid, I put my trust in you.

Psalms 56:3



trip Update

What was the weather like today?

What cultural differences stood out to you?

What was the best part about today?

What was the hardest?

Did anyone say anything "quote-worthy?"



the nations & the needy

Read and think about John 2:12-16 & Mark 11:15-17

Here we see two similar passages (some say it's the same event, some say Jesus threw tables around in the temple a couple of times). These aren't passages discouraging us from selling brownies in the church foyer. They're giving us a glimpse of Jesus' heart for all nations, and his heart for the poor. You see, the temple court was the only area where Gentiles (non-Jewish people) were able to enter and worship the Lord. Now that it had become the temple Wal-Mart, the Gentiles no longer had a place to worship. The temple is to be "a house of prayer for *all* nations." And then there's what's being done to the poor. In John it mentions that Jesus paid special attention to those selling the doves, which were the sacrifice of the poor. It was Passover time, and everyone was coming to the temple to offer sacrifices for their sins. The well-off offered up sheep and cows, but the doves were reserved as the sacrifice of the poor. So you see Jesus specifically turning his anger to those selling doves in the temple court. Usually a dove could be bought for mere pennies outside the temple, and now inside the temple courts the price had sky-rocketed, potentially cutting off the poor from being able to offer up their sacrifices to the Lord.¹ We don't see Jesus angry much, but when the poor are being oppressed, when someone is being cut off from the opportunity to worship, he takes action.

- ⊗ **How has your time in another culture changed your view of the world? Your view of the poor?**
- ⊗ **What is something God is calling you to do this week on behalf of the poor?**
- ⊗ **Spend some time praying and asking God to give you a greater heart for reaching the nations, and helping the poor.**

¹ Michael Card, *The Parable of Joy*, Thomas Nelson Publishers, ©1995, pg. 31

trip Update

What was the weather like today?

What are you most excited about doing when you get home?

What was the best part about today?

What is the hardest part about going home?

Did anyone say anything "quote-worthy?"

May the nations praise you, O God,
Yes, may all the nations praise you.
Psalm 67:3



close-up on the world

Do you know that one third of the world's population lives in areas that are unreached by the gospel? There is no Bible in their language or church in their culture.

Progress is being made though. In 1974 *half* of the world's population fell into the "unreached" category.

Statistics taken from *Mission Frontiers, The State of World Evangelization*, by Patrick Johnstone.

The title 'up-close' is rendered in a large, stylized, 3D font. The letters are filled with a black and white photograph of a rocky coastline with waves crashing against the shore. The word 'post-trip' is written in a bold, black, sans-serif font inside the central white circle of the letter 'o' in 'close'.

This I declare of the Lord:
He alone is my refuge,
my place of safety;
He is my God,
and I am trusting in Him.

Psalm 91:2

The logo features the words 'UP' and 'CLOSE' in a large, stylized, grey font. The 'O' in 'CLOSE' is a large circle. Overlaid on this circle is the text 'idEntity CrISis' in a black, lowercase, sans-serif font. The 'i' in 'idEntity' is lowercase, while 'Entity' and 'CrISis' are uppercase.

Read and think about Luke 10:17-20

Jesus sent out 72 of his followers to minister in surrounding towns and cities, and now they've returned, excited about the amazing things they have seen and done. Jesus' response to his returning mission team is good for you to think about today as you're fresh off the mission field. Jesus turns their attention away from what they have done, and reminds them of who they are. What you do changes. Your mission trip is over and you're back at home, but that doesn't change who you are. You are a child of God, set apart for God's purposes, an ambassador of Christ, appointed to bear fruit and share to Good News! Keep on being who you are, even though the trip is finished!

- ⊙ **What have you learned about yourself and who God has made you to be during the last couple weeks?**
- ⊙ **How can you continue to live like that now that you are home?**
- ⊙ **Spend some time praying and thanking God that you are His child!**

See how much our heavenly Father loves us,
for he allows us to be called His children, and we really are!

Psalm 67:3



trip Update

What was the best part about today?

What was the hardest?

What do you miss most about your team mates?

*What short yet informative answer can you give to the question:
"How was your trip?" (it is good to be prepared for this!)*

close-up on the world

Do you know that there are 410,000 Christian missionaries in the world?

Do you know that 36.4% of those missionaries are from the United States? And that 35.4% are from Asia?

Statistics taken from *Mission Frontiers, The State of World Evangelization*, by Patrick Johnstone.



Read and think about Matthew 28:18-20

The last 3 years had been a whirl-wind that's left the disciples heads spinning. The miracles, wisdom, and compassion they had experienced in following Jesus had changed them in every way. They weren't the same people they were back when they had simply dropped their nets and started following him. There was no way they could just go back to living their same old lives, *but what was next?* Jesus is saying his final farewells and the disciples are wondering what the future holds for them. Jesus doesn't leave them hanging. He spells out their next mission loud and clear: "go and make disciples of all nations," and he seals it with a magnificent promise: "I am with you always..."

- ⊗ **How have you changed as a result of what you saw God do on your mission trip?**
- ⊗ **How has your view of God changed?**
- ⊗ **Jesus last command is for you to. What are you going to do to continue reaching out to the nations? What is your next mission?**
- ⊗ **Look back over the facts on the world listed in this journal, and spend some time praying about them.**

And be sure of this: I am with you always,
even to the end of the age..

Matthew 28:20



They could see that they were ordinary men, who had had no special training. They also recognized them as men who had been with Jesus.

Acts 4:13



trip Update

What was the best part about today?

What was the hardest?

What do you think is the biggest change people are going to see in you as a result of your mission trip?