



Session 1

The Biblical Basis for Our Mission

Session 1 (Part 1):

Why We Go: The Motive of Our Mission

Attention Getter – 10 minutes

Look around and see what materials you have to build with: You could use boxes of sugar cubes, decks of cards, large Lego sets, scrap lumber, the big cardboard building blocks from your church nursery, etc.

Divide the group up according to your size and have a competition to see who can build the tallest structure with the materials provided. Give them 3-5 minutes to build and then measure to determine the winner and give out prize.

Explain that when we are trying to build or do something great, it is imperative that we set a firm foundation. Point out the foundation of your winning team.

Say, “In our first three sessions we will be building the foundation for success on our mission project to _____.” (location of trip)

“As with everything else in our Christian lives, the foundation for our success is that we build on the truth of God’s Word.”

Note: This session will focus on the WHY of our mission

Ask students why they have signed up to go on this mission trip (sounds fun, friend invited me, want to get away, love to travel, gospel, etc.) Be careful not to react negatively to “less than spiritual answers.” Any reason to go on this trip is good enough. It’s our responsibility to lead these students AND workers to the right reason. Ask, “Why do you think we, as a youth group need to go on mission trips at all?”

1. Because our world is a mess! – 20 minutes

a. Genesis 3 – Understanding the impact of man’s fall (5 Minutes)

- i. **Illustration:** *Option one:* Using the graphics provided in a PowerPoint or media shout presentation, show the picture of seeds (acorn, corn kernel, pumpkin seed and apple seed) and ask kids to identify what the seed grows into. *Option two:* Bring several packets of seeds, empty the

packets into small bowls or piles and have kids guess what the seed grows into. **For transition say**, “Since Adam and Eve made the choice to disregard the *one small* command that God gave them, our world has fallen further and further from God and has grown into a BIG MESS!

- ii. Ask students to take turns reading Genesis 3 aloud one verse at a time and then help them understand that since the fall of man in the Garden of Eden, we have all been born with a sinful nature that we could never overcome unless God intervened.
- iii. **Say**, “In fact, as our technology has evolved and our imaginations have expanded, our sin nature has really spiraled out of control – it’s not getting better!”

b. Activity: Graffiti Wall (10 minutes) – Split your group into 3 teams.

Find three 8-foot pieces of foam board, sheet rock or butcher paper and set them up on walls where students can creatively do the following: (you can use spray cans or markers).

- i. **Board 1:** Identify examples of how bad things have gotten in this world. (school shootings, divorce rates, gang violence, political scandal, human trafficking, etc.)
- ii. **Board 2:** Identify ways people express their individuality and lack of willingness to follow God’s ways. (alter their bodies, change their style, change their friends, fight with parents, etc.)
- iii. **Board 3:** Identify different, but false ways people try to find satisfaction, meaning and salvation in life (immerse themselves in fantasy, work really hard to earn, be good, etc.)

c. Help them understand that our only hope is to introduce the lost world to Jesus. (5 minutes)

Print and attach the following Scriptures to the three boards of the graffiti wall (one verse per wall) and ask teams to read them and be ready to explain how they relate to our need to go on mission trips.

- i. Col. 1:27 – “To them God chose to make known how great among the Gentiles are the riches of the glory of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.”
- ii. Eph. 1:7-10 – “In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace, which he lavished upon us, in all wisdom and insight making known to us the mystery of his will, according to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth.”
- iii. Heb. 6:19-20 – “We have this as a sure and steadfast anchor of the soul, a hope that enters into the inner place behind the curtain, where Jesus has gone as a forerunner on our behalf, having become a high priest forever after the order of Melchizedek.”

2. Because we have a hope that we need to share! (7-10 minutes)

- d. **Case Study** – Woman at the Well (John 4:3-30)
- e. **Show YouTube video of the Woman at the Well (2:36):**
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q49BbfgJbto>
 - i. Point out how Jesus first met her physical needs then showed her what her spiritual needs were.
 - ii. Notice how Jesus didn't condemn or avoid her, but confronted her with wisdom and compassion – and showed her the better way.
 - iii. Notice her reaction to Jesus' offer – the new hope she found in Him.
 - iv. Notice how she couldn't keep it to herself – and “ran back to town” to share.
 - v. Relate all these points to your upcoming trip.

3. Because our Savior said so! (10 minutes)

- f. Share a personal story about something you really wanted to do when you were a teenager, but your parents said no. When you asked them “Why?” – they answered, “Because I said so!” That's generally the most frustrating answer you can get in that situation because you don't really want to know the reason why, you just want to extend the conversation in hopes you will get a different answer. “Because I said so” ends the conversation. It's daddy's final word on the matter. Then it comes down to whether we will obey or disobey.
- g. If you are still trying to extend the conversation about missions in the life of the believer, here's God's “because I said so”...
 - i. Rom. 1:16-17 –
 - 1. Paul repeats the words of the Old Testament prophet Habakkuk when he says, “the righteous will live by faith.”
 - 2. The beginning of a faith relationship is the sinner's positive response to the gospel, which is “the power of God unto salvation.”
 - ii. Matt. 28:18-20 –
 - 1. 17 – We have God's authority to take this message.
 - 2. 18 – The Great Commission is not GO! ... It's MAKE!
 - a. Go = “as you go,” wherever your life takes you, wherever you have influence...
 - b. Make disciples = actively leading the lost to salvation and a dynamic, growing relationship with Him.
 - c. Of all nations = start right here and right now and listen and respond to God's call for you to be His witness (Acts 1:8) “to Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria and to the uttermost parts of the earth.”
- h. Now, it's up to us... will we obey or disobey

Close session with prayer

Session 1 (Part 2):

How We Go – The Mechanics of Our Mission

Say, “Welcome back! In this session we will answer the question of *how* we become effective *on mission* in our daily lives and also on these short-term mission projects.”

1. We become something new! The gospel changes us. (20 minutes)

a. **Opening activity:** “To Tell the Truth” Game (8 minutes)

Find three of your youth workers or church staff members (this would be a great place for the senior pastor to show support and vulnerability) and have them each write a story about something they did in the past that is outlandish and unbelievable.

Give each student a piece of card stock and a marker. Instruct the students to listen to each story and try to determine which one of the three is telling a true story about themselves. Those who correctly identify the “truth teller” will win a “sweet” prize.

Have each student write the name of the person they believe is telling the truth on their card and then ask them to hold up their cards if they believe No. 1 is telling the truth... No. 2... No. 3... (get into groups by their choice and stay for the next activity).

Then ask the person that is telling the truth to “Please stand” The three story tellers look back and forth, half standing, bobbing and then finally all three stand up!

Since everyone will have correctly identified a “truth teller” shower the room with small packets of Sweet Tarts, Dum Dum suckers or some other small individual “sweet” prize.

b. **Transition by saying**, “Just like these three horrible sinners, we all have sinful and crazy pasts. We all have made dumb choices that didn’t please or honor the Lord. Some are crazier than others, but it’s obvious that we are all sinners (Romans 3:23). The great thing is, no matter what are past, God can make us new, clean and usable for His Glory.”

c. In groups formed above, ask read or review the following passages and report how this passage relates to the fact that we have to become new and flesh out the gospel.

- i. Group 1 reads John 1:14-18 – Just like Jesus, when we are change the Gospel must be fleshed out in our lives.
- ii. Group 2 reads 2 Cor. 5:17 – When we are changed, we leave the old behind.
- iii. Group 3 to review the story of the woman at the well from John 4 – when we are changed we are filled with passion and mission

d. Martin Luther – “Every Christian ought to be a Christ to his neighbor.”

2. We show something new! The gospel works out of us. (15 minutes)

Lead a brief discussion about the relationship between faith and works so that nobody is confused. Emphasize that while we cannot gain or maintain our salvation by works (**Eph. 2:8-9**) it is clear that, once we are changed by God's grace and mercy, we are compelled to serve God and others out of our love for Him and recognition of what He's done for us (**2 Cor. 5:14**).

- e. John 3:16 – Understanding the SO of “for God so loved...”
 - i. Give out an enlarged copy of [John 3:16](#) (graphic provided).
 - ii. Ask students to circle the word SO – then ask them what that word points to... (the extent of God's love for us... **John 13:1** – he showed them the full extent of His love – loved them to the end) Guide a short discussion about how God “demonstrated” His love for us.
 - iii. Around the perimeter of the graphic, ask students to record how God's sacrifice and Christ's suffering make a difference in their lives each day. (I know he understands my grief, I am not afraid of death, I know that I'll never be alone, etc.).
- f. Becoming a “Doer of the Word” - James 1
 - i. Ask a student to read **James 1:19-27**.
 - ii. Ask, “What do you think it means to be a doer of the Word?”
 - iii. Guide a discussion about how our actions give validity to our message.
 - iv. Nobody cares what you know until they know that you care. Show them!

2. We tell them something new! The gospel speaks out of us. (20 minutes)

- a. Understanding that showing people Christ through our actions is not sufficient
 - i. Ask, “Think back again to our story about the Samaritan woman at the well. How did Jesus demonstrate this concept?” Here's how:
 - 1. First, Jesus met her physical needs. He gave her a drink!
 - 2. Second, Jesus honestly and gently, pointed out her spiritual needs.
 - 3. Third, Jesus introduced her to the Father who could change her and save her.
 - 4. Finally, he empowered her for disciple making.
- b. Christ is our example. He always started with physical needs, but He never neglected to speak the truth that we can't have eternal or abundant life unless we confess and repent of our sins and ask the Father to cleanse us.
- c. We need always be ready to open our mouths and give a testimony about the source of our hope (**1 Peter 3:15**).
 - i. Ask students to select a partner; perhaps one of their mission team members that they don't know as well.
 - ii. Ask students to share with one another when, where and how they came to Christ and entered into the saving relationship with Him. (Give students 45 seconds to answer then tell them to switch).

- iii. In the same pairs, ask students to answer the question, “What’s one way your relationship with Jesus effects you today or makes you different from people who don’t have that relationship?” (Give students 45 seconds again to answer).

- d. How do we do this?
 - i. Arrange for a panel of two adults, one college student and one older student who you know to be effective as witnesses and ask them to:
 - 1. Share what witnessing tools they use and show the students how to do the same (**if your church uses a particular gospel tract or plan, teach that here**). The key is not what tool you use, but that you become comfortable with the plan of salvation and you share it.
 - 2. Share some words of encouragement about overcoming the fear of witnessing – becoming bold!
 - 3. Share some tips on how to turn a conversation to spiritual things – becoming.
 - 4. Focus on the last question... “Is there any reason why you wouldn’t want to ask Jesus to forgive you and commit your life to Him right now?”

 - ii. Remind students by saying, “God has done all the heavy lifting and will draw sinners to Himself.”
 - 1. Our job is simply to be faithful to tell our story and invite others to the party!
 - 2. **Isaiah 55:11** – “So shall my word be that goes out from my mouth; it shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose, and shall succeed in the thing for which I sent it.”

Close the session with prayer

Session 1 (Part 3):

Where We Go: The Target of Our Mission

Remind students of biblical concepts of mission studied so far (3 Minutes):

- We go because our world's a mess and needs Jesus!
- Our mission begins with the change that takes place when we become Christians and is dependent on people being able to see and hear the gospel in our lives.
- Jesus met physical needs first then addressed spiritual issues.
- We have been commissioned to make disciples "as we go!"

Opening Activity: "I Have Never" Game (5-10 minutes depending group size)

- Ask your group (students and adults) to set their chairs in a circle. Make sure there is one less chair in the circle than there are participants.
- Ask everyone take their seats in the circle while you stand in the middle and give instructions for the game.
- The object of the game is to not get stuck in the middle without a chair. You will start the game by making a TRUE statement about something you have never done. (I have never been a girl; I have never attended Central High School; I have never been on a mission trip)
- If the people in chairs **HAVE** done what you **HAVE NEVER** done, they **must** get up and change chairs. They have to move more than one seat. The person in the middle rushes to find a seat.
- Advise participants that this is not meant to hurt anyone or embarrass anyone. Avoid things like "I've never had a drink of alcohol," etc.
- This should be a crazy and chaotic time as people rush to get chairs.

Transition by saying, "On this mission trip you will probably be asked to do things that you have never done before. I want to encourage you to embrace these new challenges. More than that, I want you to prepare for them."

Read Acts 1:8 (10 minutes)

- Explain the concepts of how Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria and uttermost parts of the earth relate to us today. (See provided .pdf file)
- Tie this to the concept of "as you go" from Matt. 28.
- Ask students to read the rest of chapter one.
 - Note that there was a time of waiting and preparation between the commission and the Holy Spirit's arrival and the initiation of the mission.
 - Ask students to notice what they were doing during this time that prepared them for the mission.

1. Before this trip! A commitment to prepare for the mission (8-10 minutes)

- a. Preparing for new opportunities
 - i. Don't just stand around waiting (Acts 1:9-11)
 1. We need to stop waiting for God to do great things.
 2. We need to start preparing for the mission so that the world will be ready for His return.

- ii. Build your team (Acts 1:12-14)
 1. Spend time together and really get to know one another – “one accord.”
 2. Pray for one another (and other churches/students who will be joining you).
 3. Pay close attention to the teaching of your leaders (i.e. Peter in vv. 15 ff)
 4. Get organized – understand the roles you will play (adding Matthias).

b. Practice missions in your Jerusalem until God sends you elsewhere.

2. About this trip! A commitment to week focused on missions (20 minutes)

- c. Understanding the culture – Paul at Mars Hill, Acts 17:22-31 – (5 minutes)
 - i. Paul obviously knew the culture.
 - ii. Paul found a way to connect with them.
 - iii. Paul respected their culture and respectfully showed them how Jesus could be “known.”
 - iv. What do you know about _____ (mission location)? (8 minutes)
 1. Ask adults to share info about the city, the climate, the socio-economic factors, the spiritual condition, etc.
 2. Ask adults to tell how the mission activities that you will be doing can be used to make Jesus known to the people.
- d. Following the leadership of the Holy Spirit – (5 minutes)
 - i. Connect the role of the Holy Spirit in Acts 1:8 to Acts 2:1-4.
 - ii. God promised power in chapter 1 and fulfilled His promise in chapter 2.
 1. He will do the same for us!
 2. We need to prepare for the mission, wait and be led by the Holy Spirit, then trust Him enough to be bold and obedient to whatever tasks and opportunities He gives us.

3. After this trip! A commitment to a lifestyle of missions

- e. **Understanding the participle?** As you go ... (Matt. 28) (2 minutes)
 - i. We’ve made it clear that our mission extends way beyond the upcoming short-term project.
 - ii. Missions is a lifestyle of disciple making for the growing, obedient believer.
- f. **Luke 19:1-10** – Zaccheus and Jesus (5 minutes)
 - i. Take them back! Lead the entire group in a chorus of “[Zaccheus was a wee little man...](#)” complete with hand motions – if you are not familiar with this old song, visit the link: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ONRxHcjvCM4>
 - ii. Ask the students where in this passage of Scripture we find Jesus’ simple mission statement for His life?
 1. Seek and Save the lost!

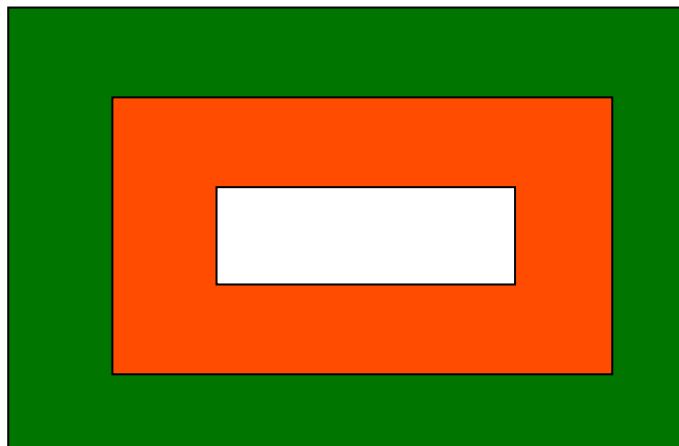
2. He did it by serving with an attitude of humility (**Ph. 2:5**)
 - a. Zaccheus was not a good guy.
 - b. Zaccheus had a bad reputation.
 - c. Jesus sought him out, picked him out of the crowd and targeted him for salvation.
 - d. The transformation in Zaccheus would have drawn great attention in the community in the days, weeks and months to follow.
 - e. Do you think Jesus was being strategic by seeking out this outcast?
 - f. Do you think we need to be strategic about how we use our gifts and resources to accomplish the mission to which God has called us?

Transition by saying, “We are going to finish this session by taking a strategic look at the people that God has placed in our sphere of influence.”

- Think about your school:
 - Who do you sit by in class that might not know Jesus?
 - Who do you sit by at lunch?
 - Who do you spend time with in extracurricular activities?
- Think about your family and friends.
- Think about people you work with.
- Think about people you see around town.

g. Making a list – Prayer Target (15 minutes)

- i. Before the session, create some tangible target board. You could use an old dartboard or find an unused bulletin board in your church and cover it with different colors of paper.



- ii. Obtain inexpensive paper key tags, Post It notes with thumbtacks, or whatever else you can figure out. Also, secure a packet of business cards for your printer or use any kind of card stock that could be cut into pieces that would fit into a man’s wallet (see sample and publisher template provided).
 1. Hand out three key tags or Post It notes to every participant.

2. Hand out one Seek and Save Prayer card to every participant.
3. Ask each student to think about three people in their sphere of influence who they are confident do not have a relationship with Jesus.
4. Ask student to write their names or initials on the key tags and place them on the outside level of the target board with a thumbtack.
5. Ask students to add the three names to their Seek and Save Prayer card and begin to pray for opportunities to share the gospel with these people.
6. Once you have shared the gospel with one of these individuals, move the key tag with their initials on it to the second level and keep praying.
7. If/when that person gives their life to Jesus, move them to the inner level and have a party.
8. After the party, make sure that they get plugged in to a small group for Bible study and discipleship.

4. A final note:

- h. A call to a longer term mission experience.
- i. Years ago, Andy Morris, the founder of Mission Serve, shared with me the vision of what the church and the world would look like if every student that passed through our ministry would spend a summer, semester or year in full time missions or ministry before they got out of college and started their “adult” responsibilities.

Since that day, I have extended that challenge to every student that I have had in my ministry. Many have gone on summer mission projects; some have gone on full semester or year-long missions. All have been blessed.

There have been many others who have answered that call and told the Lord that they were ready and willing to go wherever and whenever God wanted them. For many of them He has given them ministries right at home that have changed their lives and the lives of their churches and communities.

I wonder today if would you be willing consider that call. Are you willing to say, “Yes, Lord, wherever and whenever you want me to go ... I will go!” If so, consecrate that commitment by sharing it with one of the adult workers as we close this session with a time of altar prayer.

Close the session with prayer