



**CHANGED  
FOR LIFE**

# MISSION OF GOD

Session Two: Before the Trip

**LEADER/TEAM**

MATERIALS AND HANDOUTS

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# Session Two: Before the Trip

## MISSION OF GOD

### **Goal**

- ✦ Participants will learn about the holistic nature of missions.
- ✦ Participants will learn about the biblical call to humility and why it is critical to missions.
- ✦ Participants will make a list of steps they will take to prepare their hearts for this experience and for the change that will take place afterwards.

### **Prepare**

- ✦ Read through Session 2.
- ✦ Watch the Session 2 Video.
- ✦ Make copies of Session 2 Handouts.
- ✦ Ask your host group for a video clip or statement about what God has been doing through their ministry and in their community.

### **Materials**

- ✦ Video or statement from host church
- ✦ Handouts for Session 2 (paper or electronic)
- ✦ Video for Session 2
- ✦ Computer or projector for watching videos
- ✦ Newsprint or white board and markers
- ✦ Pens and pencils
- ✦ Bible

# OPEN

10 minutes

As the team arrives, give them time to talk with one another, check out the information table, and get coffee or refreshments. Building community in this way is just as important as sharing content with the team.

Before you start, pray together as a team for the community or country you are going to, the people you'll be working alongside, the logistics of your trip, and your cohesion as a team.

Tell the group that today's session connects our mission trip with the larger world of mission. Mission work has been going on for a long time. Most of us have heard stories about missionaries traveling to foreign lands for as long as we've been going to church. But have we ever thought about when mission work started? Have we ever wondered who was the very first missionary?

On white board or newsprint, write "Who was the first missionary?", and below it, the following names:

- ✦ The apostle Paul
- ✦ William Carey, British missionary to India
- ✦ George Leile, American missionary to Jamaica
- ✦ Abraham
- ✦ Jesus
- ✦ Mother Teresa
- ✦ Others

Have the STM team divide into groups of three or four to answer the question. Explain that after a few minutes you'll be asking them to not only name their choice but also defend it.

Invite the groups to report, and if they mention the names of other missionaries, write their names on your white board too. Affirm their discussions, noting that all of these people were missionaries, point out that Abraham was the first missionary on *this* list.

Tell the group that these are just a few of the people God has sent to the nations. Write on the board the names of each person in the room.

## EXPLORE

Time: 20 minutes

Transition to the next part of your session by noting that although all of the answers the group gave about missionaries were correct in some sense and well-defended, we're going to be challenged today to think even more broadly about mission. God's mission in this world began with the very first people God created! And as you plan your short-term mission trip, what you do will be connected to what God's people have done throughout all of history. We are all a part of God's mission.

Invite team members to look at the diagram on Handout 2.1. Tell them it's a snapshot of salvation history—and the history of missions. Encourage them to take notes or jot questions down as you watch the video together. Also ask them to think about the significance of the way the diagram is shaped.

After watching the video together, ask group members to look at Handout 2.2. Divide into groups of three or four and talk about the group questions there. Ask someone in each group to take notes and prepare to present their small group's thoughts to the larger group.

Invite groups to report, one by one, affirming all of their ideas. Then conclude the discussion by commenting that if we aren't careful, we end up believing that mission starts when we show up in our host community or country and ends when we leave. To avoid that trap, ask the group to commit to three assumptions, listed at the bottom of Handout 2.2:

1. God has been at work through his people since Adam and Eve.
2. Christians in our mission trip community or country have been faithfully living out God's presence long before we arrive and will continue to live out God's presence long after we leave.
3. Mission—that is, service, evangelism, education, development, justice, and so on—is inherent in God's call on our lives as Christ-followers. It's something we are a part of 365 days of the year, not just while we are in our host community or country.

Ask group members if they have any questions or concerns about these assumptions. If they do, take time to talk them through before you move on to Step 3.

## CONNECT

Time: 20 Minutes

Show a video clip or read a summary from your sending agency or hosts that describes something God has been doing through the church and in the community over the last six months. Invite reactions and observations.

Then have participants look at Handout 2.3 and challenge them to come up with two priorities your team will want to keep in view as you reflect on the way your trip fits with God's mission in the world. For instance, each day during your trip, you could look for one example of where God has been working in this place before you arrived.

Give participants a few minutes to think and jot down their ideas—either individually or in pairs—and then give them time to share what they wrote. As they share, write a list on the whiteboard. As a group, select two or three priorities you would like to adopt. Ask group members to record these priorities at the bottom of Handout 2.3. Keep a record of them yourself too, so you can refer back to them and continue to revise goals before, during, and after the trip.

## CLOSE

Time: 10 minutes

Take time to pray together over the goals you committed to as a group during this session. Share any other prayer requests or praises (difficulty with travel arrangements, fundraising goals, and so on). Pray that God would change each and every life involved.

### Option: Journal

You will be going on a journey together. But this will also be a personal journey for participants. You may want to distribute notebooks (or encourage participants to record their thoughts on their smartphones, computers, or tablets) and invite them to keep a journal of their thoughts and experiences and hopes as they plan for this mission experience. Challenge the team to also list their weekly personal goals for preparation.

**How I can minister alongside our hosts . . .**

**What makes me excited about continuing the mission when I return home . . .**

**This week I will pray that . . .**

**Option: Information**

Draw the attention of your STM team to the items you placed on the table before the meeting today. Invite them to add items to the display as they discover articles, books, and other helpful information about the site you will visit during the weeks to come. Encourage the STM team to share any links or helpful information they have discovered.

# HANDOUT: SESSION 2.1

God's Mission

ADAM/EVE

ISRAEL

AARON

JESUS

THE 12

CHURCH

ALL NATIONS

## HANDOUT: SESSION 2.2

### Video Response

1. What encourages you about viewing missions from this perspective?

2. What challenges you?

3. How does this information relate to our mission trip?

4. How does this vision relate to our lives beyond our mission trip?

### **Our Assumptions**

1. God has been at work through his people since Adam and Eve.
2. Christians in our mission trip community or country have been faithfully living out God's presence long before we arrive and will continue to live out God's presence long after we leave.
3. Mission—that is, service, evangelism, education, development, justice, and so on—is inherent in God's call on our lives as Christ-followers. It's something we are a part of 365 days of the year, not just while we are in our host community or country.



## HANDOUT: SESSION 2.3

### Group Priorities

List three priorities you think your team might focus on as you as you reflect on how your trip fits with God's mission in the world.

Priority 1:

Priority 2:

Priority 3:



List the priorities your group agrees on for your upcoming trip. Keep in mind that priorities will be revised during ongoing sessions and post trip.

Priority 1:

Priority 2:

Priority 3:

