

◇ APEX MISSIONS

HIGH SCHOOL



PREFIELD TRAINING GUIDE



The image features a dark, moody photograph of a mountain range, likely the Sierra Nevada, under a twilight sky. The terrain is rugged and layered, with various ridges and valleys visible. Overlaid on this photograph is a semi-transparent topographic map, with its contour lines appearing as thin, light-colored lines that trace the elevation changes across the landscape. The overall color palette is dominated by dark blues, greys, and blacks, with a subtle yellow-green glow from the text and map lines.

APEX FAMILY

WELCOME TO APEX

Hey Friends!

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The Youth Missions Team
Dan Sommer
Mackenzie Balmer

GOSPEL
INFLUENCERS

DON'T MISS THIS!

This is your Youth Pastor/Leader Preparation List!

This is your quick start guide. There are a ton of resources in this manual but these next couple of pages are your guide to keeping it all straight, preparing your group well, and keeping up with deadlines. This list is essential to the success of your missions experience. Please pay close attention and complete all steps in the preparation list.

PROFILE: Make sure to keep your group profile up to date at forms.efca.org. This is also where you will find necessary and relevant documents as they become available.

REVIEW: Read all the materials included in this guide carefully.

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

PRAY: Begin to pray for the students you will be bringing and the ministry and community you will be serving. Pray that God will prepare hearts and minds to receive and grow in the gospel. Also be praying for God to prepare the hearts and minds of your participants as they get ready to serve in ministry. As you know, stepping into ministry often makes us a target of spiritual attack. Also join our Apex team in praying Luke 10:2 over your students for God to work in planting seeds and passions for lifelong gospel influence, missional living, and potential calling into missions/ministry.

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

ADDITIONAL INTERNATIONAL MISSIONS PREPARATIONS: There are a few additional requirements for anyone traveling internationally for their mission trip. Make sure to verify early that all participants have their passport and that it will not expire within 6 months of your trip. Apply for any VISA's necessary to travel to your country of service. Arrange your transportation early to secure as good of a price as possible. Complete the US State Department STEP process. Secure travel insurance for each participant including emergency evacuation and other medical needs coverage. We will mail you the onsite Missions Guide and t-shirts prior to your travels.

PREFIELD TRAINING: Lead your group through the pre-field training materials to equip them for their missions experience and for Gospel influence. We have provided you with 3 training resources: Apex Tool, Relational Sphere of Influence Tool, and the Simple Gospel Tool. You need to work through each of these tools with your group to maximize Gospel conversations while onsite and beyond.

...AND THIS!

MINISTRY PREPARATION:

- Prepare any ministry requirements for VBS, ESL, games, sports, and/or any other activity that your group will be leading on your mission site. If you are not sure what you need to prepare you can email us at Apex@efca.org for clarification.
- Apex provides a handful of onsite disciplemaking tools to be trained by our college MLT hosts. These tools include the ALTR tool, the Study Tree Tool, the Friendship Star Tool, the Prayer Arrow tool, and the Listening Diamond tool. Communicate your 2 onsite disciplemaking tool choices to Apex.
- You are responsible for onsite transportation for your group. Please provide 3 open seats for the college MLT's to travel on site with you.

CONNECTIONS: Be prepared for video conference calls with Apex Missions and your missions partner. These video calls will include a 15 minute call in February with Apex Missions for check in and clarity as well as a call between you, Apex, and your site ministry partner around March or April.

FINAL PAYMENTS: Your registration balance is due 1 month before arrival at your mission site. Please review the Registration Payment Policy for deadlines and fees.

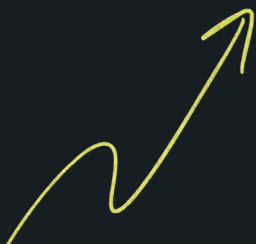
FINAL NUMBERS: Your final invoice will be emailed to you on (or around) May 15. This invoice confirms your final numbers. You will not be allowed to add participants past this point. All attendees must be registered and you may not arrive with unregistered attendees (students or leaders). Please review the Registration Payment Policy for participant number changes.

FINAL PREPARATIONS: Make sure to purchase and pack any necessary ministry supplies, review the packing list with your group, review "Posture in Missions" guidelines with students, and most importantly pray together as a group.

IMPORTANT DATES:

- Registration Deadline: February 1 for International Missions and March 1 for US Missions.
- Deposit Due Date: 30 days after initial registration.
- Final Balance Due: 30 days before arrival at site.
- Required liability, background and Ministry Safe documents: 2 weeks before arrival at site. See your online group profile (your registration login at forms.efca.org) for access to these documents.
- Final onsite schedules will be communicated by Apex Missions to you in late May once we have received all of the details from your site ministry partner.
- June 8-12: Apex Staff and college MLT student orientation (these dates are for the Apex team and to inform you that we will be out of the office). Please anticipate minimal communication from us during this week, though we will try to respond as quickly as we can. We will be working hard to prepare your site host MLT teams.

*The remainder of this guide contains the tools and resources to help you complete the above tasks.



...OR THIS!

Successful missions is not possible without the proper training. The Apex Tool and Simple Gospel Tool are included in this guide for you to start preparing with your group.

The Apex Tool:

This tool is not only easy to remember, but it is built into our logo! Our goal is to help students recognize a kairos moment can happen at any time when we acknowledge, probe, etch, [and] xplore how God is working even in the smallest details.

The Simple Gospel Tool:

This tool takes the Good News and simplifies it so that any person can share the Gospel anytime. By breaking it down into four easy steps, a Gospel conversation feels less intimidating.

As part of your Apex Missions experience, we gladly share two additional tools with you while onsite! You as the youth pastor will get to choose two additional tools for your students to learn, practice, and take home so that fruitful evangelistic ministry continues!

Option 1: Friendship Star Tool

To learn how to overflow the love of God in tangible ways by caring for people in the way they best receive love. These are five simple ways to live on mission in your sphere of influence.

Option 2: Prayer Arrows Tool

To learn how to pray when reaching a level of trust and vulnerability with the people around us. When they start asking questions involving “why” and “how” this allows us the opportunity to go deeper in our friendship and to start engaging in prayer with our friends.

Option 3: Listening Diamond Tool

To learn how to listen to others with Gospel ears in order to discover natural in roads for the Gospel to be presented by using four movements as a way to sort information in a person’s story.

Option 4: Study Tree Tool

To learn how the life of a follower of Jesus must be rooted in the truth of God’s Word. Jesus described himself as a vine and his followers must remain attached to him if they would bear any fruit in their lives.

Option 5: ALTR Tool

To learn how to trust in God with a posture of surrender. Trusting God means that you take all of your choices, beliefs, relationships, decisions, lifestyles, and attitudes and put them on the ALTR of God.

TO SELECT YOUR TWO DISCIPLEMAKING TOOLS NOW, EMAIL US AT APEX@EFCA.ORG

YOUR PARTNERSHIP IN MOBILIZATION

Every year our team recruits college age participants to serve and host youth groups onsite, known as our Mission Leadership Team (MLTs). Our core four values are: gospel fluency, bold curiosity, missional relationships, and disciplinemaking catalyst. MLTs are individuals who have said “yes” to being a laborer in God’s harvest and want to experience missions in an authentic, strategic, and immersive way.

For every referral you give us that completes the application process and commits to serving with us, we’ll give you \$100. If you send 10 referrals and all 10 make and join the team...you’re going to get \$1,000! We know that there is not much margin to add work to your plate in youth ministry. We also know that no youth pastor is getting rich from their church salary. So, for just a little effort on your part we want to put some extra cash in your pocket!

Our Apex team invests a lot of time and energy traveling and promoting Apex Missions to college age student in various locations, but YOU are our BEST connection. We would much rather invest in you and your students.

You know your students and they trust your opinion. We know encouragement from you goes way beyond any promotional plan or gimmick. We are praying that God would provide 30 MLTs this summer for our various sites to serve in missions and help us host our high school groups. Maybe you can be a resource that God uses to answer that prayer and even play a role in helping a student discover a passion and calling into missions or ministry.

There are 2 very easy steps to submitting referrals.

First: Submit your referrals by clicking the link below or scanning the QR Code.

[Submit your MLT names here!](#)



Second: Text or email the following message (or something like it) to the student(s) you are referring:

Hey! Have you ever considered a short-term mission opportunity beyond high school? My friends at Apex Missions (part of the EFCA) are looking for quality college age help this summer. I think you would be a great fit for them! I gave them your name so if they contact you, I hope you will consider serving. If you are not interested you can just let them know and they will move on. Let me know if you have any questions but in the meantime here's a link to check them out:

[Learn more about Apex Missions](#)

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OVERVIEW

OUR ORGANIZATION

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

OUR MISSIONS

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

OUR YOUTH MISSIONS

Mobilizing students for global gospel influence and missional living.

OUR 1 FOR 51 EMPHASIS

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

OUR VALUES

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

OUR YOUTH MISSION MINISTRY

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

OVERVIEW CONTINUED

OUR OBJECTIVES

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

OUR YOUTH MISSION GOALS

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

OUR TEAM

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

OUR WEBSITE

www.apexmissions.org

The image features a dark, moody landscape of a mountain range, possibly at dusk or dawn. The terrain is rugged and layered, with a topographic map overlay consisting of thin, light-colored contour lines. The word "ADMINISTRATION" is centered in a bold, yellow, italicized sans-serif font.

ADMINISTRATION

FINANCIAL POLICY

REGISTRATION AGREEMENT

The cost for Apex Youth Missions: \$500 (\$450 early bird) + travel per participant. International: \$1250 (\$1100 early bird) + travel per participant. Early bird registration ends December 15. All registrations and participants added after that date will be charged the full registration fee. Each church must register independently. You may partner with other churches, but you may not register as one group.

REGISTRATION DEPOSIT

A \$100 deposit is required for each participant within 30 days. The deposit will be your first payment toward your total participant registration fee. Your dates and spots are officially held once we receive your deposit. If we don't receive a deposit within 30 days, you will forfeit your registration.

GROUP SIZE

A minimum group size for an Apex Missions trip is 12. Apex will partner your group with other groups to get above the minimum number and to get as close to the maximum number as possible for US sites. International sites require each group to have a minimum of 10 participants and will not be partnered with other groups. Participants can be added at any time if space at the site allows but must be approved by Apex staff prior to addition. Apex Missions requires a 10:1 student to leader ratio per gender with a minimum of three leaders.

PARTICIPANT REDUCTION POLICY

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

PARTICIPANT REDUCTION FEE SCHEDULE

UP TO NOVEMBER 15 – Unused registration funds will be applied to trip final balance.

NOVEMBER 15 - MARCH 15 – Forfeit \$100 deposit per participant reduction. *If this reduction drops your group below the minimum group number you may be responsible for 100% of the participants registration.

MARCH 16 - MAY 15 – Forfeit \$100 deposit per participant reduction and responsible for 50% of participants remaining balance. *if this reduction drops your group below the minimum group number you may be responsible for 100% of the participants registration.

AFTER MAY 15 – Responsible for 100% of participant cost.

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

TRAVEL PLANS

U.S. SITES

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

INTERNATIONAL SITES

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

PLANES, TRAINS, BOATS, AND AUTOMOBILES

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

EMERGENCY PLAN

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

REQUIREMENTS

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

INTERNATIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS

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

MISSION PLANNING SHEET

HIGH SCHOOL MISSION MEETING PLANNING SHEET

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

MEETINGS AND THINGS TO ACCOMPLISH

Date 1 - Introduction

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

Date 2 - Support Letters

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

Date 3 - Primary Ministry

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

Date 4 - Primary Ministry Details

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

MISSION PLANNING SHEET

HIGH SCHOOL MISSION MEETING PLANNING SHEET

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

MEETINGS AND THINGS TO ACCOMPLISH

Date 5 - Ministry Details

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

Date 6 - Final Prep

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

Date 7 - Packing Party

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

The background features a dark, moody photograph of a mountain range. Overlaid on this image is a topographic map with thin, light-colored contour lines that trace the ridges and valleys of the terrain. The overall color palette is dark, with shades of charcoal and black, punctuated by the yellow-green of the text and the map lines.

***GROUP
LEADERSHIP***

POD GROUP LEADERSHIP

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

HERE'S HOW IT WORKS

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

BENEFITS OF POD GROUP LEADERSHIP

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

MISSION LEADERSHIP TEAM

WHAT IS THE MISSION AND LEADERSHIP TEAM?

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

WHO ARE THEY?

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

WHAT WILL THEY DO?

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

YOUR INVOLVEMENT IN MOBILIZATION

TO OUR COLLEGE AGE FRIENDS -

We recognize there are many ways you can spend your summer, and we invite you to ponder the same question we have asked ourselves:

How am I participating in the Great Commission?

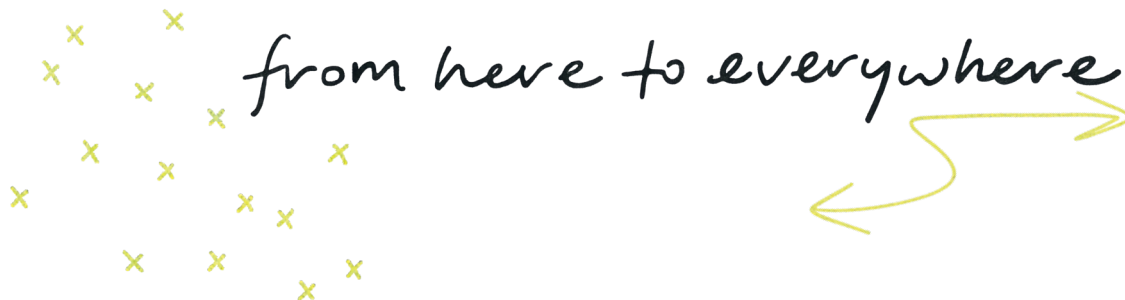
When Jesus called his first disciples, He was also calling His first missionaries. He called two ordinary men to an extraordinary pursuit. He called fishers of men. *And He is still calling fishers of men.* Our hope is that the thought of serving in missions brings you encouragement, anticipation, and a longing to take the gospel from here to everywhere. One of our goals is to guarantee a "clear next step" that you know is available to you.

We want to personally invite you to the mission field. If you are a graduating senior in high school or older, would you prayerfully consider joining our Mission and Leadership Team next summer? Or stepping into a 3 week or 6 week mission experience? What would it look like for you to join as a laborer in God's harvest this summer? Who is going to the ends of the earth to share the Gospel? Who is going to say "Here I am Lord, send me?"

There is an opportunity for you to step in to bold curiosity, gospel fluency, missional relationships, and a disciplemaking catalyst. Will you pursue it?

"Let no one despise you for your youth, but set the believers an example in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith, in purity." 1 Timothy 4:12

To make a move onto the mission field, we'd love to walk with you every step of the way. Contact Mark Kato at mark.kato@efca.org for more information.



A dark, atmospheric photograph of a mountain range, likely a desert landscape, with a topographic map overlay. The map lines are light green and follow the contours of the terrain. The text "PREFIELD TRAINING" is centered in a bold, italicized, yellow font.

PREFIELD TRAINING

APEX TOOL

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

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



A _____

What has happened or is happening?

P _____

What is God revealing to you?

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

E _____

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

X _____

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

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

APEX TOOL

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

ANSWER KEY:

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

A cknowledge

What has happened or is happening?

P robe

What is God revealing to you?

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

E tch

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

X plore

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

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

RELATIONAL SPHERE OF INFLUENCE TOOL

YOUTH LEADER

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

YOUTH LEADER READ

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

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

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

RELATIONAL SPHERE OF INFLUENCE TOOL

Who are your personal and extended connections?

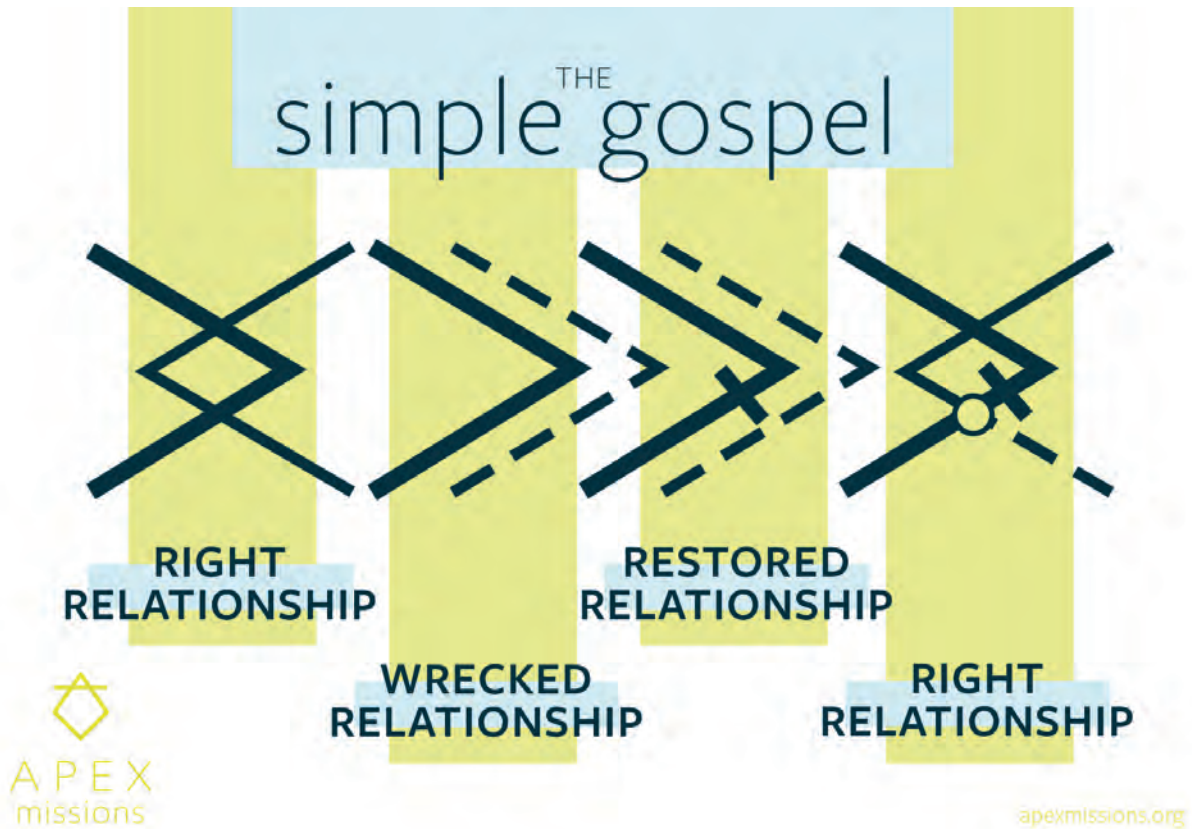
Fill in the blanks with the best options:
church, schools, sports, work, clubs, etc.

home

your name

name of individual

SIMPLE GOSPEL TOOL

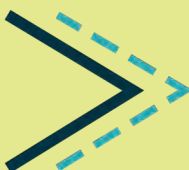


God created us to be in a...
RIGHT RELATIONSHIP
with HIM.



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

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



The broken arrow represents us in our sin which has caused relational separation. We changed. God's hasn't.

God sent His Son Jesus to offer a...
RESTORED RELATIONSHIP
with HIM.



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

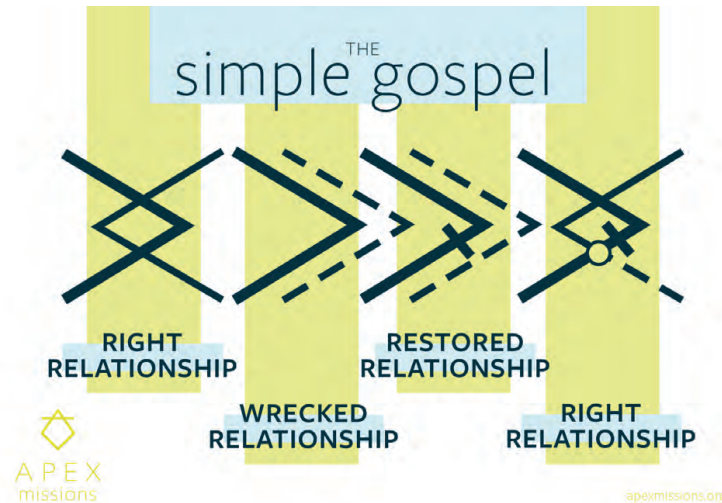
When we choose God's gift through Christ, it restores us to a present and eternal...
RIGHT RELATIONSHIP
with GOD.



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

SIMPLE GOSPEL TOOL

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



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

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

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

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

SIMPLE GOSPEL TOOL

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

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

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

RIGHT RELATIONSHIP

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



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

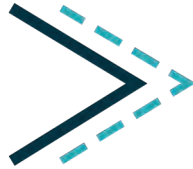
Our RIGHT RELATIONSHIP with God was WRECKED through sin. The term “sin” is used to describe God’s perfect standard in which humanity in action, deed, and word falls short. Sin is not only something we do but it’s part of who we are in our very nature, apart from Christ.

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

SIMPLE GOSPEL TOOL

WRECKED RELATIONSHIP

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



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

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

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

RESTORED RELATIONSHIP

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



SIMPLE GOSPEL TOOL

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

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

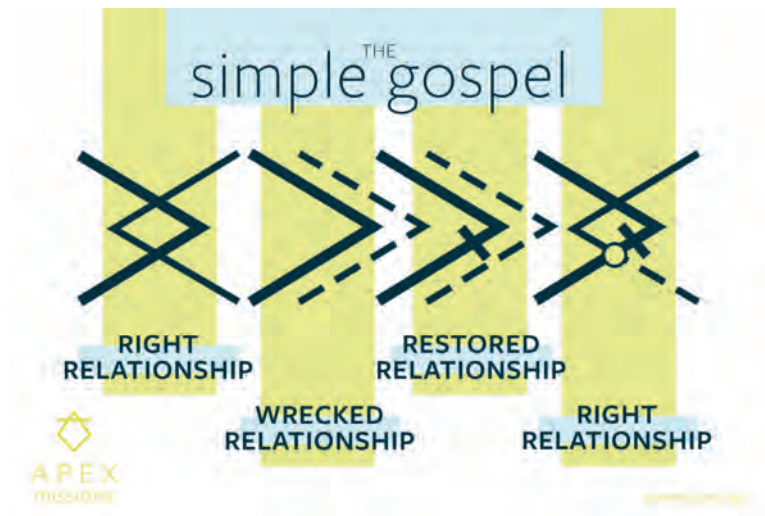
- 1 Corinthians 6:11 (NLT) Some of you were once like that. But you were cleansed; you were made holy; you were made right with God by calling on the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.
- John 1:12 “Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the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

RIGHT RELATIONSHIP

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



SIMPLE GOSPEL TOOL



TRAINING THE SIMPLE GOSPEL

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

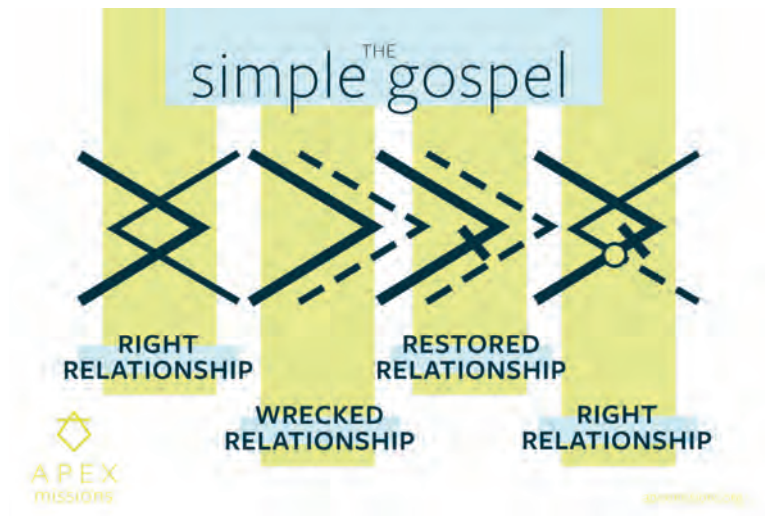
- a. RIGHT RELATIONSHIP
- b. WRECKED RELATIONSHIP
- c. RESTORED RELATIONSHIP
- d. RIGHT RELATIONSHIP

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

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

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

SIMPLE GOSPEL TOOL



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

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

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

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

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

PRAYER TEAM

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

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

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

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

My prayer team:

WHY WE VALUE PRAYER WALKING

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

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

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

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

The background features a dark, moody photograph of a mountain range under a twilight sky. Overlaid on this image is a semi-transparent topographic map with light-colored contour lines. The text 'MINISTRY PREP' is centered in a bold, italicized, yellow font.

MINISTRY PREP

SUPPORT LETTER STEPS

PRAY

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

ACTION

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

STEP 1: BRAINSTORM LIST

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

Here are some ideas to get you thinking:

Parents

Siblings

Former employers

Relatives

Friends of Parents/ Parents' co-workers

Teachers

Family attorney

Close Church friends

Businesses you visit often

Neighbors/former neighbors

Retired friends

Coaches + Teammates

Those who have influenced you spiritually/ Former Sunday School teachers

Christmas card lists

People you have led to Christ

Peers/ Parents of friends

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

SUPPORT LETTER STEPS

STEP 2: CONTACT LIST

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

STEP 3: SUPPORT LETTER

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

When contacting potential supporters, send:

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

STEP 4: THANK YOU NOTES

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

STEP 5: TURNING IN \$\$\$

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

STEP 6: PRAYER POSTCARDS

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

STEP 7: FOLLOW-UP LETTERS

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

SUPPORT LETTER TEMPLATE

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

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

Dear **NAME**,

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Sincerely,
NAME

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

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

VBS PREP INFORMATION

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

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

VBS COORDINATOR

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

VBS LEADERSHIP TEAM

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

- Lessons
- Crafts
- Games
- Music

VBS PREP INFORMATION

MATERIALS/CURRICULUM

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

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

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

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

LESSONS

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

VBS PREP INFORMATION

MUSIC

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

CRAFT

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

GAMES

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

ESL PREP INFORMATION

ENGLISH AS SECOND LANGUAGE

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

ESL COORDINATOR

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

ESL LEADERSHIP TEAM

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

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

LESSONS

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

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

ESL PREP INFORMATION

ICE BREAKERS

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

CONVERSATIONAL GAMES

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

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

IDIOMS

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

TESTIMONIES

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

MUSIC

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

GET CREATIVE

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

SAMPLE SCHEDULE

100,000 Foot View Schedule:

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

The Monday-Friday timeline MIGHT look something like this:

- 7:30 AM **Breakfast at Housing Site**
- 8:00 AM **Devo's**
- 9:00 -12:00 **Primary Ministry**
- 12:30 **Lunch at Ministry Site**
- 2:00 – 4:00 **Secondary Ministry**
- 6:00 **Dinner**
- Time TBD **Apex Training**
- Time TBD **Group Debrief**
- Time TBD **Down time**

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

CROSS CULTURAL RELATIONSHIPS

CROSS CULTURAL RELATIONSHIPS

By Pastor Michael Rice

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

Read 1 Corinthians 12:12-20 (NIV)

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

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

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

CROSS CULTURAL RELATIONSHIPS

CROSS CULTURAL RELATIONSHIPS

By Pastor Michael Rice

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

CROSS CULTURAL RELATIONSHIPS

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

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

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

CROSS CULTURAL RELATIONSHIPS

5. Ask questions rather than making assumptions.

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

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

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

9. Listen!

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

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

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

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

CROSS CULTURAL RELATIONSHIPS

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

CROSS CULTURAL RELATIONSHIPS

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

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

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

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

The image features a dark, moody photograph of a mountain range, likely at dusk or dawn. The mountains are silhouetted against a dark sky. Overlaid on the entire image is a light-colored topographic map, with its contour lines clearly visible. The text 'GEARING UP' is centered in the middle of the image.

GEARING UP

POSTURE IN MISSIONS

APEX EXPECTATIONS

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

ATTITUDES AND ACTIONS

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

A SERVANT HEART

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

POSTURE IN MISSIONS

TEAM UNITY

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

CULTURAL SENSITIVITY

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

RELATIONSHIPS

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

POSTURE IN MISSIONS

CONDUCT

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

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

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

POSTURE IN MISSIONS

DRESS CODE

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

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

PACKING LIST

Everything you pack should fit into one suitcase. US based sites need to be prepared for 7 days and international sites need to be prepared for 7 days plus travel days. This is a general guideline, use standard youth group and church requirements, and ask if you have any questions about your specific mission site.

BE SURE TO BRING

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

EXTRA ITEMS FOR INTERNATIONAL

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

PACKING LIST

CLOTHES

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

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

CHURCH CLOTHES

Guys:

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

Girls:

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

LEAVE BEHIND

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

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