

# Short-Term Trips



◆ TRAINING GUIDE ◆





## ABOUT THIS GUIDE

This Training Guide was provided to you with the permission of Sojourn Midtown. We kindly ask that, when using this guide, you do the following:

- 1 You or your church gain no financial benefit.**  
You are welcome to print and distribute this resource, in its entirety or in unchanged excerpts, as long as you do not charge a fee.
- 2 Give attribution.** Please name Sojourn Midtown as the author of the document. If possible, please include a link to [sojournmidtown.com](http://sojournmidtown.com).
- 3 Consider a financial contribution** in support of the development of this and other resources by Sojourn Midtown. Suggested donation: \$10 per booklet.







A vibrant street scene in a colorful town. The image shows a row of buildings with bright colors like blue, orange, and purple. A balcony with a purple railing is visible, adorned with a large box of colorful flowers. A man and a woman are walking away from the camera on the sidewalk. The word "Contents" is overlaid in large white text.

# Contents



---

SESSION 1

**Team Building 6**

SESSION 2

**Prayer 8**

SESSION 3

**Communicating the Gospel**

*Domestic Version 10*

*International Version 12*

SESSION 4

**Crossing Cultures**

*Domestic Version 14*

*International Version 16*

SESSION 5

**Trip Details & Logistics 18**

SESSION 6

**Mid-Trip Reflection 20**

SESSION 7

**Post-Trip Debrief & Celebration 22**

---





# SESSION 1

# Team Building

VIDEO



TEAM UNITY  
& THE GOSPEL

ARTICLE



THE PRAYER LIFE  
THAT MATTERS  
MOST





**ACTIVITY**

## MEET YOUR TEAM

Take some time to play a game to get to know one another as a group. Sample games are **Two Truths and a Lie**, **Fish Bowl**, and **Code Names**.

**VIDEO**

## TEAM UNITY & THE GOSPEL

Watch **Team Unity & The Gospel**. (Note that all session resources can be found in this guide on left-hand pages, opposite session content.)

How can the gospel unify you and your teammates even if you have little in common?

**SCRIPTURE DISCUSSION**

## EPHESIANS 4

Read the passage and answer these questions together:

- 1 How does Paul encourage the Ephesians toward unity?
- 2 How can you apply Paul's instruction to the team?

**ACTIVITY**

## TEAM VALUES

The word **covenant** is used in the Bible to define a special relationship. Long before your team seeks to lead people into a covenant relationship with God, it's fitting for the team to form a covenant with one another. One way to do this is to create a unique list of values for your team. These can build the foundation for every decision, heart posture, mindset, and ultimately contribute to your effectiveness as a team.

Separate into groups, if your group is large. Have people pick one of following passages and write down words or phrases your team might take from them to create your values. Then discuss and write out your values below.

- 1 Peter 4:8–10
- Hebrews 10:24–25
- 1 Corinthians 12:17–20
- Proverbs 27:17
- Ecclesiastes 4:9–10

### Our team values

---



---



---



---

Based on what you've read and discussed, take some time to talk through how your team specifically can work to preserve unity. Then take a moment to pray to the covenant-keeping God to help your team to be unified as you represent him among the nations.

**BEFORE YOUR NEXT TRAINING**

## ACTION STEPS

- 1 Set a date for your next session.
- 2 Have each team member apply for a passport, if necessary. Those who have a passport already should check to make sure it does not expire any sooner than 6 months after their return.
- 3 Read the article **The Prayer Life That Matters Most**.



# SESSION 2

# Prayer

VIDEO



WHAT IS THE  
GOSPEL?

ARTICLE



WHEN EVANGELISM  
ISN'T YOUR  
SPIRITUAL GIFT

ARTICLE



HOW DO I  
COMMUNICATE  
THE GOSPEL?

ARTICLE



C2C

WORKSHEET



HOW TO WRITE  
YOUR TESTIMONY



**ACTIVITY**

## TEAM CHECK-IN

Give personal updates related to the trip. Then review the team values discussed at the last meeting.

**DISCUSSION**

## THE PRAYER LIFE THAT MATTERS MOST

- 1 Share insights or questions from the article you read.
- 2 What do you find difficult about this article concerning prayer and having an intercessor?
- 3 Of the five primary requests that Jesus prays, which speaks to you?

**ACTIVITY**

## PRAYER WALKING

If possible, prayer walk the neighborhood together. If weather does not permit a prayer walk, divide into partners and pray through **Ephesians 6:10–20** indoors.

### Guidelines for Prayer Walking

- 1 Split into groups of 2–4, saying short prayers as you feel led. Start with a time of personal confession and adoration of the Lord.
- 2 Take time to be silent and really take in your surroundings. What do you see? What do you smell? What do you hear? Pray in response to these things. Seek to be a learner as you walk.
- 3 Look for opportunities to talk to people. Stop from time to time to greet people and start conversations. As you pray for opportunities to share the gospel, make sure you look for those opportunities and take them when they come.

- 4 Don't be afraid of silence. Use this time to find rest and refreshment in the Lord.

You may also use Bruce Carlton's prayer-walking model as a guide:

- **Open heavens:** Ask God to open heaven and pour out his Spirit on the people you see.
- **Open hearts:** Ask God to open hearts to receive the gospel when they hear it.
- **Open homes:** Ask God to open homes of families who are eager to believe together.
- **Open highways:** Ask God to open highways for the gospel to move freely.
- **Open hands:** Ask God to open your hands so that you are ready to speak and to serve.

Come back together and debrief on your prayer walking experience. Together, discuss:

- What was challenging?
- How did God speak to you while you were praying?

**BEFORE YOUR NEXT TRAINING**

## ACTION STEPS

- 1 Set a date for your next session.
- 2 Watch the video **What Is The Gospel?**
- 3 If you're doing a domestic trip, read and reflect on **When Evangelism Isn't Your Spiritual Gift.**
- 4 Read the article **How Do I Communicate the Gospel?**
- 5 If you're going overseas, learn **C2C.**
- 6 Write your testimony using **How to Write your Testimony** before the next team meeting. Be prepared to share this at the next session.



A person with dreadlocks is performing a skateboard trick on a ramp at dusk. The person is shirtless, wearing dark pants and sneakers, and has their arms outstretched. The background shows a concrete ramp and a metal handrail. The lighting is warm, suggesting sunset or sunrise.

## SESSION 3

# Communicating the Gospel *Domestic*

WORKSHEET



HOW TO WRITE  
YOUR TESTIMONY





---

**ACTIVITY**

## TEAM CHECK-IN

Give personal updates on fundraising efforts and other assigned tasks.

**VIDEO DISCUSSION**

## WHAT IS THE GOSPEL?

- 1 What is something you are prone to forget about the gospel?
- 2 How did you make sense of the gospel when you became a Christian? In other words, was there something said or an evangelism tool used that made the gospel clear to you?
- 3 How do you think American Christians change the message of the gospel to reflect today's culture?

**ACTIVITY**

## TESTIMONIES

Each team member should have prepared their testimony using the **How to Write your Testimony** worksheet. If time allows, split into pairs and have each person take a few minutes and share the story they wrote.

**ARTICLE DISCUSSION**

## WHEN EVANGELISM ISN'T YOUR SPIRITUAL GIFT

- 1 Is there anyone who feels they have a knack for evangelism? Why?
- 2 Can you share a positive or negative experience of sharing the gospel with someone?
- 3 What barriers prevent you from sharing more often?

**ACTIVITY**

## TEAM PRAYER

End your meeting by praying together as a team. Ask the Lord for boldness to share his Word and for his name to be glorified.

**BEFORE YOUR NEXT TRAINING**

## ACTION STEPS

- 1 Set a date for your next session.
- 2 Continue your fundraising.
- 3 Review your testimony and share it with at least one unbeliever.
- 4 Read over the prompts for the **Story Circles** activity found on page 13 and think through your response.
- 5 Bring an unpeeled banana to the next meeting.



## SESSION 3

# Communicating the Gospel *International*

WORKSHEET



HOW TO WRITE  
YOUR TESTIMONY

ARTICLE



WHAT IS  
CULTURE?



---

**ACTIVITY**

## TEAM CHECK-IN

Give personal updates on fundraising efforts and other assigned tasks.

**VIDEO DISCUSSION**

## WHAT IS THE GOSPEL?

- 1 What is something you are prone to forget about the gospel?
- 2 How did you make sense of the gospel when you became a Christian? In other words, was there something said or an evangelism tool used that made the gospel clear to you?
- 3 How do you think American Christians change the message of the gospel to reflect today's culture?

**ACTIVITY**

## TESTIMONIES

Each team member should have prepared their testimony using the **How to Write your Testimony** worksheet. If time allows, split into pairs and have each person take a few minutes and share the story they wrote.

**ARTICLE DISCUSSION**

## HOW DO I COMMUNICATE THE GOSPEL? & C2C

- 1 What are your reflections on the material?
- 2 What did you learn about God and people from this story?
- 3 What must we do in response to this story?

**ACTIVITY**

## TEAM PRAYER

End your meeting by praying together. Ask the Lord for boldness to share his Word and for his name to be glorified.

**BEFORE YOUR NEXT TRAINING**

## ACTION STEPS

- 1 Set a date for your next session.
- 2 Continue your fundraising.
- 3 Review your testimony and share it with at least one unbeliever.
- 4 Read **Acts 10:21–35** and write down any reflections.
- 5 Read the article **What is Culture?** and answer the reflection questions. Be prepared to share your thoughts at your next meeting.
- 6 Bring an unpeeled banana to the next meeting.



## SESSION 4

# Crossing Cultures *Domestic*

ARTICLE



TEAM CRISIS &  
PREPARATION

ARTICLE



PACK SMART,  
PACK LIGHT



**ACTIVITY**

## PRAYER & UPDATES

Start your meeting with prayer. Everyone can give a fundraising update and a quick personal update.

**SCRIPTURE DISCUSSION**

### ACTS 10:21–35

- 1 What was Peter’s posture toward Cornelius and his household?
- 2 How can we apply Peter’s posture to how we approach people on our trip?

**ACTIVITY**

## BANANAS

Your leader will guide you through this activity.

**ACTIVITY**

## STORY CIRCLES<sup>1</sup>

In this activity, you will learn from your team’s different backgrounds while exploring cultural perspectives and practicing intercultural skills. You will learn to show respect for differences; practice curiosity, empathy, and listening for understanding; and reflect on experiences and develop increased self-awareness. Your team leader will lead you through these rounds:

### Round 1: Ground Rules

### Round 2: Get Acquainted

- 1 **Prompt:** Share your name, three words or phrases that describe your background, and why those words or phrases are important to you.
- 2 **Story Sharing Session:** Each person should take time to answer the prompt. No one

should respond to or interrupt the speaker (deep listening).

### Round 3: Intercultural Competency

3 **Prompt:** Describe an experience you had with a person or people different from you (in age, religion, gender, socioeconomic status, culture, etc.). What did you learn about yourself or others?

4 **Story Sharing:** Each person should take time to answer the prompt. No one should respond to or interrupt the speaker (deep listening).

### Round 4: Flashback

Each person should share something that was meaningful or insightful about each person’s story (15 seconds max).

### Round 5: Debriefing

- What did you learn about **yourself** through this experience? (This is about increased cultural self-awareness.)
- What **common themes** did you hear?
- What do you want to **explore further** after these stories? What are you curious about? Are there similarities and differences with others you’d like to learn more about? (This is about cultivating curiosity.)
- How has this experience **helped you** practice listening for understanding? In developing empathy? (This is about developing intercultural competency.)

**BEFORE YOUR NEXT TRAINING**

## ACTION STEPS

- 1 Set a date for your next session.
- 2 Read **Team Crisis & Preparation**.
- 3 Read **Pack Smart, Pack Light**.

<sup>1</sup> Adapted from Deardorff, D.K. (2019). *Manual for developing intercultural competencies: Story circles*. Routledge.



## SESSION 4

# Crossing Cultures *International*

VIDEO



CULTURAL  
COMMUNICATION  
DIFFERENCES

ARTICLE



TEAM CRISIS &  
PREPARATION

ARTICLE



PACK SMART,  
PACK LIGHT

**ACTIVITY****PRAYER & UPDATES**

Start your meeting with prayer. Everyone can give a fundraising update and a quick personal update.

**SCRIPTURE DISCUSSION****ACTS 10:21–35**

- 1 What was Peter's posture toward Cornelius and his household?
- 2 How can we apply Peter's posture to how we approach people on our trip?

**ARTICLE DISCUSSION****WHAT IS CULTURE?**

- 1 What are challenging cultural differences you've faced in the past or may face in the future?
- 2 What about your culture is good? What needs to be redeemed?

**ACTIVITY****BANANAS**

Your leader will guide you through this activity.

**VIDEO & DISCUSSION****CULTURAL COMMUNICATION DIFFERENCES**

Watch the video together. Share thoughts or insights from the video.

**DISCUSSION****CULTURE SPECIFICS**

The Sent One you are partnering with will provide a written document or video about the specifics of their culture with the group. Ask questions as needed.

**BONUS ACTIVITY (OPTIONAL)****MEAL**

During the next few weeks, eat a meal together at a restaurant that reflects the culture you will be experiencing on the trip.

**BEFORE YOUR NEXT TRAINING****ACTION STEPS**

- 1 Set a date for your next session.
- 2 Read **Team Crisis & Preparation**.
- 3 Read **Pack Smart, Pack Light**.





## SESSION 5

# Trip Details & Logistics

EXAMPLES



SHORT TRUTHFUL  
STATEMENTS

Have someone open in prayer.

**ARTICLE DISCUSSION**

## TEAM UNITY & THE GOSPEL

Ask any questions from the **Team Crisis & Preparedness** article.

**ACTIVITY**

## SHORT TRUTHFUL STATEMENTS

As a team, read the examples of **Short Truthful Statements (STS)** and write down your own. Next, go over the communication policy and, if going to a secure location, learn the code words for certain Christian terms. Partner up and practice using the code words.

**ACTIVITY**

## ITINERARY PREP

Depending on the location of your trip and what the Sent Ones have planned, take some time to prepare. This could look like:

- Going over VBS material
- Packing supplies
- Studying material given by a Sent One
- Gathering gifts for Sent Ones
- Practicing drama or music

**DISCUSSION**

## DEPARTURE PLANS

Go over the final details of the day you leave and the **Pack Smart, Pack Light** article.

Talk through concerns or questions.

Things to remember:

- Arrive at the airport two hours before departure.
- Do not pack the night before you leave—pack earlier.
- Make sure you have any chargers, adapters, and medicines you need.
- Don't forget your driver's license or passport.

**BEFORE YOUR NEXT SESSION**

## ACTION STEPS

- 1 Schedule the date and time of your next session.
- 2 Schedule the date, time, and location of your final session. It will be your debriefing, which is extremely important. Schedule it for no later than one week after you return home.
- 3 Get any final trip instructions from your group leader.
- 4 Submit any last minute fundraising as soon as possible, if applicable.





## SESSION 6

# Mid-Trip Reflection

ARTICLE



8 WAYS TO STAY HUNGRY



**ACTIVITY**

**PERSONAL REFLECTION**

1 Who is someone you met who impacted you?

---

---

---

2 What is something that challenged or encouraged you?

---

---

---

3 What is God inviting you into as a result of this trip experience?

---

---

---

4 How did you see God work?

---

---

---

5 How can you share this with others when they ask about your trip?

---

---

---

**DISCUSSION**

**REFLECTION ANSWERS**

As a team, discuss your answers with one another. If applicable, Sent Ones will lead this time.

**BEFORE YOU LEAVE THE COUNTRY**

**ACTION STEPS**

- 1 Offer to pray for the church planters or sent ones you have been working with this week.
- 2 Think about small, inexpensive souvenirs you could purchase and give to your supporters back home to grow their understanding and hearts for the nations. These often include coins or bills, keychains, postcards, necklaces, or bracelets.
- 3 Read **8 Ways to Stay Hungry for Missions after a Short-Term Trip**.





SESSION 7

# Post-Trip Debrief & Celebration

---

**ARTICLE DISCUSSION**

## **8 WAYS TO STAY HUNGRY FOR MISSIONS AFTER A SHORT-TERM TRIP**

Talk through thoughts or reflections you have on the article.

Through this trip everyone on the team has seen God display his glory in numerous ways. Each person has stories to tell. We know from Scripture that true faith is spoken aloud (Romans 10:10) and that the gospel is preached in words (Romans 10:15). Likewise, you must share your stories by opening your mouths and speaking them with confidence and wisdom. But this is harder than you might expect. You'll need help to be prepared.

Why is it so important to declare your experiences of God's glory, yet often challenging to do so?

**ACTIVITY**

## **PREPARING TO TELL OTHERS ABOUT YOUR EXPERIENCE**

An American's attention spans lasts about 30 seconds when discussing something unfamiliar. So if you're going to tell others about your experience, you need to make it relatable. However, if you haven't already thought through what you most want to say, you may struggle to say anything compelling.

Also, if you haven't prepared yourself for apparent lack of interest from others, you may become frustrated and bitter. Not everyone is uninterested—they may simply have no way of relating to a missions experience.

- 1** Reflect on your experiences together.
- 2** If you could tell someone only one story from your trip, in only thirty seconds, what would it be? How would you tell it?
- 3** Just as we learned to relate to people on our trip in ways they could understand, how can you meet people where they are and encourage them toward Christ when you communicate your experience?





**SOJOURN CHURCH**  
MIDTOWN

