



Group Leader: Please be certain to have enough of the "FOCUS on Mission" menus for each household in your group. (Additional copies are available for you at the Welcome Desk in MCC's Foyer.) Your objective for this week's group is to facilitate a discussion and prayer among your group members about the impact that going on a short-term mission trip has on others and on the one who goes. The goal is that members of your group begin to strongly consider committing to a trip in 2019.

START TALKING (Choose the best one!)

- Are you a long-range planner, or do you take one day at a time? Why so?
- When you were 15, what did you expect to be doing at 25? Were you right?

START THINKING

1. Read Matthew 28:18-20 and Acts 1:8 aloud. This is the "Great Commission" given by Jesus, a command that set the course for the work of his followers ever since. How would you summarize this "job description" in your own words?
2. Which part of this commission seems most important to you: He has authority over everything? He wants each of us to spread the word? He will always be with us? There will come a time when history will come to a close?
"You are either a missionary or a mission field." Agree or disagree? Why so?
3. MCC views short-term mission trips as powerful discipleship opportunities. Can you imagine some ways that doing an MCC trip might grow or mature a person spiritually? (Invite discussion)

(Examples: **Builds faith** as one sees God provide finances or gives strength, motivation, and creative ideas to be able to go; **builds character** by being part of a team and preferring/serving others; **provides faith-building experiences** of "only-God" moments while on the trip such as seeing lives changed or goals accomplished; going **builds relationships** with other team members that continue well after the trip itself; participants return with a **fresh perspective** of how God works, loves people, and of what he's doing in other places; participants return with **fresh faith and zeal** for how God might work through them here in our own community.)

SCRIPTURES

Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 19 Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

Matthew 28:18-20 (NIV)

But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

Acts 1:8 (NIV)

START SHARING

4. Read James 4:13-15, Ephesians 5:15-16, and Ecclesiastes 11:4 aloud. Will there ever be a “perfect” time to go on a short-term mission trip (or to get involved in supporting missions)?

How seriously have you considered doing a short-term trip? What has been your greatest motivation to do so? Your greatest hindrance?

5. Read John 20:21-22 aloud. If the Great Commission is the general task of making disciples as we go through life, and the Holy Spirit “calls” us as individuals to specific tasks related to it, how might you discover what God has specifically “called” you to do?

Example: Keep asking, seeking, and knocking for direction. Ask the Lord to place His desire for your next step into your heart. Then, start pursuing what you desire. Investigate a team to see if it seems good to the Lord and to you.

6. On Sunday, Pastor Mitch said that the Holy Spirit sends us as witnesses with power, helping us. What are some ways the Holy Spirit helps us?
(Examples: He gives us power to BE witnesses through consistent daily living; he leads and directs us as to what place, trips, when to go, etc.; he provides opportunities to supply us for going; he is already at work in lives and situations that we'll encounter; etc.)

What are some of the ways the Holy Spirit has led you in the past? How is he leading you now?

Leader Tip: *This might lead into a time of prayer on a variety of things. Hopefully, they will include the consideration of going or sending others on a short-term mission trip.*

START RESPONDING

7. Read Acts 13:22 aloud. God described King David as “a man after my own heart.” Then he explained what he meant—“he will do everything I want him to do.” What holds you back from that sort of obedience to God (from being a man or woman after God’s own heart)?

Leader Tip: Make certain that each household (or individual) has a “FOCUS on Mission” menu in hand. Turn on some music and then invite the group to examine domestic and international trips for 2019.

8. What trip(s) has caught someone’s eye tonight? (Invite discussion)
9. What might it be like if our group decided to help (not fully fund, probably) one of our members do a trip in 2019? (Example: Yard sales, spare change, donate unexpected gifts we’ve received, etc.)
10. Lead the group to pray about any trips that are of interest and the idea of helping someone else do a trip. Also pray that the Lord will call the right people needed for each trip and team.

START PRAYING & DOING

- Ask the group to use the online missions portal at MCC’s website to check out trips this week.

SCRIPTURES

Now listen, you who say, “Today or tomorrow we will go to this or that city, spend a year there, carry on business and make money.” 14 Why, you do not even know what will happen tomorrow. What is your life? You are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes. 15 Instead, you ought to say, “If it is the Lord’s will, we will live and do this or that.”

James 4:13-15 (NIV)

Be very careful, then, how you live—not as unwise but as wise, 16 making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil.

Ephesians 5:15-16 (NIV)

Whoever watches the wind will not plant; whoever looks at the clouds will not reap.

Ecclesiastes 11:4 (NIV)

Again Jesus said, “Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you.” 22 And with that he breathed on them and said, “Receive the Holy Spirit.

John 20:21-22 (NIV)

After removing Saul, he made David their king. God testified concerning him: ‘I have found David son of Jesse, a man after my own heart; he will do everything I want him to do.’

Acts 13:22 (NIV)