**Pre-Trip Devotional**

**Day 1**

Where are you right now?  
I know that you know where you are right now physically, but do you know where you are spiritually?

Read Luke 18:9-14:  
To some who were confident of their own righteousness and looked down on everybody else, Jesus told this parable: “Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. The Pharisee stood up and prayed about himself: ‘God, I thank you that I am not like other men – robbers, evildoers, adulterers – or even like this tax collector. I fast twice a week and give a tenth of all I get.’   
“But the tax collector stood at a distance. He would not even look up to heaven, but beat his breast and said, ‘God, have mercy on me, a sinner.’   
“I tell you that this man, rather than the other, went home justified before God. For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.”

It is easy to look in the mirror and see a physical reflection of ourselves, but in looking at our spiritual lives, we must go a little deeper than what things look like on the outside.

Now read I John 1:5-2:2:  
This is the message we have heard from him and declare to you: God is light; in him there is no darkness at all. If we claim to have fellowship with him yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not live by the truth. But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin.

If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness. If we claim we have not sinned, we make him out to be a liar and his word has no place in our lives.  
My dear children, I write this to you so that you will not sin. But if anybody does sin, we have one who speaks to the Father in our defense – Jesus Christ, the Righteous One. He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world.  
Close your personal devotion time in prayer by confessing any sins that may be holding you down right now.

**Day 2**

So, why did you come on this trip?  
Welcome to your mission trip! You are in for perhaps one of the greatest weeks of your life! You’ll be hanging with friends, making new ones, and sharing the greatest story of all time with people you do not even know now. If you let God do what He wants to in and through you this week, it is going to be great.  
But why are you here? I hope you are here for more than a reason to see a new place, to be with your friends, or to just get away from home. I hope you are here because you have sensed God calling you to a deeper commitment, one that calls for you to give of your time and talent for Him.  
What you do this week will be worthwhile, but let us remember that what you will do this week does not earn your salvation.

We see this clearly in Ephesians 2:8-10, where Paul tells us, “For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith- and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God- not by works, so that no one can boast. For we are God’s workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.”

Did you catch that last phrase? The first part of this passage is important, for in it we see that mere works do not earn a way to heaven. And then there at the last part of the passage is a statement that is so profound: God has prepared things for you to do in this life! This week is one of those things God has prepared, in advance, for you to be a part of. Will you let Him do His thing?  
  
Close your personal devotion time in prayer, asking God to use you in a mighty way this week. Let Him know, if you are willing, that you are totally His this week.

**Day 3**

What is your role this week?  
Whether you consider your individual assignment big or small, your part is crucial to the results this week.

Take time to read Romans 12:3-8:  
For by the grace given me I say to everyone of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the measure of faith God has given you. Just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, so in Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. We have different gifts, according to the grace given us. If a man’s gift is prophesying, let him use it according to his faith. If it is serving let him serve; if it is teaching, let him teach; if it is encouraging, let him encourage; if it is contributing to the needs of others, let him give generously; if it is leadership, let him govern diligently; if it is showing mercy, let him do it cheerfully. (You may also wish to look up I Corinthians 12:12-31)

These passages compare the body of Christ, or the church, with the human body. It is humorous to think that one of our toes would get upset that our hand is getting more attention or use, and decide to stop performing its function. It would be devastating! And that is the point of these passages, that if we as individual Christians decide that we are not as important as other members of the spiritual body and decide to quit performing our functions, the whole body will suffer.   
  
Close your personal devotion time in prayer by thanking God for the opportunity to be used by Him this week. Ask Him to continue to show you how you can best serve Him in this setting.

**Day 4**

“He who is faithful in what is least is faithful also in much; and he who is unjust in what is least is unjust also in much.” Luke 16:10

God rewards those who are faithful. Throughout your life God will seek to grow you in your faith. He will continually bring you to times when you must trust Him. He will lead you into situations that require a “little” faith, and if you are faithful, He will then take you into situations that require even greater trust in Him. Each time you are able to trust God at a higher level, God will reveal more of Himself to you. Your faith and experiencing God are directly linked.

The best way to tell if you are prepared for a greater revelation of God is to see how faithful you have been with what God has given you. This is a foundational principle in God’s relationships with us: If you have been faithful with the little He has given you, you are ready to be entrusted with more. If you failed to trust God with the little He gave you, He will not trust you with ore. God will not lead you beyond your present level of trust and obedience to Him. He will return you to your area of unfaithfulness until you are prepared to trust Him. The children of Israel were unwilling to trust God to lead them into the Promised Land, and their generation never again was able to move forward with Him.

You stand at an exciting new door of opportunity to know God more intimately every time you believe Him. Every step of faith leads you to a deeper relationship of faith with Him. It is an open invitation to know God more intimately.

**Day 5**

“He who calls you is faithful, who also will do it.” 1 Thessalonians 5:24

God never calls us to do anything without faithfully keeping His word and enabling us to do it. We are not always faithful to do what God tells us but He remains faithful and stands by His word to fulfill what He has promised (Isa. 46:11).

When the children of Israel reached the Red Sea, they might have concluded that God had abandoned His promise to them. The sea was barring their advance, and the murderous Egyptian army was racing to overtake them! Yet God proved then, as He has ever since, that He is absolutely faithful to every word He speaks to His children.

God may have spoken to you about something in particular—a ministry in your church, the way to raise your children, or what you should do in your job. You have obeyed Him, but now you face a Red Sea experience. It seems that what you thought God wanted to accomplish is not happening. Perhaps your ministry has not been well received, or your children are rebelling, or those at your workplace are criticizing your actions. Trust in the character of God. It is His nature to be faithful. The testimony of His people throughout the ages is expressed by the psalmist, who declared: “I have been young, and now I am old; Yet I have not see the righteous forsaken, Nor his descendants begging bread” (Ps. 37:25).

Regardless of how bleak your present circumstances are, do not lose hope. No one has ever experienced unfaithfulness on God’s part! Allow time for God to reveal His faithfulness to you. Someday you will reflect on what God has done and praise Him for His absolute faithfulness to you.

**Day 6**

“I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.” John 10:10

The 10th chapter of John tells us that Christ came to earth so that our lives might be filled with abundance. But what, exactly, did Jesus mean when He promised “life…more abundantly”? Was He referring to material possessions or financial wealth? Hardly. Jesus offers a different kind of abundance: a spiritual richness that extends beyond the temporal boundaries of this world. This everlasting abundance is available to all who seek it and claim it. May we, as believers, claim the riches of Christ Jesus every day that we live, and may we share His blessings with all who cross our path.

Instead of living a black-and-white existence, we’ll be released into a Technicolor world of vibrancy and emotion when we more accurately reflect His nature to the world around us.

Bill Hybels

The only way you can experience abundant life is to surrender your plans to Him.

Charles Stanley

Don’t miss out on God’s abundance. Every day is a beautifully wrapped gift from God. Unwrap it; use it; and give thanks to the Giver.

**Day 7**

“Whatever you do, do it enthusiastically, as something done for the Lord and not for men.” Colossians 3:23

Genuine, heartfelt Christianity is contagious. If you enjoy a life-altering relationship with God, that relationship will have an impact on others—perhaps a profound impact.

Are you genuinely excited about your faith? And do you make your enthusiasm known to those around you? Or are you a “silent ambassador” for Christ? God’s preference is clear: He intends that you stand before others and proclaim your faith.

Does Christ reign over your life? Then share your testimony and your excitement. The world needs both.

There seems to be a chilling fear of holy enthusiasm among the people of God. We try to tell how happy we are—but remain so well-controlled that there are very few waves of glory experienced in our midst.

A. W. Tozer

The proper perspective creates within us a spirit of reaching outside of ourselves with joy and enthusiasm.

Luci Swindoll

Be enthusiastic about your faith. John Wesley wrote, “You don’t have to advertise a fire. Get on fire for God and the world will come to watch you burn.” When you allow yourself to become extremely enthusiastic about your faith, other people will notice—and so will God.