

THE MOST IMPORTANT STORY[®]



GO! KIT[™]

TRAINING MANUAL

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THE MOST IMPORTANT STORY[®]

"HOW BEAUTIFUL ARE THE FEET OF MESSENGERS
WHO BRING GOOD NEWS!" (ROMANS 10:15) -- THAT'S YOU!

We believe that Short Term Missions is one key way that God is fulfilling the Great Commission. At least 2 million North Americans embark on a short term trip every year. Wells are dug, homes are built, leaders are trained, the Word of God is shared. And the love of Jesus is communicated in very tangible, physical ways. It's a unique work of God that he has raised up in our time.

We want to equip you to have maximum impact for Jesus on the field. This training handbook can be read individually or in a group setting.

GO!
KIT[™]
TRAINING MANUAL



PART ONE OVERVIEW



ENGAGE & FLEX

These are the watchwords for any successful short term trip. You are embarking on a team mission. Therefore it's important that everyone participates. And remember that the main certainty for the whole trip is that it won't go exactly to plan.

ENGAGE

With the cost, time and planning that you are expending, there's no room for you to be an observer. Engage and get all you can out of this experience. Keep an eye out for how you can help. Take appropriate initiative to do things because there will be much to do. Talk to the local folks you meet. Ask questions. Pray everywhere you go. Engage.

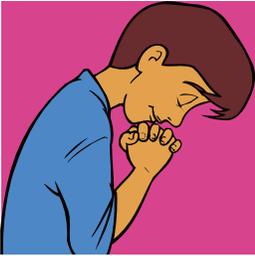
FLEX

Situations on missions trips are very fluid. Something will go wrong or not work as it should. This is normal. If you anticipate the need to flex, it will be easier to do when the power goes out, the food offered is inedible or the town drunk decides to "help" you during the gospel presentation. It happens to everyone. Read through Acts 9 and forward and see how absolutely flexible the first missionary Paul was! Flex.

While engaging and flexing are ***actions*** that you do, they actually start in attitude. As you prepare, pray for a humble, teachable, flexible attitude!

"I used to think that prayer should have the first place and teaching the second. I now feel it would be truer to give prayer the first, second, and third places, and teaching the fourth."

James O. Fraser, British missionary to China.



PRAYER

Prayer is one of the absolute keys to leading people to Christ. Without it, we are just telling people interesting facts and exciting stories. Only the Holy Spirit will bring them to himself. But the great news is that he lets us do it with him!

So, don't divide prayer into one compartment and evangelism into another. They are indivisibly linked.

Every morning, pray that the Lord will put you in front of the person he wants you to connect with and share with. Ask the Lord for specific opportunities. We have been amazed at how the Lord will do that more times than not.

When you pray that prayer, be on the lookout and expect the Lord to answer that specific prayer. We've seen people pray that, honestly forget they prayed it, and then have amazing opportunities to share.

Most team members have a prayer team back home that commit to praying daily. If your team isn't organizing one, organize one of your own. You may be able to send updates via email, text or internet. But even if you can't update, make sure that you have a team of people praying not only for your needs but also for the people that you will encounter.

Keep in mind some team members may not yet be in a spiritual place where they are comfortable asking for prayer or may not have a good community yet from which to build a prayer team. Reach out to them and/or even create some kind of "prayer box" where team members can sign up without drawing attention to themselves.

PART ONE OVERVIEW



THE MISSING INGREDIENT

There is one major missing ingredient in many short term trips: **The Word of God.** We advocate that every believer stepping onto the mission field should bring at least 50 copies of the Word of God in the language of the people they are visiting. It's important that the material is biblical, evangelistic and dynamic. And then pray and work to leave all of the booklets behind in the hands of their new friends!

This material can take many forms - full Bibles, gospel portions or a small booklet. For the last 15 years we have published a 32-page booklet, "The Most Important Story Ever Told" (MIS) which has been used around the world by hundreds of short term teams and indigenous church planters as well as organizations such as Samaritan's Purse, WorldServe, Billy Graham Evangelistic Association, Luis Palau, and Operation Mobilization (OM).

And now you are taking this same material into your own mission field.

"For the word of God is alive and powerful. It is sharper than the sharpest two-edged sword, cutting between soul and spirit, between joint and marrow. It exposes our innermost thoughts and desires"

Hebrews 4:12 (NLT)



PART TWO USING THE BOOKLET



Using this booklet will empower you to do two things:

1. Share the full story of redemption, from Genesis to Revelation in one, short sitting.
2. Leave the booklet as a gift so that it can be read and re-read and shared with others.

"The Most Important Story" print booklet and app are mostly identical in content - the illustrated story begins with a family reading the "most important story" and continues to creation, the fall, the birth, life, death, resurrection and ascension of Jesus. The vital part of the booklet is ending with an invitation to accept Christ with a prayer of salvation.

ONE STORY. ONE SITTING.

This is the key to the proven effectiveness of this evangelistic tool. In one sitting - maybe 15 minutes - you can read the booklet/app with a child or adult and they will hear the full, complete story of redemption. And at the end of the story is a call for the reader himself to pray to receive Jesus.

Note the design of the story:

God made us. We sinned. God sent Jesus to die and come back to life. We then can pray and ask Jesus to forgive us and to make us a part of his family. As you read, reinforce this overview structure with the child.

Also note:

- Words in the print version that are bolded are directly from the Bible (New Living Translation).
- Scripture references are directly under the title of each double-page for further study.
- Notice and point out how kids appear in nearly every illustration.
- Notice and point out the animals - cute animals might help kids to enter into the story.
- Note that the app has a few more illustrations than the print.

THE BOOKLET YOU CAN READ

You should also have and be taking a copy of the booklet in your mother tongue, whether English, Spanish or another language. Read it completely at least once and spend more time on the final pages with the invitation and prayer. Practice the invitation page with another participant during your training sessions.

When on the field, make sure you have your own copy with you wherever you go.

THE BOOKLET YOU LEAVE BEHIND

We recommend that each team member pack 50 copies in the language or languages of those you will be encountering. Your team leader will have ordered these. Note that sometimes more than one language is needed for the region you will visit. If you plan to do outreach with children, you may very well need more than this number. A village or town of children in some cultures can have more kids than you might think!

If you begin to run out of booklets, try to ask for those receiving to take just one per family. If you are still running short, just ask them to share with others to let their friends either read with them or after them. We have often seen 3-4 kids, looking at one booklet together, laughing, making comments but interacting with the message together.

We suggest the stack of 50 booklets be broken into 2 packages of 25 each. A large, heavy-duty freezer bag is ideal in case something spills or if you are in the rainy tropics. Put a rubber band around them so they don't get all crunched up.

These can go in checked luggage or in carry on. Depending on how many are going and the airline, we have been able to implore the counter person to let us ship extra boxes at no charge. We just say we are going to help poor kids in the destination and ask if they would help us bring these materials for them. Often the counter person may have discretion on whether to charge or not. We have had churches bring as many as 3-5,000 copies on one trip!

Once on the ground, carry at least 5 copies with you everywhere you go. If you have a backpack with that elastic back that stretches, display a booklet there and gain some attention. When going down the street or chatting, the booklet might be a conversation starter and you can give them a copy.

PART TWO USING THE BOOKLET

Opportunities crop up at the most unexpected times. You may be waiting for a ride home from your site and a group of school children walk by. If you don't have copies, you have just missed a great opportunity.

Ask your local contacts to teach you a phrase in their local language such as, "Would you like this?" Or, "I have a wonderful gift for you." Just memorize it phonetically; don't worry about spelling. And make sure you say it with the universal language - a smile.

Studies show that in many cultures a booklet like this given to one person will probably be read by at least 9 others! 10 people x your 50 copies = much sowing of the Word of God!

Also, once you are on the ground, see if it's appropriate for the local leadership to write their name, address, or some way to contact them on the back of the booklet. There is a space available just for that. The team can help writing those. Also, stickers or a stamp can be used. This way the person receiving the booklet knows who to contact for follow up.

WHEN YOU GET TO CHAT

Especially with kids, the ideal situation is to sit down with 1 to 4 kids and go through the booklet/app with them. Hopefully by this time you are familiar enough with the booklet you don't need to reference yours but if you do, pull yours out and they will be interested to see it in English. If they can read a little English, they will get a kick out of trying to read it in English. Have fun with it.

If the person can't read, then an interpreter will be necessary. However, if you have some history of the language (Spanish 101 . . .) you may be able to read the foreign language aloud, even if your pronunciation and personal understanding is limited. In many cases, the person appreciates your attempt.

You can read yours while they read theirs. This is assuming that you don't speak their language or you don't have a translator handy. If you can read it in their language so much the better!

When you get to the end and the invitation, don't wimp out. The invitation is very inviting and assume that the Lord put the person in front of you so that they would come to a saving knowledge of Jesus. Assume they are going to pray. Don't hesitate. Just use gestures if you are on your own with them and when you get to the invitation and prayer, just point to them, their heart, bow your head and fold your hands to show prayer and then point to them, their lips, smile and encourage them to pray.

Many westerners want to skip over or minimize the section about sin and repenting/turning away from sin to Jesus. But don't skip over it.

When Jesus appeared risen to his disciples he said, "This is what is written: The Messiah will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, and repentance for the forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations. . . "

(Luke 24:46, 47)

That's our task. To preach repentance and forgiveness in the name of Jesus to everyone everywhere. Don't skip over it or minimize it.

If they don't want to pray, that's fine. Be sure to affirm them, chat with them and treat them no differently than if they had prayed with you. Give Jesus time to work in their heart. Our job is to sow the Word of God. We may not be the ones to bring in the harvest.

If you can, learn this phrase: "Tell your family and friends what you did." Romans 10:9 says, "If you believe in your heart and confess with your mouth, Jesus is Lord, you will be saved." It is very important that they express what they have done with someone even if they get resistance. Remember that the Spirit of God is within them now and will give them strength.

If you have a translator available, ask them to underline what the person just did. They need to review the facts of salvation with the new believer. It's critical that you connect the new believer with someone from the local leadership. You will be getting on a plane soon but they will be doing the discipling.

Depending on the region and culture, you may need to tell the new believer that some may not be as excited as them about their new faith in Jesus. However, this is the first opportunity to teach them about prayer. Tell them to ask Jesus to touch the heart of those who may not be approving of this.

Don't underestimate the power of the Spirit of God even in the heart of this baby believer. We have heard so many stories of even kids going home to tell their parents and face more than scoldings but the kids pray for their family and come back the next day beaming at their new-found faith.

PART TWO USING THE BOOKLET

WHEN THEY DON'T STAY

Often, adults or kids just come to you and the crowd around you, get their booklet and run off or go home. If you will be in the area the next day, try to learn the word for "tomorrow," indicating you will be there the next day and encourage them to come back.

When you huddle with the team, pray for all those you shared God's Word with that day.

There will be many that perhaps did not get a booklet. Be sure to leave any extra that you have with the local leaders for them to continue the distribution.

AND PRAY SOME MORE

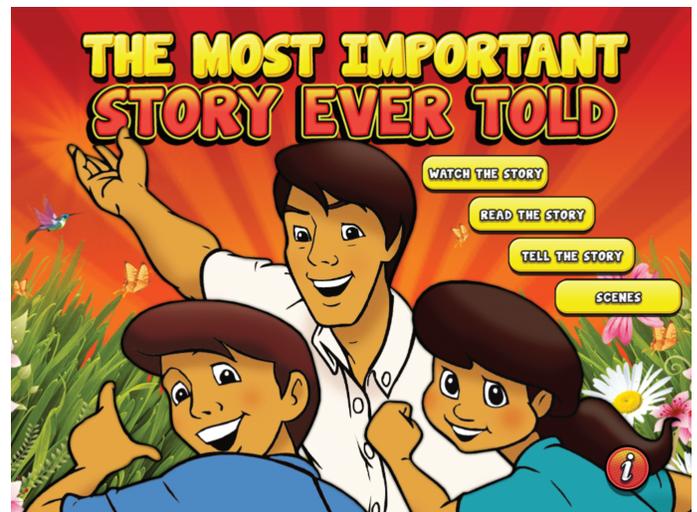
Remember, "Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God." It is extremely humbling to think that this child or person may well have never heard the Gospel and here the Lord takes you across the world and gives you the incredible privilege to introduce them to the Lord Jesus Christ!

Although this may happen many, many times on your trip as you have at least 50 booklets, even if one prays to receive Christ, it is worth the effort.

MIS APP - JUST LIKE THE BOOKLET, ONLY DIFFERENT

The Most Important Story app is very similar to the print booklet. However, the "Listen To The Story" mode allows you to hear the text aloud. This solves the language issue because the "book" reads it aloud to the listener.

A few viewers can crowd around an iPhone and a small group can see the larger iPad. In another section we discuss the use of the Go Kit!™ projector.





"THERE" ISN'T LIKE "HERE"

At home in North America, evangelism is mostly based on established relationships. We share our faith with the people in our circles of influence such as family, co-workers, and friends. In North America, we mostly like to wall ourselves into our homes and fenced in backyards. When we are out in public, we typically don't interact with strangers and if we do, we're very guarded. That's just our culture.

We also don't like to have our doorbells rung only to find a friendly fellow with a white shirt and black tie ready to hand us religious material. That's not our culture.

But in other cultures around the world, this is not the case. In Africa, Latin America and Asia, kids will play freely in the streets. Strangers are not always considered a danger. And if you show up on their doorstep or front yard and want to tell them about Jesus, they are mostly open or at least aren't thinking that you are interrupting them.

So, one of the first things we as short-term missionaries must do is shed our own cultural ideas. While we would not ring the doorbell of a stranger in our own town or walk up to a group of kids at a park and talk to them about Jesus or give them a booklet, these actions are very acceptable in most of the rest of the world.

You will always want the local leaders to guide you on this. But most North Americans don't want to be "those kind of people" who are trying to "force their beliefs on someone." But there is an amazing freedom and very different way of thinking in most of the cultures where you will be going.

So, as Paul said to Timothy, "fan the flame" of your own gifting and go with power and love for the lost. For many North Americans, boldness in sharing Jesus is one lesson of a short-term trip.

PART THREE REACHING KIDS

KIDS - THE DOORWAY TO ADULTS

The "Most Important Story" booklet is fully illustrated and to our North American's eyes seems to be aimed at kids. And for sure it is. It was designed for kids to hear the full story of redemption in one sitting.

But what we've discovered after years of field work is that it's not just for children. For one thing, comic style books are grown up reading in many parts of the world. That's just one more bit of cultural viewpoint to change.

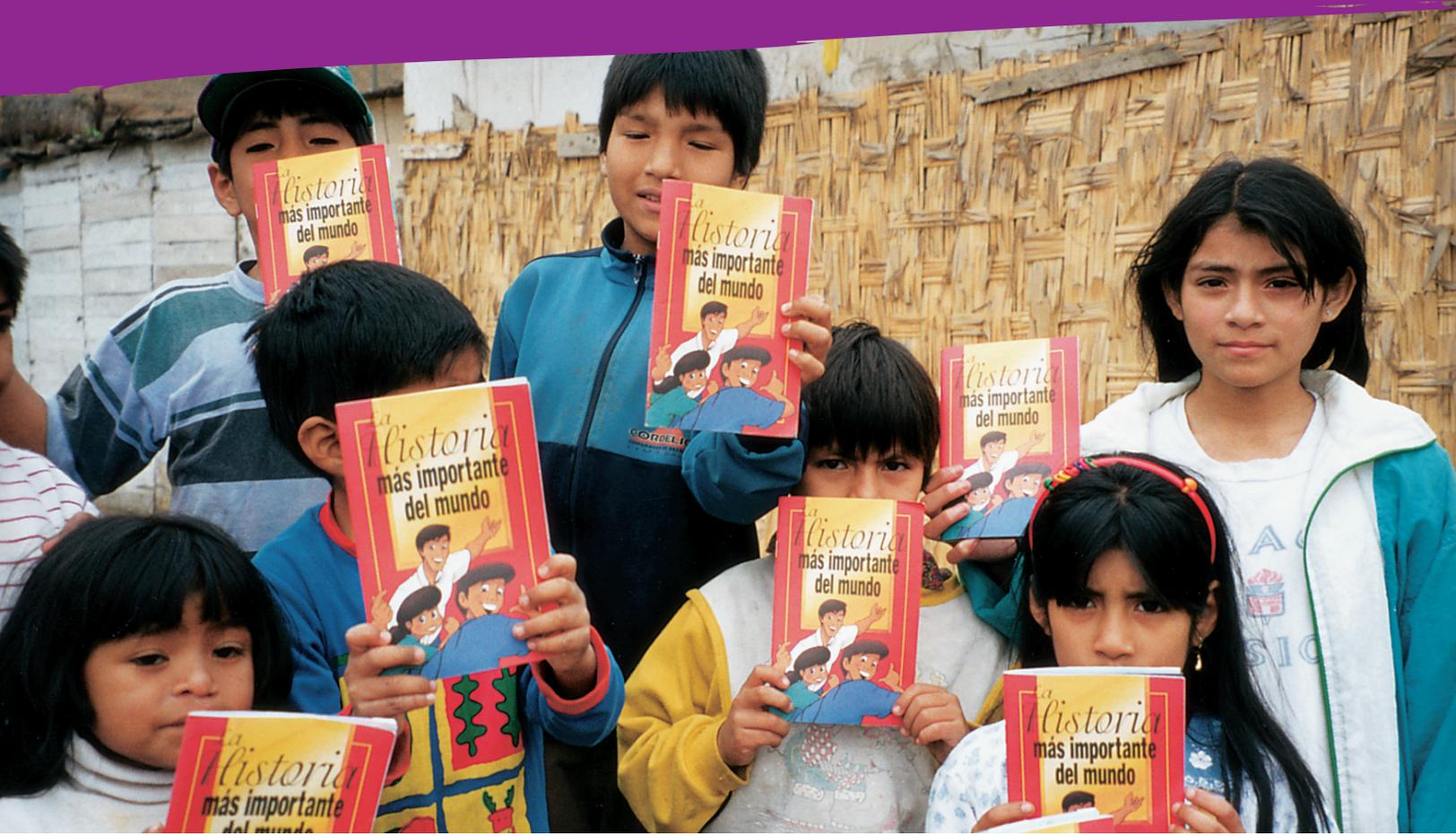
Another point is that adults will read it to and with their children. And as they do, they hear the message as well. In fact, for some adults the kid friendly presentation disarms preconceived ideas.

Vietnam was the first place that the MIS booklets were extensively used. One church network there grew to 1,200 churches in a relatively short amount of time. How? They credit 33% of this network (400 churches) having been started by children receiving the MIS booklet.

We've experienced adults clamoring for them when they're being passed out. So, while to our sensibilities, this is "kid stuff," it is powerful for all ages.

Do not be surprised that adults ask for a copy and be prepared to give them one. In many cultures, if they ask, make sure to give them a copy as it could offend them if you don't. Also, be prepared that often the adults will hang back behind the kids but at the first hint of you offering one, they will most likely smile and gladly receive a copy. They most likely want it for themselves but their kids may not be there and they may want one for their entire family.

And having said that about reaching adults via kids, we want to say that there could be nothing more strategic than reaching the children of a culture. "The hand that rocks the cradle is the hand that rules the world." We want to be those who will rock a culture with the gospel!



EVANGELIZING KIDS -- THE SAME GOSPEL

The task of evangelism is to convey the facts of Jesus' redemption to others. The gospel that you would share with a fellow adult is the same gospel that you would share with a child. There's no difference to the content.

Of course there is a difference. And that difference is the fact that kids of varying ages understand concepts differently. And so our task is to make sure we understand how kids develop and how to present the gospel effectively.

Most kids until around 8 or 9 think very concretely. Things are good or bad. Their world is black and white.

After 9 or so, kids begin to think more abstractly. Their world takes on more "gray."

The key principle is that you don't DILUTE the gospel in order to explain it to kids. Instead, you DISTILL it down to its key components.

PART FOUR CULTURAL DIFFERENCES

FISH DON'T KNOW THEY'RE WET

That sums up cross cultural ministry. Like a fish in water, you are a product of your culture. Fish only know "wet." They don't know "dry." Why would they ever think about "dry?"

Very little was directly taught to you about your own culture, and most of it was simply caught. Different cultures are a good thing. God loves it when you sing your worship songs with a clear melody line and often with a backbeat and guitar. He also loves the atonal worship chanting of another culture just as much. God made people and he made them different.

So, you first must realize that you are a fish and that you are wet. And when you go to another culture, you have to realize that they may be "dry" and don't know they're "dry."

Fish analogies aside, being respectful and understanding the culture you are visiting is vital.

Every culture has amazing, incredible aspects to it and some of them can be hard to deal with from a western mind-set or if never faced with a particular situation.

Depending on the country, you may find food, water and smells to be a challenge. Depending on your region, your team leader and local leadership will help you with food and water. Adjusting to smells - well, you're on your own.

We sometimes don't understand that our behavior can offend. The watchwords here are "aware" and "respect."

We have seen a scenario happen many times. At the end of a long day, there is a shared dinner with local leadership. One group is sitting near the local pastor but the rest may be at the other end of a long table. Though it may be hard to hear, try to stay focused on what is being said where the local leadership is. We've seen often that the "western" end of the table will start to talk amongst themselves start telling jokes and pretty soon the other end of the table is puzzled as to what's going on. Stay aware of what's going on. Some cultures are quiet. Some are loud. Take the lead from your local hosts and conform to them, not the other way around.

The local hosts typically will provide food for you. Understand that for some of these hosts, a meager, foul smelling stew is the equivalent of your Thanksgiving dinner for them. And it may be costing them more than you would imagine.

Sometimes, the local host will put food on your plate. Never decline, no matter what it is. Just smile, accept it, move it around on your plate, squish it down if you can and cover it up with a bone or something. You don't have to eat it but don't make a big deal about it. In fact, you may have a friend sitting beside you who is willing to help you out and eat it.

The general rule is don't refuse it but also, you do not need to eat it if you feel it will make you sick. There are creative ways around it.

Special note for many Asian regions: when you are served something to eat and drink, you may feel obligated to finish all of it. The only problem is that if you leave an empty plate they will fill it again. If you are having trouble with it, move it around, squish it down, eat some if you can and then leave it - the same with drinks. If you don't care for it, don't finish it. If you do, in Asia, you will get more. You can go down to a half-full glass and then just put your hand over it when they go to top it off and smile and pat your stomach that you are full.

**And remember the proverbial missionary quote:
"Where you lead I will follow, what you serve I will swallow."**



PART FIVE GO KIT™ WITH PROJECTOR



Most people think of an app as something you do by yourself as you stare at your mobile device. But with the advent of micro projectors (pico), such as the ones in the Go Kit!™ this is no longer true. The Go Kit!™ turns a solo activity into a powerful large group evangelistic presentation! This "mini movie" combines the visuals, music, voices and excitement of a movie with the passion of the in-person, live presenter being able to stop and interject as the story unfolds. This is an innovative way to share the gospel and you are making history as you bring this technology to the mission field.

PREP

There's two "rehearsals" you want to do before going. The first is that you want to connect the mobile device to the projector and try it out, learning the buttons, etc. It's very straightforward and easy to use. But you want to get familiar with it.

Secondly, as a team, you should go through the presentation, identifying how it will be done and different roles that you can play.

Ideally, there will be one of you to go through the app, tapping it, letting it play in the language. Depending on the language and other factors, you may want to talk via interpreter about different points of the story as you go along.

The rest of the team will be interacting and engaged with the people assembled to see the app presentation. This is not the time for the team to hang back. The role of sitting with the "audience" is vital.

Booklets should be ready to pass out to the group, which is another job for team members. And don't forget to have a team member at the exit to give out booklets in case someone leaves early.

Then, there's those who would be outside the area, inviting others in or encouraging those who may hang back to come join.

PACK

All of these items were included in the Go Kit™ on our site but make sure you pack them:

- HDMI cable to connect projector to device
- Apple adaptor
- Second apple adaptor if you're using an iPhone 5

In addition, you'll want to make sure you have:

- The charging cable and adaptor for your mobile device
- International plugs to charge the mobile device AND projector
- Large plastic food storage bags to keep all these items safe from rain

If you can, pack along doubles of these items in SEPARATE carry on bags. And if more than one team member has an iOS device, pack it along if possible.

And we strongly advise that you pack all of these in CARRY ON luggage, not checked.



PART FIVE GO KIT™ WITH PROJECTOR

LOCAL LEADERSHIP

If possible, ahead of time make sure your local partner knows what you will be doing regarding the presentation. Get their input on where best to present it. A church setting is fine but to reach the broader local community, presenting outside can lead to fantastic response and attract those who would not go inside a church building.

The projector works better the darker it is. Direct sunlight in mid-day outdoors will be hard to see. But inside mid-day will probably be okay. Dimmed or indirect lighting is mostly fine. Outdoors with heavy shade works as well. If you can make the room dark - even better. And at night, obviously you have no worries in this regard.

Be prepared on how you will handle the "close" when the offer to receive Jesus is presented. You will want to discuss with the local partner how best to handle this. We strongly recommend using the app to go right through to the invitation and the prayer of salvation. You can ask for a show of hands or for people to stand.

If you can, someone from local leadership should connect with those who respond right then, after the presentation. They will need to underline the decision and encourage them to move forward with discipleship.

Depending on the dominant religion of the area, it may be best to have discipleship arranged away from a church building so it does not appear that it is to get people to "change religions." It is about coming into a personal relationship with Jesus Christ and ensuring their eternity with Him in heaven. The local leaders will know how best to handle these issues.

Upon the close of the meeting, make sure you engage, being friendly, even if you can't speak the language. Make sure everyone has a booklet when they leave.

If possible, arrange for multiple nights or days of showing so they can bring others or hear it for themselves a second time. And it could even be a chance to start discipleship.



LEAVE IT WITH THEM

One idea to consider is to leave the projector and connections with the local leadership. They obviously would need an iOS device and that might be improbable in many circumstances. But not in all. In fact an iPad mini or iPod Touch costs about \$300 and remember that they do not need any kind of service plan. But all of this depends on your level of commitment and experience with the local leadership.

You could also send a Go Kit™ to the local leadership when you get home - we can help work out int'l shipping.

AS YOU LEAVE

Try to get at least the first name of some of the new friends you've made. If appropriate, take their picture. That way when you return, their face will remind you to pray.

If by chance you have any copies of the booklets left, leave those behind for the local leadership to distribute.

And pray.....pray for each person that you encountered and the many more that the booklets will encounter after you have left. Pray for the local leadership. And then trust as Isaiah tells us, "God's Word will not return void but will accomplish all it is meant to."

PART FIVE GO KIT™ WITH PROJECTOR

ENGAGE WITH OTHERS - ENCOURAGE OTHERS

When you return you may find that the world you just left behind and your home world are radically different. Stay connected to your teammates and process these feelings together. It might help to write down these thoughts as well.

Pray through insights that you gained or things the Lord spoke to you about during your trip. Continue to process and pray for the people there. In many cultures you can stay connected with them through social media and email, but certainly not in all. Your team would have set up in advance policies about what kind of info (your email, Facebook account, etc) you should give out.

Encourage others in your community to be a part of reaching people around the world for Christ. Talk it up, show pictures, tell stories.

The Most Important Story Facebook Page is also a great place to post pics and you can even tag us in pictures that you post on your own wall.

As so many teams are going and using these materials we would love to hear about it and you would be an encouragement not just to us but to all believers who read your story. Connect with our blog, "talk" to us on social media, email us or call us.



We would want to "encourage one another to love and good deeds."



THE VISION

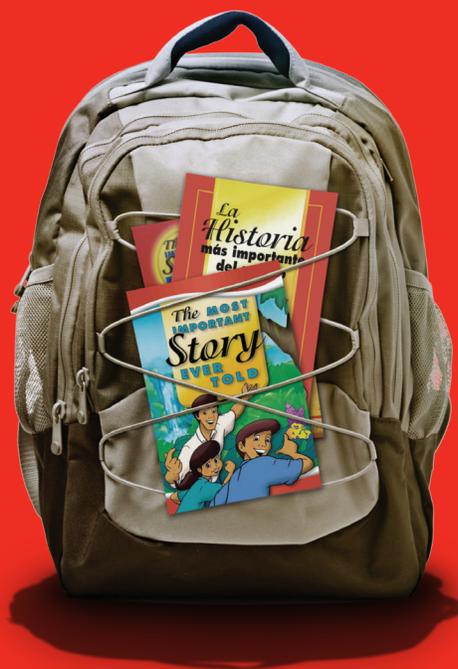
It's hard to believe as you sit for way too many hours on a plane or encounter food that turns your stomach -- that there's a future eternal impact to what you are doing.

There will be children and adults who you will meet or meet again when together in heaven. Maybe you planted. Maybe you watered. Maybe you harvested. But you are a part of them learning of Jesus and gaining eternal life.

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I SAID, 'HERE I AM. SEND ME.'

ISAIAH 6:8



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