



THEREFORE

AN INTERACTIVE MISSION TRIP JOURNAL

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THEREFORE GO is a 4-week, interactive mission trip journal designed to help your students get the most out of their missions experience.

The four weeks of Therefore Go work as follows:

WEEK 1: PREPPING FOR YOUR MISSION

WEEK 2: ON MISSION

WEEK 3: REFLECTING ON THE MISSION

WEEK 4: YOUR MISSION MOVING FORWARD

**IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS ABOUT
THEREFORE GO,
DON'T HESITATE TO GIVE US
A CALL AT 1.888.969.6360.**



THEREFORE GO

THEREFORE

AN INTERACTIVE DEVOTIONAL JOURNAL

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THEREFORE

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THERE- FORE

The Great Commission is one of Christianity's most quoted scriptures. Churches use it as their purpose statement. It's printed on mission trip t-shirts. It's everywhere. And that's good because it's incredibly important. It's one of the last things that Jesus said to the disciples after His resurrection and before He ascended into heaven: "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

It's interesting that we see at the beginning of the Great Commission the word therefore. Therefore means "for that reason" or "consequently." The purpose of the word therefore is to join two thoughts as a kind of cause-and-effect. Something happened, therefore something else is going to happen.

The something here is the sentence right before the Great Commission. Jesus says, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go THEREFORE and make disciples of all nations..." That word therefore isn't just sandwiched in to make the Great Commission sound fancy: therefore is there for (ha! get it?) a reason. We don't bust up into the world making disciples because it's a stamp on our passport, a good feeling in our hearts, or because we have all the correct answers about life and faith.

"All authority in heaven and on earth" means that Jesus reigns supreme. Jesus is reminding His followers that He comes from the Father, and the Father has given Him the authority here and in heaven. With that fact in mind (therefore), He says to go and make disciples of all nations. What this means is that you and I are called to go and tell others about Jesus—to go and make disciples of Jesus—and Jesus will handle literally everything else in heaven and on earth. He'll actually even handle the work of changing hearts; we simply have to be the means by which people hear about Him.

With that in mind, ask God to release you from any fear or anxiety you have about your upcoming trip. He has the authority. Ask Him to release you from the pride that whispers how you're doing a noble thing by sacrificing your time to go on a mission trip. You are not the authority. Ask Him to release you from the selfishness that makes you want to be the center of this redemption story. He is over all here and in heaven. Ask Him to use this journal to reveal to you His authority all over the world, our country, our state, our neighborhood, and our lives.

HOW THEREFORE GO WORKS

Therefore Go is an interactive journal designed to help you get the most out of your mission experience. We've designed it to allow you to prepare for your trip, process your trip, and build on your experience moving forward. This is accomplished through the various purposes of the four weeks.

HERE'S HOW EACH WEEK BREAKS DOWN AND WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT:

WEEK 1: PREPPING FOR YOUR MISSION

This week will help you prepare for the mission trip you're about to take. The Bible Study and activities in this week will help you prepare your heart and mind for your mission.

WEEK 2: ON MISSION

This week is all about getting the most out of your time on mission. The studies and activities this week will empower you to maximize your time serving on mission.

WEEK 3: REFLECTING ON THE MISSION

This week will equip you to look back on your time and fully process all that God was trying to show you while on your trip.

WEEK 4: YOUR MISSION MOVING FORWARD

This week will help you build off of what you learned on your trip and apply it to your life as you move beyond your mission experience.

ONE MORE THOUGHT . . . Plenty of people go on mission trips. For some of these people, the trip itself doesn't have much lasting impact. But it doesn't have to be this way. Your mission experience can be a platform upon which you build a vibrant faith. But you have to be intentional about listening for what God is telling you and putting it to use in your life long after your trip. This journal can help you do that. So prayerfully work through this journal in a spirit of discovery, expecting God to move and watching to see what He wants to show you.

WEEK One

PREPPING FOR YOUR MISSION

If you know anything about cooking or baking, you know that preparation is key. If you wait until you've already started making a dish to grab ingredients and measuring spoons from the pantry, you're more likely to make mistakes. Taking the time to set out everything you need, read all of the instructions, and measure before you begin make the process more organized, more enjoyable, and you can pay attention to the important aspects of whatever you're making.

Being mindful of the preparation of your mission trip is exactly like this. You've probably gone to great lengths to get physically prepared for your trip: doing your laundry, purchasing travel-sized toiletries, and learning about the culture you'll be visiting. Just as important is getting spiritually prepared.

Thinking through all of the aspects of your trip gets you fully primed for God to use you in extraordinary ways. If you're prepared, you're not distracted by simple things or roadblocks. You don't have to be afraid of telling your own story of salvation because you've already prepared! Without preparation, your experience wouldn't be all it could be.

Within the pages of this journal, we're going to be exploring the missionary journeys of the Apostle Paul. Using his mission trips as a backdrop, we'll look at the truths Scripture uncovers for us as we look to Paul as our example. Paul had a life-changing experience with Jesus, and he spent the rest of his days turning the authority of his own life over to Him.

You're about to embark on an opportunity that could also be life changing—both for you and for the people to whom you will minister. So as much time as you would give to your physical preparation, make sure you're also preparing your heart and mind. It's the key to getting the most impact out of the time you spend on mission.

Dig in. Ask God to help you prepare. Expect for Him to move.

WHAT TO EXPECT THIS WEEK

DAY 1: PAUL'S LIFE-CHANGING EXPERIENCE WITH THE GOSPEL

DAY 2: ANANIAS AND PAUL

DAY 3: JESUS CHANGES PAUL'S LIFE

DAY 4: SHARING THE GOSPEL

DAY 5: PAUL BUILDING UP THE CHURCH

DAY 6: PRAYERFULLY PREPARING YOUR HEART

DAY 7: REVIEW AND REFLECT

You probably know of the Apostle Paul. He's the guy who wrote most of the New Testament. He was also the greatest missionary the world has ever known. But the Paul we know and love was not always a hero of the faith. He actually started off the exact opposite of that: a persecutor of Christians and an enemy of Jesus Christ. (Quick note before we go on: Paul was also known as Saul, and he's referred to by both names in the Bible. We're going to use Paul since that's how he's most commonly referred to today. The Bible refers to him as Saul up until Acts chapter 13. Just know that when we say Paul it's the same guy.)

In your Bible, read Acts 9:1-2.

So how could this guy Paul—who when we meet him is an archenemy of Jesus and the Way—ever become the author of the majority of the New Testament and the missionary that does so much for the cause of Jesus? The answer: the Gospel.

Now read Acts 9:3-9.

Paul knew about Jesus dying on the cross (but Paul would have actually been on the side of those who crucified Him). He knew that some people believed that Jesus rose from the dead (but Paul wanted to destroy everyone who believed that). He knew about this supposedly "good news" called the Gospel (but he actually thought it to be bad news). Then one day, this Jesus presented Himself to Paul. And in a single moment, the foundation he had built his life upon crumbled, and Paul came to believe in the One who he had spent his life trying to fight.

What's amazing is that what happened to Paul is what has actually happened to every person who has ever become a Christian—including you. Romans 5:10 tells us that Jesus died for us on the cross while we were still His enemies (like Paul). Colossians 1:21 says that we were once separated from God and hostile to Him (like Paul). And because of these things, we deserve to be punished for all of eternity.

But God, who is rich in mercy to sinners like Paul and sinners like you, sent Jesus to die in our place. Jesus took the punishment that we deserve for our sins on the cross. He died the death we deserve to die, even though He lived a life of perfect obedience to God—the life we should but cannot live. And Jesus rose from the dead and ascended to the right hand of God the Father, where He sits ruling over the universe.

And just like He did to Paul, Jesus has revealed Himself to us. Like that flash of light on the Damascus road, 2 Corinthians 4:6 says that God has shone His light into our hearts to give us the "light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." Just like Paul, every one of us who has turned from our sins and trusted in Jesus is given a new identity in Him.

How could God ever use a guy like Paul? Because he was totally transformed by the Gospel. How could God ever use a guy or girl like you? The answer is exactly the same.

CONSIDER:

1. What is your Paul story? When you go on your mission trip, you'll be sharing your own personal story of salvation a lot. Begin thinking now about how you want to tell it.

2. Try to consider two or three points in your life that led to your salvation. Write these down below and save them for later in the week. We'll come back to them.

WEEK 1 DAY 2

You are about to go somewhere far away. You are going to cross state lines, likely even the boundaries of countries. And the whole purpose of you going is to share the good news of Jesus Christ with the people to whom you are going. God is sending you, and He is sending you to share.

In your Bible, read Acts 9:10-19.

Now go back and re-read those verses. But this time, in your head, replace the town Damascus with your hometown, the town in which you are likely sitting this very moment. Replace the name Ananias with your own name. Replace Straight Street with the name of a street in your town. Lastly, replace the name Paul with the name of an unbeliever that you know.

DAMASCUS ————

ANANIAS ————

STRAIGHT STREET ————

PAUL ————

Now, with that scenario in mind, could Jesus be calling you to do exactly the same thing that He called Ananias to do in this story? In verse 11, Jesus commands us to “Go!” In the exact same way, Jesus has called every single follower of His in Matthew 28:19-20 to “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

The Great Commission is an incredible calling. And it’s probably ringing in your ears a lot right now as you prepare to go somewhere far away with the news of Jesus. But is the Great Commission any less of a calling on your life while you sit there in your hometown for the other 51 weeks of the year?

God called Ananias to go down the street—not across the world—to share Jesus with Paul. So before you even leave your own hometown and your own home country, to whom has God called you to minister to down the street? Who on your sports team needs you to share Jesus with them? Who in the band with you? Who in your class? Getting on an airplane or carrying a passport won’t automatically make you bold in sharing Jesus. That has to start now.

CONSIDER THIS

1. Think of a person (before you even go anywhere) in your proximity that you can share Jesus with. Start praying for him or her, and maybe even write their name down in a private place so you remember.

2. Think of that person while you are on your trip. Pray for him or her even while you’re away. And when you come back, come ready to share the good news of Jesus with that person.

WEEK 1

day 3

CONSIDER this

USE THE SPACE BELOW TO WRITE ABOUT HOW YOU'VE CHANGED SINCE BECOMING A BELIEVER.

In your Bible, read Acts 9:18-22. This guy that you've been reading about in Acts 9 would actually be the one who wrote these famous words in the Bible:

THEREFORE, IF ANYONE IS IN CHRIST, HE IS A NEW CREATION. THE OLD HAS PASSED AWAY; BEHOLD, THE NEW HAS COME. (2 CORINTHIANS 5:17)

Now, how grateful do you think Paul was for this truth?

Remember who Paul was. Go look up these verses and write a word or two in the blanks below that Paul used to describe himself.

1 CORINTHIANS 15:9

GALATIANS 1:13

1 TIMOTHY 1:15

How could someone described this way ever be saved, let alone become a missionary? The Gospel, that's how. The Gospel of Jesus Christ changes everything. He takes the worst of the worst and gives them the status of moral perfection—the very status of Jesus Himself.

Like we said, Paul was insanely thankful that 2 Corinthians 5:17 was true. But what about you? Are you thankful for the truth of 2 Corinthians 5:17?

The Gospel of Jesus Christ completely changed Paul's life. And if you are a Christian, the same is true for you. (Everyone who is a Christian is a new creation.) Take a moment and think about some of the things that have been transformed in your life since you met Jesus. What are the old things that have gone away, that have been nailed to the cross (these can be things like certain sin struggles or feelings of shame or loneliness)? Aren't we grateful that it doesn't stop there? What are the new things that have come through the forgiveness given in Jesus (these can be things like freedom from sin, righteousness, a desire to pray, and a love for God and neighbors)? In your Bible, flip over to 2 Corinthians 5:16-21 and read that whole paragraph to help you think about how you've changed. Praise God for what He has saved you from and what He has saved you to.

The Old Has Gone

The New Has Come

Blank writing area for 'The Old Has Gone'

Blank writing area for 'The New Has Come'

DAY 4

In your Bible, read Acts 9:26-28.

Paul has a crazy story. So crazy that it is almost unbelievable. In fact, to most of the people who first heard that Paul had become a Christian, well, they simply didn't believe it. But after a while, people couldn't not believe it any longer. The evidence was undeniable, for Paul himself was constantly telling everyone what had happened to him when he met Jesus.

And God has the exact same plan in mind for everyone that He saves—including you. God wants to use your story and His saving grace in your life to spread the news of His Gospel everywhere.

While your story is probably not just like Paul's in some of the crazy details, in the most important ways, your story shares many similarities. You were once dead in your sin, an enemy of God, and destined for eternity in hell under God's wrath. In your sin, you were pitiful and miserable. But in God's mercy, He revealed Jesus to you. He showed you the problem of your sin. God showed you how Jesus lived the sinless life you couldn't and died your death on the cross. And when you understood that, you turned from your sin, placed your trust in Jesus, and started to follow Him.

So, yeah, your story is actually just like Paul's. And God wants you to use your story to tell the story of Jesus. So today, we want you to write out your story in the space provided below. It doesn't have to be super long. Before you start, use the questions below to serve as guidelines. You can even go back to the first day of this week's devotions and reference the two or three points you wrote down. Then, you can use this when you have opportunities to share your story, both at home and abroad.

In the first paragraph, seek to answer this question with your story: What was your life like before you met Jesus? Here are some other questions to help you flesh that out:

● *WHAT ATTITUDES CHARACTERIZED YOUR LIFE?*

● *WHAT ACTIONS CHARACTERIZED YOUR LIFE?*

In the second paragraph, seek to answer this question with your story: When Jesus came into your life, how did you experience freedom? Here are some other questions to help you flesh that out:

● *WHAT FEARS HAS JESUS FREED YOU FROM?*

● *WHAT SIN STRUGGLES HAS HE HELPED YOU FIGHT?*

● *WHAT ARE THE CONSEQUENCES (THINK ETERNAL CONSEQUENCES) THAT HE FREED YOU FROM?*

(Note that you are a work in progress on this—like every other Christian. No one is perfect in any of these yet.)

In the third paragraph, seek to answer this question with your story: Now that Jesus is your Savior and Lord, what has changed? Here are some other questions to help you flesh that out:

● *HOW HAS YOUR THINKING CHANGED?*

● *HOW HAS YOUR SPEECH CHANGED?*

● *HOW HAVE YOUR ACTIONS CHANGED?*

● *HOW HAS YOUR WHOLE PURPOSE CHANGED?*

Close your time by asking God to show you ways you can use your story to tell others the story of Jesus.

CONSIDER THIS:

1. Once you've written out your story, go back and read through it. Take some time to thank God for the way He's written your story so far!

WEEK 1 DAY 5

In your Bible, read Acts 9:31.

Acts 9:31 became the theme of Paul's life, because through him, God built up the Church all over the world. God saved Paul, and then He sent him to encourage and preach to believers. Paul visited these little churches, made sure to answer questions they had about the faith, admonished them when they weren't acting in a manner according to the Gospel, broke bread with them, and loved them. Paul prayed for them, made sure their widows and orphans were cared for, and that no one was teaching a false Gospel. God used Paul's unique gifts to do big work for the Church. The same is true for you: God saved you, and now He has sent you to build up the Church.

Take a minute and write down in the box below the names of some people you know that God has used to build up the Church. Maybe it's your pastor who teaches God's Word every week. Maybe it's a grandmother in your church who has devoted herself to prayer. Maybe it's a youth Sunday School teacher who trains up students in godliness.

PEOPLE I KNOW WHO GOD HAS USED TO BUILD UP HIS CHURCH

Now, in the next box, write down the names of specific people who have helped build up your faith. Maybe it's one of your friends who serves as your accountability partner. Maybe it's your sibling or your teammate who actually led you to faith in Jesus. Maybe it's your youth pastor who discipled you and encourages you to follow Jesus. Really take inventory of your life and write down the names of those who lift you up and strengthen your faith.

PEOPLE WHO GOD HAS USED TO BUILD UP MY FAITH

Finally, in the last box, write down some ways that God might use you to build up His Church. What kinds of gifts do you have that God might want to use? Paul obviously had a huge role to play in the early Church, but there were others with different gifts who played a part as well. Everyone has something to offer the Body of believers, and it may not look like what your friend or your family has to offer. What kind of free time do you have that you could use to serve the Church, particularly the local church where you are a member? What relationships with unbelievers and believers do you have that you feel you need to steer in a spiritual direction for the sake of building up God's Church? Be creative.

WAYS THAT GOD MIGHT USE ME TO BUILD UP HIS CHURCH

This kind of work—just like every other building—doesn't happen overnight. It takes time. But it also takes builders. It takes you.

CONSIDER THIS

1. Look through the names in the top two boxes. Take some time to pray for these people by name.
2. Write down on an index card your list of the ways that God could use you to build up your church. Carry it around with you as a reminder to look for God-appointed opportunities.

WEEK 1 day 6

In your Bible, read Psalm 23. Read it through slowly several times.

VERSES 1-2

THINK ABOUT THE WAYS THAT GOD HAS SHEPHERDED YOU. OFFER HIM THANKS FOR HOW HE HAS CARED FOR YOU, LED YOU THROUGH YOUR LIFE, AND BEEN INVOLVED IN THE DETAILS OF YOUR DAY-TO-DAY.

What does it mean when it says, "I shall not want"? How are wants different than needs? Do you see how the sheep's wants are all covered in verse 2? What are some of your wants that rise up when your heart is not content in Jesus?

PRAY FOR CONTENTMENT, AND THANK GOD FOR ALL OF HIS PROVISION IN YOUR LIFE.

VERSES 3-4

What are some of the fears about your trip in your heart right now? (You might fear for your safety, fear for knowing the right things to say, or have anxiety about traveling.)

One of the most repeated commands in the Bible is "Do not fear." And virtually every time that God commands this, He backs that command up with this promise: "For I am with you." Remember that guy Ananias from Acts 9 (Day 2 of this week's devotions)? How do you think Psalm 23:4 would have comforted him with the task God gave him?

AFTER THINKING THROUGH ALL OF THIS, TELL GOD YOUR FEARS. BE HONEST; YOU HAVE NO NEED TO TRY AND HAVE IT ALL TOGETHER FOR GOD. HE ALREADY KNOWS YOUR HEART. SO TELL HIM, AND THEN ASK HIM TO MAKE YOUR TRUST IN HIM GREATER THAN YOUR FEAR OF ANY CIRCUMSTANCE.

VERSES 5-6

These verses are all about God's abundant provision. God sets the table. God makes our cups so full that they run over.

NOW TAKE A MINUTE AND THINK ABOUT THE TANGIBLE EXAMPLES OF GOD'S PROVISION IN YOUR LIFE.

Perhaps the greatest provision of all is God's presence. Verse 2 says that God leads us. Verse 6 says that His goodness and mercy follow us. Verse 4 says that He is with us. And then the final words of the psalm are, "I shall dwell in the house of the LORD forever." The point is that after understanding all that God has done for us, where else would we want to be? So wrap up your prayer time by telling God that very thing: whether He takes you to peaceful or scary places, there's nowhere else you'd rather be.

WEEK 1 DAY 7

For every Day 7 in this journal, you'll be challenged to pause and reflect on what you have learned throughout the week. There will be a quote you can reflect on as well. The idea is simply to look back over each day's devotion, reflect on what the Spirit was guiding you to uncover, and focus on these things throughout your day.

Read this quote and let it help you reflect on what God is showing you.

"PEOPLE FROM MY FIRST HOME SAY I'M BRAVE. THEY TELL ME I'M STRONG. THEY PAT ME ON THE BACK AND SAY, 'WAY TO GO. GOOD JOB.' BUT THE TRUTH IS, I AM NOT REALLY VERY BRAVE; I AM NOT REALLY VERY STRONG; AND I AM NOT DOING ANYTHING SPECTACULAR. I AM SIMPLY DOING WHAT GOD HAS CALLED ME TO DO AS A PERSON WHO FOLLOWS HIM. HE SAID TO FEED HIS SHEEP AND HE SAID TO CARE FOR 'THE LEAST OF THESE,' SO THAT'S WHAT I'M DOING, WITH THE HELP OF A LOT OF PEOPLE WHO MAKE IT POSSIBLE AND IN THE COMPANY OF THOSE WHO MAKE MY LIFE WORTH LIVING."

— Katie Davis Majors, missionary to Uganda



JOHN 15:16

*“YOU DID NOT
CHOOSE ME, BUT
I CHOSE YOU AND
APPOINTED
YOU THAT YOU
SHOULD GO AND
BEAR FRUIT AND
THAT YOUR FRUIT
SHOULD ABIDE, SO
THAT WHATEVER
YOU ASK THE
FATHER IN MY
NAME, HE MAY
GIVE IT TO YOU.”*