



# Jeremiah Project Jr. High Mission Team Training Sessions

## Introduction

Dear Youth Leader,

Thank you for taking the time to prepare your Jr. High students for their mission trip with JP this summer. By doing so, you will be setting your students up for success months before their arrival into camp and prepare their hearts for what God wants to do in and through them during their time at JP. It is our prayer that these preparation sessions will assist you in achieving that with your team.

Here are some tried and true tips for getting the most out of this preparation material: First, if possible, plan an overnight retreat at the church or at a retreat center. Youth workers who do this have found it to be very effective. Why? Here are a few reasons:

1. Students are more focused and participatory.
2. Mission teams feel a stronger sense of identity and community after spending some concentrated time together.
3. Attendance is much higher at one overnighter compared to 5 sessions that are spread out over several weeks on Sunday afternoons or during the week.
4. And lastly, you (the overworked youth leader) does it all in a one-shot event. Sweet!

Here is a simple suggested outline for that overnight retreat:

### **Friday:**

7:00pm: Meet at the Church

8:00pm: Session #1

9:00pm: Break

9:30pm: Session #2

10:30pm: Break

10:45pm Closing devotion



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### Saturday:

8:00am: Breakfast

9:00am: Session #3

10:00am: Break

11:00am: Session #4

12:00pm: Lunch/Pack-up

1:00pm: Session #5: Practice Construction Session (see notes on this session)

2:00pm: Closing Prayer

Lastly, look through all the sessions ahead of time and get a good feel of the purpose of each session and how best to lead each one. There is a supply list at the beginning of each session so that you can gather all of the supplies in advance of the sessions.

There you have it! We hope you find this material helpful and feel free to reach out to us if you need any help in preparing to lead these sessions.

In His grip,

Todd Freneau  
*Executive Director*



## **Jeremiah Project** Jr. High Mission Team Training Sessions

### **Preparation Sessions:**

Session 1: "Why we are going on this Mission Trip?"

Session 2: "What will a week at JP look like?"

Session 3: "Retreat to Advance"

Session 4: "Our Own Backyard"

Session 5: "Practice makes us...Better!"

Note: The last session is one that is planned and led by YOU! We have made some suggestions for things to cover during this session that we feel will be beneficial to your students. However, you will need to tailor it for your group. Ask someone in your congregation who is skilled in the area of construction to spend some time going over some of the basics of construction.



## Jeremiah Project Jr. High Mission Team Training Sessions

### Session 1: “Why are we going on this Mission Trip?”

#### Supplies Needed:

- Index Cards and a pen/pencil for each student and adult.
- Box or hat to place index cards in.
- White board or newsprint and easel, markers.

**Purpose of this session/For the Leader:** Jr. High students sign up for mission trips for a variety of reasons. Some sign up because it's the “right thing to do.” Others want to go because their best friend is going. Still others sign up to get away from home for a week. The list goes on, of course. Whatever the reason, I'm excited that any student wants to sign up for a week-long mission trip because I know that this could be such a life-changing week for them and those they will be serving.

In this session, we're going to give your team an opportunity to name and discuss those reasons, but we also want to challenge them to go deeper and invite them to explore – and even own – a new perspective on why they are going on this mission trip.

**Ice Breaker:** Choose a fun game from your arsenal of youth group games that help break the ice. Be intentional about separating certain pairs or groupings. You want to break up some students that tend to stick together and only hang with their BFFs.

#### **Opening Activity: “Name It. Claim it.”**

Give each student a 3X5 index card and a pen/pencil. Start off by setting the stage for the first conversation, “Why am I going on this mission trip?”

Say something like this: *Some of you have expressed to me or others why you want to go to JP this summer, but I thought it would be good for everyone to hear everyone else's reasons. This will be a great place to start as we prepare our hearts and minds for our week at JP.*

Tell them that you do NOT want their name on this card, so you'd like them to feel free about the reason they signed up for this summer's mission trip. When they're done, ask them to fold the card in half and place it in the box/hat.



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Once all cards are in the box/hat, take time to read each one out loud and have one of the adults or a student write them on newsprint or a white board, making a list for all to see. Maybe use tally marks for duplicates.

Say something like this: *As we can see there are several different reasons why we have signed up for this mission trip. I'd like us to now share some responses to this next question:*

“Why do you think God wants us to go on this mission trip?”

(field responses from the group and make a note on newsprint or whiteboard)

Transition: Say something like this:

*I'd like to share some additional reasons from God's Word for us to consider as we prepare ourselves for our week at JP.*

Have someone read the following scriptures:

Matthew 28:18-20.

Ask:

1. What can we learn from the Matthew scripture? *(There is an eternal component to our mission. It's making a difference here on earth now, but it's also about making a kingdom difference – something that lasts beyond this life.)*

Read: Acts 1:8.

1. What can we learn from the Acts scripture? *(We aren't asked to do this alone. God gives us the power of the Holy Spirit to be His witnesses wherever He sends us.)*

Say something like this: *There are several scriptures that command us to care for the poor – and we will certainly do that - but never at the expense of helping them become a part of the kingdom of God. In other words, JP's mission is to meet the physical, emotional, social, AND spiritual needs of God's people.*

Lastly, read Jeremiah 1:7-9.

1. What can we learn from the Jeremiah scripture?



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Say something like this: *Historians believe that the prophet Jeremiah was probably around 11 or 12 years old when God spoke these words to him. JP believes that God still calls 11 and 12-year old students to be the hands and feet of Christ. God **can** place His words in your mouth, if He so chooses. But we need to be faithful to pray for God to use us to speak **His** words.*

*So, let's review some of what we've talked about:*

*We have several different reasons why we want to go on this mission trip. And there are real people with real needs out there that we want to fill somehow on this trip. But let's not forget to believe that God is behind this trip and with us on this trip and He wants us to not just help folks have better living conditions, but He wants us to share the good news of a life with Jesus.*

*He also wants to do something **in you**, so that your life will spill over into others' lives. Mission trips are about life-change, beginning with you. Get excited, not only for what this means in your life, but in the lives of those God will put you in contact with.*

**Closing Prayer.**



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### Session 2: “What will a week at JP look like?”

#### Supplies Needed:

- Copy of “Core Values Match-up” for each participant.
- Pen or pencil for each participant.
- Newsprint or whiteboard, markers.
- “Just Another Day in JP Paradise” PowerPoint presentation (download from the JP website) or printout of presentation (download from JP website).

**Purpose of this session/For the Leader:** We know that there may be several students on your team who are going to JP for the first time, and it can be unnerving for some who have never been away from home before. They will want to know more about what the week will be like in hopes of feeling more comfortable about their decision to go on a week-long mission trip.

This session covers some of the basics of a week at JP and will provide more than just a snapshot of the week. We will look at JP's Core Values that drive why we do what we do during a week at JP. We'll also cover what a typical day looks like, and more!

**Ice Breaker:** Again, choose a fun game from your arsenal of fabulous youth group games that help break the ice. Be intentional about separating certain pairs or grouping.

#### Opening Activity: “Core Values Match-up”

Give a copy of “Core Values Match-up” to each participant, along with a pen/pencil.

Say something like this: *Every organization should have a set of values that guide the organization's activities. Without a list of values that are lived out, then an organization risks just doing things without any real purpose. JP has 8 core values that they use to guide everything they do. Why should that matter to us? Because JP wants to communicate to all who come that when you come to JP, this is what you can expect...this is what they are striving for...this is why they do what they do each summer.*



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*So, I'm going to give each person a list of JP's core values which will be listed on the left side of the page. The explanation of those core values is listed on the right side of the page, but not in order. I'd like you to match-up the core value on the left to the statement on the right. Go!*



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### Core Values Match-Up

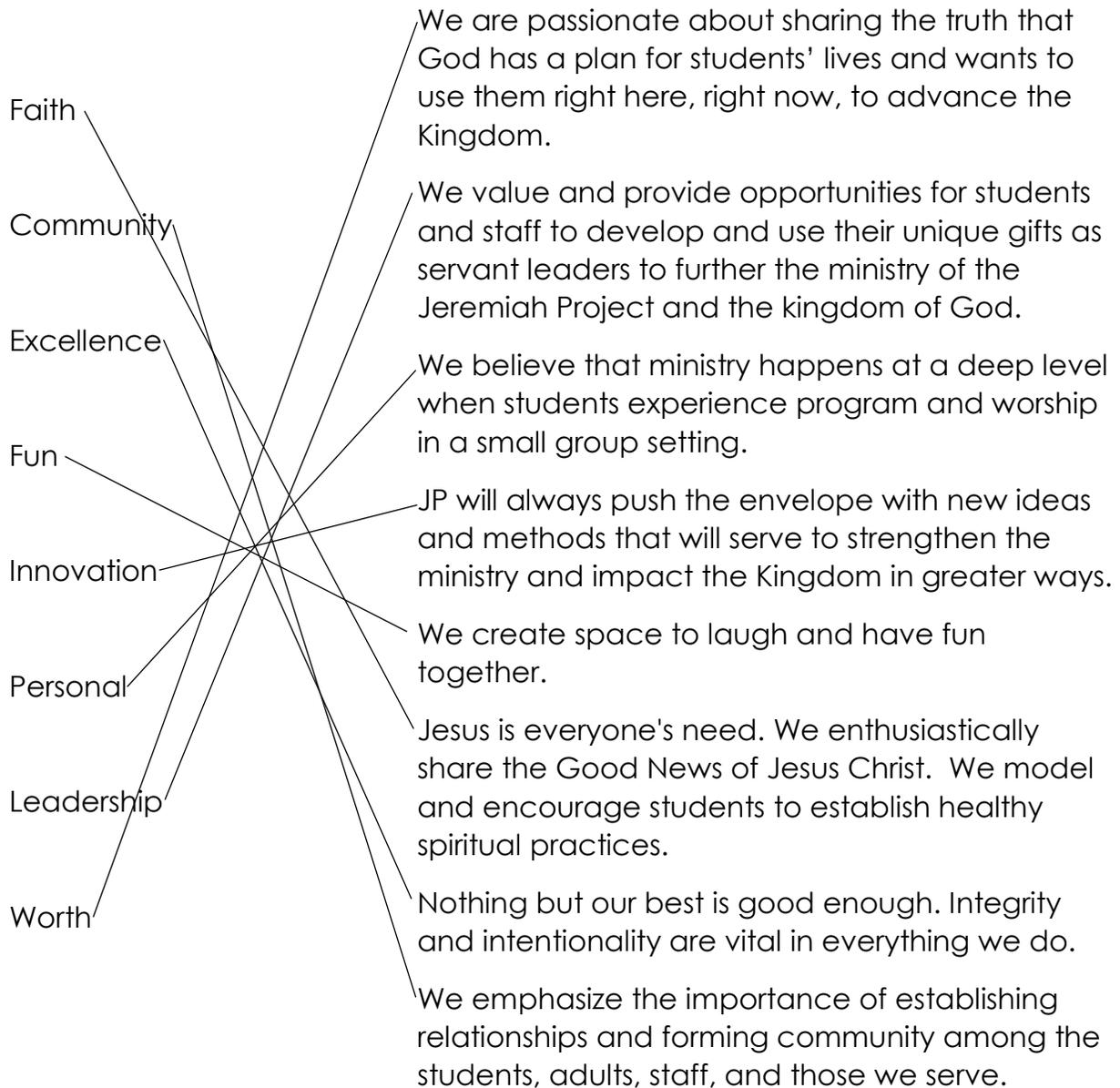
Faith	We are passionate about sharing the truth that God has a plan for students' lives and wants to use them right here, right now, to advance the Kingdom.
Community	We value and provide opportunities for students and staff to develop and use their unique gifts as servant leaders to further the ministry of the Jeremiah Project and the kingdom of God.
Excellence	We believe that ministry happens at a deep level when students experience program and worship in a small group setting.
Fun	JP will always push the envelope with new ideas and methods that will serve to strengthen the ministry and impact the Kingdom in greater ways.
Innovation	We create space to laugh and have fun together.
Personal	Jesus is everyone's need. We enthusiastically share the Good News of Jesus Christ. We model and encourage students to establish healthy spiritual practices.
Leadership	Nothing but our best is good enough. Integrity and intentionality are vital in everything we do.
Worth	We emphasize the importance of establishing relationships and forming community among the students, adults, staff, and those we serve.



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After everyone is done with the matchups, compare answers with this list:

### Core Values Match-Up





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### Read list of Core Values:

Have students take turns reading each core value and corresponding statement.

Say something like this: *Now that we've read all 8 core values, let's talk a little more about three of those core values.*

Take a moment to read the core value and the matching statement:

**Core Value: Faith.** "Jesus is everyone's need. We enthusiastically share the Good News of Jesus Christ. We model and encourage students to establish healthy spiritual practices."

Ask:

Why do you think this is an important value for JP on a mission trip?

After students have shared, say something like this: *JP believes in a holistic approach to mission trips. Meaning, our mission is not to just serve people in need (which is very, very important), but they believe that it is equally important to recognize that we all – ourselves and those we serve – need a relationship with Jesus.*

*The second half of that value states: "We model and encourage students to establish healthy spiritual practices."*

Ask:

What does that statement even mean? (ask for responses from students)

Say something like this: *JP models healthy spiritual practices through the morning devotional time (worship, reading scripture, quiet time), devotions at lunch (reading scripture, discussing with other Christians what God is telling us through His Word) and through the evening sessions together (worship, sharing testimonies of how God is moving in our lives, scripture memorization, and more).*

**Core Value: Fun.** "We create space to laugh and have fun together."

Ask:

For those that have been to JP before, what are some things that are fun to do together?



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Here are some things to share if your team has never been to JP before, or if these were not mentioned by those who have been in the past:

- **JP's Fabulous Water Balloon Volleyball Tournament!** This is where 3 pairs of students play a version of volleyball against another team of 3 pairs. The difference is that each pair holds a towel between them to catapult a water balloon over the net to the opposing team. Each church puts a team together and has a ton of fun playing other teams!
- **FREE Day!** Yep, Wednesday is FREE Day and each church gets a day off from work to go out and do an activity together. Maybe tubing, hiking, swimming, whatever! Your leaders will decide what happens that day.
- **Time with new and old friends!** At JP, fun just happens! It happens with your pals from church, but it also happens with new friends that you will meet on your work team!
- **Evening Program:** Each night we gather from 7:30-9:00pm for a great time of worship, videos, slide shows, small groups, and more. This time is always fun and a special part of the day.
- **And so much more!**

**Core Value: Worth.** "We are passionate about sharing the truth that God has a plan for students' lives and wants to use them right here, right now, to advance the Kingdom."

This is the last one we will look at of the 8 core values.

Ask:

Has anyone here ever been told that they are too young for something? (Solicit responses)

Here are some you may want to add in case they missed them:

1. Too young to drive a car.
2. Too young to date.
3. Too young for an iPhone.
4. Too young to stay home by yourself.
5. Too young to vote.
6. Too young to stay out late.



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Say something like this: *We know that Jr. High students are frequently told that they are too young for this or that. And some of those “too young” statements are for good reason! However, JP has always believed that 6-8 graders are NOT too young to be used by God. Furthermore, JP believes that God is true to His Word when He says:*

*“For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the Lord, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and future.” – Jeremiah 29:11*

Ask:

So, how does that make you feel after hearing that? (Solicit responses)

(feel free to add some more of your own questions)

### **Activity/PowerPoint Game “Just Another Day in JP Paradise”**

To the leader: This is a fun way to share information about what a typical day at JP looks like, as well as sharing some other interesting details about your team's week at JP. If possible, set up a game show atmosphere and have two teams compete. We have provided a PowerPoint presentation for you to use. If using PowerPoint is not an option, you can also download a printable version of the presentation and lead the game with that resource. Both are available at the JP website. Simply go to “Youth Leader Resources” and look for the PowerPoint or PDF file.

At the end of the game, ask students if they have any questions about their week at JP.

### **Optional Conversation:**

If time allows, spend a few moments asking your team to share responses to the following questions. This is a great way to get a glimpse of some of their thoughts for the mission trip:

- What questions do you still have about the trip?
- What are you *most* looking forward to?
- What are you *least* looking forward to?
- What are your expectations about what you will be doing?
- What do you hope God will do during our week at JP?

### **Closing Prayer**



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### Session 3: “Retreat to Advance”

#### Supplies Needed:

- Copy of the commentary and Matthew 14 scripture found in this session for a student to read out loud.
- Bibles.

**Purpose of this session/For the Leader:** Retreats & mission trips should be time set apart from the normalcy of the world. Our goals for this session are for your team to see the importance of “retreating” from the distractions of their everyday lives in order to draw closer to Jesus and to those whom they will be serving with. We will share ways that students can prepare their hearts and minds for their week at JP. Part of the challenge for some students will be going without their cell phones for a week. We will address this directly in this session as well.

**Ice Breaker:** Choose a fun game that will get your students moving and burning up some energy before the session begins!

#### Opening Activity: “I Can’t Hear You!”

Select one student to be in the middle of a circle, surrounded by 5 or 6 other students. Position another student approximately 25 feet away with the printed text located below. Instruct the 5 or 6 students surrounding the one student to simply talk non-stop about whatever they want to talk about (not necessarily loud) to distract the one student from hearing the other student positioned 25 feet away. Ask the other student to read, at a normal volume level (no shouting), the following text from author, Alli Worthington:

**“One of the most beautiful reminders I have of the importance of spending intentional time with God is found in Matthew 14. John the Baptist has just been beheaded, and Jesus wants to be alone, so He retires to a private place to grieve. But the crowds hear that He is there and follow Him. He has compassion on them and heals the sick among them. Then He performs the miracle of the feeding of the five thousand. And Scripture tells us this:**

***Immediately Jesus made the disciples get into the boat and go on ahead of Him to the other side, while He dismissed the crowd. After He had dismissed them, He went up on a mountainside by Himself to pray... alone.***



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**Once again, we see Jesus leave the crowd, with work still to be done, to take care of what is important. He knows He needs to connect to His Father, to pour out His heart to Him, to rest in the comfort of His arms as He grieves the loss of John the Baptist. He doesn't rush around to fix everything for everyone. He could have — He is God, after all. But He is also a human being who needs to spend time alone with God."**

After the student has finished reading, have everyone sit down and ask the following questions of the student who was surrounded by the other students in the circle:

Debrief:

1. How difficult was it to hear what was being read to you?
2. Why was it difficult?
3. Share some of the things you heard the other person read?
4. What were some other feelings you experienced during this activity?

### **Activity, Part 2:**

Now, do the activity once again but this time *without the students that were distracting the one student*. Ask the student who read the text to go back to his/her same spot and read the text once again.

Debrief:

1. Did you find it easier to hear what was being read to you?
2. Why was it easier?
3. Share some things you heard the other person read?
4. What were some other feelings you experienced?

Ask:

What do you think was the point of this activity?

Say something like this: *We all live busy lives. Every day, there are lots of voices all around us, and things vying for our time and attention. These aren't necessarily bad things, but they can distract us from time with God and/or they can keep us from hearing God's voice. Sometimes, we need to "retreat in order to advance" in our relationship with God.*



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*Retreats are really great, and we need them from time to time in order to experience something deeper in our faith. Our mission trip to JP is a time to retreat as well.*

*The week at JP, we will be forced out of our comfort zones, out of our typical routine and away from the distractions of life and into a different and special place where we focus on our relationship with God and with others.*

*Let's look at a couple of scriptures where we see Jesus retreating from the world in the midst of all the demands on his life.*

In the 14<sup>th</sup> chapter of Matthew we see two examples:

Read Matthew 14:1-14.

Here we see Jesus receiving the news about John the Baptist. Upon hearing the news, what does Jesus do? (Answer: he goes to a solitary place)

Ask:

- Why do you think he went off to be alone?
- The Bible doesn't tell us, but what do you think he may have done while he was alone?

Read Matthew 14:15-24

Ask:

- What does the scripture say Jesus did when he withdrew to be alone?
- It seems like Jesus was always surrounded by people who needed him and demanded his time and attention. What can we learn from Jesus' way of dealing with the demands of everyday life?
- How might this apply to our lives?

Ask:

What are some everyday things, distractions and/or worldly things we need to remove from our lives when we go to JP? (list them on newsprint or a white board)

(some possible answers: siblings, cell phone, a dating relationship, friends that may not be such a good influence on us, video games)



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Note: Students may not see some of these things as being distractions. Walk through each one and help them see ways in which they could be a distraction.

Take some time to address JP's cell phone policy: **Students must turn in their cell phones to their leaders upon arriving to JP. JP allows church leaders to let students have their cell phones on Wednesday – free day – but must turn them back in before dinner on Wednesday. Students may then have their cell phone back on Saturday when they leave camp. Ipods, mp3 players, or any other electronic entertainment devices are prohibited in camp.**

To the leader: Upon hearing this, many students may feel it is unnecessary - and even a form of punishment - to not be allowed to have cell phones at camp.

JP's Director, Todd Freneau, shares the heart behind JP's policy. Read the following to your students:

“Our passion is to create a place where students experience *more* community, *more* fellowship, *more* of what God has to offer and, yes, *less* of the worldly things. A place where students can truly "retreat" from the stress and distractions of everyday life. It's one of the really cool things about going away on a mission trip in the first place: to get away from the normalcy of the world we all live in and to experience something different, something *life-giving*, and maybe even *life-changing*.

And as much as we all love cell phones, the truth is, they can be a major distraction and prevent us from truly being present with others and with God. We believe it's more important to spend time with the people you're with at JP, rather than with whatever is going on back home, easily triggered by texts, notifications from social media, phone calls, etc.

I realize that it feels unnatural for most of us to be without our cell phones for a week, and it's something that's really hard to do. But we think it's worth the sacrifice. The Gospels are full of examples of Jesus withdrawing from people, daily life activities, and the demands of his ministry to be alone with the Father and pray. We believe there's a lot of wisdom in that. I hope that you will hear my heart that we desire the very best for you at JP and know that our policy is really *for* you and not *against* you!”



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Ask:

- What are some of your thoughts after hearing this explained?
- What do you agree with?
- What do you disagree with?
- What are some of the challenges you will have by not having your cell phone?

Leader: Here are some concerns students may have by not having their cell phone that you will want to cover with your students:

**“I need to call home.”** Assure your students that if they need to call home – even daily – they will absolutely be able to do that using a leader’s cell phone.

**“I need it for medical reasons.”** If a student needs to have their cell phone for medical reasons (app that monitors blood sugar levels, etc.) they keep it with them as needed.

**“I go to sleep listening to music on my phone.”** Discuss other ways to substitute for that: bring a fan, book to read, use a white noise machine, etc.

**“I take pictures with my phone.”** We know it’s not commonplace anymore but encourage students to bring a digital camera from a friend or family member to take pictures during the week. JP will also present a flash drive full of pictures to their youth leader before they get in the church vans at the end of the mission week.

Give the students an opportunity to ask additional questions or to discuss this topic further.

### **Take the 2-Week Cell Phone Challenge.**

If you like the following idea, take this time to agree as a team to take the 2-Week Cell Phone Challenge.

#### **Here’s why:**

Some students have grown up with a cell phone in their hands. This may help students prepare themselves for a week without their cell phones, intentionally weaning themselves off their cell phones so it won’t be a sudden shock to their systems when their week at JP rolls around.



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### Here's how it works:

**Two weeks before you leave on your mission trip**, have the group agree to each person limiting time on their cell phones to 30 minutes a day.

If they go to sleep to music, have them select another method during this time as well.

Encourage them to communicate to their friends outside of church that they are taking this challenge and to explain why they are doing it. Bonus: This could be a simple way to share about their faith and the reasons they are going on a mission trip. They could also ask these friends to support them in the challenge leading up to the mission trip.

**One week before you leave on your mission trip**, have the group agree to each person limiting time on their cell phones to 15 minutes a day.

Find a way to hold each person accountable. Maybe a text from the leader each morning to remind them? Ask parents to help their son/daughter be accountable during this time. Maybe create a simple one-page covenant form where each person signs their name to commit to the challenge (you could copy and paste the above material very easily). Or, come up with your own challenge that fits your situation better. Be creative!

### Close with Prayer



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### Session 4: “Our Own Backyard”

#### Supplies Needed:

- Quotes written on construction paper (or copy and print from your computer) and taped all around the room.
- Newsprint and markers, or white board and markers.
- Tape for newsprint and quotes.
- Bibles.

**Purpose of this session/For the Leader:** This session is designed to help participants understand that serving others does not end after a weeklong mission trip. Our responsibility to care for God’s people begins in our own backyard.

**Ice Breaker:** Choose a fun game that will get your students moving and burning up some energy before the session begins!

#### Opening Activity: “Quotes”

Have these quotes taped up on construction paper all around the room. Instruct the students to walk around the room (by themselves – not with their best buddy) and read each one in silence (Stress quiet as much as possible). Ask them to make a mental note of their top 2 quotes to share with the group (Note to the leader: except for the first two, all other quotes are from Mother Theresa).

***“Service is not a project, it’s a way of life”.***

***“Fall in love with mission work, not with mission projects”.***

***“I alone cannot change the world, but I can cast a stone across the waters to create many ripples.”***

***“I want you to be concerned about your next-door neighbor. Do you know your next-door neighbor?”***

***“It’s not how much we give but how much love we put into giving.”***

***“Love cannot remain by itself – it has no meaning. Love has to be put into action, and that action is service.”***



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***“If you can’t feed a hundred people, then feed just one.”***

***“Stay where you are. Find your own Calcutta. Find the sick, the suffering, and the lonely right where you are—in your own homes and in your own families, in your workplaces and in your schools.”***

***“I see God in every human being. When I wash the leper’s wounds, I feel I am nursing the Lord himself. Is it not a beautiful experience?”***

Once everyone has had time to explore the quotes, ask everyone to sit in a circle.

### **Discuss:**

Go around the circle and ask each person, including the leaders:

1. Share your top 2 quotes.
2. Tell us why they chose them.

(Note: what we are trying to get to here is a broader view of serving others, based not on a mission trip, but on the One that calls us to love the people around us, no matter who they are)

Ask:

1. Pick a quote (the same one or a different one) and share the ways you try to live that out, or how you see others living it out.

Read this quote to your team again (you may have to tell them who Mother Theresa is and that Calcutta, India is where she lived most of her life):

***“Stay where you are. Find your own Calcutta. Find the sick, the suffering, and the lonely right where you are—in your own homes and in your own families, in your workplaces and in your schools.”***

Say something like this: *The quote from Mother Theresa is what we are talking about today. Mission trips are great. But the true test of our compassion comes when we get back home. Are we still serving when the trip is over in our everyday lives? Or do we pat ourselves on the back and say, “I’ve done my good deed for the year!” and are content with just a mission trip?*

Ask:

What does, “Find your own Calcutta” mean?



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### Read Matthew 25:31-40

Ask:

What does this scripture have to do with our discussion today?

### Read this to your students:

A story is told of a businessman – a Christian - who was walking down the streets in New York city, hurriedly making his way to a meeting. He passed a homeless man sitting up against a wall with a sign that said, “Hungry.” The business man continued to walk by but in his heart, he felt something saying, “Do something.” The businessman looked up and saw a fast food restaurant. He went in and bought a sandwich, fries, and a drink. He returned to the homeless man and offered the meal to him. As the homeless man reached out to accept the food, the businessman looked into the man’s eyes and was stunned. Unexplainably, the man’s face turned from that of a homeless man into the face of Jesus.

Say something like this: *When we see someone, we can choose to see them as just another person, or we can remember that God's Word says that whenever we see do something for or to someone, we're doing it for or to Jesus as well.*

### Activity: “Our Own Backyard”

Have your group list on newsprint or white board all of the local service projects (in your own community) that your youth group has participated in over the past 12 months.

Celebrate the ways in which you have been involved in service to those in your own community.

Then ask:

1. Which projects are ones that are on-going (more than once a year)?
2. Who are we reaching out to (elderly, children, homeless, hungry)?
3. What other needs are there in our own backyard?
4. What other service opportunities could we be doing (list on newsprint)?



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To the leader: The Jeremiah Project wants to encourage your youth group to adopt a new outreach or even begin a new ministry within your group. Lead your group in a brainstorming session for a few minutes.

Ask:

1. Is there an existing outreach ministry that we could become involved with on a regular basis that we've not worked with before?
2. Could we begin a new ministry that reaches out to special group of people?

Tell the students that we're just brainstorming right now. Don't commit just yet but write down the ideas that surface and follow up with them after you return from your mission week with JP. After your trip, find a time to revisit these ideas and act on them.

### **Closing:**

Gather the mission team into a circle and ask each person to share something they hope for at the Jeremiah Project this summer (for themselves, the mission team, or the people they will be serving).

Have someone read Jeremiah 1:4-8.

**Close with prayer.**



## Jeremiah Project Jr. High Mission Team Training Sessions

### Session 5: “Practice makes us...Better!”

**Purpose of this session:** This session is all about allowing students (and adults) to practice some of the basics of construction. Participants should learn the proper way to swing a hammer, remove a bent nail, and more. Remember that many of your students have never used a hammer in their brief life! It is important that they have time to become familiar with the basic tools that they will most likely be using while at JP. Allowing time to become familiar with these and to practice ahead of time will greatly reduce the anxiety that many of your students have going into this project.

This session is one that is planned and led by YOU! We have made some suggestions for things to cover during this session that we feel will be beneficial to your students. However, you will need to structure it for your group.

Ask someone in your congregation who is skilled in the area of construction to spend some time going over some of the basics of construction. Here’s what we think that person should cover:

1. **Safety** (wearing goggles, proper way to use a ladder, proper shoes for the work site, being aware of your surroundings with lumber and nails). Please remember that middle school students will NOT be allowed to use power saws.
2. **Proper use of tools.** We suggest that someone demonstrate the proper use of a hammer, saw, level, chalk line, square, and measuring tape, as well as how to properly drive a nail and how to remove it.
3. **Techniques** for painting and how to clean up after painting.
4. **Allow time to practice.** Supply scrap wood and nails and let the students (and adults) practice driving nails and removing them as well.

Structuring this can be a daunting task, and trying to make it fun, while conveying the seriousness of it is just one of the fantastic challenges you get to face as a youth leader! But to help you out, there are a few suggestions and ideas you can incorporate to make it easier on you and your students!

#### Ideas:

- Have the group build a doghouse and then give it to someone in the community.



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NOTE: Once again, ask someone skilled in construction to bring pre-cut wood and/or nails to make a doghouse or similar structure. Break into small groups, give them the supplies and tools and let them go at it! Remember this is **after** you've gone over the proper use of tools!

- Have the students build a set of freestanding steps! Same stuff applies as before!
- We know one church group who combined this session with a pool party for participants! It was lots of fun and gave the group another opportunity to hang out and bond as a mission team!
- Another church built some picnic tables and auctioned them off to raise money for the mission trip!