

Greetings fellow youth worker!

The training material is designed to be user-friendly and is a very effective tool in preparing your students and adults for their mission trip experience with the Jeremiah Project. Here are a few tips that will ensure a successful training event...

First, if possible, plan an overnight retreat at the church or retreat center. Youth workers have found this to be most effective. Students are more focused and participatory! Mission teams feel a stronger sense of identity and community after spending twenty-four hours together. Attendance is much higher at one overnighter than sessions spread out over several Sunday afternoons.

We are available for you should you have any questions about the training material, forms, or anything else about your mission trip. Please call us toll-free at 1-866-JP4JRHI (574-5744).

Serving Him together,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Todd Freneau".

Todd Freneau
Executive Director

Work Team Training Sessions

Session 1: “Teamwork!”

Purpose: To discover the importance of working together on a mission team using problem-solving challenges, trust-building exercises, and activities that stress communication and cooperation.

Session 2: “I Know the Plans I Have For You”

Purpose: Using Jeremiah as an example, this session is designed to help students understand that there is a reason for their presence on the mission team. The session also looks at what their mission trip experience may look like (typical day, “free” day, work teams, lodging, etc.).

Session 3: “Called to Compassion”

Purpose: To help participants to see that, first and foremost, we are to demonstrate compassion and love to each person we encounter.

Session 4: “Working for the Kingdom”

Purpose: 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.

Session 5: “Practice, Practice, Practice!”

Purpose: This session is all about allowing students (and adults) to practice some of the basics of construction. Participants should learn the importance of safety and how to properly swing a hammer, remove a bent nail, and more- **if you are not skilled in construction you’ll want to recruit someone who is!**

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**PLUS!** Included at the end of the training sessions are two suggestions for a commissioning service. Use one of these services during worship on the Sunday before you leave for your mission trip.

# Preparation Session Supplies

list of supplies for all 5-preparation sessions  
Suggested timeline for over-night retreat



- Box of brownies & everything it takes to make them
- Oven
- Blindfolds for every other person in your group
- Various items for an obstacle course (hats, shoes, tennis balls, beach balls, rubber chickens, Crock-pot, etc.)
- Bibles for everyone
- 10 Pieces of lumber or carpet squares, varying sizes
- Index cards for each person
- Pen or pencil for each person
- Laptop/Computer (optional)
- Projector
- Projection Screen
- Downloaded PowerPoint game: "Life at JP!" ([www.jeremiahproject.org](http://www.jeremiahproject.org). Go to "Youth Leader Resources" then, "Registration/Downloads")
- Large blanket (for a game – won't get damaged...probably)
- Winning prize for your whole group (candy, broccoli, or something similar)
- A long piece of rope (about 30-50 feet)
- Signs taped on a wall (11x17 or sheets of paper): "What God Hates", "What God Loves"
- Newsprint
- Masking tape
- Markers
- 10 copies of "Life After JP" (session 4, page 3)
- Lumber, tools, etc. for practice in Session 5. You'll also need someone skilled in construction to lead this session. Plan in advance!

## Friday

7:00pm – Meet at the church  
7:30pm – Session #1  
9:00pm – Break  
9:30pm – Session #2  
11:00pm – Get ready for bed  
11:30pm – Lights out

## Saturday

8:00am – Breakfast  
9:00am – Session #3  
10:30am – Break  
11:00am – Session #4  
12:30pm – Lunch  
1:30pm – Session #5  
3:00pm – Retreat ends

# Session 1: Teamwork!

## **The Essentials:**

**Purpose:** To discover the importance of working together on a mission team using problem-solving challenges, trust building exercises, and activities that stress communication and cooperation.

Time: 1 hour, 30 minutes

## **Overview of Session:**

- Opening
- Icebreaker: 10 minutes
- Group-Building activity and debrief: 20-30 minutes  
Trust-building activity and debrief: 30 minutes  
Closing: 10 minutes

## **Supplies Needed:**

1. One or two boxes of brownie mix and the ingredients
2. Kitchen utensils needed to bake brownies
3. An oven
4. Blindfolds for every other person in your group
5. 10 Pieces of lumber or carpet squares, varying sizes
6. Bible

## **1. Opening**

Open with prayer. Introduce the session to the group. Make sure to explain the purpose and importance of the session to the group members.

## **2. Icebreaker**

The name of this icebreaker is “**Questions**”. This game should be done in small groups of 5-7 people.

### How to play:

Have group members stand in a circle. One person begins by looking at someone in the group and asking a question – any question. It really doesn't matter what the question is, so long as they ask a question. The person who was then asked a question turns to someone else and asks a different question. Then that person turns to someone else and asks a different question. Sounds simple, doesn't it? It is until you look at the rules of the game.

### Here are the rules:

1. You cannot *ask* a question that's been asked before.
2. You cannot *ask* a question to someone that just asked you a question.
3. You cannot *answer* a question.
4. You must ask a *different question* to a different person *within 3 seconds*.

If a player violates any of the above rules, he or she simply steps out of the circle and observes until the round is over. Play this 3-4 times.

### **3. Group-Building Activities**

The name of this game is called the “**Blindfolded Brownies.**”

Divide the group into teams with no more than six in a group (If you have a larger group, you may want to go through this exercise twice, using two boxes of brownie mix). The object of the activity is to make brownies following the directions on the box but with the following restrictions:

- The team members take turns being blindfolded as they follow the directions from the rest of the team to complete one step of the brownie making process.
- The other team members may verbally give directions but they may not assist the blindfolded teammate nor may they move the teammate’s hands.
- The team must eat the brownies they make!
- While brownies bake, gather the group together and read Romans 12:4-8.

*Discuss the following:*

1. How does it feel to be working together so closely?
2. How do you think each person’s role will affect the final product?
3. How is the way we’re working together similar to what this passage says about the body of Christ?

### **4. Trust-Building Activity**

The name of this trust exercise is *Diminishing Resources*. You could do this either in a Fellowship Hall or outside.

#### **Objective:**

The ultimate objective is to successfully have the entire team off the floor/ground at the same time.

#### **Rules:**

1. Begin by using all the lumber/carpet squares for the group. Everyone must be off the ground, but can be standing on the material. The ground has become a swamp filled with hungry alligators. If you have one square for each person, great, if not, then people will need to begin getting creative.
2. If one person falls off the square and gets even a toe in the swamp, take a square away.
3. Once everyone is safe on a square, remove one square at a time (alligator ate it, it started to sink, be creative) until only one or two squares are left and the group is huddled together. If the group thinks outside of the box, try and remove the last square (Hint: The rule is everyone has to be out of the swamp, they don’t have to be on the square, they can all be in the air simultaneously, for example)

## **Debriefing:**

**IMPORTANT:** Allow at least 5-10 minutes at the end to debrief. Make sure to get several people to answer each question. Work to include everyone in the discussion - even the quiet and shy members. Have the group sit on the floor and then ask:

1. What was that exercise like for you?
2. What was the most fun for you? Why?
3. What was the scariest or the most difficult for you? What made it so?
4. Why is trust important?
5. What makes trust difficult?
6. Why might trust be important in our mission team?
7. Why might trust be important to us as Christians?

## **5. Closing**

**Scripture:** Have someone read 1 Corinthians 12:12

**Say something like this:** *We have seen through the exercises that communication, trust, problem-solving and cooperation are all very important if we want to be an effective team. We need to rely on each other in order to accomplish certain tasks. God has given us each other so that we can work together and support each other. Sure, we can do some things on our own, but the work God has for us this summer will require us to recognize each other's gifts, work as a team, and trust each other.*

Close in prayer

# Session 2: “I Know the Plans I have For You”

## **The Essentials:**

**Purpose:** Using Jeremiah as an example, this session is designed to help students understand that there is a reason for their presence on the mission team. The session also looks at what their mission trip experience may look like (outline of a typical day, their “free” day, work teams, lodging, etc.) and answer many questions that may be on the minds of middle school students (Whoa, that’s a scary thought!)

## **Overview of session:**

1. Opening 1 hour, 30 minutes
2. Icebreaker: 10 minutes
3. “Why Are You Here?” 30 minutes
4. “Life at JP”: 20 minutes
5. Closing

## **Supplies needed:**

4 different types of balls (i.e. a tennis ball, volleyball, a ping-pong ball, a beach ball)  
Index cards for each person  
Pen or pencil for each person  
Laptop, projector & screen and PowerPoint game, “Life at JP!” downloaded from the JP website ([www.jeremiahproject.org](http://www.jeremiahproject.org). Go to “Youth Leader Resources” then, “Registration/Downloads”)

## **1. Opening**

Open with **prayer**. Introduce the session to the group. Make sure to explain the purpose and importance of the session to the group members.

## **2. Icebreaker**

The name of this game is called the “**Four Balls Exercise.**”

You will need 4 different types of balls (i.e. a tennis ball, volleyball, a ping-pong ball, a beach ball). Other balls will work, of course. In a large group, with everyone standing in a circle standing, tell the group that you will begin by tossing a ball (underhand and gently) to someone in the group (cannot be to the person standing next to you). That person will then toss it to another person who has not received it yet, and so on until the last person to receive it throws it back to you. If that person is standing right next to you, have the group start over and end with someone who is not standing next to you. Once you’ve accomplished that, tell the group that you will now “lock” the pattern. Begin tossing the ball using the same pattern as before just to make sure everyone knows whom he or she is supposed to throw it to. Now, inform the group that you will be introducing three more balls sporadically while the first ball is being tossed around.

The goal is to have all four balls in the circle being tossed around while not dropping any of the balls. If at any time a ball is dropped, the following must take place:

1. Everyone sits down
2. Leader asks three questions:  
    “What went wrong?”  
    “How do we fix it?” and  
    “Does everyone agree on the solution?”
3. Resume the activity

After the group has spent some time with this activity, find a stopping point and debrief the activity (it’s not crucial that the group “succeed”).

1. How did we do?
2. What did we learn about our group?
3. Why is communication important in a mission team?

### **3. Why Are You Here?**

Give each person an index card and a pen or pencil. Ask them to write down all the reasons they have signed up for the mission trip. Ask them to give “real” answers and not ones that they think you want to hear like, “I want to be a missionary in Africa when I come back from JP”, or, “I want to be the next Mother Theresa”. Tell them that they are *not* to put their names on the cards.

Give them a few minutes to write down their reasons and then collect the cards. Sitting in a circle on the floor or in chairs, read each one out loud. Its okay if some (or most) of the reasons are silly; after all, they’re middle schoolers!

### **4. Why Are You Here Part 2 Scripture Search**

After you have some fun with those answers, divide the students into two teams. Have them do a scripture search to find the answers to this info on Jeremiah.

#### **Team 1:**

1. Jeremiah was a(n):
  - a) apostle
  - b) epistle
  - c) prophet
  - d) pizza delivery guy

**Hint:** Check out Jeremiah Chapter 1.
2. How old do most historians think Jeremiah was when God called him?
  - a) 9 – 11 years old
  - b) 12 – 14 years old

- c) 40 – 42 years old
  - d) 127 – 130 years old
3. What did God call Jeremiah to say to the people of Judah?

**Hint:** *Check out Jeremiah 7:23-24*

**Team 2:**

1. Why did Jeremiah think he wasn't useful to God?

**Hint:** *Check out Jeremiah Chapter 1.*

2. Besides disaster, what kind of other message does God send through Jeremiah?

**Hint:** *Check out Jeremiah 29:11.*

3. How long did Jeremiah proclaim God's message?

- a) 4 days
- b) 4 years
- c) 40 years
- d) 4 decades

**Answer Key:**

1. Jeremiah was a(n):

- a) apostle
- b) epistle
- c) prophet**
- d) pizza delivery guy

**Hint:** *Check out Jeremiah Chapter 1.*

2. How old do most historians think Jeremiah was when God called him?

- a) 9 – 11 years old
- b) 12 – 14 years old**
- c) 40 – 42 years old
- d) 127 – 130 years old

3. What does God call Jeremiah to say to the people of Judah?

**Hint:** *Check out Jeremiah 7:23-24*

**God calls Jeremiah to give the message to the people of Judah that they must turn from their idol worship and moral decay and follow God. Otherwise the people of Judah will meet with disaster.**

4. Why did Jeremiah think he wasn't useful to God?

**Hint:** Check out Jeremiah Chapter 1.

**Jeremiah felt he was too young to be of any use to God.**

5. Besides disaster, what kind of other message does God send through Jeremiah?

**Hint:** Check out Jeremiah 29:11.

**It was also a message of hope.**

6. How long did Jeremiah proclaim God's message?

a) 4 days

b) 4 years

**c) 40 years**

**d) 4 decades**

### **Debriefing:**

**Leader:** Ask these questions and try to get your students to draw the conclusions. If they're having trouble coming up with the conclusions, or if you want to supplement their answers, there are a few suggestions for what to say.

**Ask:** *What does all this info about Jeremiah have to do with you?*

**Say:** *Simple. The story of Jeremiah is not just a story about Jeremiah. In many ways, it's a story about us – God's people. Among other things, it's a story about how God calls young people to do great things...even today!*

*The Jeremiah Project believes that God calls young people today to do great things. God calls middle school students to be the hands and feet of Christ. God calls middle school students to show compassion and love for people. God calls middle school students to bring hope to others. And the Jeremiah Project believes that you're on this mission trip for a reason.*

**Have a student read Jeremiah 29:11.**

**Ask:** What does this passage have to do with our mission trip experience?

**Say:** *God knows the plans he has for you. God knows why you're going on this mission trip.*

*You may have said that you signed up for this mission trip to get away from your parents, or because your friend talked you into it, or some other reason. But God knows the real reason you're here. God wants you to draw near to Him and He wants to use you this summer to do great things.*

**5. "Life at JP" (NOTE: There is a PowerPoint game available for download on the JP website called "Life at JP!")**

**Leader:** This next section deals with the more practical stuff about the mission trip. You will want to have your own details of the mission trip to share with your team, like when you're leaving for the mission trip, what you will be doing on your "free" day, etc.

We'll try to anticipate the other questions that may be rolling around inside their heads. We've developed this little game to address some of the aspects of the JP mission trip.

Play the game show, "**Life at JP!**" with your group. Have a podium or music stand for you – the host – and divide your group into two teams. Teams will take turns sending a representative to the front of the room to answer a question. If they answer it correctly, their team gets a point. Alternate teams for each question.

**1. What time do you wake up in the morning? Correct answer: b**

- a.) 6:30am
- b.) 7:00am
- c.) 7:30am
- d.) 10:00am

**2. What type of food is served at breakfast? Correct answer: a, b, and sometimes d**

- a.) Cold cereal
- b.) Hot cereal
- c.) No cereal
- d.) Eggs & bacon, pancakes, etc.

**3. What do you wear to the work site? Correct answer: d**

- a.) Sweatpants
- b.) Shorts
- c.) Your favorite jeans
- d.) Clothes you don't mind ruining

**4. How much water will you be asked to drink at the work site? Correct answer: b**

- a.) 4 gallons by 4:00pm
- b.) 4 quarts by 4:00pm
- c.) 3 gallons by 3:00pm
- d.) A sip at least once during the day

**5. Your work team is made up of: Correct answer: c**

- a.) Really annoying people
- b.) Your best friends from youth group
- c.) People from various churches
- d.) People who only speak Chipmunk

**7. The type of work you'll be doing could be:** Correct answer: **a & b**

- a.) Post-hole digging
- b.) Painting, hammering, yard work.
- c.) Washing the Camp Director's car
- d.) Changing diapers
- e.) Bathing chipmunks

**8. JP likes students who:** Correct answer: **b, c, & d**

- a.) Whine
- b.) Work hard, play hard, & pray hard
- c.) Take showers
- d.) Put on clean underwear...everyday!

**9. The cabins are:** Correct answer: **a & c**

- a.) Covered by a roof
- b.) Equipped with whirlpools
- c.) Just right!
- d.) For the adults only (students sleep in tents)

**10. I will be sleeping in a cabin with:** Correct answer: **d (and possibly b and c)**

- a.) Chipmunks
- b.) Stinky people
- c.) My mouth open (how else will the bugs get in?)
- d.) People from other churches
- e.)

**11. The staff gets to play the campers at what sport each week?**

Correct answer: **A Water Balloon Volleyball Tournament.**

**12. What comes immediately after breakfast each morning?** Correct answer: **b & d (and sometimes "a")**

- a.) A trip to the bathroom
- b.) Morning devotions
- c.) A 30-minute *Buns of Steel* workout
- d.) Quiet time with God

**13. Each evening is set aside for:** Correct answer: **d**

- a.) A 30-minute *Buns of Steel* workout.
- b.) Fireworks
- c.) A 45-minute video on the proper way to floss your teeth.
- d.) An awesome evening program filled with music, singing, sharing, praying, learning, and growing closer to God.

**14. What types of recreation opportunities are there at camp? Correct answer: a & b**

- a.) Basketball
- b.) Volleyball
- c.) Ping-Pong
- d.) Paintball
- e.) Dog pile the youth leader

**15. What time is “lights out” each night? Correct answer: b**

- a.) 10:00pm
- b.) 10:30pm
- c.) 11:00pm
- e.) Midnight

➤ **The next three are BONUS QUESTIONS (5 points for each correct answer)!**

**16. About how many other churches will be at JP the same week as your church?**

Correct answer: a

- a.) 3-5
- b.) 6
- c.) 7
- d.) 37

**17. When do campers receive any mail that was sent? Correct answer: c**

- a.) *After* breakfast
- b.) Right *before* dinner
- c.) Right *after* dinner
- d.) No “Mail Call”. Staff keeps all packages that contain junk food.

**18. Approximately how many people will be in camp, including staff? Correct answer: c**

- a.) 55
- b.) 60
- c.) 65
- d.) 70

**19. Wednesday is “Free” Day. What is that? Correct answer: c**

- a.) That’s the day you get anything you want for free.
- b.) That’s the day they let all the prisoners from the local jail out for 2 hours to go to Wal-Mart.
- c.) That’s the day you go somewhere with your youth group and have a lot of fun together.

**20. What special event happens on Thursday night? Correct answer: a & d**

- a.) The staff plays the campers in Water Balloon Volleyball.
- b.) The staff lets the campers stay up all night long.
- c.) It's a day of fasting – no one eats dinner that night.
- d.) It's a banquet for the families we work with.

Total up your points and give the winning team a big JP staff hug (if you don't know what that is, make something up).

**Share** your church's details (discuss what you'll be doing for your "free" day, departure times, fund raising announcements, handout medical forms, etc.)

**What other questions** does your group have? Make a note of them in the box below. Then, email them to JP and we'll answer them right away!

Questions to ask JP:

Email these to "[kristie@jeremiahproject.org](mailto:kristie@jeremiahproject.org)"

**5. Closing**

Read Jeremiah 29:11 once again and then **close with prayer.**

# Session 3: “Called to Compassion”

## **The Essentials:**

**Purpose:** To help participants to see that, first and foremost, we are to demonstrate compassion and love to each person we encounter.

Time: 1 Hour, 30 Minutes

## **Overview of session:**

1. Opening
2. Icebreaker: 10 minutes
3. Listening Test: 15 minutes
4. Disability Relay: 35 minutes  
Scripture: 10 minutes
5. If the world were 100 people: 10 minutes
6. Closing

## **Materials needed:**

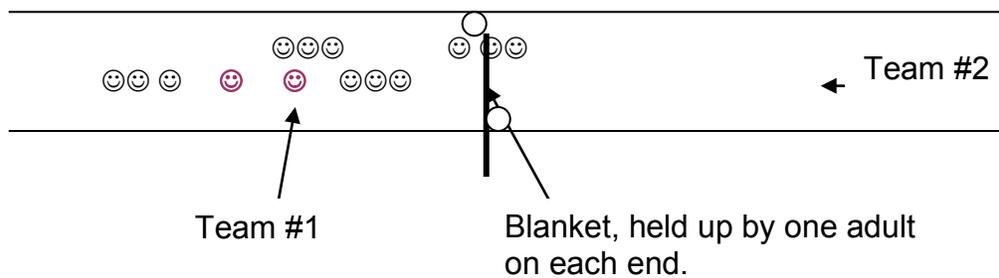
Large blanket  
Winning prize for your whole group  
Blindfolds  
Bibles

### ***1. Opening***

Open with prayer. Introduce the session to the group. Make sure to explain the purpose and importance of the session to the group members.

### ***2. Icebreaker***

The name of this game is called, “**Drop Zone**”. You will need a large blanket for this game. The location that usually works best is a narrow hallway in church. Divide your mission team into two teams. Again, for you visual learners out there, here you go:



**Play:** Players take turns going up to the blanket with their *backs to the blanket*. At the count of three, the adults quickly lower the blanket and the players standing at the blanket spin around to face the other player. The object of the game is to see who can say the name of the other team's player the fastest. The person that loses is now on the opposite team. The team that gets all the other team's players wins. Please note: This game will not work if you have a small mission team coming to JP.

### 3. "Listening Test"

Start by telling the youth that a part of ministering, both on mission and at home with our friends and families, is *listening*. Really listening means maintaining frequent eye contact with the person who is sharing and asking questions that are pertinent to the conversations. Above all, take what the person shares seriously, and be sensitive to their feelings. Remind them that what is shared in the group is confidential and stays in the group. This is important to the trust that is being built. Spend about fifteen minutes practicing listening. (You may want to refer back to this later when you are discussing meeting social and emotional needs.)

Use the question ideas in **Handout #1**, or make up some of your own. Have the kids start with a partner then after about five minutes, switch partners and move on to new questions.

### 4. "Disability Awareness"

Divide your groups into teams of three to five people. (Adapt to the size of your group.) The following "characters" should be identified:

- One person who is "blind" (blindfolded)
- One person with an arm tied in a sling. (They may not use the arm during the relay.)
- One person who is designated as being unable to walk. (They must be carried throughout the relay.)
- Two people to be "carriers", but one cannot speak and one cannot read.

The following are possible tasks for the team to complete but also may be adapted as space and facilities warrant.

- Look up a given Bible verse and be ready to paraphrase it to the group.
- Take a walk around the building and come back in a different door. (Try to use stairs or steps if possible.)
- Call the youth director's cell phone and leave a message.

- Get each person in your group a cup of water and everyone must drink it.
- Sit down in a circle when you are done.

Aside from the obvious physical limitations of some of the members of the relay team, the only rules are that everyone on the relay team must participate in each task. Being middle schoolers, they will get a little wild and crazy while doing this. That's okay. But when the activity is over, you will need to ~~tie them up~~ calm them down and have a brief but "serious" discussion.

Process this activity with the group by asking:

1. How did you work differently to accomplish your tasks?
2. What things were you able to do the same?
3. How did this activity make you feel?
4. How might you better understand someone living with a disability?
5. How did working within a team help you accomplish your tasks?

### **Scripture**

Let's look at some scripture to see what God has to say about compassion and loving one another:

### **Read: 1 John 4:1-12**

Divide your team into groups of 5 or 6 (each with an adult). Give each team paper and several Bibles. Have each group list as many facts about love as they can find. For fun, give out a prize to the group with the most.

After a few minutes, gather the groups and discuss the newfound facts. Facts could be: God is love. We're to love one another. If we love, we know God. We love because God first loved us, etc. Award the winning group a big bag of candy hearts for each fact listed (Tell them that a true sign of love is sharing!).

### **Read John 13:35**

#### **Small Group Questions**

1. Will people know we are disciples for Jesus if we build a wheelchair ramp for them?  
Based on the scripture, how will people know?
2. What are some ways we can show love and compassion to those we are serving?

### **Read 1 Corinthians 13:1-13**

As a fun exercise and one that will drive home the message of this scripture, have each small group rewrite the scripture to include examples from the work site. Example:

*"I may be able to hammer a nail without missing it once, but if I do not have love, I am only a..."* You get the idea. Encourage them to have fun with it and allow them to be silly as well. Take a moment at the end of this exercise to reinforce the importance of the message.

## 5. "If the World Were Only 100 People"

Visual Document: If you'd like to hand out the following information in a visually attractive and colorful way, go to this link and print off a copy:

[http://25.media.tumblr.com/tumblr\\_llub3kQjzylqiuwg7o1\\_rl\\_1280.png](http://25.media.tumblr.com/tumblr_llub3kQjzylqiuwg7o1_rl_1280.png)

Have the youth fill in the blanks on **Handout #2**. Ask the students for their reactions after they fill out the handout. You can do this as one large group or have individuals or teams complete then discuss as a large group.

Ask the group after you review the correct answers:

1. What kinds of needs might most families have?
2. Name some other things at home that you take for granted?
3. How might we be called to serve people that do not have all the resources available that we have?

Share the following with your students (list them on newsprint): *All of the activities we have participated in during this session identify the kinds of needs we may be called to fill:*

- Physical/ material- either due to a disability or a material need around their property.
- Emotional/social- a need for company; to be listened to; to feel somebody cares about them.
- Spiritual - a need to be invited to pray, to share noontime devotions or a scripture reading.

**Say something to this effect:** *Now that we have identified the kinds of needs we may be filling; we have to keep in mind who identifies that "need": The person who requested help or us? For instance we may get to a house where our directions are to rake a yard even though the porch is falling down and the whole place needs painting. How do we handle that?*

### **Optional:**

Have one or more students that have been to JP share about their own experiences with families and individuals they've encountered.

## 6. Closing

Use the scripture Luke 10:30-37, the parable of the Good Samaritan. Jesus used parables frequently because it helped the people relate his message to their own life. We could say Jesus met the people "where they were". We are called to do the same. Serving means empowering the people we serve; it builds them up and shows Christ's love through us.

Gather your team in a huddle and, as a **closing prayer**, lead your students in a prayer for wisdom and guidance in demonstrating love and compassion to each person they encounter this summer. Do a "popcorn" prayer where students can share, as they feel led. **NOTE:** Don't go in order around the circle for each student to pray. Instead, create a safe environment where students can pass on praying out loud.

## **Handouts for Session 3: "Called to Compassion"**

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### **Handout #1**

#### **The Listening Test**

#### **Your favorites:**

- \* What do you like most about school?
- \* What's your favorite time of year? Why?
- \* What is your favorite Bible verse?

#### **Exposing weaknesses:**

- \* What do you think is your worst personality trait?
- \* What is your most annoying habit?
- \* What habit annoys you most in your friends?
- \* What do you disagree with parents about most often?

#### **The pits:**

- \* What bugs you most about school?
- \* What is your least favorite vegetable?
- \* When were you last bummed out and why?

#### **Revealing strengths:**

- \* What is your best personality trait?
- \* What is your greatest skill?
- \* What is your best spiritual strength?

**Helpful scripture:** Proverbs 18:2, 13                      Proverbs 22:17

Ecclesiastes 3:7

Taken from Up Close and Personal by Wayne Rice  
(Youth Specialties Books, El Cajon, CA., 1989)

## Handout # 2

### If the World Were Only 100 People

Guess how many out of 100 would fit these categories. For example, If the world were only 100 people, 61 would be Asian.

If the world were only 100 people...

- \* \_\_\_\_ would be females
- \* \_\_\_\_ would be males

If the world were only 100 people, there would be

- \* \_\_\_\_ Asians
- \* \_\_\_\_ Europeans
- \* \_\_\_\_ from the Western Hemisphere (The Americas - North and South)
- \* \_\_\_\_ Africans

100 people total

If the world were only 100 people,

- \* \_\_\_\_ would be children (under 18 years old)
- \* \_\_\_\_ would be adults

100 people total

If the world were only 100 people, out of 100...

- \* \_\_\_\_ would have a college education
- \* \_\_\_\_ would own a computer
- \* \_\_\_\_ people would live in substandard housing
- \* \_\_\_\_ would be unable to read
- \* \_\_\_\_ would suffer from malnutrition
- \* \_\_\_\_ would be dying of starvation
- \* \_\_\_\_ would be overweight
  
- \* \_\_\_\_ people would have no clean, safe water to drink
  
- \* \_\_\_\_ people would have some supply of food and a place to shelter them from the wind and the rain, but \_\_\_\_ would not. (Totals 100)

## Handout #2- Answer Sheet

### If the World Were Only 100 People

\* 50 would be females

\* 50 would be males

\* There would be:

\* 61 Asians

\* 12 Europeans

\* 14 from the Western Hemisphere (The Americas - North and South)

\* 13 Africans

\* 30 would be children

\* 70 would be adults

\* 1 would have a college education

\* 1 would own a computer

\* 80 people would live in substandard housing

\* 14 would be unable to read

\* 50 would suffer from malnutrition

\* 1 would be dying of starvation

\* 15 would be overweight

\* 17 people would have no clean, safe water to drink

\* 75

people would have some supply of food and a place to shelter them from the wind and the rain, but 25 would not.

# Session 4: “Working for the Kingdom”

## **The Essentials:**

**Purpose:** To help participants understand that serving others does not end after a weeklong mission trip and that their young age does not prohibit them from acting or give them a free pass to not act. Our responsibility to care for God’s people begins in our own backyard.

**Time:** 1 Hour, 30 Minutes

## **Overview of session:**

1. Opening
2. Icebreaker: 10 minutes
3. I Don’t Get It: 45 minutes
4. “Life after JP”: 10 minutes
5. Closing

## **Supplies needed:**

A long piece of rope (about 30-50 feet)  
Newsprint taped to the wall with the headings “What God Hates” & “What God Loves”  
Masking tape  
Markers  
10 copies of “Life after JP”  
Bibles

### **1. Opening**

Open with **prayer**. Introduce the session to the group. Make sure to explain the purpose and importance of the session to the group members.

### **2. Icebreaker**

The name of this game is “**Blind Polygon**”.

Divide the mission team into groups of 8 to 10. Take the groups to different locations. Blindfold each person and have them sit down. Place the rope about 15 to 20 feet from the group at a location where they do not know where it is.

**The Challenge:** Your challenge is to find the rope that is nearby and make a (right triangle, square, rectangle, etc. - whatever you choose) without using your sense of sight. When you agree - as a group - that you have successfully completed the challenge, sit down, take off your blindfolds, and see what shape you have created. After you look at it for a minute, talk about the exercise.

### **Debriefing**

The real goal of this exercise is communication, teamwork, cooperation, and problem solving - not just succeeding. The more mistakes that are made, the more learning that will take place. Make sure to allow time at the end to debrief. Even failure to complete the task can mean successful learning. That is your "real" goal.

- Ask:**
- 1) Were we "successful?" Why or why not?
  - 2) What were the problems or difficulties we encountered?
  - 3) How did we overcome these?
  - 4) What did you learn about us as a group?
  - 5) What did you learn about yourself?
  - 6) What does this exercise have to do with our mission team?
  - 7) What does this exercise have to do with being a Christian?

### **3. "I Don't Get It"**

#### **Leader Info:**

When we think about injustice in the world, we often think about events that happen in other parts of the world – children starving in third world countries, the AIDS epidemic in Africa, child bonded labor. Your group is half a world away from many of these injustices that we think about, but just because they may not be as obvious here at home, doesn't mean injustices don't happen.

For this section, the goal is to help students realize their place in helping others not just during this one mission week, but throughout their lives. Students will also get an opportunity to examine any underlying feelings they may have about injustice in the world and the responsibility they have to address these issues. As Christians, we are called to not only love what God loves, but hate what God hates as well.

Don't be shocked if some individuals seem less-than-positive about being asked to join the fight against injustice. Press on. If you connect with the skeptics, you'll really connect with the tenderhearted. And don't overlook the value a skeptic's questions can bring to your process: some kids take things to heart on a shallow and unconsidered level; the skeptic invites them to think deeper, which can lead to deeper conviction and long-lasting commitments. And wouldn't that be nice.

#### **What God Loves/What God Hates.**

For this part of the session, have two pieces of newsprint on the wall. On one, write *What God Loves*. On the other, *What God Hates* (you can do this ahead of time and cover it with a blank piece of newsprint so the students don't see it). Divide your students in half and have each group go to a different piece of paper. Give them 2 minutes to write down all the things they can think of for each category. Then, switch the groups and give them 2 minutes at the other station.

**Leader Tip:**

Here are some suggestions if your group is having trouble coming up with a few:

| <b>What God Hates</b> | <b>What God Loves</b> |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Abuse                 | Kindness              |
| Starvation            | Mercy                 |
| Lying                 | Forgiveness           |

**After each group has had an opportunity to list what they think God hates and what God loves, bring them all back together to discuss the following questions.**

- 1) Have a couple students read the lists out loud to the whole group. Does anyone disagree with anything that was put on these lists? Why? Is there anything we forgot to put up there?
- 2) Why do you think that God hates these things on the “What God Hates” list?
- 3) Why do you think that God loves these things on the “What God Loves” list?
- 4) How do you feel when you see these two lists? Helpless? Angry?

*Some students may feel sad, helpless, or angry especially when looking at the “What God Hates” list. It’s good to talk about these because we can segue into what they can do about these issues.*

**Potential follow up questions:**

- 1) How angry are you? What do you feel like doing?
- 2) Why do you feel helpless?
- 3) Who feels determined to change things? What do you want to do?
- 4) Who feels numb or who feels nothing when looking at these lists? Talk about that.
- 5) What did I leave out? Talk about that.

**Scripture.**

Have someone read **Micah 6:8**.

**Ask:** What does this say about our responsibility to people and/or to God?

Have someone read **Hebrews 13:1-3**.

**Ask:**

- 1) Who are the human beings in these three verses?
  - a. Write down the list, including brothers, sister, strangers, prisoners, victims, us (by the way, in the Bible, “stranger” usually refers to a resident alien.)

- 2) How does this passage describe our responsibility to each of these?
- 3) What is the hardest thing about loving other Christians as if they were your brothers and sisters?
- 4) What's the hardest thing about being hospitable to aliens and strangers?
- 5) What's the biggest challenge to remembering prisoners as if you were in jail too?
- 6) What's your biggest challenge in remembering those who are mistreated as if you were suffering yourself?
- 7) What's the biggest challenge to actually *doing* something about injustice in the world?

### **Bringing It Home**

#### **Ask:**

- 1) How do we bring what we've learned today into our everyday lives?
- 2) What are some things we can do in our own community to show God's justice to people? (You can list these ideas on newsprint if you like).

*Brainstorm ideas for 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. If your group is set on making a commitment during this very session to be part of an outreach ministry, that's okay too.*

#### **4. Life After JP**

Have your students and adults take turns reading. It's always a good idea to allow students to volunteer when it comes to reading. Some students may not be very good readers and it may embarrass them. Again, it's important to create a safe environment with middle school students.

**Reader #1:** *So, what happens when we come back from the Jeremiah Project? What will happen to the feelings that we will have experienced? What will happen to our group?*

**Reader #2:** *Will we still be on fire to serve God in our own community and to live out our faith every day? Maybe we'll take on new and exciting service projects in our own community and fall in love with mission work instead of just mission projects.*

**Reader #3:** *The truth is, it's gonna be hard. Many of us will come back changed and excited about our newfound faith. For others, it was a great week, but it wasn't as powerful for us spiritually as it was for others – that's okay. God speaks to us in different ways and at different times.*

**Reader #4:** *Now what? For many, this will be the last opportunity to serve with the Jeremiah Project...or will it? In a few short years, we could return to serve on staff. Wouldn't that be awesome! Maybe then we'll be on the winning water-balloon volleyball team!*

**Reader #5:** *The staff of the Jeremiah Project realizes that it's hard to keep the fire of faith burning inside you. It's tough to be a Christian in a non-Christian world. It's tough not to cross the line and compromise your beliefs and values – particularly at school.*

**Reader #6:** *To help us in our walk with God, JP encourages us to regularly attend Bible study, youth group, worship, and also develop habits of daily prayer, devotion time, quiet time, and to surround ourselves with other Christians at school.*

**Reader #7:** *The Jeremiah Project also offers a spiritual retreat in the spring called "JOURNEY."*

**Reader #8:** *This is another way for us to continue growing in our faith after our mission trip experience is over. We get to see old friends, worship our awesome God, and be challenged in our walk with God.*

**Reader #9:** *And of course, JP wants to encourage us to look beyond the Jeremiah Project for our mission trips. There are lots of other mission organizations out there that will expose us to other cultures and different needs.*

**Reader #10:** *Remember, fall in love with mission work, and not mission projects. We should be open to where God wants to send us and our group. Let's not put God in a box – God's much too big for that!*

The JP staff looks forward to an awesome work camp this summer with you. Bring an open heart and an open mind and let God rule!

#### **5. 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.**

# Session 5: “Practice, Practice, Practice”

## **The Essentials:**

**Purpose:** 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 life – at least not correctly! 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.

Time: 1 Hour, 30 Minutes

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!

*Be creative and make this a fun, informative session! Your students need to feel encouraged and empowered to do the work God has prepared for them this summer.*

# Commissioning Services

Option #1:

## The Jeremiah Project Commissioning Service

**Leader:** Dear friends, today we recognize the ministries of our students and adults and consecrate them to a special task in the service of Jesus Christ. Hear the words of our Lord:

*“You did not choose me but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit and that the fruit shall abide; so that whatever you ask of the Father in my name, He may give it to you.” - John 15:16*

**Leader:** Do you believe that you have been led by the Holy Spirit to engage in this work and to assume the responsibilities, which God has placed on you as you go forth to your assignment at the Jeremiah Project?

**Mission Team:** I do so believe.

**Leader:** In humble reliance on God’s grace, do you commit your time and spirit to giving of yourselves during this mission to the work of Christ, both in the community and in the lives of your fellow campers?

**Mission Team:** Yes, God being my helper.

**Leader:** In the name of this congregation, I commend you to this work and pledge to you our prayers, encouragement and support. May the Holy Spirit guide you and strengthen you that in this and in all things you may do God’s will in the service of Jesus Christ.

**Congregation:** We rejoice to recognize you as missionaries from this church. May the blessings of God go with you and keep you safe throughout your mission.

**Option #2:**

The Jeremiah Project Commissioning Service

**Pastor:** Next week these students and adults will leave for an incredible mission of service and love in Winchester, VA. Please join in this commissioning with this responsive reading:

(Mission Team will be facing the congregation)

**Youth #1:** Matthew 25:37-40 reads, “Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink?”

**Youth #2:** “When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you?”

**Youth #3:** “When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?”

**Pastor:** “The King will reply, ‘I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did to me.’

**Entire Mission Team:** During the week, we will be ambassadors for Jesus by sharing God’s love with each person we come in contact with;

**Guys:** The elderly...the forgotten...the tired

**Girls:** The children...people with disabilities...the poor

**Entire Mission Team:** ALL of God’s children

**Pastor:** Lord, bless the attitudes and actions of these your servants. Help them to see you have made them into valuable tools of love.

**Congregation:** All of us cannot be with you on your mission trip. Will you be our representatives in the mission field?

**Mission Team:** We will gladly represent this church

**Congregation:** Will you freely give of your time, energy, and love?

**Mission Team:** We will cooperate and participate as eager servants of God.

**Congregation:** We are grateful for your commitment to serve, and pray God’s blessings upon your experience.

**Mission Team:** Will you, as a congregation, continue to support us with your prayers?

**Congregation:** We will pray that the people see a glimpse of God at work through you.

**Pastor:** And now let us pause for a moment of silent prayer...

**Pastor:** With the strength and power of the Holy Spirit, go and serve the Lord. May God’s presence shine on you! Amen.