

Grace Dental and Medical Missions, Inc.  
(GDMMissions)

# Short-Term Field Team Handbook

December 2012





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## Introduction

Thank you for your interest in Grace Dental and Medical Missions (GDMMissions), and a special thanks for your desire to serve the Lord on a short-term field team trip. This handbook will give you more information about GDMMissions and our policies that will prepare you for your trip. It is our aim to help you benefit most from your foreign field team trip and to assist in your spiritual, mental, and physical preparation for what could be one of the best experiences of your life!

***As a member of a field team with GDMMissions you are considered a short-term missionary.*** Because you represent the Lord Jesus Christ we request that you observe the standards and practices in this handbook. Because our standards and practices are grounded in the Bible we trust that you will read them with care and understanding.

Short-term field teams are of real benefit to missionaries and local churches in foreign countries. As a member of a field team we hope you will pray about the following objectives as you prepare for your trip:

1. To gain insight into mission work. To understand the work of the Lord in a different culture. To seek to know more clearly His will in personal involvement in world missions. To share this insight with your local church when you return from your trip.
2. To communicate and distribute the Word of God for the salvation of unbelievers and for the edification of believers. To see that the Gospel of God's Grace is presented clearly through a personal testimony that reflects the reality of the indwelling Holy Spirit.
3. To serve, grow spiritually, and further the cause of the Gospel by assisting missionaries and local assemblies through dental and medical evangelism. To use your spiritual gifts to bless others on your team as you work together to bring the Gospel to the lost.
4. To show the love and compassion of Jesus Christ to those in need through your health care skills and experience. To translate physical acts of kindness in the area of dentistry and medicine into opportunities to share the Gospel with those who are impacted by you personally.

The short-term field team trip is not an opportunity for tourism, sightseeing, or shopping. As a member of a GDMMissions dental and medical evangelism team you should not expect a vacation at the expense of a missionary's or local pastor's time. There is serious work to be done – and there is joy in serving the Lord!

Dr. Jack Mitchell  
President  
Grace Dental and Medical Missions, Inc.



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## **Ministry Philosophy of GDM Missions**

Grace Dental and Medical Missions is grounded in a core missionary philosophy whose primary objective is sending and supporting dental and medical missionaries to foreign countries to present the Gospel and assisting in establishing local churches.

Our desire is “...*that we might be fellowhelpers to the truth.*” (3 John 8) through dental and medical service to draw attention to the message of salvation through Jesus Christ.

Our philosophy of ministry has six aspects:

### ***The Fundamentals of the Faith***

We work with local churches, missionaries, mission boards, and other Christian organizations that are in agreement with our doctrinal statement and Biblical faith and practice. Individuals on our staff and all who participate in our health care and evangelistic activities must agree in writing with our statement of faith. We do not partner with other Christian dental or medical organizations unless they too agree in faith and practice with our doctrinal statement. We do not seek or accept funding from governmental or private humanitarian organizations.

### ***Evangelism First***

Our philosophy is to focus our health care resources on evangelism and church planting. It would be easy to become consumed with dental and medical clinics to only relieve human suffering or to meet individual health care needs. These needs alone can be overwhelming in their magnitude. However, we see our ministry of compassion aimed toward the souls of men, women, and children through our unique use of dental and medical resources.

### ***Proven Partnership Strategies***

Over the years we developed a partnership strategy of working closely with foreign contacts and local churches. Our strategy is to develop contacts in a target country, break down bureaucratic and cultural barriers, plant evangelistic seeds, water them through persistent follow-up, and praise God for the harvest. We identify contacts in those countries where our dental and medical clinics can be most effective and work with them to send short-term or longer term teams. We work with like-minded local churches in the United States to educate, develop and support health care professionals to send out as dental and medical missionaries in obedience to the Great Commission. We are the mission board sought for training, development, leadership, sponsorship, and support of dental and medical missionaries.

### ***Short-term Field Team Ministries***

We plan our short-term field team ministries around one or more dentists, doctors, or health care professionals augmented by other support team members. Our field team trips are planned so each member of the team has a valued role and a set of tasks to support either health care activities or ministry, or evangelism with local pastors. We do not subscribe to a philosophy of “sacred tourism” and ensure that our short-term field team ministries are focused on daily objectives. Our team-oriented philosophy results in more invitations by missionaries to return again and



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referrals to other missionaries. Also, many individuals take repeated field team trips as valued members of our field teams and view their participation as an essential part of their personal Christian ministry.

### ***Long Range Planning***

Our mission seeks to be an organization where like-minded Christian dental and medical professionals can serve the Lord in evangelism and church planting through a variety of ways that fit their abilities and professional circumstances. GDM Missions has a long range five-year plan wherein health care professionals will have diverse opportunities to serve in evangelism and church planting ministries ranging from a short clinic trip within six hours of the United States to a longer ministry in a distant missionary clinic in Africa or Asia. Our goal is that some short-term missionaries will eventually become full-time dental or medical missionaries. Our philosophy is that Christian dentists, doctors, and other health care professionals should be offered a variety of opportunities to serve through our mission.

### ***Accountability***

We are committed to the highest standards of financial, doctrinal, and Christian conduct accountability to our supporting churches and individuals.

All our financial transactions are open and transparent. Our financial position is reviewed quarterly against an annual budget by our Board of Directors and annually by an auditor. We are committed to high standards of office administration and open communication with our supporters.

All our staff and missionaries must review our doctrinal statement annually and sign a statement of agreement with it. All participants in our short term field team trips must also indicate in writing their agreement with our doctrinal statement.

When we are in other countries we respect the cross-cultural sensitivities of churches in which we minister. We hold our field teams and staff to high standards of Christian conduct whether at home or in a cross-cultural environment.

## **A Brief History of GDM Missions**

### ***Founding and Early Years***

In 1992, an opportunity presented itself to Dr. Jack Mitchell and his wife Jennifer to help a missionary family on furlough from Africa with their personal dental needs. An outgrowth of this experience was an awareness of the difficulties many missionary families face obtaining affordable dental care.

Grace Dental and Medical Missions (GDM Missions), Inc. was incorporated in 1996 as Grace Dental Mission, Inc. (GDM) - a non-profit, tax-exempt corporation whose purpose is to help local churches in their efforts toward worldwide evangelism. The mission was established with a burden to help missionaries by providing free dental care to qualified families both in the United States and on foreign fields.

The first two ministry trips to foreign fields (Senegal, West Africa and Papua New Guinea), were primarily focused on treating missionary families serving in those



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locations. While on these trips it became obvious that the dental ministry could be used as a tool to bring unsaved people in contact with the message of the Gospel.

### ***Evangelistic Dentistry***

Beginning with a ministry trip to Mexico in 1998, the focus began to change toward assisting missionaries and local churches in their evangelistic outreach. While still interested in meeting the needs of the missionaries, the overriding purpose of the ministry trips became evangelistic, bringing the missionary in contact with those seeking dental care. It was not unusual that during a two week ministry several hundred people would be brought into contact with the local church planting missionary and local believers. Also in 1998, we started to include non-dental participants in these ministries to aid in the evangelistic outreach, with a particular emphasis on ministering to children. This proved to be beneficial not only to the missionary on the field, but also to those participating and their respective local churches. These “field team trips” became a regular part of the mission.

### ***Dental and Medical Evangelism***

In addition to the change in emphasis to evangelism first, the Mitchells began to see other health care professionals, such as physicians, nurses, and dental hygienists desiring to serve God with their skills and to show love for the lost. With this apparent expansion into the medical field they saw that they could impact even greater numbers of people. As a result, the Board of Directors voted in February, 2009 to officially change the name of the mission from Grace Dental Mission, Inc. to Grace Dental and Medical Missions, Inc. (GDM Missions).

Since its founding in 1996 through 2008, GDM Missions has treated approximately 2,000 missionary family members and participated in over 50 mission trips to more than 20 different countries.

## **Preparation for Short-Term Team Trips**

### ***Team Meetings***

There will be at least one meeting of the entire team before the planned departure for the trip. Because some team members may be in different states this can be done by telephone in a teleconference.

Team meetings will reiterate the purpose for serving the Lord on this particular trip and what will be done to assist the host missionary or host church. Also, the standards listed below will be reviewed and guidance given on additional standards and customs unique to the country to be visited. There will be a specific dress code for traveling as a group, serving, and attending services. The team leadership will be identified and each team member will be given one or more duties for the trip. Depending on the make-up of the group some will assist dentists, doctors, or other health care providers. Others may be asked to assist with evangelism programs, meals, and handling supplies. Individual men may be asked to give a team devotional from the Word and lead team devotions and prayer that begin each day.



A schedule for the planned duration of the trip will be handed out along with a travel itinerary and instructions on where and when to meet. Whenever possible the team will travel together between the United States and the destination country. The team leader will review security procedures to be observed while traveling and while in the host country.

### ***Personal Preparation***

Following are some things you can begin to do immediately as you prepare your heart for a team mission trip. Even if you have not yet applied for a trip with GDM Missions you can begin now to seek the Lord's will using these suggestions:

1. Pray in abundance for the blessing and enablement of God on your team trip. Pray that your interest in missions will be strengthened and ask God for discernment to know how best to use your spiritual gifts.
2. Determine that you will be faithful in daily prayer and reading of God's Word as part of your preparation. Start now to develop this important pattern of talking with God and reading the Bible every day.
3. Pray about the standards of conduct and doctrine listed in this handbook. If you haven't thought much about your personal Christian testimony as expressed in the way you dress, the activities you pursue, the music you listen to, etc. now is a good time to reflect on what the Bible has to say about these important aspects of your Christian walk.
4. Ask God for a flexible, understanding, yielded heart to serve Him according to His purposes. Sometimes we find that field team trips don't go exactly as planned. We try to organize the team ahead of time as best we can but cultural factors are such that plans may have to be changed and all schedules thrown out the window! Remember that adjusting is difficult for other members of the team too, including mature leaders, so everyone will need Christian grace to deal with changes and adversity. We are in a spiritual battle to bring the Gospel to a dark world, but God is so faithful in fighting the battle for us!
5. Choose a prayer partner in your local church who you will pray with and who will pray for you before, during, and after your trip. Your short-term field team trip will have a spiritual impact on your life and your prayer partner can pray for you during your trip as you face day-to-day spiritual challenges.
6. Begin a series of Bible studies on the subject of missions, the Great Commission and/or evangelism. Read through the Book of Acts to see how the Gospel spread throughout the known world. You might want to include assignments to read missionary biographies, or books on the subject. (If you want suggestions for missionary reading – besides the Bible – you can ask any of the GDM Missions staff for a reading list.)

### ***Church Family***

When you learn that you have been accepted on a short-term field team trip with GDM Missions ask your local church family to pray for you. Let them know where and when you will be going, what you will be doing, and what spiritual lessons you hope to



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learn. Ask them to pray for you as you prepare. Meet with your pastor and share with him your expectations for the team trip and ask that he and your church family pray for you while you are away. Ask your prayer partner to pray for you at prayer services. When you return from your trip ask your pastor if you can give a testimony on what you did and, more important, what spiritual lessons you learned.

## Christian Biblical Standards

### ***Our Position on Worldliness***

*“Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.” (2 Timothy 2:19b)*

*“Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. 17 And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.” (1 John 2:15-17)*

*“Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world.” (James 1:27)*

*“ I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.” (Romans 12:1-2)*

It is expected that all those who serve with GDM Missions in any capacity should have put off worldly attitudes, appetites, and behavior. Their lives should be marked by a pattern of *“keeping [themselves] unspotted by the world.”* This is important because, as ministers of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, those who serve with the GDM Missions are called to give a correct and biblical view of what it means to be a follower of Jesus Christ. A verbal witness that declares the necessity of turning to God from sin is compromised by a life that remains entangled in the world. We lose our influence as God’s ambassadors—His salt and light—when we conform to the world.

The following standards are established by GDM Missions with a sincere desire to guard those who serve with us from the evils of this deceptive age and to help those to whom we minister to steer clear of the pitfalls of this world and its popular culture. Isaac Watts’ hymn (*“Am I a Soldier of the Cross”*) declares reality when it states that *“this world is not a friend of grace to help us on to God.”*

In addition, these standards are listed so that all who serve with the GDM Missions will be in agreement with the position of the mission on these issues. This is important so we can work together in harmony and confidence.



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## **General Behavior**

*"Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others."* (Philippians 2:3-4)

*"If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men."* (Romans 12:18)

*"Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers. And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you."* (Ephesians 4:29, 32)

*"Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you."* (Hebrews 13:17)

*"And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men;"* (Colossians 3:23)

*"Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God."* (1 Corinthians 10:31)

*"Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing."* (John 15:4-5)

It is expected that all those who serve with the GDM Missions in any capacity will maintain a godly and peaceful relationship with others. Everyone is to be friendly, courteous, cooperative, and trustworthy. If conflicts or disagreements arise they are to be settled with humility and free from gossip. All field team members are to cheerfully obey and carry out the orders of those in charge.

Traveling on a field team is hard work. There are many pressures (long travel, tough living conditions, illness, fatigue, unexpected changes in plans, etc.) that must be faced with patience and maturity if the team is going to be successful and bring glory to God. The work of missions can only be done in the power of God. Field team members are to maintain their walk with the Lord through daily fellowship with Him in the Word and prayer. It is only as this fellowship exists that the fruit of the Spirit rather than the works of the flesh will be revealed during times of pressure.

## **Entertainment**

*"I will set no wicked thing before mine eyes..."* (Psalms 101:3a)

*"Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things."* (Philippians 4:8)

*"Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night. And he shall be like a tree*



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*planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.” (Psalms 1:1-3)*

*“Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul;” (1 Peter 2:11)*

It is expected that all those who serve with the GDMissions will use biblical discernment in their television/video/internet viewing, music listening, and reading habits. It is obvious that the images, language, crude behavior, and anti-Christian philosophy of Hollywood are opposed to godly living and counter-productive to the goals of gospel missions.

Any person who gives evidence of being absorbed with the ungodly entertainment of our age will not be able to serve with GDMissions. Specific standards regarding the use of television, music, reading material, etc. while on the field team will be reviewed before each mission trip.

## **Music**

*“As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance: But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy.” (1 Peter 1:14-16)*

*“Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers.” (Ephesians 4:29)*

*“Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.” (Colossians 3:16)*

*“Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints. For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ.” (Jude 1:3-4)*

It is the position of the GDMissions. that the lyrics, music, and style of performance of rock, rap, hip hop, R&B, country, and much of the popular music of the day run contrary to the truth of Scripture. This music is not in keeping with the pattern of holy living that is to characterize a believer’s life.

In addition, knowing the association of popular music and the groups that play it with this world’s culture, we believe that using this music style in a Christian song – even though there may be nothing doctrinally wrong with the lyrics – makes this style of music unfit to communicate the truth.

The New Testament makes it clear that the Gospel message and truth of God will always be under subtle attack and that we are *“to earnestly contend for the faith.”* GDMissions believes that contemporary evangelicalism’s push for an ecumenical spirit is a dangerous and unbiblical direction. This drift of compromise is something that we seek to avoid and expose by steering clear of contemporary Christian music (CCM) that is so popular in evangelicalism.



Therefore it is expected that all those who serve with GDM Missions in any capacity will not have listening habits that include rock and other popular music. It is further expected that those who serve with us will agree with this stated position regarding CCM.

## ***Dress and Appearance***

### ***General Policy***

This policy deals mainly with the “outward appearance” upon which the world looks. We seek to follow the guidelines established in God’s Word for His people. We believe that the Bible establishes at least three minimum standards for Christian dress:

- *Modesty* – God’s standards for both men and women are set high and are guided by the principle of modesty. (I Timothy 2:9; II Timothy 2:22)
- *Distinction* – Men should dress like men and women should dress like women. (I Corinthians 11:14-14; Deuteronomy 22:5)
- *Identification* – Believing men and women must identify themselves in their outward appearance with the Lord and not with the world. We are to dress and conduct ourselves as becoming His children. (I Timothy 4:12; Romans 12:1-2; I John 2:15-16)

We expect our field team members to be spiritually mature enough to discern appearance that would be considered worldly, and refrain from it.

### ***Field Team Appearance***

The Scriptures admonish that the most important dress for the Christian is reflected in his or her countenance and attitude. A positive, cheerful, flexible and learners attitude is always acceptable and encouraged. A negative, critical and griping attitude will destroy the impact of our ministry and the blessing within our group. It cannot be tolerated.

*“I made a covenant with mine eyes; why then should I think upon a maid?” (Job 31:1)*

*“In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array; But (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works.” (1 Timothy 2:9-10)*

*“Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ’s stead, be ye reconciled to God.” (2 Corinthians 5:20)*

Fads and fashion in clothing and hairstyle are as changeable as the weather, but God’s standards for modesty and decency do not change. We believe that modest and appropriate dress and appearance is in keeping with a consistent Christian testimony.

The world is becoming more sensual and immodest in dress and behavior. Christians are not to conform to the world’s pattern, but are to dress modestly. In addition, as ambassadors of Jesus Christ, our dress and appearance should reflect who we are and whom we represent.



Therefore it is expected that all those who serve with GDM Missions will dress modestly and according to the occasion and place. Also, men's haircuts should be clearly masculine and neatly combed. Masculine tapered haircuts for women are not permitted. Further specific standards of dress and appearance will be reviewed prior to each mission trip. Details will be given regarding appropriate church attire, travel attire, working attire, etc. During mission trips team members should be prepared to change any garment that is considered to be inappropriate by the team leaders.

When traveling between the U.S. and our host country or when using public transportation within the host country we will carefully observe the policy of conservative dress mentioned above. Men will wear long pants (slacks) and a shirt with a collar. Women will wear modest skirts. No jeans or denim clothing.

The general principles noted above are equally applicable when serving on the field and yet the standard of appearance may be adjusted to account for climate and working conditions unique to dental and medical clinics.

- The missionary will ensure that their appearance does not offend or cause conflict with the appearance standards set by local missionaries. Generally, jeans, shorts and T-shirts are not to be worn. If weather or work conditions are such that work or casual clothing is necessary, this will be communicated by the Team Leader. (Any use of "native" apparel must be what local missionaries would consider modest and conservative for mature believers in their location of service. Check with the Team Leader or missionary before you buy any item of local clothing.)
- Medical and dental clothing or unisex "scrubs" tops are permitted in a clinic setting but should be changed, if possible, when outside the clinic environment.

### **Attitude**

The Scriptures admonish that the most important dress for the Christian is reflected in his or her countenance and attitude. A positive, cheerful, flexible and learners attitude is always acceptable and encouraged. A negative, critical and griping attitude will destroy the impact of our ministry and the blessing within our group. It cannot be tolerated. The haughty, "rich kid" attitude or "know it all" that characterizes the behavior of some Americans in foreign countries must at all costs be avoided in order to further the effective and humble presentation of the Gospel.

### **Social Conduct**

*"Flee also youthful lusts: but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart."* (2 Timothy 2:22)

*"But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints;"* (Ephesians 5:3)

*"Abstain from all appearance of evil."* (1 Thessalonians 5:22)

It is expected that all those who serve with the GDM Missions will maintain relationships with the opposite sex that are above question at all times. Specific standards will be reviewed prior to all mission trips.



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## Doctrinal and Position Statements

### ***Doctrinal Statement***

The words of the original writings of the Old and New Testaments are God-breathed. Therefore they are inerrant and carry the authority of God (Psalm 12:6; Proverbs 30:5; 2 Timothy 3:16; 2 Peter 1:20-21). The Scriptures we now possess have been preserved by God without significant variation and therefore may be said to be the very Word of God (Matthew 5:18; 24:35; John 10:35).

There is one true God who eternally exists in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (Isaiah 48:16; Matthew 3:16-17; 2 Corinthians 13:14).

Jesus Christ is fully God and fully man. Having been conceived by the Holy Spirit and having been born with a sinless human nature by the Virgin Mary, He laid down his life and shed His blood for the sins of the world. He arose bodily from the grave and is seated at the right hand of the Majesty on high where He ever lives to make intercession for the saints (Luke 1:35; John 1:1, 14; Philippians 2:5-8; 1 Timothy 3:16; 1 Corinthians 15:1-6; Hebrews 1:3; 7:25).

The Holy Spirit is the Person within the Godhead who was sent to convict the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment. He permanently indwells every believer since Pentecost and baptizes (places) each believer into the Body of Christ (John 16:7-11; Romans 8:9; 1 Corinthians 6:19-20; 12:13).

Man was created in the image of God and through his act of sin brought physical and spiritual death into the world. All human beings since Adam and Eve are born with a sin nature and are under the power and penalty of sin. All who do not receive God's forgiveness will suffer the righteous penalty of spending eternity in the Lake of Fire (Genesis 1:26; Romans 3:9-12; 5:12; John 3:36; Revelation 20:15).

Jesus Christ is God's substitutionary sacrifice for the sin of the world. His death on the Cross is the full and only satisfaction of the just demands of a holy God for judgment on sin. All who receive Christ by faith alone are declared righteous on the grounds of His shed blood and receive eternal life and cleansing from all sin (Isaiah 53:5-6; Romans 3:24-28; Hebrews 9:26; 10:12-14; 1 John 1:7; 2:1-2).

The believer in Jesus Christ is eternally secure in Him. Having passed from death unto life, the believing sinner has been sealed by the Holy Spirit unto the day of redemption and will never perish (John 5:24; 10:27-29; Ephesians 4:30; Jude 24; 1 Peter 1:5).

Jesus Christ will return to catch away the Body of Christ before the Seventieth Week of Daniel begins (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; Revelation 3:10). At the conclusion of this seven year period Christ will return to the earth in power and great glory to establish His earthly kingdom (1 Thessalonians 5:9; Matthew 24:29-31; Revelation 19:11-16).

The Church [the Body of Christ] and Israel are two distinct entities within the sovereign purpose of God. Each has its own beginning, composition, commands, and promises. Therefore the Scriptures are to be interpreted grammatically, historically, and contextually in order that God's program for each age may be clearly understood (1 Corinthians 10:32; Romans 9:4-5; 2 Timothy 2:15).

Because it is the pillar and ground of the truth, the local church is God's primary witness unto Himself in this age. It has two observances commanded by Christ: the



Lord's Supper and water baptism by immersion (Ephesians 3:10; 1 Corinthians 11:23-28; 1 Timothy 3:15; Matthew 28:19-20).

Both the just and the unjust will be bodily resurrected. The unjust will be resurrected to stand before the Great White Throne of God to be consigned to the Lake of Fire; the just will be resurrected to share in their promised blessing for eternity (John 5:28-29; Revelation 20:11-15; 1 Corinthians 15:22-23).

Believers are called unto a life of holiness. This means separation unto the Lord from all that displeases Him. There is to be no compromise or cooperation in any religious endeavor with groups or individuals who are unsaved or disobedient to the Scriptures (Romans 16:17; Ephesians 5:11; 1 Corinthians 5:11; 2 Corinthians 6:14-18; 2 Timothy 3:5; 2 John 10-11).

Satan is a personal spirit being who along with other fallen angels, seeks to oppose God and His purposes. Satan and his angels will be sent to the abyss during the millennial phase of Christ's earthly kingdom, and at its conclusion will be consigned to the Lake of Fire for eternity (Ezekiel 28:12-17; 1 Peter 5:8; Revelation 20:1-3, 7-10).

Spiritual gifts are God's gracious abilities He gives believers to edify one another. Those gifts that were miraculous in nature ceased with the passing away of the apostles and are consequently not for today (1 Corinthians 12:4-7; 13:8-12; 14:12).

## ***Position Statement***

### **Theological Liberalism**

Because we believe all of Scripture is inerrant and is the very Word of God (2 Timothy 3:16; 2 Peter 1:20-21), Grace Dental and Medical Missions will not endorse or cooperate in ministry with any organization or individuals who minimize or renounce any part of Scripture or its explicit doctrines (as summarized in the doctrinal statement of Grace Dental and Medical Missions).

### **New Evangelicalism**

Because we believe the Bible teaches that believers are called unto a life of holiness and are to separate themselves unto the Lord from all that displeases Him, Grace Dental and Medical Missions will not endorse or cooperate in ministry with any organization or individuals who advocate or practice worldliness, a cooperation with disobedient believers, or a toleration of theological apostasy. Because we believe that the philosophical thinking of new evangelicalism (e.g. the end justifies the means) is not consistent with Scripture, Grace Dental and Medical Missions will not cooperate in ministry with those who espouse the defining characteristics of new evangelicalism (1 Timothy 6:3-5; 1 John 2:15-17).

### **Ecumenical Movement**

Because we believe the Bible teaches that believers are not to compromise or cooperate in any religious endeavor with those who are unsaved or disobedient to Scripture, Grace Dental and Medical Missions will not endorse or cooperate in ministry with any organization or individuals who advocate or



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practice ecumenical ministry/evangelism (Romans 16:17; 2 Corinthians 6:14-18).

### **Charismatic Movement**

Because we believe the Bible teaches that those spiritual gifts that were miraculous in nature ceased with the passing away of the apostles, Grace Dental and Medical Missions will not endorse or cooperate in ministry with any organization or individuals who advocate those distinctive practices and doctrines which uniquely characterize the charismatic movement (1 Corinthians 12:4-7; 13:8-12; 14:12).

### **Doctrinal Deviations**

Because we believe there is a need for doctrinal purity within this organization, Grace Dental and Medical Missions will not endorse or cooperate in ministry with any organization or individuals who are unable to affirm in creed and/or practice the explicit doctrines of Scripture as summarized in the Doctrinal Statement of Grace Dental and Medical Missions (2 Timothy 3:5; 2 John 10-11).

## **Financial Information**

### ***Raising support***

Financial needs are an important consideration in life. But, as important as it is, it should not be the first consideration in considering a field team trip. If this ministry is truly of the Lord, then God will supply the resources needed (Matthew 6:33; 2 Corinthians 9:8; Philippians 4:19). These scriptural principles have to be kept in mind when considering where the funds will come from for a particular ministry.

The Lord may provide the funds through savings, from one's regular occupation or part time work, or through gifts from others. Participants should let others know by testimony or by prayer letters that they are involved in a short-term missions ministry asking for support through prayer. When giving requests for prayer, it is perfectly acceptable to let any financial needs be known in a general way. The focus of a presentation should not be on the soliciting of funds, but on the work God has called you to. Allow the Lord to do the supplying. Anything done in the flesh is of no value to God's service (John 15:4-5).

### ***Tax-Deduction Statement***

All contribution checks should be made out to *Grace Dental and Medical Missions, Inc.* or *GDMMissions*. Checks should be mailed to GDMMissions, 150 Cross St., Methuen, MA 01844 for them to be properly processed.

GDMMissions is charged with the serious responsibility of properly documenting and handling the receipt and disbursement of funds. Every gift sent by churches and individuals is meant to underwrite ministry. In a very real sense it is God's money and the Board of Directors of GDMMissions takes its stewardship as a holy obligation. It is in the spirit of 2 Corinthians 8:21, "...*providing for honest things, not only in the*



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*sight of the Lord, but also in the sight of men”* that the following policies are established.

GDM Missions appreciates every gift that God provides through His people. Our ministry is most easily facilitated by unrestricted gifts; that is gifts that are not designated for a particular project or person. Unrestricted gifts are used at the discretion of the Mission Board to carry out the work of our ministry and allow Grace Dental and Medical Missions, Inc. to provide the donor with a receipt that can be used to support a charitable deduction for federal income tax purposes. We understand, however, that sometimes God puts on the heart of His people to give for a particular purpose or person. Gifts that are restricted for a particular purpose or person will be honored by GDM Missions, but gifts that are made payable or earmarked for a particular *person* are not tax deductible. If we believe that a donor's gift is not tax deductible, then we will offer either to return it to the donor or ask the donor to release the restriction.

## **Application Process**

### ***Applications***

An Application for Field Team Ministries may be obtained from Grace Dental and Medical Missions, Inc. by calling 978-454-6710, by logging on to our Web site: [www.gdmmissions.org](http://www.gdmmissions.org) , or by writing to: GDM Missions, 150 Cross St., Methuen, MA 01844. All applicants must indicate on their application that they have read and are in agreement with the GDM Missions doctrinal statement. Applicants are strongly encouraged to read the Short-Term Field Team Handbook (also on the Web site) before applying.

### ***Pastor's Recommendation***

In addition to filing out the Field Team Application form, potential team members must have their local pastor submit the Pastor's Recommendation Form (also available on the Web site). Both the Field Team Application, along with the application fee and the Pastor's Recommendation Form, must be submitted before consideration by the Acceptance Committee of GDM Missions.

### ***Christian School Administrator's Recommendation***

In addition to filing out the Field Team Application form and Pastor's Recommendation Form, potential team members who attend a Christian school must have their school administrator or principal submit the Christian School Administrator's Recommendation Form (also available on the Web site). If an applicant has been away at college GDM Missions may also require a recommendation form from an administrator from your school.

### ***Approval of the Acceptance Committee***

The Field Team Acceptance Committee of Grace Dental and Medical Missions will consider all applications for short-term ministry trips.



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## ***Personal Interview***

All participants approved by the Field Team Application Committee will be notified by mail. Once approved, a personal or telephone interview may be arranged between the participant and a member of the Field Team Application Committee or staff member of GDM Missions.

## **Liability and Insurance**

### ***Risk***

#### **Introduction**

This Risk Statement is to advise participants of the potential risks involved in living and working in third-world or developing nations and to realize and take full responsibility for the consequences as one assumes those risks. We ask that you gather as much information as you feel necessary and, when you are completely satisfied and confident that this is what God wants you to do, read the Risk Statement below. Keep the information in this booklet for your records. We count it a real privilege to assist you in your desire to participate in serving with at GDM Missions as "*fellowhelpers to the truth.*"

#### **Risk Statement**

Living and working in a third-world or developing nation carries with it certain risks not found or associated with work in industrialized nations such as the USA and Canada. These risks can include hazards to both your person and property through cross-cultural offenses, accident, disease, criminal acts, terrorist acts, weather conditions, or inadequate medical services and supplies. There can be added emotional and physical stress due to loneliness, culture shock and long working hours.

We realize that it is not possible for us to predict, or fully prepare you for every circumstance you will face. However, it is our goal to advise all missionaries with GDM Missions, and all participants in our programs, of the assumed risks associated with mission work in a foreign country and our policies regarding these risks, through this statement. In addition, we encourage you to prepare yourself for service through a number of ways:

- Prepare yourself spiritually, physically, and mentally for service.
- Read all you can on the potential country of service.
- Contact GDM Missions to obtain any information we may have.
- Talk with missionaries serving in the country and in the specific locale.
- Contact your government office, such as the U.S. State Department to obtain the most up to date information on the area.
- Take any additional steps you feel are necessary.

**Special Note:** In view of the fact that many insurgent, guerrilla and criminal groups commit crimes of kidnapping or other forms of criminal extortion as a



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means for demanding the payment of ransom, it is important that you understand the policy of GDM Missions in this area. We are deeply concerned for the well being of each of our members, and will pray and labor diligently for the release of any member taken hostage. However, it is the policy that GDM Missions opposes the payment of ransom in any form, cash, commodities or services. We realize that to pay ransom would only endanger other missionaries and ordinary Americans who travel in many parts of the world. Therefore members and participants in GDM Missions programs should not assume that ransom will be paid for their release. GDM Missions recommends, in the event of a hostage being taken, that any remaining family members be evacuated to the home country.

Please be sure that your parents and loved ones understand this policy before your leave for a ministry with GDM Missions.

Signing an application with GDM Missions for short-term field team trips certifies that the applicant has read the above information and will not hold GDM Missions liable for injury, disease, or delay of return, or any other claims, while under the auspices of Grace Dental and Medical Missions, Inc.

### ***Insurance Coverage***

It is required for all participants in the ministry of GDM Missions to have adequate health insurance coverage effective in country of area of service. GDM Missions requires proof of insurance coverage be sent to the mission office 30 days prior to departure for the ministry. In addition to the standard health coverage, GDM Missions will purchase a supplemental travel insurance policy that covers health, accidents, medical emergencies, and evacuation while overseas. The cost of this policy will be included in the overall expenses of the trip. Applicants that are under 18 years of age will need a parental permission form and medical power of attorney form signed by a parent or legal guardian.

### ***Health Considerations***

#### **Immunizations**

Generally speaking, immunizations will be required for most, if not all, short-term mission trips. A specific list of required immunizations for individual trips will be sent out when applications are accepted for that trip. However, it would be a good idea to be sure your Adult Tetanus-Diphtheria immunization is up to date (good for ten years). In addition, you might want to begin the Hepatitis B vaccine series of three shots. Please allow enough time before the trip to complete the series. Both of these immunizations should be available through your family physician or nearest hospital.

#### **General Health**

All participants in field team trips must be in good overall health. Before traveling, all team members will be required to list all medications currently being taken. In addition, GDM Missions may require a physical examination or report from the participant's family physician stating they are in good overall health.



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## Medical Proxy Form

A medical proxy form must be signed and notarized prior to travel. This form authorizes one or more team leaders to make medical decisions on behalf of the participant if the participant cannot make medical decisions for himself/herself while on team travel.

## Travel Information

### Luggage

Due to the high charges for airline luggage, the usual passenger allowance of one checked bag will be used for shipment of supplies and equipment needed for clinic ministry. This means that all personal clothing and other articles must fit in one (1) carry-on bag such as a backpack of no more than 40 lbs. A small personal bag is also allowed which must fit under your seat. If your carry-on bag is too big it will have to be checked and may require a fee.

Current carry-on regulations by the U.S. Transportation Security Administration (TSA) have what is called the 3-1-1 rule for taking carry-on items through airport security checkpoints. Please read the information at the TSA web site for the latest tips on how to go through airport security.

<http://www.tsa.gov/travelers/airtravel/assistant/index.shtm>

The following is quoted from the TSA web site regarding the 3-1-1 rule:

TSA and our security partners conducted extensive explosives testing since August 10, 2006 and determined that liquids, aerosols and gels, in limited quantities, are safe to bring aboard an aircraft. The one bag limit per traveler limits the total amount each traveler can bring. Consolidating the bottles into one bag and X-raying them separately from the carry-on bag enables security officers to quickly clear the items.

**3-1-1 for carry-ons** = 3.4 ounce (100 ml) bottle or less (by volume) ; 1 quart-sized, clear, plastic, zip-top bag; 1 bag per passenger placed in screening bin. One-quart bag per person limits the total liquid volume each traveler can bring. 3.4 ounce (100 ml) container size is a security measure.

**Be prepared.** Each time TSA searches a carry-on it slows down the line. Practicing 3-1-1 will ensure a faster and easier checkpoint experience.

**3-1-1 is for short trips.** If in doubt, put your liquids in checked luggage.

**Declare larger liquids.** Medications, baby formula and food, and breast milk are allowed in reasonable quantities exceeding three ounces and are not required to be in the zip-top bag. Declare these items for inspection at the checkpoint.

Mark you checked and carry-on luggage clearly with a luggage tag on an outside handle with your name and address. Place a copy of your itinerary or the emergency contact sheet inside all bags with easy access near the zipper. (If you wish to buy a special TSA-approved combination lock for your luggage you may do so. Be sure it is TSA-approved so they can open your bag with a



special key if they need to inspect it after you have checked it. Do NOT use a regular lock.)

**You will need your passport accessible at the airport for check in and also to fill out customs and immigration forms on the airplane.** When filling out forms, use the address for “Lodging” that is on your emergency contact sheet for where you will be staying. **You are entering the country as a “tourist” or “for pleasure.”** Always carry your passport and wallet (with money, credit cards, drivers license, etc.) with you and never in your checked baggage.

Do not exchange dollars for local currency at the airport in the U.S. We can exchange dollars for local currency when we arrive either through the host missionary or at an ATM. Drawing money from an ATM in the destination country gives you the best exchange rate. You should bring no more than \$50-100 for spending money. Traveler’s checks are not generally recommended.

### ***Going Through Security***

If you do not traveled through airports frequently you need to be aware that rules are always changing. You may need to remove your shoes, jacket or sweatshirt, and any heavy metal items such as a large belt buckle and place them in plastic bins for X-ray screening. Normally you do not need to remove jewelry or watches. Be sure to remove all coins, keys, cell phone, even chewing gum with a foil wrapper from your pants or shirt pockets.

We recommend that you not bring any expensive jewelry or laptops with you on your trip.

Pay attention to the posted instructions and those of the TSA screeners. Do not joke or comment about the screening process. They are doing a difficult job screening thousands of people per day. A simple “Thank you!” for their service is always appreciated.

### ***Special Travel Information***

It is important to arrive early at your meeting location so the team can arrive together at the airport on time. If you are meeting the team at the airport be sure to arrive in plenty of time to check in. Airports are very crowded, especially in the morning, and it is not unusual to wait in line for an hour to check in for an international flight. Lines at security can also be extremely long at peak hours so plan on plenty of time.

Sometimes volunteers have been forced to check their intended carry-on luggage because it was too large or too heavy. If the traveler already has one checked item, this may force him or her to pay extra – as much as \$100 per additional bag. Be sure to follow luggage limits carefully so as to avoid this. There have been times when volunteers have had to allow their carry-on



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luggage to be placed with checked baggage because there was no storage available on overcrowded airplanes. Also, we sometimes take small airplanes to our final destination and only bags that fit under your seat are allowed. The point is – the smaller and more compact you can make your carry-on, the better the experience you are likely to have! If you should be required to put your intended carry-on with checked luggage, make sure you take all essentials out and keep them with you. (Passport, tickets, baggage claim checks, cell phone, prescription medicines, etc.)

As a rule, you should always pack essentials and a complete change of clothes in your carry-on just in case your luggage does not arrive with our flight. It is important that you be able to describe your luggage in case it is lost (size, color, and type.) Take a photo of your luggage with your cell phone or camera and you will be able to describe it more accurately. If you have been asked to check your carry-on make sure you can describe it as well. Some missing bags come in the next day; some may take a week to reach you.

Money, cameras, passports, and valuables should be in a carry-on when moving through and around airports or hotels. Upon arrival in an airport keep your carry-on in your hands at all times and do not set it down – even for a minute. If you need to use the restroom take it with you or give it to a team member for safekeeping. Special care needs to be taken against pickpockets and thieves. Compartments with money and tickets should be zipped inside the bag or closed with a snap. Do not leave your ticket or valuables exposed where they can be seen. Wallets are safer in a front pocket than a rear one. Hip or waist pouches may be used instead of a purse for valuables.

There may be a crowd at the door as you exit the terminal upon our arrival and head to our vehicles. Please stay with the group and guard your carry-on and other luggage. Beggars and other bystanders, especially children may approach you to give them something. Help us teach them not to expect handouts. We all feel sorry for them, but when vehicles are surrounded by luggage handlers, beggars, and people who want to help load, a bag can be easily stolen or a wallet taken. The Team Leader will take care of paying for any services so you do not need to take out any money.

Usually the team is given the opportunity to exchange money into local currency. The rate changes every day. We suggest that \$20 is plenty for a 7-10 day trip, until it is time to go souvenir shopping or to buy things while waiting in a U.S. airport. Large U.S. denominations such as \$100 or \$50 bills are difficult to spend in stores. \$20 or \$10 bills work best. Traveler's checks are okay, but not absolutely necessary. Credit cards are accepted directly for purchases in most places.

Cell phones will work in most countries but the cost for calling the U.S. may be several dollars per minute. We ask that if you bring a cell phone with you to our destination country you turn it off while conducting ministry and not use it in public places. Remember too that cell phone are easily lost or stolen.



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## **Supplemental Information**

Following, or provided separately, is information on the specific location we will be ministering during your time with GDM Missions. We encourage you to learn more about the customs, culture, and beliefs of the people you will be serving; and become familiar with the environment of the country and towns or villages you will visit.

Please feel free to contact anyone on the GDM Missions staff if you have questions about a field team trip or the location to be visited. Our desire is that your time of service in dental and medical evangelism will be fruitful for you personally and bring great glory to Jesus Christ!



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## Short-Term Missions

### It Really is the Great Commission

By Dan Olinger – Teacher of Theology and New Testament at Bob Jones University  
Excerpts from “Teacher to Teacher” Magazine, Vol. 12, No. 2, May 2008

#### Benefits

The benefits are great. A brief experience gives the student an opportunity to experience mission work up close and reasonably realistically, at relatively low cost. It certainly makes sense for the student to find out that foreign missions is not his calling before he has gone through the effort and expense of candidate school, deputation, and language school. On the other hand, a large number of career missionaries testify that it was a mission trip that either initiated or confirmed their recognition of God’s will for them.

A significant benefit for American students is that it attacks the insularity with which most American teens develop; they are separated from the rest of the world by two large oceans, and they really believe that Paris Hilton and the Super Bowl are significant news stories. They can learn otherwise very quickly if given the opportunity. The student will benefit from his exposure whether or not the Lord eventually calls him to foreign mission work.

Pretty much everyone can benefit from team-oriented activity. Sports provide most young people with their primary experience with teamwork, but mission work provides a team experience that is different in many ways from what they will learn on the athletic field. Most obviously, the work they will be engaged in is overtly and primarily spiritual; they will be helping one another not to swing a bat or kick a ball but to tell the story of Christ and to disciple younger believers. They learn to make sacrifices, to encourage one another, and to share failures and successes as they go about the business of taking the message to the ends of the earth. That is precisely preparation for life in the church.

Often overlooked is the benefit to teachers of gathering foreign mission experience. It rejuvenates the jaded teacher, and it places into his toolbox a set of experiences that will both shape his teaching techniques and enrich his teaching content for the rest of his life.

#### Pitfalls

Any work that can be done well can also be done badly. Mission trips are no different. And the price of failure is high waste of financial resources given in good faith by God’s people, which could have been used instead on something worthwhile, not to mention the spiritual damage that can be done both to team members and to potential ministry recipients if the job is done badly.

The great danger, obviously, is that the trip becomes simply pious tourism; the members are interested primarily in experiencing something new, in gathering experiences for their own selfish purposes. There is nothing wrong with tourism, I suppose, but there is also no reason why the church should pay for it. Teams



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need to understand that they are there to work, and they need to be held accountable both by supervisors on site and by the sending churches back home.

Another danger with short-term work is that it gives the impression that you have “seen missions,” but it typically is not long enough to provide a realistic experience. In a week or two, you do not really have time for the adrenaline to wear off. It is all whirlwind and very exciting. But that is not what missions is like. Missions is all about being faithful through drudgery, routine, and only the occasional moments of terror. Lust for adventure is a lousy reason to become a missionary. My recent mission team experience lasted eight weeks; I wanted the students to have enough time to get really tired. That is part of what they needed to learn.

My greatest fear in short-term mission work is that I, or the team, will turn out to be more of a burden to the missionary than a help. Most short-term “missionaries” do not realize how much work it is for a missionary to prepare for and supervise the work of a team. I know of cases where teams ran up significant expenses for the missionary (I hope without realizing it) and then left him to pay the bill. The team leader needs to discuss frankly with the host missionary whether what the team is doing is really worthwhile from the missionary’s perspective; the team needs to ensure that the missionary lets them do as much as possible; and they need to pay attention to the costs they are running up.

A very significant danger of short-term work is the fact that in a short stay, team members cannot learn to work effectively in a strange culture. They do not have time to learn the language; they are unknowingly being strange and offensive in virtually everything they say and do; and their effectiveness at carrying out the Great Commission will be significantly hampered.

One more danger worth mentioning is the temptation to cut corners on qualified, discipling leadership. Team leaders need to know how to disciple believers, how to discern what is happening spiritually in the lives of team members, and how to confront biblically. There are all kinds of leadership styles, of course; some leaders are very intense and driving (in a healthy way), while others lead with a lighter touch. But whatever their style, leaders need to lead, and they need to be proactive in spotting and addressing spiritual needs as they arise. Not everyone can do that well; knowing a lot about the country or culture or the cuisine or the airlines simply not enough. This is a mission trip, not a cultural exchange program.

## **Personnel**

Experienced business people will tell you that a business rises and falls on hiring; if you hire the right people, everything else about the business is a lot easier. Mission teams are no different. Leading a team that gels and works proficiently is one of life’s greatest joys; herding a bunch of cats around a strange country is one of the worst experiences imaginable. So who should be on a team, and who should not?



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As was implied earlier, you want to weed out the tourists. You also want to filter out the abysmally selfish, the secretly sinful, and the well-intentioned but largely useless hangers-on. This can be difficult, obviously, because we cannot see hearts, and people who want to go on a mission team tend to be on their best behavior when around those who are deciding who will go. Many team leaders have found that the simplest way to discourage the insufficiently or improperly motivated is to set up the team so it costs something in personal effort before the team leaves. Team members are required to read certain books, memorize verses, or prepare and perform a children's Bible story or two – not busywork, mind you, since these are things that they will need and use during the trip – but things that require some discipline and sacrifice. Have potential members engage in exercises or ministries where you can watch for their willingness to put self aside and prefer someone else.

It should go without saying - but unfortunately it cannot – that team members need to be qualified for the work they are allegedly going to do. Many people think that construction work does not require skilled help but people who think that do not do construction work. Not everyone can work effectively with children; not everyone can teach even basic courses in a Bible institute. You need to show up with people who can get the job done, and well. There is no excuse for sending missionaries the personnel equivalent of used teabags.

## **Goals**

Different teams will obviously have slightly different goals, depending on their type and location. But a few basic goals should serve as the foundation for any short-term mission work:

- Carry out the Great Commission as effectively as possible, given the cultural limitations
- Lighten the load of the host missionary both while you are there and after you leave.
- Expose the team members to as realistic an experience of missions as possible.
- Disciple the team members in their spiritual walk as they are experiencing and assimilating what the Lord is teaching them on the trip.