

# The Harvest

**Developing a Heart of Prayer and Mission  
Work that Advances God's Kingdom**



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# The Harvest

The major theme for this journal is cultivating a heart of prayer and mission work for lost people. Our theme verse is

When he saw the crowds, he had compassion for them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. Then he said to his disciples, “*The harvest* is plentiful, but the laborers are few; therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest.” (Matthew 9:36-38)

The journal is designed for you to read a daily Scripture text, answer reflective questions, record daily activities, and pray for the day with any issues or concerns that God brings to mind. Journaling helps you clarify your thoughts and feelings, know yourself better, reduce stress, solve problems more effectively, track behavior patterns, view trends, and see improvement over time. It is a good discipline to practice and acquire.

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## Using This Journal

The ***Before We Travel*** section assists you in preparing your heart for the mission trip. Simply take ten to fifteen minutes each day to complete the journal page for that day. This is a great time for you to let God work in your life through reading the selected Scriptures combined with a period of reflection on your life.

The ***On-Site Mission*** section will help you record notes on your experience in light of Scripture. During the days at the mission site, set aside some time in the morning for the first section and then a few minutes in the evening for the Today's Reflection. This journal will help you think about the day and how God worked in your life, your team, and the people of \_\_\_\_\_.

The ***Back Home*** section helps you continue to process the work God has and will continue to do in your life. After having such a great experience with new and old friends, it's often hard to return home. This is sometimes where God does His greatest work in the hearts of His short term missionaries.

My hope and prayer is that God will use this journal and your experience on this mission to make a difference in your life, the lives of those you minister to, and the local church where you worship and labor as man or woman of God.

# **Seven Days Before We Travel**

## In Seven Days We Travel

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Place: \_\_\_\_\_

**Today's Scripture:** When he saw the crowds, he had compassion for them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. Then he said to his disciples, “*The harvest* is plentiful, but the laborers are few; therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest.” (Matthew 9:36-38).

One reason I decided to go on this mission trip is?

I think I am compassionate toward unsaved people when I ...

Dear God, please forgive me for my lack of compassion for the people you created who do not believe in You. Help me to have a sense of compassion for others, especially the people of Mexico.

## In Six Days We Travel

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Place: \_\_\_\_\_

**Today's Scripture:** For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth. For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse. (Romans 1:18-20)

What parts of His divine nature and His creation help me see God in my everyday life?

I sense God's greatest presence in my life when I ...

Dear God, You have made the earth and all that it contains. It is a wonder to behold the various parts while we travel through our short time in life recognizing some day you will destroy this work. Thank you that our eternity will be in Your presence and the protection of your eternal power (2 Thessalonians 1:5-9).

## In Five Days We Travel

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Place: \_\_\_\_\_

**Today's Scripture:** For we ourselves were once foolish, disobedient, led astray, slaves to various passions and pleasures, passing our days in malice and envy, hated by others and hating one another. But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that being justified by his grace we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life. (Titus 3:3-7)

In what ways did I sense the goodness and loving kindness of God when He first appeared in my life?

I know my sins are forgiven because....

Dear God, thank you for appearing in my life. While the road you and I travel is often difficult, I am so thankful for your goodness and love to me especially for the forgiveness of my sin. Help the people of Mexico recognize their need for you and your appearance in their lives.

## In Four Days We Travel

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Place: \_\_\_\_\_

**Today's Scripture:** Jesus said to them, "My food is to do the will of him who sent me and to accomplish his work. Do you not say, 'There are yet four months, then comes the harvest'? Look, I tell you, lift up your eyes, and see that the fields are white for harvest. Already the one who reaps is receiving wages and gathering fruit for eternal life, so that sower and reaper may rejoice together. For here the saying holds true, 'One sows and another reaps.' I sent you to reap that for which you did not labor. Others have labored, and you have entered into their labor." (John 4:34-38)

What kind of church work makes me feel like I am doing something much greater than myself?

I know how to share the gospel with others by...

Dear God, so often I rush through my daily life without thinking about the spiritual condition of others around me. Help me to have a divine appointment with someone today who needs to hear the truth of who you are and what you have done for all mankind.

## In Three Days We Travel

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Place: \_\_\_\_\_

**Today's Scripture:** But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth." (Acts 1:8)

When was the last time I shared my testimony with someone?  
What was their reaction?

I see evidence of the Holy Spirit in my life when...

Dear God, help me sense the power and presence of Your Holy Spirit. And then let the Spirit be evident to all as I bear the fruit that comes from an empowered life: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control (Galatians 5:22). Lead me in all I think, do, and say.

## In Two Days We Travel

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Place: \_\_\_\_\_

**Today's Scripture:** And when they saw him they worshiped him, but some doubted. And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age." (Matthew 28:17-20)

How has worship helped prepare me to fulfill the great commission (to go make disciples of all nations)?

In my personal ministry, I have helped someone become disciple of Christ by...

Dear God, you have commanded us to go make disciples of all nations. I know this begins at home. Help me to work on my own life as an intentional follower of Christ where I work, where I live, and where I play, and to work on helping others become followers not your fans.

## In One Day We Travel

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Place: \_\_\_\_\_

**Today's Scripture:** For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not our own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one can boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them. (Ephesians 2:8-10)

What kind of ministry am I involved in prior to this mission trip?

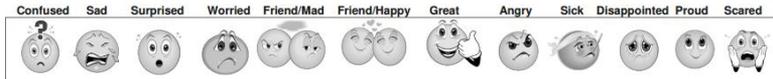
I get the greatest contentment in serving God when...

Dear God, thank you for saving me not by what I do but by what You did and not just for me but for the whole world. Your grace is enough for me and for anyone who truly seeks forgiveness and your Lordship. What a blessing. Help me and help our team shine Your light as we labor in Mexico by speaking, building, and serving our host church.

# **On-Site Mission Ministry**

## Mission Day 1 - Today We Travel & Arrive

How do you feel today? (circle one) Date: \_\_\_\_\_



**Today's Scripture:** And I heard the voice of the Lord saying, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" Then I said, "Here I am! Send me." (Isaiah 6:8)

What are some ways I hear the Lord's voice in my life? What are the settings in which He speaks to me?

I have heard God clearly speak to me regarding...

Dear God, thank you for the different ways You have communicated to me and to others in the body of Christ. Sometimes it is hard for me to hear You in the midst of a noisy and cluttered lifestyle. Help me see You work and hear You speak as we travel today. Keep us safe and secure.

## Mission Day 2

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Place: \_\_\_\_\_

**Today's Scripture:** So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God. Give no offense to Jews or Greeks or to the church of God, just as I try to please everyone in everything I do, not seeking my own advantage, but that of many, that they may be saved. (1 Corinthians 10:31-33)

Which behaviors in my personal life bring glory to God? Which behaviors need work or may be offensive to other people?

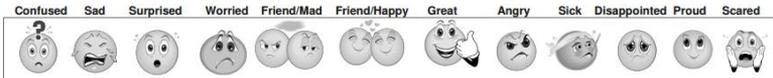
I will glorify God today by...

Dear God, thank you for all you are about to do in and through me and through the lives of our team. Help me to be sensitive in our new environment and whatever I am assigned to do, I will do as though I am working for You. Use me in a way that will result in lives being saved.

**Go Mission to Mexico Pre-Brief Notes:**

## Today's Reflection

How do you feel today? (circle one)



Today I (saw, tasted, touched, heard, smelled, or noticed)?

A low point was....

A high point was...

## Mission Day 3

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Place: \_\_\_\_\_

**Today's Scripture:** How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching? And how are they to preach unless they are sent? As it is written, "How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news!" But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Isaiah says, "Lord, who has believed what he has heard from us?" So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ. (Romans 10:14-17)

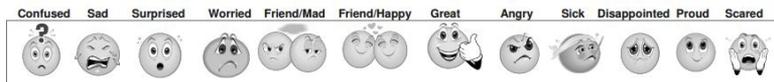
What does the gospel of Jesus Christ mean to me and to the people I meet?

I know the people we meet are hearing the good news because we...

Dear God, thank you for sending on this mission to Mexico. I pray You will continue to use our team and our host church to impact the community for Christ. Guide us as we go door-to-door sharing the hope and promise of forgiveness with our new friends. Prepare the hearts of the people as we meet, greet, listen, learn, and attempt to love them into Your kingdom.

## Today's Reflection

How do you feel today? (circle one)



Today I (saw, tasted, touched, heard, smelled, or noticed)?

A low point was....

A high point was...

## Mission Day 4

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Place: \_\_\_\_\_

**Today's Scripture:** First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all people, for kings and all who are in high positions, that we may lead a peaceful and quiet life, godly and dignified in every way. This is good, and it is pleasing in the sight of God our Savior, who desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. (1Timothy 2:1-4)

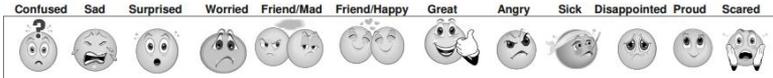
How am I at praying for the people of Mexico and their national leaders?

I pray specifically for the leaders of Mexico and the United States that they would....

Dear God, help me to faithfully lift up the leaders of the United States and nation of Mexico. Our world needs leaders who know You and know your word. Show our team how we can please You in our work, speech, and thoughts.

## Today's Reflection

How do you feel today? (circle one)



Today I (saw, tasted, touched, heard, smelled, or noticed)?

A low point was....

A high point was...

## Mission Day 5

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Place: \_\_\_\_\_

**Today's Scripture:** Do nothing from selfishness or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others. Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. (Philippians 2:3-7)

What are the ways I routinely put other people's interests and welfare ahead of my own?

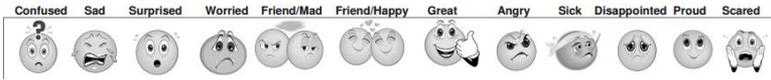
This week I put \_\_\_\_\_ interests ahead of my own by,,,

This week I put my interests ahead of \_\_\_\_\_ when I...

Dear God, living with others in mind is not as easy as it often sounds, or as easy as it is to speak about it rather than to live it out. Help me and help our team look for opportunities to put others first and then seize that opportunity with Christ-like action.

## Today's Reflection

How do you feel today? (circle one)



Today I (saw, tasted, touched, heard, smelled, or noticed)?

A low point was....

A high point was...

## Mission Day 6

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Place: \_\_\_\_\_

**Today's Scripture:** Share in suffering as a good soldier of Christ Jesus. No soldier gets entangled in civilian pursuits, since his aim is to please the one who enlisted him. An athlete is not crowned unless he competes according to the rules. It is the hard-working farmer who ought to have the first share of the crops. Think over what I say, for the Lord will give you understanding in everything. (2 Timothy 2:3-7)

My Christian life tends to identify most with a soldier, athlete, or farmer? (pick the main one)

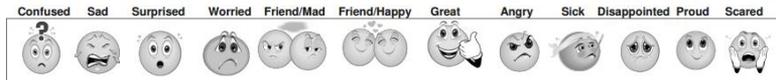
This week I found myself being most like a \_\_\_\_\_ when I...

This week I could have done a better job of being a \_\_\_\_\_ by...

Dear God, help me to live like good soldier who does not get entangled in the affairs of everyday life as I strive to wage godly warfare for your kingdom. Enable me to work hard with proper discipline and to labor as Your disciple producing lasting fruit. Provide me with a special sense of understanding as I serve You.

## Today's Reflection

How do you feel today? (circle one)



Today I (saw, tasted, touched, heard, smelled, or noticed)?

A low point was....

A high point was...

## Mission Day 7

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Place: \_\_\_\_\_

**Today's Scripture:** Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. (1 Thess. 5:16)

What is my walk with God like during bad circumstances? Why should I accept them as God's will?

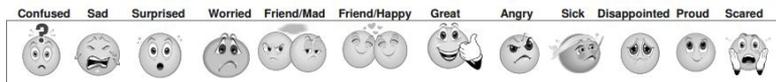
This week I was able to rejoice, pray, and give thanks for a difficult circumstance when...

Dear God, I know I should rejoice always but sometimes life is difficult. I know You want me to pray continually as I go through life day-to-day and moment-to-moment but often my mind wanders. I know You like your children to be thankful no matter what circumstances they experience but far too often I grumble and complain. Forgive me Lord and help me reflect the light of Christ. I have so much to be thankful for.

## **Go Mission to Mexico Debrief Notes:**

## Today's Reflection

How do you feel today? (circle one)



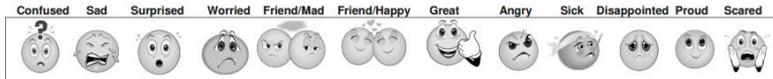
Today I (saw, tasted, touched, heard, smelled, or noticed)?

A low point was....

A high point was...

## Mission Day 8 - Today We Travel Home

How do you feel today? (circle one) Date: \_\_\_\_\_



**Today's Scripture:** Those who sow in tears shall reap with shouts of joy! He who goes out weeping, bearing the seed for sowing, shall come home with shouts of joy, bringing his sheaves with him. (Psalm 126:5-6)

What was the most significant joy you experienced during this seven day mission trip? Why did you feel that way?

Now that I am going home what are some ways I can share my mission experience so the seeds of the gospel are sown in the lives of other people?

Dear God, thank you for your hand on my life and this week's mission trip. It was truly a joy to see You work in and through us as individuals and as a team. Help us go home and continue to sow your word and see You work the power of the gospel. Give me a generous heart, so that I will want to give myself away in service to others.

# Returning Home

# Mission Reflections

The thing I like best about my mission trip was...

The thing that made my mission trip most unpleasant was...

The most significant lesson God taught me was...

The area in my life where I saw the greatest change was...

One story that sums up what God did through me is...

The biggest challenge I face in returning home will be...

The thing I'm most thankful to God for is...

If I have an opportunity to go on another mission trip...

- I would like to go
- I doubt that I would go

Why or Why not?

## Back Home – Day 1

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Place: \_\_\_\_\_

**Today’s Scripture:** For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith for faith, as it is written, “The righteous shall live by faith.” (Romans 1:16-17)

How do I communicate the gospel to the people I meet where I live, where I work, and where I play?

In what ways has God increased my faith during this mission trip?

Dear God, I am home again but I pray my life won’t be the same as it was when I left. I want to live my life for You. I pray that your power and presence within me will overflow to my family, friends, neighbors, and fellow coworkers/students. I specifically ask you use me touch the lives of \_\_\_\_\_.

## Back Home - Day 2

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Place: \_\_\_\_\_

**Today's Scripture:** For you were called to freedom, brothers. Only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another. For the whole law is fulfilled in one word: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." But if you bite and devour one another, watch out that you are not consumed by one another. (Galatians 5:13-15)

What are the ways I can love my neighbor and serve others in my sphere of influence? (Where I live, work/study, and play)

What are some ways my flesh keeps me from loving and serving the people God has placed in my life?

Dear God, You have given me a sphere of influence where I have neighbors, family members, friendships, and coworkers/students. You have called me to love and serve these people. Forgive me when I am too self-centered or selfish to love and serve as I should. Show me where I should act as your servant and help me develop a willingness to love and serve, especially in my relationship with \_\_\_\_\_.

## Back Home – Day 3

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Place: \_\_\_\_\_

**Today's Scripture:** Now the works of the flesh are evident: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, envy, drunkenness, orgies, and things like these. I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. (Galatians 5:19-24)

Which works of the flesh plague my life the most? Which fruit of the Spirit do I need to see more of in my life?

In what ways can I limit the flesh in my day-to-day living?

Dear God, help me know and experience your forgiveness for allowing the flesh to control my life especially the sin of \_\_\_\_\_ . I want to become more like Jesus in the way I love and serve You and others. Guide me today and empower me to reflect more of You in bearing the fruit of the Spirit.

## Back Home – Day 4

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Place: \_\_\_\_\_

**Today's Scripture:** But godliness with contentment is great gain, for we brought nothing into the world, and we cannot take anything out of the world. But if we have food and clothing, with these we will be content. But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation, into a snare, into many senseless and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction. For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evils. It is through this craving that some have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many pangs. (1 Timothy 6:6-10)

What areas of my life seem to breed the greatest sense of discontentment? Why does this exist in my life?

If the enemy were to tempt me, he would approach my life by giving me \_\_\_\_\_.

Dear God, the world and all it offers in terms of the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the boastful pride of life are nothing in comparison to knowing and serving You. Please forgive me for the times I have wished for instant fame and fortune.

## Back Home – Day 5

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Place: \_\_\_\_\_

**Today's Scripture:** I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect. (Romans 12:1-2)

How do I present my body as a living and holy sacrifice on a daily basis?

I routinely renew my mind by \_\_\_\_\_.

Dear God, I offer up my body now, on the altar of Your service to those in my sphere of influence. I give myself to You, without reservation. From this day forward, my mind, will, emotions, and physical body belong to You. I will go where You tell me to go, do what You tell me to do, and say what You tell me to say. Thank You, Lord, for receiving me as I am and using me to make a difference in the world.

## Back Home – Day 6

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Place: \_\_\_\_\_

**Today's Scripture:** Fight the good fight of the faith. Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called and about which you made the good confession in the presence of many witnesses. I charge you in the presence of God, who gives life to all things, and of Christ Jesus, who in his testimony before Pontius Pilate made the good confession, to keep the commandment unstained and free from reproach until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ (1 Timothy 6:12-14)

What are the circumstances in my life where I need to exercise stronger faith?

I have increased energy and boldness in my faith when I ...

Dear God, sometimes I find myself being weak and not trusting You as I should. Please forgive me for all the times I have failed to fight the good fight of faith. Specifically, I ask you to strengthen me when I \_\_\_\_\_.

## Back Home – Day 7

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Place: \_\_\_\_\_

**Today's Scripture:** But I do not account my life of any value nor as precious to myself, if only I may finish my course and the ministry that I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the gospel of the grace of God. (Acts 20:24)

What could stop me from finishing well in my life?

Is there anything or any sin in my life that tends to become so valuable that it sometimes is more important than Christ? What is it and how should I deal with this when it appears?

Dear God, I want to serve you faithfully all of my life. I recognize the world, the flesh, and the devil hate your servants who faithfully execute their calling in life. I know these forces work to disrupt, discourage, and destroy any person and any local church that testifies to the gospel of grace. Help me finish well as I work to discern and obey your will for my life.

# Conclusion

In his commentary on Matthew 9:36-38 Warren Wiersbe writes,

“The work of salvation could be accomplished only by Jesus Christ, and He did it alone. But the *witness* of this salvation could only be accomplished by His people, those who have trusted Him and been saved. The King needed ambassadors to carry the message—and He *still* needs them. “Whom shall I send, and who will go for Us?” (Isa. 6:8) It is not enough that we *pray* for laborers (Matt. 9:36–38). We must also make ourselves available to *serve* Him.<sup>1</sup> “The multitudes today are still in need of the Shepherd. Only Christ can lead them and feed them (see Ezek. 34). Christ pictures Himself as a shepherd and as a harvester, the Lord of the Harvest. The harvest is His (v. 38) and we must obey Him if the souls are going to be won.”<sup>2</sup>

I hope your time in the word, time in prayer, and time in mission work resulted in changes to your personal life and ministry. The world needs more men and women who will labor in the harvest fields of the earth.

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<sup>1</sup> Wiersbe, W. W. (1996). *The Bible exposition commentary* (Mt 9:18). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

<sup>2</sup> Wiersbe, W. W. (1992). *Wiersbe's expository outlines on the New Testament* (42). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.