

13 Commandments for Going on a Mission Work Trip

- I. *Thou shalt* go with a positive attitude. Try to avoid complaints and anything else that could lead to arguments or dissension within the group.
- II. *Thou shalt* realize that this is a mission work trip in which you seek to serve God by working to serve others to the best of your ability. Frankly, one of the most unpleasant situations is when some people who are working their hearts out turn around and see other very healthy and able-bodied group members who are doing nothing or as little as possible. Of course, everyone gets tired, and sometimes a brief illness may keep you from working. That's understandable, but always try to do your best. This is a work trip not a luxury cruise.
- III. *Thou shalt* stay together and not go wandering off on your own without the knowledge of one of the group leaders. We don't want anyone to get lost, be the victim of a criminal act, or have any other misfortune.
- IV. *Thou shalt not* delay group activities by being late when we are going someplace. It is not fair to make everyone else have to wait for you.
- V. *Thou shalt not* leave valuables unattended or get into other situations that could invite theft. Fanny packs (or something similar to wear on your belt) are safer than purses. You definitely should bring and wear a concealed waterproof pouch under your clothing for most of your money, your passport, and other identification.
- VI. *Thou shalt* act as though cleanliness is next to Godliness when it comes to possible health hazards from contamination. Don't even think of drinking the tap water or brushing your teeth with it; use bottled water that's sold instead. Always carry waterless instant hand sanitizer (Purell or other brand) or Wash-n-Dry packets to clean your hands immediately before eating. Dirty hands touching your mouth can invite illness.
- VII. *Thou shalt* always remember to practice basic health and first aid principles. Use mosquito repellent with at least 30% DEET content to protect against both nuisance mosquitoes and those that carry dengue fever (somewhat similar to malaria). Some people find that Avon Product's "Skin-So-Soft" also helps. Sunscreen should be used if there is any chance of getting sunburned. Always carry a disinfectant with you, such as Polysporin or Neosporin, and use it anytime you cut your skin. Always check with a medical care professional when you have any questions about these or related matters.
- VIII. *Thou shalt* always practice safety in and regarding vehicles. Unfortunately, many local drivers whether in a car, truck, bus, on a motorcycle, or on a motor scooter, tend to drive much more wildly than we are used to seeing in the United States. You can never be too careful in looking out for the unexpected.

IX. *Thou shalt not forget* to practice caution and accident avoidance behavior around our worksites. It's so easy to get a dislocated finger, twist a ligament or much worse. Special group mission trip insurance to cover even such things as air ambulance (if necessary for getting appropriate medical care) definitely should be obtained before your trip, but it's better not have to collect on it. Be especially careful when walking at night. Bring a couple of flashlights; there's a disposable kind that's about the size of your palm.

X. *Thou shalt* respect the privacy of our group members. In some instances, men and women will be staying in closer proximity to each other than you are used to doing in the U.S., and sometimes you may be using common bathroom facilities. Be careful not to accidentally cause embarrassment to yourself or someone else.

XI. *Thou shalt* remember that you are a guest in someone else's church, town, and country. Don't think that being an American from a more materially-blessed culture makes you in any way better or smarter than your hosts. You should try to respect their customs and seek to learn from them as they do from you and your group. Also remember that as an American, you are very conspicuous in places like your overseas host churches and the neighborhoods around them. Don't do anything that might cause embarrassment to your hosts. For example, a few years ago, a group mission group that went to the Dominican Republic did that when some of its members purchased cigarettes and alcoholic drinks. It took the host church along time to overcome the gossip especially from local non-members who were very aware of the stand that Baptist churches in that country take against smoking and alcoholic consumption. In another instance, some members of a mission group bought and wore souvenir t-shirts advertising a local beer and bought cigars to take home. Both were very inappropriate actions.

XII. *Thou shalt not forget* that your purpose is to glorify God through all of your actions. Prayer, prayer, and prayer are the three most essential elements for your success.

XIII. *Thou shalt* expect to have a wonderful, memorable, and life-changing experience that you will always appreciate. Doing whatever you can in advance to learn about the country where you are going and picking up a few basic words and phrases (of a complimentary nature) of their language will make your trip even more meaningful and productive. Feel free to contact the trip leaders or people who have been on previous trips if you have any questions.

Used from webpage: <http://www.helpingoverseasdirectory.org/hod/content/view/16/52/>