

# **The Ascent**

## **Mission Trip Covenant Agreement**

*The purpose of this Trip Covenant is to protect the effectiveness, quality, and safety of our trip together. By signing this document, I acknowledge my agreement with, and conformance to, the expectations listed below:*

1. I will remember that I am a guest working at the invitation of a local missionary, pastor, church, etc. I will dress modestly, and I will attempt to gain understanding as to what is acceptable and not acceptable to the people we are working with and ministering to, so that I can comply with their standards of etiquette, attire, etc. If my hosts are offended by my dress, I will respect them by changing my attire. If they offer me goat meat stew, I'll try it! I'll remember the missionaries' prayer: "Where You lead me, I will follow; what they feed me, I will swallow!"

2. I understand that we have come primarily to serve and to learn. (There may be rare times when some of us are teaching, but this is not our primary purpose.) I may encounter procedures that I feel are inefficient, or attitudes that I find closed-minded. I will resist the temptation to inform our hosts about "how we do things." I will be open to learning other people's methods and ideas.

3. I will respect the host's view of Christianity even if their theological positions are different than mine. I recognize that Christianity has many faces throughout the world, and that the purpose of this trip is to witness for Christ, to serve people, and to experience faith lived out in a new setting.

4. I will develop and maintain a servant attitude towards all.

5. I will respect and obey leadership from both The Ascent and the host organization(s). If one of my leaders asks me to jump, my response will always be, "How high?"

6. I will refrain from the sin of gossip. I will not spread rumors. If I have a problem with someone on my team, I will do my best to work it out peacefully and respectfully.

7. I will refrain from complaining. I understand that travel can present numerous unexpected and challenging circumstances. Instead of complaining, I will be creative and supportive, and I will work to adapt to the circumstances that I am in.

8. I will respect the work that is going on in the country with the particular church, agency, or person(s) that we are working with. I realize that our team is here for just a short while, but that the missionary and local churches are there for the long term. I will respect their knowledge, insights, and instructions.

9. I will attend and be prompt to all team advance preparation meetings and follow-up or make-up sessions. I will notify my team leader in advance if I am going to miss a given meeting, and I understand that I may be required to make up what I missed.

10. I will fulfill all logistical requirements. I will comply with all requirements regarding passports, finances, shots, etc. I will assume full financial responsibility for the portion of this trip that is mine. If I do not raise the needed support, I will personally cover my costs. Regarding finances, there will be certain critical dates when you will be required to have specific amounts of money sent in to The Ascent. These are deadlines! You will be supplied these dates and amounts in writing. If you anticipate that you will not be able to make a payment, please contact an Ascent staff member.

11. I will refrain from negative political comments or hostile discussions concerning our host country's politics. I will be mindful that Americans tend to speak louder and more boisterously than many other cultures. This is sometimes seen in a negative light by nationals. I will be careful not to be offensive or obnoxious to our national hosts. I will instead be sensitive in all areas of my conduct, and to the norms of the society I am visiting.

12. I will not be exclusive in my relationships. If my sweetheart or spouse is on the team, we will make every effort to interact with all members of the team, not just one another. If I am attracted to a teammate, I will not attempt to pursue an exclusive relationship until after we return home.

13. I will refrain from any activity that could be construed as a romantic interest toward a national. I realize certain activities that seem innocuous in my own culture may seem inappropriate in others.

14. I will abstain from the consumption of alcoholic beverages or the use of tobacco or illegal drugs. If I am addicted to one of these substances, I will discuss this with my leaders before hand so that we can come up with a plan that might allow me to still go on this trip while not using any substance.

15. I will contribute my share of work toward the project we came to do, and be thoroughly prepared for what I have been asked to present. I will be prepared and punctual in my work and my presentation. I will work to be a team player. I will also be willing to roll with the punches, and jump in when needed, even if it is something I didn't prepare to do.

**Before Trip Departure:** I realize that my ability to be a member of a short term missions trip is dependent in part upon my complying with the standards of the Trip Covenant. Should I fail to meet the terms of this covenant, or to meet reasonable biblical standards for behavior or trip preparation, I realize that I may not be given permission to go on the trip. Final approval for anyone to attend an Ascent Missions Trip will be at the sole discretion of the Ascent leadership team.

**After Trip Departure:** I understand that if I am in violation of any of the tenets of the Trip Covenant or of biblical standards for Christian behavior upon arriving in the host country, I could be required by team leadership to return home early, at my own expense.

Student name (Printed) \_\_\_\_\_

Student name (Signed) \_\_\_\_\_

Parent name (Printed) \_\_\_\_\_

Parent name (Signed) \_\_\_\_\_

Ascent Staff (Printed) \_\_\_\_\_

Ascent Staff (Signed) \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_