

PAR Missions Counseling

These questions are just for your own reflection.

Why do you feel led to participate in Disaster Relief?

What special gifts do you think God equipped you with to help serve in times of Disaster?

What special gifts do you think God equipped you with to work beside other volunteers?

What do you think is the most effective way to reach people for Christ?

What is the least effective way to reach people for Christ?

There are three audiences to consider when embarking on a Disaster Relief Mission Event:

1. The Storm Victims
2. Other Volunteers (in our own group and those we will meet in the Mission field)
3. Yourself

The Storm Victims –

1 John 3:18 states “Dear children, let us not love with words or speech but with actions and in truth.”

Our goal is to show them the love of Christ through our actions

Our goal is not merely to lead them to Christ, but to plant seeds and let God be in control of their path.

It’s not about a number – how many people are led to Christ. We will never know the number of lives that are changed by our efforts.

It’s easy to assess where they are in their spiritual walk.

Question: How can you find out where they are in their walk?

(Ask what churches there are in their community. Observe signs that they are active in a spiritual journey – you may see crosses or statues of the Virgin Mary. Ask if they grew up in a church)

Imagine what state of mind you would be in if your house was damaged or if you had just lost everything. What kind of actions by a volunteer would minister to you the most?

It is harder to receive than to give. If the victim offers you a bottle of water or a cup of coffee, accept it graciously. Sit with them for a while.

LISTEN. They may have stories to tell. Listen with your ears, not your mouth. It's not our job to "fix" their situation. Show them compassion as Jesus would.
Avoid theological discussions.

Other Volunteers –

Matthew 11:29 – Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.”

Upon arrival – you will find other volunteers and volunteer coordinators that have been there before us. You are one of MANY. Enter the situation as Jesus would. Be humble, compliant and as flexible as possible. Be willing to be the one to sacrifice comfort for the sake of others.

Be flexible with the living conditions – you don't know what kind of housing, food and facilities you will be living in

We may think our purpose is to minister to the victims, but volunteers from other groups are also part of the mission field. Be humble. Be respectful (quiet at night when they are resting).

If you see work that another volunteer has completed incorrectly and you can fix it, fix it. If you can't don't point it out to anyone but a supervisor in private.

Be inclusive of everyone in worship and prayer time, but NOT in chain saw usage.

Be respectful of other volunteers within PAR.

Be self sufficient by reading over the Summer/Winter Packing List and the Day Pack Packing List. Edit them to fit your own needs.

Consider special medical, dietary and personal comfort needs that you may have and prepare for those.

Pack as if you are going to be in the worst conditions (heat, allergies, insects) and that there is no Wal-Mart around.

Be considerate of the drivers. Don't ask to be taken on special errands. If you're 10 minutes early, you're on time.

In the evening, decompress with the group – go get ice cream with the other volunteers; participate in a sharing time. Be inclusive.

Yourself

Genesis 2:2 “By the seventh day, God had finished the work He had been doing; so on the seventh day He rested from all his work.”

While on the trip

1. Take time to sit with God either in the morning or the evening. Maybe write in a journal.
2. Hydrate. Make sure you have nourishment. Rest when you need it.
3. Admit if you don't feel confident with a task that you have been given – with a chainsaw or on a roof. Talk with the coordinators about it.
4. Focus on the gifts /skills that God has given you.
Question – What are your skills and how can you use them?
5. Stay in contact with family and friends (texting, Facebook, calls) so they understand what you have experienced.

When you return home

You will be mentally and physically exhausted. Allow yourself a day to decompress.

Question: How would you decompress?

Follow through with anything God lays on your heart during the trip.

Share your experiences with family and friends.