

MISSIONS POLICY and GUIDELINES

At GMU we are passionate about missions because the Bible informs us why we should be involved in missions. The question is always what should be done and how should we do it? God's word has clear principals to guide and lead us in answering these questions. The primary prescriptive passage we find in Matthew 28:16 – 20 are the Great Commission, which define the task for us. There are additional descriptive passages in Acts and other New Testament books that show us how the apostles thought about how to carry out the task of missions. If we want to be successful in the mission's field, we need to take these principles from those descriptions and make them our own.

WHAT IS INVOLVED IN THE TASK OF MISSIONS?

- Going (Matt 28:19; Mark 16:15; Acts 1:8): Jesus Christ was clear that some manner of going was required. The participles in the Matthew and Mark passages have the force of imperatives. Whether to the other side of the world or to the other side of the street, some “going” is necessary. This means that we must be intentional and extend ourselves beyond our normal patterns of life, beyond our usual circles of friends, and beyond our ethnic, cultural or geographic boundaries.
- Preaching the Gospel (Mark 16:15; Luke 24:47; Acts 1:8): The centerpiece of missions is to spread the good news about redemption in Jesus Christ. The Mark passage calls it preaching the gospel. The Luke passage gives the core content of the message as repentance for the forgiveness of sins in Jesus' name. In the Acts passage Jesus tells his disciples to be his witnesses, ones who testify to the truth of what they know. Every activity of missions must serve to advance this central purpose.

- Making Disciples (Matt 28:19–20): **The ultimate goal of missions is not just to make converts, but disciples.** A disciple is someone who continues to learn from and follow after Jesus. The Matthew passage specifies two means by which we are to make disciples: ♣ Baptizing: When a person repents and believes in Jesus, he is baptized in one Spirit into the body of Christ (1 Cor 12:13). The starting point for a new disciple, therefore, is to break from his former manner of life and to identify with his Lord and Master, Jesus Christ. He does this, first of all, by being baptized in water, which represents the spiritual realities of which every true disciple partakes, such as death to self and new life in Christ. Once baptized, these new disciples gather together into local churches as an expression of their incorporation into the universal church, which is the body of Christ.
- Teaching: Teaching converts to obey all that Christ commands is a non-negotiable, central component to true missions. It has been well said that the New Testament can scarcely conceive of a disciple who is not instructed. Jesus spent three years with his disciples; Paul did not shrink from declaring to his people the whole counsel of God’s word. Unfortunately, far too much that passes as missions today aims at making converts instead of disciples. But a person’s turning away from sin is secondary to the primary goal of turning to God in obedience of all that he commands. Missions must include teaching unto obedience, for Christ demands nothing less. Implicit in this command is the necessity for churches to be planted wherever converts are made, and for leadership to be adequately trained and appointed in each church. Only then is the great end of missions attainable, which is to see God glorified, worshiped, and enjoyed by all peoples everywhere.

HOW SHOULD WE GO ABOUT ACCOMPLISHING THIS TASK?

In deciding how to accomplish the task of missions we can make observations from how missions were conducted in the time of the apostles. While the descriptions of missions in that day are not necessarily normative for us in our day, they do provide valuable information. From our observations of biblical patterns, we may derive the following principles that will help us as we continue the Great Commission task today:

- Missionaries should be sent by local churches (Acts 13:1–3): The church at Antioch sent Barnabas and Paul off on their missionary journey. In our day we also have missions' agencies and societies that are involved in getting missionaries to the field and sustaining them there. The efforts of these organizations can be very valuable, but they should be in support of the local church, not in place of it. The ultimate responsibility of local churches to send and sustain missionaries should not be passed off to others.
- Missionaries should be among the most qualified people in the church (Acts 13:2): Barnabas and Paul were the most distinguished leaders in the Antioch church. Missionaries are ministry leaders in a difficult and often hostile environment. They should not be the people who could not hack it in local church ministry. Rather, missionaries that are sent out should be some of the spiritually strongest and most mature members of the church. In most cases, a missionary should meet all the qualifications of an elder as listed in 1 Tim. 3:1–7 and Titus 1:5–9.
- Missionaries should remain accountable to the church that sent them (Acts 14:26–27): Paul and Barnabas returned to the church at Antioch to report on their ministry. This indicates that the relationship between the missionaries and the church was ongoing. Missionaries are an extension of their local church's ministry in another geographic location or among a different people. The elders should continue to exercise oversight over the missionaries they have sent to ensure the maintenance of sound doctrine and ministry practice. This would imply that the church also

remains responsible for the care of the missionaries they have sent in terms of prayer, comfort, encouragement, etc.

- Missionaries should be supported by churches through prayer and material assistance: The Philippian church financially supported Paul's ministry (Phil. 4:15–16). Paul also requested that the Roman church aid Phoebe (Rom 16:1–2) and that the Corinthian church aid Timothy (1 Cor 16:10–11). Paul specifically asked for the Ephesian church to support his ministry in prayer (Eph 6:19). The apostle John exhorted the support of itinerant gospel preachers (3 John 8). Significantly, he also said that support should be refused to those who distort the gospel (2 John 10–11). It is evident then that it is right for those who cannot directly engage in missionary activity to provide material and moral support to those who have been called to that effort.
- Responsibility for missions resides at the level of leadership in the church (Acts 13:1): This principle follows from the fact that Jesus tasked his apostles, as the leaders of the church, with the Great Commission. Similarly in any local church, the elders and pastors should shoulder the responsibility for one of its most central tasks. The church in Antioch modeled this principle in that the group listed in Acts 13:1 were the elders of that church. This does not mean that lay people and general church members should not take an active role in the conduct of the mission's effort, but the elders should be the champions of the mission's effort and should ensure that it is accomplished.

MISSIONARIES SHOULD PRIORITIZE THOSE ACTIVITIES THAT MOST DIRECTLY ACHIEVE THEIR MISSION.

The core task of the Great Commission is to make disciples. A missionary, therefore, prioritizes those activities that most directly achieve this end. By observing what activities Paul and his associates were involved in we can draw principles as to what should be the highest priorities today. The primary activities in which we see Paul engaged are:

- Preaching the gospel publicly (Acts 9:20, 28; 13:5, 16–49; 14:1, 7, 21; 16:10, 13; 17:2, 10, 17, 22–34; 18:4–6; 19:8; 20:20; 28:30–31): Paul preached in synagogues, from house to house, in an academic gathering on the Areopagus, and in the marketplace to all who would listen. The evidence shows that Paul took every opportunity to speak the gospel, whether to individuals or to groups and in every possible setting. Missionaries, therefore, are ideally those who are most able to faithfully proclaim the gospel and unfold its riches in any and every circumstance.
- Planting churches: After people were converted to Christ, they were not left scattered, but were gathered into churches and leaders were appointed (Acts 14:23). This priority explains why there were churches in Corinth, Galatia, Ephesus, Philippi, Colossae, and Thessalonica to receive Paul's letters! It is important, then, that missionaries be qualified and able to establish churches for new converts.
- Strengthening churches through teaching and encouragement (Acts 14:21–23; 15:41; 16:4–5; 18:11, 23; 20:2; cf. the Epistles): Related to planting churches is the need for their continued support and pastoral care. It is irresponsible to win people to Christ and yet leave them to languish apart from the necessary nourishment of God's word. Missionaries should be involved in shepherding, strengthening, encouraging, and teaching all that Christ commanded to fledgling churches.

- Training leaders (Acts 14:23; 19:8; 20:17–35; 2 Tim 2:2; letters to Timothy and Titus): The New Testament associates up to 100 names with Paul, of which around 36 could be considered close partners and fellow laborers in gospel ministry. Church leaders and “co-workers” seemed to spring up around him wherever he went. Paul knew the ministry had to be passed on before he died, and so he trained a new generation of leaders to replace him. Missionaries should engage not only in planting churches and helping them start, but also in training up local leaders to replace them and carry on the gospel work.
- Mercy ministry (Acts 11:29–30; 19:12; 28:9): Though a more minor part of Paul’s ministry, it was certainly part of it. The purpose was either to provide relief to fellow Christians in difficult times or to authenticate the truth of Paul’s message as coming from God.

FIVE QUALITIES ESSENTIAL FOR MISSIONARIES

1. Missionaries must have emotional stability.
2. Missionaries must have spiritual maturity.
3. Missionaries must be effective teachers of the Word of God.
4. Missionaries must have effective interpersonal communication skills.
5. Missionaries must have the aptitude and training to effectively plant churches, nurture new Christians to maturity, and equip national church leaders for Christian service. These are the essential tasks of missions.

WHAT IS THE GOAL OF MISSIONARY WORK?

The ultimate accomplishment that Christian missionaries aspire to do is proclaim the gospel to the different nations. This is from a specific Bible verse found in the book of Matthew where Christ, God's only son, commanded His disciples to spread the Lord's name to every continent on Earth.

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 28:19-20

WHO ARE MISSIONARIES?

Christian missionaries are followers of Christ who travel the world to share the gospel with non-believers. They set foot into a different culture and build relationships with others on the field they are serving in. This is to show others the truth of the gospel.

Missionaries give with their servant's heart. This means that they go to assist other countries without expecting anything in return. They provide their services in appreciation and gratitude from the blessings God gives them.

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.

Galatians 5:13

THE PURPOSE OF A MISSIONARY

A missionary's purpose is to follow the Lord and go wherever He calls them to go. The book of 1 Peter in the Bible explains what a missionary is supposed to do.

For you have been called for this purpose, since Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example for you to follow in His steps...

1 Peter 2:21

Since Jesus Christ sacrificed Himself on the cross for all of humanity's sins, Christians are now called to spread His truth and salvation to the rest of the world. A follower of Christ is thankful and honored to receive forgiveness from the Lord for their sins and wrong-doings.

THE DUTIES OF A MISSIONARY

A missionary may perform his or her work through formal teaching in a classroom or religious setting or through informal communication. Many missionaries perform acts of community building. The particular mission's goal may depend on the skillset and education of the missionaries.

The most important duty of missionaries is to teach people about Jesus Christ and His great commandment to love God and to love others. This means ensuring that their actions not only fulfill a need but also are sustained after they have left the community. Many missionaries focus on the needs of the communities they are serving and integrate those needs with evangelism.

And he said to him, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself."

Matthew 22:38-39

THE ULTIMATE GOAL OF EVERY MISSIONARY & MISSIONS WORK

Restoring and Teaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ

To come to the Savior, people must have faith in Him which leads to repentance. This is by making the necessary changes to bring their life into agreement with the Lord's teachings through the Bible. A missionary can help and motivate people to develop such faith and grace by teaching them the restored gospel. This is through the Holy Spirit and welcoming them to commit to living according to its teachings. Keeping this commitment prepares them for the covenant of baptism and confirmation and the precious gift of the Holy Ghost.

Baptism, which corresponds to this, now saves you, not as a removal of dirt from the body but as an appeal to God for a good conscience, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

1 Peter 3:21

Show God's Truth

Both the mission-field and a missionary's main aspiration is to assist with accomplishing the Lord's master plan. God's ultimate goal is for all to come to Him.

The importance of sharing God's truth is to not only tell non-believers about the gospel but to also give them the opportunity to be saved and accept Christ into their hearts. To transform and change their lives for the better, by providing light, love, and positivity into their lives.

When a missionary shares the truth of God with them, they are exposed to a new way of living through love and liberation through the Lord, Himself.

Have A Giving Heart

A missionary's main priority is to let their neighbors know they love and care for them no matter the situation they are going through. Having a servant heart shows that they are giving their acts of service through the Lord's wisdom and not for their own righteousness.

When a disciple pursues missions and also the Lord, they are continuing the identity of humanity (which is being a son or daughter of God). Having a servant's heart means a person will do whatever they need to do to help others regardless of the pay, job description, or location of their occupation that needs to be performed. A servant's pay is in terms that the world is not good at all, but God blesses his children. Their pay is being stored up for them in Heaven, when they go home, the rejoicing will be great, for God loves a servant after His own heart.

The book of Philippians states that a person with a selfish or egotistical demeanor does nothing for the Lord. Living in a life with humility and graciousness shows more importance to the Lord than the accomplishments that someone has done for another person.

Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves.

Philippians 2:3

Bring Love and Unity

Christians all over the world are meant to love and forgive their enemies. Missionaries show the others who live on their field, about God's truth. They bring a sense of hope back into their life through bringing friendship, communication, counseling, and love to the civilians there.

Attributes of a Successful Missionary

From positivity to being an influencer, a missionary need to have these different attributes to be a successful disciple.

Charity

Charity and serving is the pure love of Christ. It includes God's eternal love for all His children. All Christians are to seek to develop that kind of love. When someone is filled with charity, they obey God's commandments and do all they can to serve others and help them receive the restored gospel.

According to Matthew, Jesus' final public teaching prior to his crucifixion is a story that ties together the final judgment and Christian charity. Here's his point: those only will endure his judgment and be welcomed into restored paradise who continue his mission of caring for the naked, the hungry, the sick, and the imprisoned.

The Bible teaches to love God and to love neighbors are the greatest commandments. Charity is not an optional extra, but an essential component of faith. In the book of Proverbs, the Holy Word identifies those who are poor and in injustice will not be judged, financially stable they are, but on the way that we treat others.

Open your mouth for the mute, for the rights of all who are destitute. Open your mouth, judge righteously, defend the rights of the poor and needy.

Proverbs 31:8-9

Virtue

Virtue originates in a person's innermost thoughts and desires. It is a pattern of thought and behavior based on their high moral standards. Since the Holy Ghost does not dwell

in unclean tabernacles, virtue is a prerequisite to receiving the Spirit's guidance. What a missionary chooses to think and do when they are alone and no one is watching is a strong measure of someone's virtue.

Virtuous people are clean and pure spiritually. They focus on righteous, uplifting thoughts and put unworthy thoughts that lead to inappropriate actions out of their minds. Christians obey God's commandments and follow the counsel of Church leaders. They pray for the strength to resist temptation and do what is right. A follower of Christ quickly repents of any sins or wrongdoings. They live worthy of a temple recommend.

Patience

Patience is the capacity to endure delay, trouble, opposition, or suffering without becoming angry, frustrated, or anxious. It is the ability to do God's will and accept His timing. When you are patient, you hold up under pressure and are able to face adversity calmly and hopefully. Patience is related to hope and faith, you must wait for the Lord's promised blessings to be fulfilled.

Humility

Humility is the willingness to submit to the will of the Lord and to give the Lord the honor for what is accomplished. It includes gratitude for His blessings and acknowledgment of your constant need for His divine help. Humility is not a sign of weakness; it is a sign of spiritual strength.

When you humbly trust Him and acknowledge His power and mercy, you can have the assurance that His commandments are for your good. You are confident that you can do whatever the Lord requires of you if you rely on Him. You are also willing to trust His

chosen servants and follow their counsel. Humility will help you as you strive to be obedient, to work hard, and to serve selflessly.

Diligence

Diligence is a steady, consistent, earnest, and energetic effort in doing the Lord's work. The Lord expects you to work diligently—persistently and with great effort and care. A diligent missionary works effectively and efficiently. Diligence in missionary work is an expression of your love for the Lord and His work. When you are diligent, you find joy and satisfaction in your work.

Obedience

As a missionary, you are expected to keep the commandments willingly, to obey mission rules, and to follow the counsel of your leaders. Obedience is the first law of heaven. It is an act of faith. You may sometimes be required to do things you do not completely understand. As you obey, you increase in faith, knowledge, wisdom, testimony, protection, and freedom.

Aspects for an Efficient Mission Trip

Leaving their home country to venture to a significantly different culture is not easy for a missionary. They are stepping foot onto land that lives in a contrasting lifestyle, alongside that, they are living with others on a team away from home. Here are three specific aspects for a mission team to pursue the results of a successful mission trip.

1. Determine their purpose
2. Preparing as a team

3. Having a servant's heart

Types of Mission Trips

1. Business as Missions
2. Church Building
3. Early Childhood Education
4. Medical Missions
5. Social Justice
6. Volunteering

1. Business as Missions

Business missionaries focus more on the entrepreneur and economical-side for the field. These Christians open doors of opportunity for many civilians by contributing to them a substantial occupation. When a business missionary opens a business a different culture that they are serving in, creates unity in the community and local jobs to provide food on the table, a house to live in, and clothing on their backs for their families.

2. Church Building

Church Building missionaries go to a country where the majority of the churches are very rare-and-few. The missionaries create a building for foreign people to go to. Building a church on a mission field provides memorable moments of opportunity to proclaim the gospel with other people groups. Finding and constructing a church also provides others a safe and sacred place to learn about the Father.

3. Early Childhood Education

While other missionaries are called to help the providers of the families, Early Childhood Education missionaries have the younger generations on their hearts. These believers go to a different culture to gift an education spiritually and academically. They play, love, and tend for the younger boys and girls. Early Childhood Education missionaries not only teach the students in the country they are serving in, but they also learn the foreign language themselves to be able to teach the young ones.

4. Medical Missions

Medical missionaries who go for more of the medical side of a trip are trained professionals who stay for a designated period of time. The teammates that this mission team consists of speech therapists, surgeons, registered nurses, etc. These missionaries go to help increase the health of the nation they are serving in. Many deprived countries have a necessity to advance medical assistance and have the necessity for a sense of hope. Medical missionaries go to show the Lord's truth, love, by helping their patients with the critical conditions that they are possibly in. These missionaries bring the Lord's love and light to their hopeless and melancholy lifestyle.

5. Social Justice

Social Justice missionaries go to this type of mission field because it includes helping others (who live in the country they are serving in) who are lost, scared, and held in bondage. There are various types of social justice positions in this type of mission group. Such as the ones who evangelize to the homeless, prostitutes, etc. Also, there are those who go find the hidden areas which hold forced women in hostage for human-trafficking. The last position is the ones who want to go to the nation to help children and adults who are being forced into work-labor and are treated unfairly.

6. Volunteering

This is the last type of mission field type. Volunteering missionaries are the ones who provide the manual labor to help out an organization, church, or school. The majority of volunteers spend their time serving by digging, cleaning, drilling, painting, and repairing different homes and buildings for the community. These missionaries will get the chance to talk to the other people groups about the Lord and be able to share the gospel with them. This is an efficient way for the missionaries to show their trustworthiness and display how the Lord has transformed their lives to a non-believer with their testimony.

How will we achieve all this in the time God has given us?

First and foremost, we need to PRAY, communication with the One who is sending us out to accomplish His mission is the most important. We need to be still and know He is Lord and listen to the Holy Spirit for wisdom, guidance and direction.

Secondly, we need to work as one that is no matter how many of us is going out in a team, we need to be One in the Spirit, One in the Purpose and work together to effect change and accomplish the Goal to spread the Saving Word of Jesus and make disciples and baptize them.

Thirdly we need to follow up, mentor and teach the new Christians how to become more like Jesus and walk the walk and talk the talk as Kings Kids.

Fourthly we need to PRAY and pray some more for the ones God has saved so they will be protected and guided by the Holy Spirit till you see them again, on earth or in Heaven.

Thank you, Lord, that we can play a small part in advancing Your Kingdom as you have directed us to do. Glory be to your name we exalt You above all else and Worship You with all our heart, Thank You Jesus.