

Ouachita Baptist University

Scholarly Commons @ Ouachita

Honors Theses

Carl Goodson Honors Program

4-17-2023

Short-Term Missions: Helping or Hurting?

Hannah Rossell

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholarlycommons.obu.edu/honors_theses



Part of the [Christianity Commons](#), and the [Missions and World Christianity Commons](#)

SENIOR THESIS APPROVAL

This Honors thesis entitled

“Short-Term Missions: *Helping or Hurting?*”

written by

Hannah Rossell

and submitted in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for completion of
the Carl Goodson Honors Program
meets the criteria for acceptance
and has been approved by the undersigned readers.

Dr. Ray Franklin, thesis director

Dr. Terry Carter, second reader

Dr. Jason Doroga, third reader

Dr. Barbara Pemberton, Honors Program director

Date

April 17, 2023

Introduction

Thesis Statement

Every year, thousands of short-term mission teams are sent out all over the world. It is estimated that more than four million Americans take an overseas short-term mission trip every year. Most of these participants are youth and young adults. The American church is estimated to spend as much, or more, on short-term mission trips as they do on sending and sustaining long-term missionaries. The question is, with all these participants and resources being sent out, are short-term mission trips helping or hurting the long-term goal of missions? Short-term missions can be helpful if they are plugging in and supporting the long-term project at hand.

Researching through literature, survey responses, and personal experiences, it can be proven that short-term mission trips can be helpful to the long-term goal. However, these teams must be more adequately prepared culturally, linguistically, mentally, and spiritually before they can effectively plug in to the mission's strategy and appropriately share the Gospel. This training must come early in the preparation of the short-term trip in order to give teams the most chance of success for plugging in and supporting the long-term missionary. Amy Young, author, and former long-term missionary, puts it this way, "If you start preparing for your transition early, you can invest in the areas that are important to you instead of reacting as they come up."¹

Brief Outline

This presentation is broken into four parts: the history of short-term missions, characteristics of a successful trip, intercultural communication and intelligence, and lastly, the success ratings of short-term trips. Each of these sections is a different aspect of the short-term mission's

¹ Amy Young, *Looming transitions: Starting and Finishing Well in Cross-Cultural Service* (CreateSpace (Scotts Valley, California: CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform, 2015). 88.

experience. Together, these sections can help churches specifically, but other sending organizations as well, better prepare their short-term teams to go overseas to be effective bearers of the Gospel.

Research Methods

Four methods of research were used.

- Literature written by church and ministry leaders
- Survey responses from global mission pastors, long-term missionaries, short-term mission team leaders and team members.
- Anecdotal experiences from serving on short-term trips for eight years in Southern Mexico and an experience in Europe.
- Information from a state Baptist convention presentation *Sentinel- Safety and Security* training by Fort Sherman Academy

Literature Used

The four primary pieces of literature used in gathering information were *Foreign to Familiar* by Sarah Lanier, *Serving with Eyes Wide Open* by David Livermore, *Misreading Scripture with Western Eyes* by Randolph Richards and Brandon O'Brien, and *Looming Transitions* by Amy Young. Additionally, website and journal articles were referenced and used in the research process. Finally, the English Standard Version (ESV) of Scripture was used.

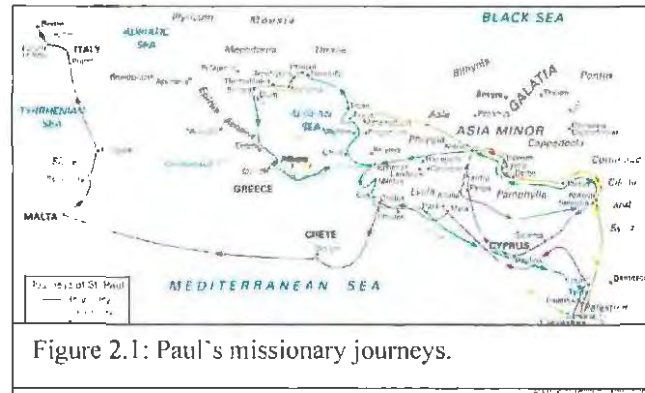
Part One: Short-Term Mission History

Where did short-term missions originate?

Some credit the Apostle Paul as the first missionary, but missions began long before that. Missions is a result of sin and sin began in The Garden of Eden. Being a missionary is being someone who is actively seeking the lost. Genesis chapter three shows when God the Father heard of the sin in the Garden, he sought out Adam and Eve to reconnect with them. The Father already knew of their fall yet chose to seek them out— that was the first missions experience. When we live our life on mission, we are living like Christ. When God connected with Adam

and Eve He enforced a punishment, but He also gave insight to the hope that would come for them one day. This was the first instance of sharing the hope of salvation in Christ with the lost.

Then, in 45 A.D., Paul was sent out on his first Missionary journey. He and Barnabas, being commissioned by the Holy Spirit, set out from Antioch of Rome. From there, they travelled to Cyprus and Pamphylia, then to Phrygia and Lycaonia. When it was time for the two men to return home and tell their own church of



what had happened, they followed the same route minus the stops in Cyprus.² A few years later, Paul was prepared to leave Antioch again for the sake of sharing Jesus with Gentiles. This time, he travelled with a man named Silas. It was on this journey that many churches were established by Paul. He would continue to be in contact with them, teaching and strengthening them with the letters that are found in the Epistles. Paul and Silas travelled to places like Philippi, Thessalonica, Corinth, Athens, and other places in Asia Minor. As stated in Acts, chapters thirteen and fourteen, the purpose of this trip was not only to establish churches but encourage those already believing in Jesus and convert others to being a Christian. During Paul's journeys he left home, served amongst unbelievers, shared Christ, and eventually returned home to share with his church in Antioch what had been accomplished. He had a sending church in Antioch. These were the people that would "hold the rope" and support him while he was gone. He was prepared not

² Ryan Nelson, "Paul's Missionary Journeys: The Beginner's Guide," *OverviewBible.com*. (July 7, 2020). Online: <https://overviewbible.com/pauls-missionary-journeys/>

only culturally and linguistically but also spiritually to teach and encourage others. He had people praying for him and men serving alongside him.

The disciples were called and commissioned to be missionaries as well. After Jesus' death and resurrection, He commissioned his disciples to go unto the nations preaching the Gospel. This account in Matthew 28, known as the Great Commission, represents one of the most popular set of verses when individuals are preparing for a mission trip. Jesus encouraged his disciples that even though He was leaving, they were to continue the work that He had begun, because He would be sending someone greater to work with them at all times as recorded in John 14:16.³ As this Great Commission applied to all Christians, missionary work began everywhere.

There were many Saints who carried the torch of missions over time. One of the most notable includes St. Patrick. St. Patrick lived from 387 to 460 A.D. Patrick studied Christianity and was sent, by an angel in a dream, to Ireland to be a missionary. He was ordained as a priest and set out to minister and evangelize to the people of Ireland.⁴ Then, in 563 A.D., the Catholic church began the work of sending out formal missionaries. However, it was not until the 1500s that the Protestant church began to send vocational missionaries. The Protestant Reformation in 1517 was led by Martin Luther. His efforts towards the Reformation sparked others to go and share about Luther's theses. Thus, the task of sending missionaries to share the message of Christ was initiated.⁵

⁴ History.com Editors, "Who Was St. Patrick?," *History.com* (February 24, 2023). Online: <https://www.history.com/topics/st-patricks-day/who-was-saint-patrick>

⁵ Tai McGuire, "The Definition and History of Missionary Work," *Just Disciple.com* (January 9, 2020). Online: <https://justdisciple.com/missionary-work-2/#:~:text=Missionary%20work%20occurs%20when%20an,They%20also%20do%20humanitarian%20work>.

In 1792, William Carey devoted his life to going into all the world and preaching the Gospel. This devotion by Carey resulted in him being named “The Father of Modern Missions.”⁶ In 1800, Carey baptized his first Hindu convert in India. Carey’s work was a result of sacrifices and teamwork. “Carey, more than any other missionary of this period, stirred the imagination of the Christian world and showed by his own humble example of what could be done in a wide variety of ways to further the cause of world evangelism.”⁷ Carey faced opposition throughout his life. Many called him crazy for his desire to share the Gospel. A group of ministers is recorded for saying, “When God pleases to convert the heathen, He will do it without your aid or mine.”⁸ This proclamation shows how drastic of a desire Carey had to serve the nations through sharing the Gospel, and, how unheard of an idea it was in that time. Through his time overseas, Carey established Baptist churches and the center of Baptist missionary activity in India.⁹ William Carey died in 1834, but his influence “was felt far beyond India.”¹⁰ It was through Carey’s work and impact that The Great Century of Missions was inspired. This modern missionary movement was crucial to the development and expansion of Christian missions.

In the 1960s through the 1970s, Youth with a Mission (YWAM) was formed by Loren and Darlene Cunningham. They had the goal of helping youth “know God and make Him known.”¹¹ In the summer of 1956 Loren was serving abroad and through a revelation from the

⁶ Ruth Tucker, *From Jerusalem to Irian Jaya: A Biographical History of Christian Missions* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2004), 122.

⁷ Tucker, 122.

⁸ Ibid, 123.

⁹ Ibid, 126.

¹⁰ Ibid, 130.

¹¹ Youth With A Mission, “Our Story HIS/story” *ywam.org* (August 5, 2020). Online: <https://ywam.org/about-us/history>

Lord, knew that he had to go the nations, preaching, and taking as many people with him as he could. The next summer his vision came to life and Youth with a Mission became a reality. Within the first year, YWAM created a training program. The initial 21 students of YWAM gathered in Switzerland for the first “in-depth training program. the school of Evangelism.”¹² Once these students finished their training program, YWAM began to flourish. It should be noted that the first formal “sending organization” that formed implemented an “in-depth” training program to be completed prior to sending any students out. While there was an urgency to get Christians to the field, they did not act with haste. Instead, they took their time and properly equipped those they were sending. This is a direct correlation to the amount of success that the organization had.

It was during this same time, the early 1900s through the 1950s, that the Wright brothers had solidified their invention of the airplane. The ability to fly would have a great impact on the American church and their access to reaching the world. Flights were a great asset to the church because an individual could get anywhere in a fraction of the time they would traveling by boat. Additionally, 1952 was the year that Jim Elliot set out on his missionary journey to Ecuador.¹³ It is clear that the early to mid 1900s were of great influence on the development of short-term missions.

What is a short-term missions experience?

The International Mission Board, or IMB, defines short-term trips as those that are one to eight weeks in length. According to the IMB, the purpose of these trips is to serve alongside

¹² Ibid.

¹³ “Jim Elliot: Story and legacy,” *Christianity.com*. (June 5, 2020). Online: <https://www.christianity.com/church/church-history/timeline/1901-2000/jim-elliott-no-fool-11634862.html>

permanent IMB teams in order to impact the ministry and the evangelism taking place. The IMB is not the only organization that sends out teams, there are many non-profit ministries with the goal of equipping and sending missionaries. Of course, churches send out thousands of members each year to serve around the world. In the end, it can be said that a short-term trip is one to eight weeks long, with the purpose of sharing the Gospel.

Who is impacted by short-term missions?

There are three main groups of people who are impacted by short-term mission trips. The first, long-term missionaries. Next, the nationals, and lastly, the “goers” of the trip. The life-changing impacts are often a significant selling point for recruiting team members for short-term trips. It is either “you will change so many lives” or, “your life will be changed forever” after partaking in such an experience, and both of these statements can be true. However, many missionaries along with Majority-World Church leader—those that are Christians outside of America and Western Europe—pose the questions, “what are the impacts of these short-term trips? Who is really being impacted?”¹⁴

The first group of individuals that are impacted by short-term teams are the long-term missionaries. The missionaries have their life and their routine established, have jobs to work, platforms and identities to maintain, ministries to run, and people to connect with. Then, when a short-term team arrives, they are tasked with hosting, transporting, and entertaining a group of Americans for a week. While the missionary family may be happy to do this, it creates extra work, nonetheless. Emily Barber, a long-term missionary who served in Haiti, explained that the most helpful, most appreciated short-term teams who ever served with her ministry were those

¹⁴ David Livermore, *Serving with eyes wide open: Doing short-term missions with cultural intelligence*. (Ada, MI: Baker Books, 2013), 63-65.

who came with the intent and the “mission” of missionary care. She said these teams were few and far between. Most teams that came wanted to be going, and doing, and accomplishing tasks. They wanted to be hosting a Vacation Bible School or an after-school program. They wanted to plan a day of activities for the orphanage, they wanted to spend their evenings sight-seeing and touring the neighboring villages. While all these tasks came from a positive and well-intended heart, these weeks were stressful for Ms. Barber and her family. All the sudden they were responsible for this team of eager and ready Americans who wanted to be on the move twenty-four hours a day in addition to their daily jobs and responsibilities. This meant that before the team arrived, she was coordinating living arrangements and transportation, activities for various groups of people, and asking neighboring communities to see if they had children or teenagers who would be interested in attending an event. It should be noted that Ms. Barber made it clear that they appreciated any team who was willing to give up their time and spend their resources and come assist her ministry for a week. She was thankful to have teams help her lead a VBS program, or love on the kids at the orphanages for a week, she was just extremely appreciative of the teams who came with the sole purpose of caring for her and her family. Being a missionary in another culture is tiring physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually. Having people there with the sole goal of uplifting, supporting, and caring for the missionary family is of priceless value.

The nationals the country the team is visiting are the goal population of impact. *Serving With Eyes Wide Open* by David Livermore gives great insight into what may actually be happening when short-term teams come to visit. “You come for two weeks. We’re here forever.” “You too quickly get into the action without thinking of the implications for our churches long

after you go home.” “Your strategies and plans are helpful. But where’s the Holy Spirit?”¹⁵

These quotes, given by Majority-World Church leaders, give Americans a glimpse into how well-intended efforts may be received by other cultures. The majority of the evidence shows that the recipient of the benefits of mission trips are the goers, not the local people. “Those who have researched the impact of short-term missions on the receivers are not convinced that these trips are changing the recipients.”¹⁶ While all of the situations and experiences were not explained in his book, Livermore does reveal clear hurt that has been felt by the people groups which have been served by mission trips. Accounts like this lend light to the fact that there is little consideration to the implications of the actions committed by mission trip goers. Author Amy Young puts it this way, “...as with a boat speeding by, others have to live in the wake you create. It doesn’t matter how much you do not intend or desire to leave a wake, you will leave one.”¹⁷ Teams will make an impact in their host country; the important thing is that this impact, or “wake,” is one that is fun and enjoyable for the nationals to ride in. Those visiting the country and community for a week do not have to deal with the consequences of what they say or do. Instead, the long-term missionary is left rebuilding relationships and trust that may have been broken in a week’s time. It also appears that when teams arrive in a different country, they take on the attitude that they can do anything. Instead, the Holy Spirit should be driving the work.

There are positives to these short trips. In the writer’s experiences of going to the southern region of Mexico, the nationals have been so thankful and appreciative of teams coming in to work for them because while they were building a gathering place for worship, they could

¹⁵ Livermore, 63.

¹⁶ Livermore, 56.

¹⁷ Young, 13.

focus on doing the job that would be providing for their family. They wanted more than anything to have a house of worship to call their own, but they also had to complete their work in order for their family to survive the week. In cases like this, outside work was appreciated, and in many cases, short-term teams can be of great benefit to the host community. But, for the nationals to reap the benefits of the short-term trip, teams must take into consideration even the most basic of consequences of their actions. For this thought process to occur, teams must be prepared culturally so that they know what is and is not received well in the context of the host community.

Lastly, young adults comprise the majority of the “goers” that the American church sends out on short-term mission trips. “Of the millions of North Americans participating in short-term mission projects every year, the majority are teenagers.”¹⁸ It is wonderful that young adults are stepping up to fulfill the role of serving. It speaks volumes of a healthy church to have teenagers and young adults eager to serve the Lord. If the mission trip is the first for the participant. Or, perhaps they have never been out of the country or in a third-world culture. It can be a shocking week full of things like poverty, homelessness, starvation, and hopelessness. These can be hard issues to process, and one may come back to the United States ready to make a change in their own life. Again, speaking to the life-changing benefits the goers receive. Livermore points to several studies that show participants tend to return home with the intent and aspiration of living more simply, going without luxuries, and living more boldly for Christ. Within six to eight weeks, however, these goers have resorted back to their previous lifestyle, habits, and behaviors that they had prior to the trip overseas.¹⁹

¹⁸ Livermore, 53.

¹⁹ Livermore, 54.

Part Two: Characteristics of Successful Trips

Plugging into Strategy

One of the clearest signs of a successful short-term trip is the ability of the team to “plug in” to the ministry of the long-term missionary. Missionaries go overseas and establish their ministry. Whether it be at face-value and the culture knows the individual is there as a Christian evangelist, or, through a platform, the missionary has an established life. A platform is a trade that the missionary comes into a foreign country with and engages the native community while working in that trade. It may be education, the oil business, engineering, or another skillset, but this is the reason the country’s government allows this Christian into their country. In reality, they are engaging in the work of their trade, but more so, they are using their work as a way to build relationships with the nationals. The hope is that one day, a strong enough relationship is present that a presentation of the Gospel can be shared. Regardless of how, the missionary will have a specific way of doing their work and living life in a new culture. It may take years for an outsider to be welcomed into a village, tribe, or community. All this to say, there is a strategy to working as a missionary overseas and foreign visitors need to be aware of the strategy before arriving so they can more effectively join in and assist in the work being done. “...relationships are like balloons: their shapes are influenced by inside and outside factors.”²⁰ The relationships that team members will make during their time in the host community and culture will be based on how well they prepared themselves-- the inside, and the nature or the community-- the outside. The inside is far easier to control as each team member is responsible for their mental, physical, and spiritual preparation. Of course, team members have no way of knowing what they

²⁰ Young, 6.

do not know, so, they need a pastor, shepherd, mentor, or team leader to guide them through the preparation process. It should be made clear to the team that each step of preparation, as small and minute as it may seem, will have a direct impact on the inside influences of what happens overseas.

As short-term trips are being planned and team members begin to prepare their hearts and minds for what they will see and accomplish abroad, they will start to conceive notions and ideas about what their experience should be like. Sociologists have found that the way in which a person anticipates a situation has a direct correlation to how the individual will perceive and experience the situation.²¹ The ideas and anticipations of team members before leaving the United States will alter how they are involved in their time overseas. By preparing their hearts and minds and creating all of these preconceived notions and anticipations the individual will create their own strategy of what they think needs to happen. This creates a “strategy” or way of working that they believe will be the most successful. It is these preconceived strategies that cause issues because now the teams are not as willing to mold and comply with the strategy that the missionary has worked to discover and establish.

Instead, what should take place is the training of mission teams in a way that properly prepares their expectations and anticipations so that they can plug in to the cross-cultural strategy of the missionary. Being well-equipped allows for the teams to be open-minded and adapt to the way of life of the ministry and workers. Unfortunately, this is rarely what happens. “...many perceptions held by North Americans about short-term missions efforts are radically different from the perceptions of the majority world Christians who host these teams.”²²

²¹ Livermore, 48.

²² Livermore, 46.

Effective Training

One of the most important pieces of knowledge to grow in before visiting a new country, especially with the hope of building relationships and loving others, is cultural knowledge. The first aspect of growing in cultural knowledge is knowing if the host country is a hot or cold-climate culture. Hot climates are those that are people and event centered, whereas cold climates are very clock centered.

Team members need to be prepared and understand the concept of time in the country they are visiting. This can significantly alter their expectations and attitudes while serving. Is the team constantly frustrated because the nationals are not sticking to a strict schedule and never on time? Or is the community upset because this team of Americans is constantly lagging behind always stopping and talking? These minute frustrations can add up and cause rifts between the team and the host community. Thus, hindering how well the team is able to relate to those they are trying to serve. A hot climate culture is mostly event centered. They are spontaneous, flexible to a change in plans, and will be very focused on experiencing and enjoying the moment. Plans may be made minute by minute and hour by hour, but not much farther in advance. This culture type is warm and inviting in the way they see outsiders, and they will spend time getting to know and welcome visiting mission teams. This can be a shock to American teams because in the Western countries time is as precious as gold. It is a “hot commodity” and something to be saved and savored. It can be difficult to adjust to being engulfed in a culture that does not value time in the same way.²³ This, then, is an aspect of training that needs to be addressed more than once. Before ever leaving the states, teams need to envision themselves in various scenarios where

²³ Brandon O'Brien, and Randy Richards, *Misreading Scripture with Western Eyes* (Westmont, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2012), 137.

their concept of time is going to differ from what is realistically going to happen in the host country. In this situation, having a team leader who has had feet on the ground in the same location the team will be serving in will be helpful. That way, they can share with their team how they were shocked and surprised by the concept of time, how it impacted their time abroad, and how to better manage personal expectations. Cold-climate cultures are very time centered. Their days are planned to the minute, schedules are made and adhered to, and time is of the essence.²⁴

Having a mission team that knows how to plan and manage their time will allow for them to ease into the culture and way of life of the nationals. This allows for quicker relationships to be built, a deeper understanding of the society they are entering, and the ability to assist in the strategy of the long-term missionary. If the host culture's concept of time is not common knowledge among the team, they may work in haste and without regard for what is best for the society. "You too quickly get into the action without thinking through the implication for our churches long after you go home" says the Majority World Christian. By jumping without being culturally prepared, it may appear that the team is working in a "me-centered" or a "human-centered" approach instead of one that is focused and sustained by God."²⁵

On some trips around the world the only conversations a team will have with their hosts will be through a translator. In these cases, the translator can mold what was said into a culturally appropriate delivery. On these trips, where there are more team members than translators available, it is imperative that the actions of the team speak louder than their words. Whether a translator will be available or not, there needs to be at least some form of linguistic training. It

²⁴ Sarah Lanier, *Foreign to familiar: A Guide to Understanding Hot- and Cold-Climate Cultures* (Austin, TX: McDougal Publishing, 2010), 118.

²⁵ Livermore, 59.

may be through the teaching of sweet phrases like “Jesus loves you” or a simple, go-to introduction. There also needs to be an awareness of words, phrases or pronunciations that should be avoided. Additionally, conversational topics that are taboo or inappropriate for a visitor to bring up for discussion need to be clearly relayed to the team. Finally, what types of topics do we as Americans avoid or make us uncomfortable, but other countries may not have a problem with and therefore, could be brought up in conversation. “When we cross a culture...we often assume that what goes without being said in our culture and language also goes without being said in other cultures and languages. This can lead to profound misunderstanding.”²⁶ Just as the team will be curious about the people and culture they will be visiting; the local people will be curious about the lives of the team and what life in America look like? While it is not realistic to ask a short-term team to learn a new language before leaving the states, it is important that they have some linguistic and communication training. Along the same lines, if the team plans to engage in door-to-door evangelism, there needs to be the proper training on how to propose the Gospel message in that culture. Not every society or village would receive eager Americans on their doorstep talking about a topic that they insist is “life-changing” and “the only way.” Additionally, these words and phrases that we consider “weighty” in the American church, may not translate to the host culture quite the same way. Westerners tend to believe if something is really important, then there will be at least one word specifically for it. Thus, the more important something is, the more ways we will have to say it. Richards and O’Brien prove this through the many ways Americans talk about their automobiles. We use car as a general term, but we also have specifics, words that paint an even clearer picture of exactly the automobile being referenced. Is it a compact car, a sedan, a hatchback or a convertible? Each of these are different

²⁶ O’Brien and Richards 70.

types of automobiles with their own distinct wording.²⁷ Having many, interchangeable phrases about the importance of the Gospel message is common when Americans talk to other Western-church goers. Overseas, however, these “churchy” phrases may not translate the way they are intended. Similarly, many countries around the world rely on rice as a staple piece of each meal. These countries have a specific name for rice in various forms. Rice in the fields, rice bagged and in stores, cooked rice, rice on plates ready to serve, these are all referred to by a different name to individuals in Asian cultures. To Americans, it is all rice. “This is not merely a matter of vocabulary but of values.”²⁸

In other parts of the world, a translator may not be necessary and team members can have direct conversations with the people they have come to serve. Or, more than likely, there is not a translator available to be with the mission team all week long. In these scenarios, it is even more crucial that the team is prepared with words and phrases that are acceptable and those that are not. On these trips there are no translators that can filter inappropriate concepts or take what a team member said and alter it to mean the same thing, but in a more culturally acceptable way. It is in places like these that team members must realize, there is not always a one-to-one relationship between languages. This can cause problems in trying to explain things that an American team member could not show a tangible example of-- like placing our faith in Christ. Not having a perfect one-to-one relationship, and not being able to show a tangible example means the importance, the reality of the situation, may get lost in translation.²⁹ In the writer’s experiences in Mexico, the team was thankful enough to have translators a few years. On these

²⁷ O’Brien and Richards, 72-73.

²⁸ O’Brien and Richards, 73.

²⁹ O’Brien and Richards, 76.

trips it was a relief to know that if a team member said something embarrassing or unsuitable, only the translator would know. However, in Scotland, no translator was necessary as only accents were different in the way the two nationalities communicated. Here, it was crucial that the team knew what they should steer away from saying and what words they needed to change as they meant something different in the Scottish context. If someone commented on a national's "pants" or made a comment that they had something in the "fanny pack" they were carrying it would have greatly offended the Scottish community. Whether a translator will be present or not, whether team members will be able to freely engage in conversation or have to follow a more scripted approach to talking about the Gospel, linguistic training is a must. Spoken language is so much more than a set of vocabulary words. It shapes worldviews and it is a critical, and massive, part of culture. When used properly, it is the most effective way to share the Gospel. When it is not used properly, it becomes an equally large stumbling block and means to misunderstandings between team members and nationals.

Soft Skills

There are certain skills that are required on the mission field. These skills include traits like maturity, awareness—of oneself and their surroundings, and diligence. These are skills that team members will bring to the table. Not every team member will have the same amount of each skill. Throughout the duration of the time the team has to prepare together and individually, these skills can grow and increase. This preparation and growth aids in the "life-changing" aspects of short-term trips for the goers. The team member does not go away and then come back a completely changed person. They begin the process of growing and changing while preparing and deepening these soft skills.

The maturity of the group has a great deal to do with how successful the events of the trip will be. It is a wonderful fact that so many of the short-term mission trip participants are teenagers and young adults, but this may lead to complications while the team is abroad. In many South American cultures, Indigenous villages, and agriculture and farming cultures children begin working at a very young age. This lends itself to suggest children grow up and mature much faster than those from America do. A large portion of understanding maturity around the world is understanding if the culture is individualistic or group oriented. An individualistic culture is just what it sounds like-- very individual in nature and typically align with cold-climate cultures. They speak and think for themselves and will step up to lead without any hesitation. Even young children are taught "You are an individual. Learn to think for yourself" in individualistic cultures.³⁰ In individualistic cultures each person carries their own weight in conversations, opinions, interactions and so on. On the other hand, in a group-oriented culture, one person is going to speak for the entire group. If one local comes to tell a team member something about how they believe, or how they feel about a certain topic, it should not be dismissed-- regardless. In group-oriented societies it certainly should not be taken lightly. Chances are, this person has come to speak as a representative of their group. In these places it takes time to get answers and make plans because the entire group must be consulted first. Additionally, members of group cultures have a hard time believing in a new faith because they feel as though they are betraying their community or "village" surrounding them, as well as their ancestors. Being presented with the opportunity of eternity in paradise with Christ may be what draws a nonbeliever to desire a relationship with Christ. But, because his parents and ancestors were not presented the same opportunity and are not getting to spend eternity in Heaven, this

³⁰ Lanier, 41.

person may very well reject the idea and the offer to accept the gift of salvation.³¹ This is understandable as group-oriented societies are more times than not, in cultures which heavily value the personal aspects and beliefs of each other and among the group as a whole. It should also be noted that the ways in which a team speaks to and addresses the national community, makes suggestions, or brings up new ideas will be interpreted differently depending on the type of society the team is interacting with-- individualistic or group-oriented. If a team is not aware of the type of society they are entering, there is a greater chance of offending the nationals.

As far as the personal maturity of the team members is concerned, that is up to the discretion of families and the sending organization. Some organizations set an age-limit of 16, 18 or 21. They do this to ensure that they can trust this person to share and proclaim the Gospel responsibly and faithfully. However, simply setting an age-limit may not be the “gold-standard” for gate-keeping the opportunity of a mission trip. Perhaps in addition to an age requirement there should be:

- An application to complete
- An interview process
- An opportunity for the potential team member to share their testimony
- A time to share when, in the last few weeks, they have shared the Gospel
- Reflection upon how this person would respond and react to cultural issues
- An evaluation of this individual’s cultural knowledge and awareness.

This process does not have to be one that is intense and intimidating thus deterring people from applying for a mission trip. There just needs to be some sort of regulation on who gets to go, and who can stay local and be a faithful sender, be on the prayer teams of those who are gone, help fundraise and bring awareness to the trip and so on. Everyone is called to live on mission everyday of their life. Not everyone, at a particular moment in their life, is equipped and ready to

³¹ O’Brien and Richards. 95-96.

be overseas. It is a great responsibility to take the Gospel globally. It can be a sensitive task, one that requires maturity and the proper desire. Through prayerful consideration the Holy Spirit will make it clear whether or not an individual is called to be going on the trip. This prayerful consideration speaks of the maturity of the participant. Is this potential team member going for the right reasons? Is the work of the Holy Spirit at the center of their desire to serve? These are questions that can be addressed through the application and interview process.

Staying safe and secure overseas is a key component to a successful trip. The following information has been adapted from the Mississippi Baptist Convention's Sentinel Training Presentation. Going overseas should not be a fearful experience. It is different and requires preparation but should not be full of worry and anxiety. These are some of the precautions a team should make before leaving the States, as well as a variety of things to continue doing while in a new culture and country. The pastor and team leader of the short-term team should lead these conversations and walk their team through some of the following precautions. When teams are faithful to prepare, they are being a good steward of the opportunity they have been given. Some things the team must keep in mind is the need to protect themselves and those they are serving. If they are in a country that does not openly allow Christianity, the team must buy in and support the platform that the long-term missionary is completing. There must be a desire to live out our testimony and preserve a Christian witness, even in the midst of challenges.

Before ever leaving the country there are pre-travel preparations that need to be made. Many of these pre-travel preparations are made through research prior to departing. For the team member, investigating not just the destination, but the route to get there can be insightful. Looking into what airports the team will arrive and depart from and what type of threats are in the transit countries can be helpful. Questions for the group to research and answer could be

what groups are active, what do they do, who leads it, and how they operate. Flights are constantly changing or being cancelled. If there is a chance the team will get stuck in an airport or city for a night, the team leader should have already thought about a contingency plan of where to safely stay overnight. Some countries will share government updates. These updates may prove to be beneficial for the team, pastors, and supporters back home to receive. The preparations the team makes is dependent on the destination, the type of work that will be done, and how many team members are on the team.

In any circumstance, teams should understand how to “be a chameleon.” This ability to blend in and lay low can be helpful when being an outsider in a country. Teams need to be prepared well culturally in order to be able to avoid cultural insults: dress appropriately- not overdressed, underdressed or provocatively; know the etiquette and expectations for public transportation and as a team, have a plan in case of emergency--where to go, how to get there, and who to look for even in the midst of chaos. While it may be fear-inducing for a team to have to sit through training on these topics, it is always better to be over prepared than under prepared.

In all circumstances, in any country, a team can be prepared with the “Big Three.” These three things can prove to be beneficial in a number of circumstances.

- Stay alert
- Be unpredictable in route and transportation
- Maintain a low profile.

Having a team leader who instills these three simple tips into their team members is already a step ahead in preparation. Another easy tool to use when preparing safety plans for mission team is the “OODA Loop.” This funny-sounding mnemonic device stands for “Observe, Orient, Decide, Act.” This helps team members remember to observe what is happening around them,

orient or become like those around them, decide and plan and then form a contingency plan for emergencies, and then act on it only if necessary.

In times of trouble, chaos, or emergency, it is of utmost importance to keep at the forefront of one's mind the reason they are in this new culture and new country. Team members are here to be ambassadors for Christ. This requires the team to keep their witness, keep their trust in Christ, keep their emotions under control, and pray continuously. The hardest part of safety and security training is preparing in the case of a hostage situation. There is a fine line to walk between being prepared and knowing what to do and becoming obsessive and worried about all the things that could go wrong. Unfortunately, there are still many countries that try to take hostage those that proclaim Christianity. The first thing to do when preparing for any sort of hostage situation is make an STS-- short tenable statement. The short tenable statement is child-like in logic and should be consistent between the team, the field host, and the supporters back in America. The team should have materials to back up the statement. Whether that be construction materials because the team is there to do manual labor, school supplies because they are there to help at a school, or books because they are there to learn. The STS must never disclose too much information and there should be no names of platforms or field hosts given. The idea of the short truthful statement presented through the visual of the "STS Box." The items inside the box are those things that the team may speak about. Things like personal testimonies--dependent on your location, hobbies and interests, family, and anything else that makes you appear human. The things that are listed outside the STS box are those that should not be spoken about. These are topics that may be harmful or reveal information about yourself or others as well as divisive subjects like politics, money, and military.

Again, safety and security can be a sensitive topic to have to prepare and teach to a team. The depth and specifics of safety and security training are subject to change based on the location of the trip, climate of the culture, the type of team and the type of work that will be done. Therefore, the training and preparation needed is up to the discretion of the sending agency, pastor, or team leader. Regardless of all the specifics, this is a non-negotiable aspect of short-term mission trip training that must take place before a team leaves the States.

Part Three: Intercultural Communication and C.Q.

Intercultural communication and cultural intelligence are skills with the highest priority to team members about to embark on an overseas journey. This section breaks down intercultural communication and C.Q. Additionally, it provides some ways team members can develop and grow these skills. Cultural Intelligence, or C.Q. is the ability to recognize and adapt to cultural differences. This is something that has been mentioned previously in this presentation but is crucial to making a successful trip. C.Q. is a measurement, like an I.Q., and thankfully, is something that can be grown through teaching, awareness, and practice.

Hot vs. Cold

Hot-Climate Cultures	Cold-Climate Cultures
Southern United States and South America	Northern United States and Canada
Africa	Northern Europe and the Jewish European population
Asia and Pacific Islands	White population of New Zealand
Mediterranean Countries	Australia
Middle East	Southern Brazil
Most of the rest of the world	South Africa

Table 4.1: Hot vs. Cold climate cultures

The biggest piece of C.Q. is knowing, understanding, and being able to adapt to the differences between hot and cold cultures. Lanier gives a list of hot vs. cold climate countries.³²

They are as follows: U.S., Canada, Northern Europe, Jewish population from Europe, white

³² Lanier, 20-21.

population of New Zealand, Australia, Southern Brazil and South Africa are all cold-climate cultures. The Southern U.S., Asia, Pacific Islands, South America-withholding Argentina as it is primarily European. Africa, Mediterranean countries, Middle East and most of the rest of the world are considered hot-climate cultures. The following is a comparison of varying aspects of hot and cold cultures and why they are important for teams to be aware of while on a mission trip.

The first comparison is whether the culture is relationship or task focused. Hot-climate cultures are traditionally relationship based. This means people will do whatever it takes to maintain, preserve, and save a relationship and someone's feelings. Even if it means having to relay non-factual information, feelings and friendships must be saved. In contrast to the cold-climate cultures, time and efficiency do not take precedence over a person and relationship. Additionally, this focus on people means that the team must make an effort to get to know the person, for who they are, before addressing any sort of business.³³ This should be kept at the forefront of the minds of teams who plan on engaging in street or door-to-door evangelism. It would not be received well to knock on a door, give heavy, important information and then move on to the next door. Instead, there should be efforts to build relationships first. Through getting to know each other, knowing each other's lives, team members sharing about themselves, a friendship will begin to form. Hot-climate cultures are so hospitable, it is typically not hard to start these types of relationships. Then, once a relationship has been formed, the information and importance of the Gospel message will be better received.

The next is high and low contexts in cultures. The difference between these two lies primarily in the formality of society. High context societies are very formal. Everything has a

³³ Lanier, 30.

protocol. There is a reason behind everything that is done-- greetings, dining, traditions, and how relationships are formed. People in high-context societies do not tend to interact with those that are not "their own."³⁴ Teams should note this so they can adjust their expectations and perspectives accordingly before arriving in a new context. Once again, having false expectations can set up a team to not be as engaging or successful as they could be if they had been properly prepared. Low-context societies appear to be very laid back and relaxed. There is great freedom to create new traditions, dress in new or different ways, meet and befriend new and different people. In societies like these "what you know is more important than who you know," and formalities do not reign over social interactions.³⁵ In countries like this, short-term teams would have seemed to have more success in connecting with people on a surface level and also on a deeper level. A level that the Gospel message could be presented on.

Following the pattern of how outsiders are treated in high versus low contexts, cultures will treat short-term mission teams differently based on whether they are an inclusive or private culture. An inclusive culture is just that-- inclusive to everyone. No conversation had in public is a private conversation as anyone is welcome to come join. An individualistic culture, however, highly regards privacy. This means, being a foreign group will be hard to break through and get to know the community they are visiting. In a group culture, however, the community will be excited to welcome the team in and host them. Another stark contrast is the view on children. In group cultures, children are always assumed to go anywhere with their parents as the idea of babysitters does not exist. In thoughts of possessions or things, they are shared a lot like the conversations. In group cultures, individuals hold true to the saying "what's mine is yours." They

³⁴ Lanier, 90.

³⁵ Lanier, 102.

are willing to share all things with their neighbors. The same is not always true for individualistic cultures.³⁶

The last principle of hot and cold cultures deals specifically with communication. Is the society very direct or indirect in their communication style? As short-term teams will be visiting with the goal of communicating the Gospel, this is an important factor to understand. Cold-climate cultures emphasize conciseness and accuracy in their communication. They will not add “fluff” for the sake of the other person or the conversation. This may come across as blunt and rude, but this is just their communication style.³⁷ On the other hand, hot-climate cultures will dance around questions or topics in a way that allows individuals to avoid communicating any harsh or bad news. Knowing the difference between these communication styles and being able to adapt the message to either of them is critical for being able to effectively share the Gospel with those in another cultural context.

Global Clusters	Time Orientation	Context	Collectivist	Power Distance	Uncertainty Avoidance
Nordic Europe	Clock	Low	Medium	Low	Low
Anglo Germanic Europe	Clock	Low	Low	Low	Low
Eastern Europe	Event	High	Medium	Medium	High
Latin Europe	Event	Medium	Medium	Medium	High
Latin America	Event	Medium	High	High	High
Confucian Asia	Clock	High	High	High	Low
Japan and Singapore	Clock	High	High	High	High
Southern Asia	Event	High	High	High	Medium
Sub-Sahara Africa	Event	High	High	High	Medium
Arab	Event	High	High	High	Medium

Figure 4.1: From *Serving with Eyes Wide Open*. “Estimates of Cultural View Orientations”

³⁶ Lanier, 57-65.

³⁷ Lanier, 33-34.

Preparing a short-term mission team in the ways their host culture communicates will better set the team up for success in effectively communicating and sharing the Gospel with the nationals. While it may seem like a lot of preparation, all of these factors fit together and fit within the hot or cold climate culture. The first step for a team leader would be to prepare the team on what climate the culture is and explain what that means. Then, through explaining the culture, things like relationships, formality and communication will arise naturally. After that, the team leader or pastor can explain the different sects of society. All of this knowledge together, plus a growing C.Q. will allow for many opportunities of a successful trip.

Cultural Intelligence

Livermore explains in Part 3 of *Serving with Eyes Wide Open* that C.Q. can be broken into four main categories: drive, knowledge, strategy, and action. While they are four independent things, all are needed to grow in overall cultural intelligence. This section will break down each one of these aspects and show how together, they can make a great impact on short-term mission teams as well as those being served around the world.

C.Q. Drive refers to the level of interest, desire, and ability to adapt to a new culture. Further developing team members in C.Q. drive requires them to have a desire for cross-culture relationships. David Platt says, “There is no transformation by aviation.” If the relationships and attempts to share the Gospel with our cross-cultural neighbors here in the States is not a priority, then flying over an ocean to a new culture is not going to change that. For each of these four aspects of C.Q., Livermore gives practical ways team members could grow. Team members can grow in their drive by “being honest about what happens as a result of these trips” and viewing these trips as a means to align with the way Jesus calls us to, not just a service project.³⁸

³⁸ Livermore, 119.

Additionally, engaging in cross-cultural experiences while still in the States is a great way to gain deeper knowledge about other questions and open eyes to the things that Americans are unaware of not knowing.

C.Q. Knowledge refers to the prior understanding about how the culture being visited is similar and different to the one the team lives in. To understand how people in other cultures work, one must understand the constructs of that culture. By researching and being taught things like hot and cold cultures and what that means for every aspect of society, team members can build a better understanding of how cultures vary. In order to grow in knowledge, other than being taught by a mission's pastor or mission's team leader, team members should read a multitude of information regarding other cultures. Additionally, they should do their best to read scripture through the eyes of another culture.³⁹ Actively seeking to understand the ways cultures differ and being open to accepting and adapting to this can significantly impact the way a team member can thrive in another culture. How often do Americans say and hear, "they drive on the wrong side of the road over there." Instead, we should be saying, "we drive on a different side of the road than they do." This small shift in thinking is all it takes to grow in C.Q. knowledge. It is an acknowledgement that our cultures are different but is clear that one is not above or superior to the others.

C.Q. Strategy is taking cultural understanding and using it to interpret cues and plan for multicultural interactions. It takes practice to be mindful of other cultures and the norms there and how they differ from the U.S., but awareness is the first step. Realizing that none of these develop overnight and each take time and experiences to grow is also important for team members to understand. The expectations they set for themselves need to be realistic. Team

³⁹ Livermore, 139.

members may even need to be reminded to assess the expectations they had set in their minds and adjust those to the things actually happening. Additionally, while teams are overseas encouraging members to journal can be a great benefit to offer them. This way, they can write out all that they have observed and learned, and not rush to process through all their thoughts and emotions.⁴⁰

Lastly, C.Q. Action. C.Q. action refers to whether or not at the end of the day, a team member can relate and serve appropriately in a new culture. It is the ability one has to adapt, relate, and work efficiently in the new culture. In the end, a team member can be prepared, have sat through training classes, researched, journaled, and done everything that has contributed to their “head knowledge.” But unless their actions reflect the things they have learned, the preparation may have been in vain. Actions will always speak louder than words. How much is each individual team member willing to change and adapt to the new culture they are engaging with.⁴¹

Part Four: The Measure of Success

Upon completing the one to eight weeks in another culture, working alongside the resident missionary or church partner there, was the trip successful? Some things that need to be considered are what constitutes a successful trip and how is the success level of a trip measured. This section will answer these questions and provide the answer to the burning question, “Should we continue allotting so many resources to this type of ministry?”

⁴⁰ Livermore, 153.

⁴¹ Livermore, 154.

Success Rates

As Livermore states, “The research shows that the receivers aren’t convinced that these trips are changing the recipients.”⁴² Livermore is stating that per the research and first-hand accounts of nationals in the Majority World Church, nationals are not as confident as Americans are in the change that happens as a result of these trips. The research does show that the biggest beneficiary of the short-term trips are the “goers.” To be fair on all accounts, it is challenging to do life-changing, Gospel work, in a mere few days or even weeks. Teams must remember that the work they went out of the country to do is work that was happening before they arrived and will continue to be done after they leave. The Majority World Church and long-term missionaries alike prefer teams to come and solely focus on missionary care-- encouraging, supporting, and giving rest to those who do the relentless work of sharing the Gospel amongst unreached or unchurched people groups. This way, the team feels less pressure and has less of an expectation on themselves to complete a certain number of tasks. If the goal is not missionary care, there still needs to be a clear-cut goal for the team to attain throughout the week. If the goal of the team is to assist in manual labor, they must evaluate not only consider if the project is completed, but also consider if the project was completed in a way that incorporated the people of the community, facilitated the building of relationships, and shared the love of Christ. If the project was completed but the team upset or offended the local community by taking their work away for a week, then the trip was not a success. If the goal was hosting a vacation Bible school for community children, but there was no engagement with local families, no invitations to join the local church, and no discipleship of the church pastors on how to shepherd these families in their community, the trip may not have been as successful as the team felt it was. Notice though, the

⁴² Livermore, 56.

success rate of a trip should never be based on the number of salvations accrued throughout the week. The job as Christian believers is to present the Gospel clearly and show the love of Christ effectively. The Holy Spirit may use us to soften a heart, but He does the changing of hearts and the saving of souls, not us. When success rates become based on the number people who experienced salvation, the trip can quickly turn into a race to evangelize. Suddenly, the emphasis on building relationships is gone and the focus is on numbers.

The American church says, “We have got to do something. The window for opportunity is *now*. The time for change is ripe. We must seize this opportunity.”⁴³ However, the Majority World Church says, “You too quickly get into the action without thinking through the implications for our churches long after you go home.”⁴⁴ When the short-term team leaves the resident missionary is left with the residents of a community who have been affected by the Americans-- whether for the good or the bad is debatable. As Young puts it, “Whether or not you want to impact their lives, you will.”⁴⁵ Often times, nationals are grateful for the relationships they have made. They have been loved on and hopefully been encouraged by the visiting team. Sometimes though, the community is relieved when their visitors have returned home. Of course, the Western church loves short-term trips because of the life-changing impacts they receive from the trip. This writer is confident that short-term trips have changed their life more than they could have ever possibly changed the lives of nationals during that week. The writer’s perspectives, opinions, thoughts, and spiritual growth all increase exponentially from short-term trips. Many team participants say the same things. One participant that was interviewed for this

⁴³ Livermore, 59.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ Young, 104.

paper said “having to leave the people that you have grown to know and love in a short time” was the hardest part of short-term trips. This sentiment shows the drastic impact the communities and people have had on her.⁴⁶

Lasting Impacts

What happens once the short-term team leaves is important to think about. Like Livermore said, teams are only present for a week. Church plant pastors and resident missionaries devote a portion of their life to this work. Is the missionary left with repair work to do? Or are they left feeling encouraged and uplifted and refreshed?

First, the lasting impact on the nationals. This impact can be either positive or negative. Mrs. Barber said this in regard to the negative impacts she witnessed in her community left by short-term western church teams, “Absolutely [I witnessed harmful interactions in our community]. Because we were in an area of extreme poverty, oftentimes locals felt like they were being showcased when visiting teams wanted to “tour” the village and take pictures of people’s homes and children without understanding that though poor, they were normal humans who are proud of their homes and their kids.”⁴⁷ This is an instance where better cultural awareness and training would have benefitted the team in engaging with the host community. Another respondent noted that the issues he has observed on the field were all centered around the economic and social statuses of the country. Once again, these instances could have been avoided if better preparation had been given. Teams could have altered their expectations and not been as shocked upon arrival. Regarding the positive impacts on nationals, getting to engage with, be loved by and get to know Americans is an exciting

⁴⁶ Dianne Wentworth, February 27, 2023.

⁴⁷ Emily Barber, February 14, 2023.

opportunity. In third world cultures or countries that are impoverished, seeing and meeting Americans, especially for the first time, is the experience of a lifetime. On trips where manual labor is accomplished is often only accomplished because there were more hands and able bodies assisting the local team. On all nine of this writer's trips to Mexico the team goal was to get a church building built for a community that had enough believers and a pastor to sustain a church body. At the end of the week the nationals expressed immense gratitude that there was a team of people who were present for a week devoted to working hard in order to get this church building up and functional. Years later the same team would go back and visit other churches that they had built in the past and those church members remembered them and once again extended their thanks to the team. Without a doubt, there was a lasting impact on these communities, and it appears that it is a positive impact. Unfortunately, during that week the team tended to take over the work. They felt like because they were there to work, the nationals should not be asked to work. In reality, the community wanted to help so that they could feel even more pride in the building that they would come to treasure in the near future. As a team they were not culturally prepared to know that this community would not allow their own to stand-by and watch others work. When the team tried to take over projects around the construction site and tell the nationals who were working that they would do it for them, it was not as well received as they intended it to be.

Sending Again

The greatest criticism the church receives about sending short-term mission teams is "Is it worth it to allot all of these resources to something that may not be successful in every way?" So, should the Western Church continue to send out short-term teams? The church spends millions of dollars each year to send teams overseas. If the receivers are not gaining as many benefits as

the Western church thinks they are, are the resources, time, planning and risk worth it in the end? The short and simple answer? Yes. The Western Church should continue to send teams overseas.

One global missions pastor said this, "...another main focus of short-term trips is to have an impact on the team member to be about the work of making disciples wherever they spend most of their time in day-to-day lives."⁴⁸ With this mindset, individuals are being trained to be better disciple-makers while they are members of a short-term team. Then, they return to their day-to-day life with more boldness and training to share the Gospel. If this is one of the hopes of short-term teams, then it is important for the sake of the Western church that individuals continue being trained and better equipped disciple makers.

Mrs. Barber said this in regard to her appreciation for teams who visited to offer missionary care, "Every so often a team would ask us what would help us serve in our area the best way and that allowed us to do the specific things God had led us to do that week instead of creating a week that was geared towards the experience of the team."⁴⁹ It is imperative that these missionary care specific teams continue to go and faithfully serve and uplift those who have said "yes" to the call on their life. Culture shock and homesickness are real and can be detrimental to those who have decided to go across cultural boundaries for the sake of the Gospel. Having familiar faces, or at least people from the same culture, come to visit and provide relief can make a substantial impact in the missionary's life.

Conclusion

In conclusion, short-term mission teams can be helpful if, and only if, they have been adequately prepared and they plug in to the established long-term project at hand. While there will always

⁴⁸ Kiley Ham, February 15, 2023.

⁴⁹ Emily Barber, February 14, 2023.

be question of if short-term teams are worth sending, the evidence is clear that with the proper training, these teams can make a great difference. Regardless of opinions, Matthew 28 is clear in its calling believers to spread the Gospel. To live a life on mission is to live in the way God has called His children to. Acts 1:8 says that we shall be witnesses in Jerusalem and all of Judea and Samaria and to the ends of the earth. Christians are called to go, that is undeniable. We must be faithful stewards of that calling and prepare well to go and make disciples of all nations.

References

- Crossway Bibles. *Holy Bible: English Standard Version*. Minneapolis, MN: Good News, 2001.
- History.com Editors. "Who Was St. Patrick?." Published February 24, 2023. Accessed April 18, 2023. <https://www.history.com/topics/st-patricks-day/who-was-saint-patrick>.
- Lanier, Sarah. *Foreign to familiar: A Guide to Understanding Hot- and Cold-Climate Cultures*. Austin, TX: McDougal Publishing, 2010.
- Livermore, David. *Serving with eyes wide open: Doing short-term missions with cultural intelligence*. Ada, MI: Baker Books, 2013.
- McGuire, Tai. "The Definition and History of Missionary Work." Published January 9, 2020. Accessed February 7, 2023. <https://justdisciple.com/missionary-work-2/#:-:text=The%20apostle%20Paul%20was%20the,Reformation%20led%20by%20Martin%20Luther>.
- NA. "Jim Elliot: Story and Legacy." Published June 5, 2020. Accessed March 19, 2023. <https://www.christianity.com/church/church-history/timeline/1901-2000/jim-elliott-no-fool-11634862.html>.
- NA. "YWAM. History: Youth With A Mission." Published August 5, 2022. Accessed February 2, 2023. <https://ywam.org/about-us/history>.
- Nelson, Ryan. "Paul's Missionary Journeys: The Beginner's Guide." Published July 7, 2020. Accessed February 7, 2023. <https://overviewbible.com/pauls-missionary-journeys/>.
- O'Brien, Brandon, Randy Richards. *Misreading Scripture with Western Eyes*. Westmont, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2012.
- Tucker, Ruth. *From Jerusalem to Irian Jaya: A Biographical History of Christian Missions*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2004.
- Young, Amy. *Looming transitions: Starting and finishing well in cross-cultural service*. CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform, 2016.