

Why Take Mission Trips?

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I pastored many years without taking an overseas mission trip.

Yes, I believed in and supported missions. I just didn't think it would be good stewardship for me to go.

While I supported others, and sent others — I never went myself. I didn't encourage people I pastored to take short-term trips, either. I thought it best to support others, such as natives, or those more qualified.

It is easy to judge on just the natural level, and to focus on how much something costs. Short-term mission trips can be expensive, and yet only last for such a limited time.

I was thinking of the best way to use the available money. That is good, but we must be careful not to let the good be the enemy of the best. I was thinking in limited terms, but God knows no limits.

Although I was trying to be a wise steward, now I realize my perspective was wrong.

Besides, people will spend their money on something, anyway. Why

not encourage them to spend it on something eternally worthwhile, like a mission trip — instead of just a regular vacation or a new TV?

What Are The Benefits Of Short-Term Mission Trips?

◆ **A better understanding of what it is like in other countries.**

You realize that other countries and cultures are different. That other people have different ways of looking at life and doing things. Your thinking will expand to consider other ways of doing things which you never have before.

◆ **A better understanding of people and their universal needs.**

You find out that people, though they may look different, are the same all over the world. They have the same feelings, hopes, and desires — they are human just like you are.

◆ **More empathy for missionaries and the problems they face.**

When you experience it, you know what it is like. You will have a greater

compassion and concern and be more likely to help.

◆ **A greater appreciation for what you have at home.**

Most people will have a more thankful attitude, and less desire to complain about their life, after a mission trip.

Most of us have felt sorry for ourselves over insignificant things. We are more apt to realize this after seeing what people in other places face.

◆ **More oriented to outreach when you return home, because of doing it there.**

People are usually more inhibited around those they know. When they travel to a distant place where no one knows them, they can more easily overcome those inhibitions. Once you realize you can witness, and pray for people there, it is easier to continue doing it when you return home.

◆ **A greater vision for missions.**

When you see the need first-hand, people there are not just statistics, but real people you know and care about. Therefore, you are much more likely to pray and to give your best.

◆ **A greater commitment to Christ and His plan.**

Doing work for God, and seeing results, is like starting a fire. It is natu-

ral for it to continue and grow larger. Once you get a taste of it, you want more.

◆ **Advancement of the Kingdom of God.**

Souls are usually won to Christ, churches are strengthened, pastors and missionaries are encouraged, by those taking short-term mission trips.

Even if you were mainly helping build a church building, or supporting others in a crusade, you still were making a difference in the kingdom of God.

◆ **Expansion of the missionary force.**

Short-term people in large numbers can make a significant difference in missionary work. Special projects, such as crusades or church building construction, especially, can benefit from a group working on them.

Perhaps more important, though, many who take short-term trips will return for longer mission service. Without the exposure of a short-term mission trip, many will not realize that God is calling them to mission work.

All pastors should take short-term mission trips, and take some of their people with them. If all churches did this, giving to missions would double.

I was wrong before. Do not make the same mistake I did. Take a mission trip, and take someone with you! □