



What makes an activity a *missionary* activity?

In very basic terms, the thing that makes an activity be a missionary activity is *the imperative need for the church to use a missionary (a representative or official ambassador) in order to accomplish this activity in an adequate and successful fashion*. This need normally surfaces when there is sufficient “distance” between the local context of this church and the context in which it wishes to work (for further information, please see the article *Barriers and Contexts in Missions Work*, found under “Key concepts” on the “Missions info” tab of the WMA website).

Therefore, a truly *missionary* activity should be found fairly infrequently within the context of the local church itself and within the context of its immediate surroundings. In these contexts, the local church normally can work *directly* with the target audience.

Members can go *in person* and fulfill these ministries. There is no need for an ambassador.

However, when elements such as culture, language, and/or geography separate the target context from this local church, then this increased “distance” becomes a serious obstacle to this church working *directly* in this new context (and the greater the distance, the greater the obstacle). When this occurs, the church crosses this distance by sending an official representative in their stead. This individual learns the culture, learns the language, and lives in this new geographical context, adapting their life and the presentation of the Gospel to this new reality. This representative is this church’s missionary, and the activities that this individual fulfills are missionary activities.

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