

# Home Church Missionary Care



1. **Listen well** - Let listening be your major gift to your missionaries; find creative ways to listen to them. Find non-monetary ways to honor their sacrifice, but always let your goal be listening.
  - a. Listen well to hear if they are getting spiritually fed and if they are self-feeding.
  - b. Listen well to hear if they might appreciate some accountability in any area of their lives or marriage.
  - c. Let them tell their story to your small group or ABF by Skype or for sure when they are home. Have a "guy's night" for the fella to tell his story his way. Let some of those sessions be with people who have listened a lot to missionaries and who are safe.
  - d. Send teams to work alongside them. Don't demand the opportunity but offer it regularly. Teach those teams how to go as listeners.
  
2. **Narrow the Gap** - Your missionaries will feel more isolated if there is a large gap between their Kingdom lifestyle/commitment and that of their peers in your church. Charge your church men with this responsibility.
  - a. Let them hear of their peers here in the church living out lives of sacrifice for the Gospel.
  - b. Let them hear of risks you are considering in order to be involved in ministry to people.
  - c. Keep them informed of ministries the church is attempting to be more relevant with the Gospel.
  - d. Let them hear about faith-requiring decisions being made by individuals and by the church.
  
3. **Pray intentionally and passionately for them** -
  - a. Let them know when and by whom they are being prayed for. Let them hear of sacrificial prayer being offered for them.
  - b. Hold them accountable to fill you in on answers to the prayers you've been offering on their behalf.
  - c. Be willing to go into "emergency prayer mode" when crises arise in their lives.

#### 4. **Care for them as normal people -**

- a. Insist on their getting away regularly as a couple and foot the bill for them. Send them good marriage stuff to listen to and read. Their marriages are pretty normal, like yours, but they just have to be lived out under glass and in a tougher spiritual atmosphere. Be proactive.
- b. Happy women are the mark of good staff care. Work on learning the love languages of your missionary women. Friendships especially for women are at a different level on the field than they were at home.
- c. Keeping contact through Skype, e-mail, texting with intentional encouragement and care, offers them a taste of normal friendships through technology.
  - i. When your gals come home on furlough (or permanently), honor them with some special time to be pampered - haircuts, watching their kids so they can have a date or do something special, maybe a spa day for the ladies, other things that communicate value and pampering to them.
  - ii. Provide an internet filter subscription for your men as a proactive measure to guard their longevity (nearly every missionary marriage problem requiring counseling now involves internet pornography at some level).

5. **Remember the Missionary Kids** - Celebrate their birthdays with a call or card or even in the Sunday school classes of their peers at home. Have their friends from home or similar-age kids write to them, e-mail them, send them books, MP3s, etc. that they enjoy and that are appropriate. Also keep them in mind at summer camp time. Can you find them a summer camp to attend somewhere in their ministry region and foot the bill?