

SMART CAN PROTECT YOUR CHURCH'S INVESTMENT

In order to fulfill our divinely appointed mission—to make disciples of all nations—a missionary must remain *on location* long enough to disciple people. We already know that the missionaries we send out should be spiritually qualified, God-called, and doctrinally sound men with vision. It only makes sense that they are prepared practically to cope with the rigors of living on a battlefield. Properly trained missionaries help protect the resources your local church is investing in their ministry and ensures that *their mission is accomplished for God's glory*.

RECOMMENDATIONS

"I have looked over a new ministry called **SMART** which is designed to get attrition under control among our missionaries. I am told that up to fifty percent of first term missionaries do not return to the field for a second term. Some of this high dropout rate comes from cross-culture challenges and unplanned family pressures. Because of Baptist International Outreach's field experience, I do not know of any group more qualified to address the attrition problem in the mission's arm of the church.

"I am sure God gave both the insight to see the need and the courage to bring it to our attention *with solutions*. I am also pleased that **SMART's** efforts will be made available to other fundamental ministries."

Dr. Charles Keen

Founder, First Bible International

"It is disheartening when a missionary comes home from the field due to unexpected difficulties for which they were not prepared. Much has been invested, many sacrifices made, and yet it seems like such a waste of valuable resources. My responsibility as

a sending and supporting pastor is to lead God's people to invest in God-called and God-prepared missionaries.

"It is obvious that a ministry to train and mentor missionaries is missing from our independent Baptist ranks. I am pleased to see that God is bringing together some much needed practical training through the **SMART** ministry.

"Better training is crucial in helping missionaries stay on the field long enough to bring forth fruit that remains—churches planted and thriving for succeeding generations."

Pastor David Cross

Faith Baptist Church, Jefferson City, TN

"We prayed for wisdom in preparing for our move to Chile; we simply did not know the many details involved in moving to a foreign country. God answered our prayers by providing the **SMART** classes. This unique training helped us to gain valuable knowledge from experienced missionaries. We recommend all missionaries to attend these training sessions so they can better prepare for the work to which God has called them."

David & Andrea White

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◆
**BUILDING
DURABLE
MISSIONARIES
WHO KEEP
ON GOING!**
◆

**HELPING YOU FULFILL
THE GREAT COMMISSION**

Great excitement fills a missionary's heart when they first stand among the people to which God has called them. They labored hard on deputation raising their support. Now they are at the threshold of their real mission, and ready—more than ever—to spend and to be spent for Jesus Christ; having left father, mother, houses and lands for His sake.

Following God's call they are determined to press on in spite of frequent setbacks, opposition and hurdles. On the field however, they begin navigating through unfamiliar waters; not always knowing how to cope with so many strange situations. They probably did not consider that an *unaccomplished mission* could be their misfortune.

UNACCOMPLISHED MISSIONS?

Unaccomplished missions are primarily the result of missionaries leaving the field *prematurely*. This could happen because of a lack of finances or their falling into sin. All too often though, missionaries come home prematurely because they get worn out by the daily grind of life in a strange culture. The repeated onslaught of numerous adversities becomes too much to bear so they return home. The result is called *attrition*; a reduction in the workforce.

MISSIONARY ATTRITION

Ideally our missionary ranks should be increasing, but *attrition* is causing them to decline. After all the hardships missionaries endure **in order to reach the field up to 50% leave permanently without accomplishing their mission!** Such high attrition is caused by a variety of factors:

1. Constant struggling to fit into a new culture
2. Recurring illness and disease in the family
3. Security threats at home or in public
4. Inability to maintain equipment

These missionaries should never be labeled as weaklings. They stepped boldly into an *offensive* attack in the enemy's territory. Regrettably, many missionaries are sent forth without *basic training*. However, if they could learn some simple *defensive* skills it might prevent Satan from gaining an advantage over them (2 Corinthians 2:11).

An example of a *defensive* measure is disease prevention. The delirium of malaria does not go away just by being *more spiritual*. However, steps can be taken to avoid contracting the disease. Because malaria prevention is not common knowledge to Americans they will benefit from having *specialized training*.

SPECIALIZED TRAINING

Specialized training is not a new concept; basic training is mandatory for military personnel. Business executives must undergo orientation and cross-cultural training before company resources are invested into sending them abroad. Specialized training makes a durable and long-lasting workforce.

However, in the realm of Christian missions, specialized training is almost nonexistent. Veteran missionaries readily admit they lacked training for the challenges they faced when they reached their field. A common question among missionaries is "Why didn't someone prepare me for this?"

THE SMARTer WAY

SPECIALIZED MISSIONARY AND RESOURCE TRAINING—known as **SMART**—is a ministry of Baptist International Outreach. The goal is to **build durable missionaries who can keep on going**; going to where our Lord calls them, going to sin-darkened nations, and going to shine the light of Christ's Gospel where it is needed.

SMART makes durable missionaries by:

- Identifying potential difficulties with which missionaries struggle
- Teaching them how to deal with unique challenges encountered on the field
- Equipping them with knowledge and skills which can help them avoid troublesome situations

SMART courses are practical in their content:

- Culture: learning a foreign culture, dealing with culture shock
- Governmental Issues and Protocols: navigating immigration, visas and work-permits, learning what the Bible teaches about bribery
- Health Matters: studying disease prevention, CPR, first-aid, water purification, and personal health maintenance
- Personal Stewardship: securing one's home and family, dealing with ministry pressures and loneliness, maintaining personal and family spiritual growth
- Resource Stewardship: maintaining vehicles and equipment
- Basic Construction Procedures: investigating alternative building options, electrical wiring and plumbing
- Outfitting and Passage: preparing and shipping equipment and supplies

The fact that missionaries from other boards are attending **SMART** is a good indication of just how much this ministry is needed in our ranks. Pre-field training can prevent some of the casualties; and durable missionaries can yield a better return on the church's investment—allowing us the joy of seeing more missions accomplished!

BUILDING DURABLE MISSIONARIES WHO KEEP ON GOING!