

The Principles of Member Missionary Work

PRINCIPLE	CONCERNS ADDRESSED	
<p>1. We succeed when we invite.</p>	<p><i>The measure of our success as member missionaries is <u>not</u> whether people are baptized or take the missionary discussions – though these are the outcomes we hope for, of course. We have succeeded when we <u>invite</u> someone to learn about the gospel of Jesus Christ. Whether they then use their free agency to choose to learn and accept the truth, is up to them.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fear of failure • Fear of rejection
<p>2. We must refrain from judgment and share the gospel freely “without any respect of persons.”</p>	<p><i>No one can tell in advance, through his or her own judgment, who is prepared to receive the gospel. Only the Lord knows this. Because of this, we must avoid judging whether anyone might or might not have interest.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Friends/acquaintances don’t appear to “need” the gospel • Friends/acquaintances happy with own church • Friends/acquaintances do not believe in God • Friends/acquaintances are not religious types
<p>3. We need not and should not alter our relationship with someone before making a gospel invitation.</p>	<p><i>The notion that we should prayerfully select people, deepen our relationship with them, and then invite them to learn about the church, is false and counter-productive. We need not and should not alter our relationship with anyone as a pre-requisite to inviting him or her to learn of the gospel.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don’t want to strain relationships with family members or friends who are not of our faith • Don’t have many or any friends who are not LDS • Member missionary work is time-consuming
<p>4. We must be honest, straightforward and sincere in making invitations to learn about the gospel.</p>	<p><i>If we are straightforward and sincere, and if the people we are inviting feel our love for them, and God’s love for them emanating through us when we’re inviting, then they will be touched and grateful, never offended – even when they say no.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don’t want to come off as pushy/offensive • Don’t want to strain relationships with family members or friends • Fear of insincerity • Feel like you’re “selling something”
<p>5. We can actively participate in member missionary work in many different ways.</p>	<p><i>Regardless of age, stage or experience, every member can participate in sharing the gospel with others. There are numerous ways to actively contribute to member missionary work that accommodate different comfort levels and personal circumstances.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Missionary work is time-consuming • Overwhelmed with current Church calling/responsibilities • Not successful with previous missionary programs • Shyness • Fear of rejection • Uncomfortable talking about religion/gospel • Don’t have sufficient gospel knowledge • Don’t know exactly how to share gospel (i.e., what to say)

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not appropriate to discuss religion at work
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PRINCIPLE (continued)		CONCERNS ADDRESSED
<p>6. We can effectively share the gospel by inviting people to serve with us in the Church, rather than simply benefit from our service.</p>	<p><i>Service builds commitment and interest. It gives us -- members and non-members -- a sense of belonging and of being needed. All of us can feel the Spirit of the Lord when we serve in His kingdom: "If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine: whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself."</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Friends/acquaintances don't appear to "need" the gospel • Friends/acquaintances happy with own church • Member missionary work is time-consuming • Overwhelmed with current Church calling/responsibilities
<p>7. We must seek guidance from the Spirit in responding to questions about the Church.</p>	<p><i>We have been promised that if we open our mouths to share the gospel, it will be filled (D&C 33:8). When people we meet ask us about our Church, we need to gauge the situation and listener and follow the promptings of the Spirit, rather than provide a set answer. Surveys have shown that the examples of members in terms of closeness to God, happiness, peace and sense of life's purpose are what initially draws people to learn about the Church. We should consider the importance of our example and testimony of these things in sharing the gospel with others.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uncomfortable talking about religion • Don't have sufficient gospel knowledge