# THERE IS NO SUCH THING AS SHORT-TERM MISSION

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**Category:** Short-Term Mission

Yes, you read that title right. There is no such thing as short-term mission.

We could spend ages arguing about what exactly we mean by mission, but that's not the point of this piece. Let's simply look at the Great Commission in Matthew 28:18-20.

> *â€˜All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.Â Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,Â and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.â€™*

So mission is first and foremost to make disciples. It isn't about making converts; getting people to raise their hands at the end of an emotional evangelistic talk. It's about helping people to develop into maturing Christ followers who are living disciplined (the clue is in the word) lives. That is not a short term project, it can't be done in just a few weeks or even a few months.

If this wasn't enough, Jesus then tells us that we have to teach the new disciples everything he commanded us. That might take a little time, too.

So mission, by it's nature, is a long term activity. There are no short cuts.

However, just because mission itself is long term, this doesn't mean that there is no place for short term mission workers. What it does mean is that short-term mission work must take place within a long-term framework.Â Short-term missionaries can bring valuable skills and manpower to bear at critical points in a long project. The key is designing short-term mission projects that support ongoing mission work.

Paul took a variety of approaches. In some places, such as Ephesus, he stayed for a long time, teaching the new believers himself. In other situations, he only stayed for a short while, but then he appointed elders to carry on the work in his absence. He also followed up his initial visits with letters and return trips to encourage the believers. Paul's mission was always long term, but that didn't mean that he stuck around for ages.

*If you are interested in short-term mission, you should take a look at the Global Connections "Short-Term Mission; Code of Best Practice". I would strongly discourage anyone from going on a short-term trip which does not adhere to these basic principles.*