

Relating to the Missionaries on the Field

When you are visiting or staying with missionaries that are on the field, there are a few things that you should know about interacting with them and relating to them in their new environment.

- Your missionary host is thrilled that you have come. They want to share their culture, their people, and their vision for ministry with you. They want you to have a good experience. They have spent weeks for months preparing for your arrival. Be a gracious guest.
- Missionaries tend to adapt to the culture of their host country and use many local customs in their own homes. If they have been in that country for a long time, they may not realize that their customs are foreign to you, but here you can ask.
- Missionaries will also have learned to appreciate and enjoy local food that you may find too strange to eat. They will offer you local food they have learned to love. It may be something truly wonderful that you will enjoy. But it may be something that is inedible to you. Out of politeness to your missionary host, don't act like it is grossing you out. You may decline it, but be sensitive.
- Your missionary has spent much time and effort learning the local language and customs. Seek your missionary's advice on appropriate behavior in your host country. Remember your missionary will remain there long after you are gone. (Unfortunately there have been teams that did not follow the guidance of their host missionary and effectively destroyed much work and many relationships the missionary had worked hard to establish.) Minister to your missionary host through prayer. Your missionary may be weary, discouraged, and wondering if his being there is making any difference. Pray for your missionary. Don't consider him some of sort of spiritual giant that doesn't need to be encouraged and uplifted.