

Quote from [Missional Small Groups](#) (by M. Scott Boren)

“Being missional is often viewed as doing a set of tasks to minister to people outside the church. Many interpret it as simply turning from an internal focus to an external focus. So some assume a missional person will do a certain set of missional activities – usually in the form of sharing an evangelistic message with others, engaging in personal evangelism, promoting social justice, or doing nice things for the poor.

Groups assume that they are being missional if they serve food periodically at the homeless shelter or pass out meals to the needy at Thanksgiving.

The words of Saint John of the Cross from the sixteenth century help us to see why missional and relational go together. He said, ‘Mission is putting love where love is not.’ First of all, it is about ‘putting love where love is not’ in the midst of others who do not have love. We can do all kinds of good things ... but none of this means that we actually love. To love means being in relationship with others who do not have that love. We are investing in them not just through projects but through continued, often very costly interaction.

[Also] when we enter into relationship with others in love, we don’t come with hidden agendas or, as a participant said in one of my seminars, ‘with our Bible up our sleeve.’ [and Thirdly], ‘putting love where love is not’ is about *being* love. This means we must actually be a people of love in order to take love on mission. I have encountered too many groups who want to perform some kind of missional act for God and impact the world, but they don’t see the need to embody the kind of love that will actually impact the world.

Being relational and being missional are intricately connected. We cannot divide the two. The church has nothing to offer the world if it does not embody the message of Good News that it aims to share.”