

Lesson 5: Getting Involved in MAST

Part A

This lesson presents some general requirements for anyone who wishes to participate in a MAST event. It describes some guidelines to ensure a good translation. You learn about some beliefs that are essential for a participant to have and the difference between those essential beliefs and other issues upon which believers may disagree.

You have already learned about how facilitators work in a MAST project and the qualifications they should have. In this lesson you learn about some of the other jobs that are needed to make a MAST event successful.

Finally, if you decide you want to be a MAST team member, you learn how to request information about upcoming MAST projects.

Important Volunteer Characteristics

There are some qualifications that are needed for MAST volunteers, but first and foremost there are certain personal characteristics that are essential.

MAST volunteers must be humble, with an attitude of service, both to God and to others. Volunteers come with a variety of skills and abilities, and they must be willing to use them for God's glory, realizing that He is the source of these gifts.

They must also be obedient, willing to subject themselves to the leadership of the facilitator. Although there are different job descriptions within a MAST project, volunteers should be willing to do whatever is asked of them, whether or not it is part of their defined "job".

Next we'll look at a list of specific qualifications that a MAST volunteer should have.

Qualifications to Participate as a Volunteer in a MAST Translation Event

In addition to humility and obedience, certain other characteristics are essential for those who are participating in a MAST event:

- Fluency in language (source language and/or target language); if not fluent in reading and writing the language, it becomes an oral language project.
- Endorsement of local church with membership of at least 3 years
- Familiarity with and willingness to follow the Translation Guidelines described later in this lesson
- Agreement with the core beliefs that are described in the Statement of Faith shown later in this lesson

Certain other qualities are valuable, but not essential:

- Biblical background
- Thinking and communicating skills

A Translator's Prayer

Before beginning a translation project and frequently during the project, translators should ask for God's guidance in handling His Word.

Translators should:

- Be self-disciplined: **Pr 25:28** *Like a city whose walls are broken through is a person who lacks self-control.*
- Be true to the inspired word: **1 Tim 3:16** *Beyond all question, the mystery from which true godliness springs is great: He appeared in the flesh, was vindicated by the Spirit, was seen by angels, was preached among the nations, was believed on in the world, was taken up in glory.*
- Restrain themselves from interpreting the story as they translate it and so end up telling the story according to what they think it means instead of what it says:
 - **Dt 4:2** *Do not add to what I command you and do not subtract from it, but keep the commands of the Lord your God that I give you.*
 - **Pr 30:6** *Do not add to his words, or he will rebuke you and prove you a liar.*
 - **Rev 22:18** *I warn everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this scroll: If anyone adds anything to them, God will add to that person the plagues described in this scroll.*
- Let the words speak for themselves: **Matt 5:37** *All you need to say is simply 'Yes' or 'No'; anything beyond this comes from the evil one.*
- Keep it simple, for explanatory words lead into transgression:
 - **Pr 10:19** *Sin is not ended by multiplying words, but the prudent hold their tongues.*
 - **Eccl 5:7** *Much dreaming and many words are meaningless. Therefore fear God.*

What Makes a Good Translation?

A translation should not just literally translate each word, but should preserve the meaning of the original text. The Unfolding Word web site lists the qualities of a good translation in their Translation Guidelines:

- **Accurate:** Translated content should faithfully communicate as precisely as possible the meaning of the original text as it would have been understood by the original audience.
- **Natural:** Use language forms that are effective and that reflect the way your language is used in corresponding contexts.

- **Clear:** Use whatever language structures are necessary to achieve the highest level of comprehension. This includes rearranging the form of a text and using as many or as few terms as necessary to communicate the original meaning as accurately as possible.
- **Faithful:** Use important terms that are faithful to the vocabulary of the original biblical languages. Use equivalent common language terms for the biblical words that describe the relationship between God the Father and God the Son. These may be clarified, as needed, in footnotes or other supplemental resources. Avoid any political, denominational, ideological, social, cultural, or theological bias in your translation.
- **Authoritative:** Use the original language biblical texts as the highest authority for translation of biblical content. Reliable biblical content in other languages may be used for clarification and as intermediary source texts.
- **Equal:** Communicate the same intent as the source text. As much as possible, maintain the literary forms in the original text, including narrative, poetry, exhortation, and prophecy, representing them with corresponding forms that communicate in a similar way in your language.
- **Historical:** Communicate historical events and facts accurately, providing additional information as needed in order to accurately communicate the intended message to people who do not share the same context and culture as the original recipients of the original content.
- **Collaborative:** Where possible, work together with other believers who speak your language to translate, check, and distribute the translated content, ensuring that it is of the highest quality and available to as many people as possible.
- **Ongoing:** Encourage the periodic review of translations to ascertain when revision or a new translation is needed.

Please proceed to Part B of Lesson 5.