

Raising Support for Missions

Principles and Strategies

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Introduction

*“And my God will meet all your needs according to his glorious riches in Christ Jesus.”
(Phil.4:19).*

“Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see. This is what the ancients were commended for...And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him.” (Hebrews 11:1-2,6).

SCA Missions Week is usually met with mixed emotions – the excitement of being part of a team that is sharing Christ and experiencing new things, and the fear of raising the money to go. What you are doing on your mission trip is vitally important. It will change your perspective on the world and will increase your understanding of God. But raising the money to pay for your trip can be anywhere from intimidating to downright petrifying. In times of fear and doubt, discouraging questions may surface. “How can I ever afford this?” “Why would people want to give money to me?” “Is what I’m doing really that important?”

You can rest assured that God always takes care of His children. Not only does He want to transform you through the actual week you are gone, but He want to start building your faith now, through the prayers and financial gifts of a support team that partners with you in your mission. If God has put on your heart a desire to be part of a certain team, then He will definitely supply and provide a way for you to go. Along the way, you will be transformed as you see his grace and provision. Ask God to transform you through the support-raising process.

What does it mean to “raise support”?

The term “raising support” is found often throughout this packet. It is important to have a solid definition in mind to prevent confusion. Raising support is not just about asking people for money. That is fundraising. Raising support means forming a base of people that will take an interest in your mission trip and desire to be involved in God’s work through their gift of money and prayer.

They give and you get to go. Raising support is about relationships. God wants people to contact people – one with a need, and one with a supply – to accomplish his plan. He is as interested in the process as he is in the result. God also wants you to have a prayer support team, as it is vital for the success of any mission trip. This process of building relationships and developing a team of people committed to supporting you through whatever means necessary are all included in the term support raising.

Why should you raise support?

(Adapted from People Raising by William Dillon)

1. Raising support helps to form a prayer base.

It is absolutely vital to the missionary to have people praying for him/her and for the work that God is going to do.

2. Raising support develops faith.

It takes faith to believe that God will supply your needs. It is often easier to not have to depend on Him. However, there is nothing that can compare to the excitement and assurance of seeing God miraculously provide for your needs. “Without faith it is impossible to please God...” (Hebrews 11:6).

3. Raising support allows others to share in God’s vision and work.

As others support you with money and prayer, they are contributing to the spreading of the gospel. The Bible clearly talks about this principle of sharing the work. In 1 Corinthians 3:6, Paul says, “I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God made it grow.” Raising support involves many people.

As you begin to raise your financial support, it is important for your focus to be in the right place...and the right place is on the Lord. If God is calling you to go on a mission trip, He will provide the resources you need to go.

This fundraising material has a twofold approach. The first section shares Biblical principles for raising support, and the second section gives practical steps on how to do that.

Common Misconceptions about Raising Support

(from "Common Misconceptions about Fundraising," in the 2010 Students International Team Leaders Manual, p. 9)

Students' Feelings	Biblical Truth	The Facts
<p>"I feel guilty asking for money for something that is exciting and sounds like a vacation."</p>	<p>Read Psalm 40:7, 8 and Hebrews 12:2 and compare these passages with Paul's testimony of his life and ministry in 2 Cor. 4:7-11; 6:3-10. Note the contrasts of "joy" and "desire" (or delight) with suffering and hardship. Ask God to help you communicate a realistic view of your ministry.</p>	<p>Excitement over service for God will be caught by your friends and family. There is nothing wrong with this kind of excitement. The work and experience you will have will be both exciting and difficult at times. Your communication of all aspects of the ministry will be important.</p>
<p>"I don't feel like I'm anyone special to be asking for money."</p> <p>"There are plenty of better things that people would rather give to."</p>	<p>Read Exodus 4, Judges 6, and Isaiah 6:1-9. Note the affirmations God makes concerning how He sees Moses, Gideon and Isaiah. Ask Him to show you how He sees you. Reflect on Psalm 139 and notice God's care for you.</p>	<p>You are a child of the Most High, the Lord of Lords, Almighty God. He has reached out to you, forgiven you of your sin, filled you with the Holy Spirit, and now has called you to proclaim what He has done. We base our worth not on what the world sees as important, but on the reality of God's relationship with us and what He calls us to do. That is worthy of support.</p>
<p>"Asking for money goes against everything I've been taught."</p> <p>"I feel like I'm a welfare case."</p> <p>"I just don't like asking for money."</p> <p>"Asking for money is uncomfortable, because people's money is a private affair."</p>	<p>Think through Christ's commission to His disciples in Matt. 28:18-20 and Acts 1:8 and His words of purpose in Matt. 16:18. Whose cause are you serving and inviting your friends to join you in?</p>	<p>You are not asking for money for yourself, but for God and His work in and through you. You are merely a steward of God's gifts as are your potential donors; thus you are working together to help fulfill the Great Commission. Asking for financial donations for secular issues has been around for a long time and is well accepted. As good as most of these are, what you are doing is far more important – you will be affecting peoples' lives for the Kingdom of God for eternity.</p>
<p>"The job is impossible."</p> <p>"I don't know very many people."</p> <p>"The people I know don't have enough money for themselves, let alone for me."</p>	<p>Reflect on God's faithfulness and awesome power in Exodus 14 and 15.</p>	<p>It is God who is our provider, not people. It is God, the creator of the universe, who is calling you to His work, and He will be faithful to you and to those who give to you. God's desire is that all of His people give to the advancement of His Kingdom, regardless of their financial situation. He will prompt people to respond to you; even people you think can't afford it.</p>

Biblical Principles for Raising Support

The Bible identifies two ways in which Christian ministry can be supported financially. These principles can apply to raising support for either an individual or an organization.

1. Principle of Self-Support. There were times in Paul's ministry when he provided for his own financial needs by making tents.

"And because he was a tentmaker as they were, he stayed and worked with them" (Acts 18:3).

"Surely you remember, brothers, our toil and hardship; we worked night and day in order not to be a burden to anyone while we preached the gospel of God to you" (1 Thessalonians 2:9).

2. Principle of making needs known. Both the Old and New Testaments have examples of this principle. Making needs known means sharing the vision and ministry with friends and asking them to prayerfully consider supporting the ministry financially.

Biblical Examples:

- a. In Exodus 12:35, God instructed Israel to ask the Egyptians for articles of silver, gold and clothing. In verse 36, we are told, "The Lord made the Egyptians favorably disposed toward the people and gave them, what they asked for..."
- b. In Exodus 25, God commanded Moses to build a tabernacle and instructed Moses to ask the people of Israel to contribute the necessary building materials. "...tell the sons of Israel to raise my contribution" (Exodus 25:2). In Exodus 35, Moses had presented the need, and the response was more than enough!
- c. In I Kings 17, the Lord instructed Elijah to make his needs known to a widow living at Zarepath. As a result, she provided food and lodging for Elijah for as long as he needed it.
- d. In Acts 11:28-29, a prophet by the name of Agabus came making a need known in a manner that prompted the following response. "Then the disciples, each according to his ability decided to provide help for their brothers living in Judea which they did."

- e. It seems the Corinthians had at some point made a financial commitment to give toward a specific need (2 Corinthians 9:5). In chapters 8 and 9, Paul writes encouraging them to follow through with their commitment. He also sent Titus to ensure that they would follow through. It seems Paul is very aggressive in his support raising.

Strategies for Raising Support

Step 1: Pray Daily

Raising support is a spiritual matter, and so support raising activities must involve regularly bringing your needs before the Lord in prayer.

Pray through your commitment to go.

Pray through any fears that you may have associated with raising support.

Step 2: Name-Storm

Develop an initial list of potential supporters. As with brainstorming, in “name-storming” there is only one rule: anything goes. No name is disqualified. Mentally erase any clouds of doubt from your mind. Don’t decide for an individual whether or not he or she will be interested. If you limit yourself to those you feel will, or can give, you may be prematurely disqualifying those whom God wants to become supporters. You will want to spend time in prayer over this list and prioritize whom to contact first.

To aid in your name-storming, you will find a list of thought provokers at the end of this manual. Take plenty of time to develop your list. Then begin to label your list by priority. Start contacting your high priority people first, and work your way through to your medium and lower priority people. Use letters, telephone calls, and visits as a way to communicate your needs.

Step 3: Write support raising letters

Letters are an effective way to communicate your needs to supporters. Handwriting a note on each letter as you sign them adds a personal touch. At least make sure and sign each letter by hand. The following are items that all support letters should include:

1. Date your letter.
2. Your greeting should be specifically addressed to an individual or couple, not “Dear Friend!”
3. Bring your reader up-to-date on what you’re doing.
4. Educate your reader. Explain what your short-term trip is, the purpose of the trip, why you have decided to participate, and what you hope to accomplish.
5. Explain your need. The purpose of your letter is to give your reader an opportunity to join your team. Be specific in your needs.
6. Involve your reader by asking him/her for specific action, based on the needs you have shared. This can include challenging him/her to cover part or all of the cost of the project. State the deadline by which you need the money.
7. Acknowledge your gratitude, partnership and commitment.
8. Enclose an SCA Mission Trip Donation Card. These can be picked up from your Bible teacher or in the high school office.
9. Conclude your letter and hand sign it.

Avoid:

Apologizing for writing or calling a person whom you wish to involve in helping you meet a need. You are providing him/her with an opportunity to be involved in a ministry through his/her resources.

Step 4: Sending out your letters

1. Photocopy your letter. Sign each one by hand. Add a little note if you want. This makes it more personable.
2. Enclose an SCA Mission Trip Donation Card in each letter.

Step 5: Follow-up Phone Call

1. You may want to follow up with phone conversations with people you send letters to. Phone calls are critical for three reasons:

- a. Most people suffer from “Information Overload,” so mail is easy to ignore or forget.
 - b. Your time frame. You have a lot of money to raise in a short period of time. Follow-up calls will help you get decisions as quickly as possible.
 - c. Courtesy to your supporters. Many people will want to help you, but won’t unless you call to answer any questions and to get their decision. Your phone call takes the burden of response off them and puts it on you.
2. Begin your phone conversation by introducing yourself and establishing rapport.
- a. Explain your plans: “As I mentioned in my letter, I am planning to go on a short term mission trip sponsored by my school.”
 - b. Share what you hope to see God do as a result of your mission trip.
 - c. Ask for a definite response.

Step 6: Thank-you Notes

Make sure you keep a record of all who give and follow up by sending thank-you notes. This is very important in developing a relationship with your supporter. This should be a personal, handwritten letter.

Step 7: Follow-Up

After your mission trip, make sure you share about your experiences through a follow up letter. Your team of supporters wants to know how your trip went. They want to hear what the Lord did through you and in you.

This information has been used by permission from Southwest Baptist University Missions in Bolivar, Missouri and Northside Community Church in Atlanta, Georgia.

Name-Storming

As you read through these categories, write down every name that comes to mind. After writing down everyone's name, pray over the list, and then prioritize it.

- Family members: Parents, Siblings, Grandparents, Aunts, Uncles, etc.
- Friends
- Friends of the Family
- People you work with
- Parents of close friends
- High school teachers
- Church Friends
- Pastoral staff at your church
- Sunday school teachers
- Friends in youth groups, Bible studies, or clubs
- Neighbors
- Dentist, Orthodontist, Doctor, etc.

1. _____	31. _____	61. _____
2. _____	32. _____	62. _____
3. _____	33. _____	63. _____
4. _____	34. _____	64. _____
5. _____	35. _____	65. _____
6. _____	36. _____	66. _____
7. _____	37. _____	67. _____
8. _____	38. _____	68. _____
9. _____	39. _____	69. _____
10. _____	40. _____	70. _____
11. _____	41. _____	71. _____
12. _____	42. _____	72. _____
13. _____	43. _____	73. _____
14. _____	44. _____	74. _____
15. _____	45. _____	75. _____
16. _____	46. _____	76. _____
17. _____	47. _____	77. _____
18. _____	48. _____	78. _____
19. _____	49. _____	79. _____
20. _____	50. _____	80. _____
21. _____	51. _____	81. _____
22. _____	52. _____	82. _____
23. _____	53. _____	83. _____
24. _____	54. _____	84. _____
25. _____	55. _____	85. _____
26. _____	56. _____	86. _____
27. _____	57. _____	87. _____
28. _____	58. _____	88. _____
29. _____	59. _____	89. _____
30. _____	60. _____	90. _____

Sample Letter

October 30, 2009

Dear

Use this paragraph to bring readers up to date with your life. You can tell them how school is going and maybe what God has been doing in your life.

Every year my school has Missions Week. This is a week where there are no classes, and each high school student is involved in a missions outreach. This year, I have the amazing opportunity to go to _____ with a team of students. We will be _____ (working with kids, doing construction, prayer walking, street evangelism, etc...). I am very excited about this trip because _____.

My team will be leaving on February ____ and returning on March _____. To go on this trip, I need to raise _____ (cost of trip). This includes my transportation, airfare, meals, and other expenses. The deadline for raising this money is February 1, 2010. As well as financial support, I also need people to pray faithfully while I am gone. I am confident that God will provide the money I need for this trip and I am excited about watching Him provide for this need. I am asking you to prayerfully consider how God is leading you to respond.

I have enclosed a response card with this letter. Please fill out the necessary information and mail your check and the response card directly to Scottsdale Christian Academy Missions (SCA Missions). Please do not send them back to me. Also, please do not put my name anywhere on the check. This gift is tax-deductible for all those outside of my immediate family.

I am blessed to have the opportunity to go to _____, and I am excited about how we can share this experience together. Please be praying for me even now that God would soften my heart, and that I would be open and willing to listen to Him. I long to hear His voice and sense His leading. Also pray that the way would be prepared for us to go to _____. Pray that the hearts of the _____ people would be open to hear the love of God. Thanks for partnering with me.

In Him,

Your Name

Your Address

Send response cards to: SCA Missions
 Attention Ministries Director
 14400 N. Tatum Blvd.
 Phoenix, AZ 85032

10 Other Fundraising Ideas

(from "Common Misconceptions about Fundraising," in the 2010 Students International Team Leaders Manual, p. 9)

1. *Ask Directly* – Have your students identify five or more of the people they listed whom they know well and feel comfortable in personally approaching for financial support. People like giving to people.
2. *Ask Your Church* – Students ask their church for support. Students call the church and ask who they need to speak with about supporting them (most churches have a missions committee or an elder for this). Mail them a letter and then a week later, follow up with a phone call. If the church does not have money designated for missions, ask if they have any "Undesignated Benevolences" (money set aside each year for charitable giving).
3. *Local Restaurant* – See if there is a local restaurant, ice cream shop or coffee shop that might be interested in helping raise money for your team. This is how it works – the ice cream shop announces that every Tuesday night for the month of January between six and nine they will give a percentage of their sales to the team. The students in turn get the word out to their classmates, friends and families and encourage them to stop by the ice cream shop and buy something. The ice cream shop will love the patronage, and you will get additional support.
4. *Civic Clubs* – Explore civic clubs (e.g. Lions, Elks, Rotary), which might be interested in hearing a presentation by students and would help financially.
5. *Work Projects* – Announce in church and at school that the team and the team members are up for hire, for odd jobs and the proceeds would go toward their outreach. Suggest painting jobs, lawn and garden care, housework – things that a team member or a group could do on a Saturday morning or an afternoon.
6. *Car Wash/Bake Sale* – Hold car washes and bake sales. If you hold your carwash or bake sale at Wal-Mart, they often match every dollar you raise up to a certain amount. Contact your Wal-Mart for more information. Offering a "free" car wash can also work well.
7. *Church Night Out* – Hold a "Church Night Out." Choose a Friday or Saturday night and announce to your church that evening is designated as "church night out" and that your team will be providing child care at the church. Parents drop off their children at the church and then return to pick them up at a specified time. In exchange for the childcare they give a donation toward the trip. The parents get good, trustworthy babysitting and you and your team have a great time with the children and raise funds for your outreach.
8. *Restaurant Fundraisers* – Many restaurant chains have fund-raising programs. Check with restaurants in your area to see if they do.
9. *Garage/Rummage Sale* – Ask people in your church, school, neighborhood, etc., to donate items for a garage sale and then sell their items with the proceeds going to the outreach.
10. *Church Dinner* – Invite the church to come enjoy a fun dinner, served by your team members. This is great for fundraising and telling your church family about the trip! Sell dinner tickets for \$ 15 (or whatever amount you feel is good for your group). You could put on an easy spaghetti dinner or make it a cultural night (specific to the country you will be traveling to). Have students and their parents help serve the dinner and mingle with the people. Have students share why they are going and prayer requests for the team.