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DISCERNING THE CALL

"Jesus Christ has set no limitations as to how this Gospel will get around the world or who will go with it. He only says to Christians, "You will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth" (Acts 1:8). He tells us clearly that "this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come" (Matt. 24:14). I invite you to step out towards the end of the earth as He begins to bring us to the end of the age."

John Kyle,

Former Director of Urbana missions conferences in the 80's

THE DECISION TO GO

by Kara Reed, Missionary to East Asia

I recall the day vividly. It was an ordinary day for me on campus, but soon became one of extraordinary impact. I had managed to push all the books & papers off my bed, pull the plug on the ringing phone, and close my door to the distractions of dorm life. . . and finally sat down to simply be with Jesus. I read the Bible. I prayed for God's grace to change me. I interceded for my campus, my friends, and my family. Nothing extraordinary. . . no fire, no earthquake, no angels. However, God presented an image to me which has proved to be revolutionary in my life: a baton being firmly slapped into a runner's palm.

The baton was in my hand, and I realized it was now my turn to carry the gospel. Many a witness had gone before me. . . Paul, Timothy, martyrs, missionaries, church-planters, unknown intercessors. . . literally generations of disciples who felt that same sting of responsibility when the baton was being passed to them. Yet there I was in Brown Dormitory as a sophomore at Duke facing the reality of the Great Commission like never before. I remember thinking, "*Geez, I just was just having my nice quiet time, Lord. What is this?!?*"

That one day birthed a realization in my life that our generation was now at an age of accountability. We are accountable to obey the Great Commission. We can no longer blame our parents or the previous generation for possibly not doing their part. . . it is our turn now to "*throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us*" (Heb. 12:1).

I decided that day in my dorm that I felt called to go on a short-term missions trip. I had several weeks prior returned from a student conference with a strong emphasis on world missions. It had sparked a true longing in my heart and in my emotions to go on a trip. However, **I didn't know what I was supposed to do that summer let alone what I was called to do for the rest of my life.** My mind spun with thoughts as I returned from that conference, "*What about working this summer to make money? What about summer school? Wait a minute, my parents?! No way they'll ever let me go around evangelizing. . . my mom read about Jim Elliot getting speared, and my dad is still flipping out because I wore a witness T-shirt around the neighborhood. Lord, what am I called to do. . . "*

I'm not sure what you are called to in regards to missions. . . I only know that we must take the Great Commission seriously in our generation. One hundred years ago, evangelist D.L. Moody said concerning

the evangelization of the world by the end of 1900, *"It can be done, it ought to be done, it must be done."* Yet, it didn't happen.

Today, however, Moody's stance is becoming closer and closer to reality, not in the year 1900 but perhaps by the year 2000. Out of the 12,000+ known people groups in the world, 10,000 already have a church-planting movement among them. By the year 2000, missiologists are realistically estimating that "over 95% of the population of the world will have access to the Gospel through a portion of the Scripture in their own language, literature distribution, radio transmission, audio recordings, the "Jesus" film, or through the preaching of an evangelist" (Bush, *"The Unfinished Task," p.1*).

What does this mean for us? It means we are a part of an enviable generation in the eternal perspective of things. College students 100 years ago could only have dreamed that the finish line might be so visible.

While facts such as these are exciting, you too may be in the position that I was in. . . I desperately *wanted* to go, but I knew I needed to hear my shepherd *call me to go*.

How do you know if you are called to go on a short-term missions trip?

There are no easy answers, no "1-2-3's" to knowing if you are called to go. Rather, we have the word of God which promises us, *"My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me"* (Jn.10:27). Hearing God's voice on issues in our lives shouldn't stress us out, but rather draw us near.

Still, many of you may want some guidelines to help you in making this decision:

ASK GOD WHAT HE WANTS

Don't ever underestimate your capacity as a legitimate child of God to hear His voice, and to know what to do. After all, even earthly fathers typically give advice and direction to their children in making life decisions. . . how much more will our heavenly Father give us direction as we ask Him to guide our lives!

READ WHAT JESUS SAYS HE WANTS

Jesus didn't seem very subtle in regards to the Great Commission when He said, "...go and make disciples of all nations." Jesus wants disciples. He is passionate about His disciples, even the Eleven who looked totally unequipped for the task. Regardless of how well equipped you are or aren't, absorb the word of God. Read what Jesus desires, what Jesus wanted to be established in the earth, and be ready to have Him direct you in His purposes. It very well may be a short-term missions experience.

ASK PASTORS AND CAMPUS PASTORS FOR THEIR THOUGHTS

This may seem a lot less glamorous than hearing from God directly, but an important part of knowing that you really are called to go on a missions trip is by having your pastor or campus minister's "blessing" and confirmation that they see this calling as well. **We must be called by God for the task, but equally important is that we be sent out by the church for the task.** "Lone Ranger" callings -- feeling called but not allowing God to confirm and cover you by a local church -- rarely bear long-lasting fruit!

Your decision whether or not to go on a short-term mission will probably require time, prayer, confirmation by your local church, and the approval/blessing of your parents. However, you'll never go

through these needed steps in being called if you don't first consider yourself accountable to the Great Commission. If the unreached people groups in our world aren't reached in our generation, who is accountable? If we don't run the race marked out for Generation X, who else will run it? Let's not bury our talents in this hour, but rather invest them in the fertile harvest fields of the world. The baton is in our hands!

"How will you face God at the end of August, or a year from now? Will you reluctantly unscrew your fist and show him the single talent, earthy from having been buried, creased from having been clenched secretly and tightly in your hand? Or will you bring handfuls of talents, risked, speculated, yet doubled and tripled though a summer or year of adventurous faith?"

Pountney, The First Four Years are the Hardest

HONORING YOUR PARENTS

How to obey your parents and the Great Commission at the same time

by David Howard, Director of Urbana '73 and Urbana '76

International Director of World Evangelical Fellowship in Singapore

He was my best friend in college. Living together in the dorm, we often spent time in prayer and Bible study together. He was a missionary candidate who had godly parents and whose vision was burning and contagious.

One day as we were about to pray, he said, "Dave, I have no doubt that God wants me overseas. But my parents think I would be wasting my talents to go to some remote tribe when I could be more effectively used among youth here at home." He went on to tell me how he loved and respected his parents and didn't want to displease or dishonor them. He wondered how he could honor them and still be obedient to God's call.

This was a major dilemma. We prayed together about it, and one day he sat down and wrote these lines to his parents:

"Grieve not, then, if your sons seem to desert you; but rejoice, rather, seeing the will of God done gladly. Remember how the psalmist described children? He said that they were as a heritage from the Lord, and that every man should be happy who had his quiver full of them (Ps. 127: 3-5). And what is a quiver full of but arrows? And what are arrows but for to shoot? So, with the strong arm of prayer, draw the bowstring back and let the arrows fly - all of them, straight at the enemy's host."

His parents got the point. They placed their son in the bow of prayer, pulled back the bowstring, and prayed him out to a remote Indian tribe in Ecuador. He never came back. He was murdered by the Indians he'd gone to reach, but the testimony of his life and witness goes on to this day. His name was Jim Elliot. Not all of you have parents who are agree to pray you out in obedience to God's call, Some of you, like Jim, have Christian parents who don't understand why you're considering overseas service, even on a short-term basis. Others have parents, Christian or non-Christian, who will oppose such an idea. How do you handle this?

Pray with Your Parents

As Jim prayed about how to reconcile obedience to God with honor to his parents, the Lord led him to a Scripture to answer the dilemma both for him and for them. God may not choose to answer your prayer in the same way, but the first and most basic step in any problem is to spread it out before the Lord.

If your parents are Christians, why not ask them to pray with you about this decision? In this way, they become involved in the decision-making process and will be more likely to understand and support you.

Honor Your Parents

Paul reminds us that the fifth commandment - "Honor your father and mother" - is also "the first commandment with a promise" (Eph. 6:2). The promise is "...so that you may live long in the land the Lord your God is giving you" (Ex. 20:12).

No other aspect of your relationship with your parents is more important than honoring them. It's so important that God includes it in the very limited list of ten simple commandments that form the basis of our relationship to God and to the world.

The rest of this article will be nothing more than an elaboration on how to honor your parents, especially as you venture you into a new "land" that the Lord may be "giving you".

Show Love to Your Parents

Whether or not parents are Christians is irrelevant to whether or not you honor them. And there's no greater way to honor your parents than to show them that you love them. Parents need love just as much (and some times more) than children do. Children are often unaware of how much their parents crave their love. They may feel that their parents "have it all together" and that they have no deep emotional needs, especially those relating to their children. Nothing could be further from the truth.

Children play a very key role in this area. I remember when our youngest son, with whom I'd had some difficulty in relating during his teenage years, said after his first year in college, "Dad, I don't think I've ever told you this before, but I think you're a great dad, and I love you." Surprise and gratitude overwhelmed me. Don't be hesitant to tell your parents - verbally and in actions - that you love them. You say they already know this? They may be plagued with doubts, so tell them this all-important truth.

Spend time with Your Parents

Demonstrate your love to your parents by spending time with them. Parents want time with their children. My elderly mother lived with us during part of her final years. Her body was weak and her mind was confused, but she knew me clearly. One afternoon, I went into her room to talk with her. She seemed unsettled. I said, "Mother, Is there anything I can do for you, or is there something you want?" She replied, "I want You". I realized in the loneliness of her confined and confused life, she wanted the presence of her son more than anything else.

Although your parents may not be at that stage yet, there is probably nothing they want or enjoy more than having their children with them. Demonstrating your love by spending quality time with them is one of the greatest things you can do to prepare for the inevitable separation when you go overseas.

Involve Your Parents

As you prepare for an overseas assignment, whether short or long term, you need to learn all you can about the country to which you are going. Why not involve your parents in learning too? Help them feel the excitement and anticipation of what it will mean to live and work in a new culture. Help them understand what a broadening and educational experience this will be.

Perhaps you can persuade one or more of the books you should be reading in preparation for your overseas service. This will help them to understand better what you are thinking and what you will be facing. It may also help alleviate some of the fears or questions they will have. Fear is often based on ignorance, and anything that will clear up ignorance will help remove fears.

Perhaps someone from that country - missionary or national - could visit your parents to help them understand what your life will be like. Personal contact, especially if it's with someone with whom you might be working, will alleviate fears and strengthen your parents' understanding.

Keep in Touch with your Parents

When you go overseas, be careful to keep in touch with your parents. I know how easy it is to become so bogged down in the pressures of work that you feel you have no time for correspondence. But few things are more important than maintaining that life line with your parents. Most areas of the world today have good direct-dial telephone communications. The investment of an occasional phone call will pay rich dividends in strengthening the all-important relationship with your parents.

Why not invite them to visit you on location? Nothing can take the place of your visit in helping your parents to understand and appreciate life in another culture.

Demonstrate your commitment to the call of God

Finally, be certain that your commitment to God and his claims on your life is not hidden. Even if your parents are non-Christians, you should not hide the fact that Jesus Christ takes first place in your life. Your desire to go overseas is primarily a response to His last commission to take the Gospel to every people and nation.

Your parents may not fully understand - much less sympathize with - this desire of yours. But they can't help but respect your commitment to the Person who means more to you than anyone or anything else. Even if they oppose your going they must see that this is based on your obedience to the commandments of the One who is now Lord of your life.

Remember the Lord said: "No one who has left home or wife or brothers or parents or children for the sake of the Kingdom of God will fail to receive many times as much as in this age and in the age to come, eternal life" (Luke 18: 29-30).

FUNDING THE CALL

"Since most short-term missionaries are financially supported by individuals and churches, one doesn't get too far along on his or her "missions planning" before the question of how to raise money arises. . . . Somehow, support raising can seem like a sure way to turn off all your friends & offend your family. Don't believe the bad press. Support raising is not rattling a tin cup for spiritual welfare. It's team ministry. You're asking others to add their financial and prayer strength to the total effort of your mission group."

Chris Stanton,

Author of The Mission Bridge Manual

GOD'S PATTERN OF PROVISION

Understanding the Biblical precedent for support raising.

by Roger Randall, Director of International University Resources for Campus Crusade for Christ

So, you are going to have to raise support? Maybe you have quaked at the very thought or really wondered if you can do it. Well, you are not the first one to wonder that.

Many have gone into the support raising adventure with fear and trembling, and most have found great success in support raising. You can, too. A good way to start is by understanding the Biblical rationale behind the practice. Once you understand that, you will be better able to raise support with boldness and confidence.

The First Financial Plan

Nearly 3300 years ago, God designed a financial plan that would provide salaries and benefits to His workers. In the book of Numbers, God called the Levites to be His first "Professional" ministers instructing them to rely on Him for their financial security. There were plenty of qualified and motivated laymen (such as Moses, Joshua and Caleb) to work on the tabernacle but God was looking for more than part time help. He wanted to meet the demanding spiritual needs of the nation, needs that could not be met by even the most dedicated workers in their spare time alone.

While the nation of Israel worked the land and faced the financial uncertainties brought on by drought, diseases and famine, the Lord promised to provide for the Levites through the tithes and offerings of the their country men. The people of God were to support the full time ministers of God.

A Covenant of Interdependence

After Christ came, God established a new covenant whereby any believer (not just those in the family of Levi) could serve Him in full time ministry. Jesus, who was a carpenter, could have funded His ministry by building furniture or repairing carts and tables. But as far as we know He didn't. As Jesus went out ministering, He relied on people such as Mary, Martha, and Lazarus who helped "...support Him out of their own means" (Luke 8:3). Jesus had financial supporters.

When Christ commissioned His followers, He gave them the spiritual authority to minister and told them to trust Him for their physical provisions (Matthew 10:9,10). Jesus gave specific directions to His disciples which forced them to depend on others for their needs. They were to accept gifts from others, "...eating and drinking whatever they give you; for the worker deserves his wages..." (Luke 10:4-7). A laborer in God's kingdom is truly worthy of being paid for his service. The Early Church workers lived on a system of support similar to that established for the Levites.

The apostle Paul writes in 1Cor. 9:14, "In the same way the Lord has commanded that those who preach the Gospel should receive their living from the Gospel". He explains that God set up a system of financial support for His workers. He also writes that even though He had the right to be supported by the Corinthians, He chose to make tents. This was an exception, however, to Paul's usual method of ministry.

Paul wanted to make sure the Corinthians to whom he preached had no reason to question his motives. He chose to live on a smaller salary and take less from the Corinthians in order to validate his character, his faith, and his ministry. With the Corinthian church, Paul may have supplemented his income by sewing canvas, but he did rely on gifts from supporters. Paul willingly received financial support from other Christians and churches, and he asked for support. In Romans, he wrote, "When I go to Spain...I hope...to have you assist me on my journey" (Rom. 15:24). The original Greek in this verse confirms that Paul was requesting money.

John also referred to God's people supporting their own. "It was for the sake of the Name that they went out, receiving no help from the pagans. We ought therefore to show hospitality to such men so that we may work together for the truth" (III John 7,8).

Living by Faith Today

Raising support doesn't make you holier than others. All Christians need to live by faith (II Cor. 5:7; Heb. 11:6) regardless of how they receive their paychecks.

The bottom line is that you need to be willing to do whatever the Lord asks you to do, or you won't be qualified for any missionary career (salaried or supported).

Most people find themselves a little uneasy as they approach the challenge of support raising. It seems to go against our American culture to depend on others - especially for finances. As Christians, we need to heed the strong scriptural warnings about conforming to our culture's values. We must remember that the Bible strongly states that accepting support gifts is part of God's economy.

In this sense, raising support is a matter of obedience to God's work and calling, not of following your feelings. If God calls you to a supported ministry position, then He will provide everything you need to fulfill your ministry, including emotional strength and perseverance (Phil. 4:19; I Thess. 5:24).

For further study and consideration, see Numbers 1:45-54; Numbers 18; Deuteronomy 18: 1-6; Jeremiah 29:11; Matthew 16:25; Luke 6:38; Luke 8:1-3; I Corinthians 9; John 15:16.

HAVING FUN GETTING FUNDED

How to face the pitfalls and practices of raising support

by Chris Stanton, author of The Mission Bridge Manual

Since most missionaries are financially supported by individuals and churches, one doesn't get too far along on his or her "mission planning" before the question of how to raise money arises. Let's look at some pitfalls of poor thinking when it comes to financing a short-term trip and then at some practical ways to get the job done.

Pitfall One: The Beggar Bugaboo

Somehow, support raising can seem like a sure way to turn off all your friends & offend your family. Sometimes, important family members can howl about "my son, the religious beggar."

Don't believe the bad press. Support raising is not rattling a tin cup for spiritual welfare. It's team ministry. You're asking others to add their financial and prayer strength to the total effort of your mission group. If you do it well, you honor your friends and family by placing yourself in a dependent mode on them. In most people's experience, few friendships are paralyzed by a request for funds. Most friends draw closer. Many of us enjoy the privacy and independence of financing our own affairs. This can lead directly into the second pitfall, in which would-be missionaries put plans on hold to get a job to earn money for the total cost of the trip.

Pitfall Two: Checkbook Guidance

This term describes the method of determining your availability to be used by God on a short-term mission by looking at the bottom line of your checkbook, where it reads "Present Balance." The reasoning is that if you have the money, you'll go; if not, you won't. If every mission enterprise were determined by the present amount of available funds, not much would ever be accomplished in missions. Instead, give God the opportunity to go beyond your means. That's when you know you're not just forcing your way onto the field but allowing God to provide for you and send you out.

Pitfall Three: Rich Uncle Syndrome

This syndrome strikes when a person thinks that one individual or organization will underwrite his or her mission. Although this may be possible for a select few, it can be a dangerous approach to God's work. Even if your past history tells you that your parents or someone else will cover your expenses, any short-term missionary who wishes to execute a mission with integrity needs to go to God for His strategy.

That strategy may demand that you go beyond the lone individual for your support. More people on your support team means more influenced, involved and affected by your mission. If you want a delightful support-raising experience, build a loyal team of friends to pray, work for, and rally around you during your support-raising process. They can help you brainstorm, mail prayer letters, do fund-raising projects, and they can provide comfort when the going gets rough.

Pitfall Four: Ignoring the Supernatural

As a trainer director of short-term missions for the past eight years, I've seen some wonderful and unusual ways God has provided money. As one mission leader says, "Where God leads, He feeds. Where He guides, He provides." The emphasis here is on "He." Never give up, no matter how impossible the situation seems financially. Trust God. If He has prompted you to go, He will provide for you, as well.

Get it fresh in your mind that God is the Provider. He has the resources. Your responsibility is not to get money from people, but to get wisdom and strength from God and depend on Him.

Positive Steps

Let's look at some positive steps of action to prepare yourself to receive the needed finances for your mission. Be sure that you never look at this wonderful opportunity to raise support and involve yourself with others as something negative or as a burden. Try to put your finger on your misgivings and questions. Talk it over with someone you trust who has done it before.

1. Pray. Pray that money in. Long before actually counting the money that comes in, you should have counted on it, by faith. Prayer is the only way to keep from fret and worry. Some pray until they have God's assurance--- a deep conviction that He will provide. This may take some time, but it's well worth the work. Once you are sure that God's desire is to provide for you as His child, you can raise support with confidence.

2. Make a budget. Know exactly how much the mission will cost. Most agencies already have set budgets for their short-termers. Include a brief overview of expenses in your support letter.

3. Develop a financial strategy. List all the resources available to people who might support you. This will help you consider how to spur people on to give creatively and sacrificially. Do this sensitively, of course. You may have more resources than you realize.

Write down the names of those you might ask to become involved financially in your ministry [NOTE: see "Who Do I Contact When I Raise Support" article]. This list will help you make sure you don't miss any potential givers. Be very open minded while you do this. You may be surprised how many people have old neighbors and great-aunts who jump at the chance to support you

4. Be prepared to make a presentation. One of the best ways to let people know about your short term is through face-to-face conversation or public presentation. Here are a few essentials to cover:

- Where you're going.
- Why you're going.
- Who you are going with. (organization)
- What you expect from the mission.
- How long will it take.
- How much it will cost.
- How much money is still needed

I think it's wise to be very clear to potential supporters what your needs are and how much they might give. In my experience, it really frustrates supporters to not know how much they are expected to give, or if you really need the support. It rarely ever puts them off to be asked directly. You won't lose friends. People can relax around you knowing just how much you need and they you know just how

much they can do to help. (When you give a presentation, be sure to intersperse a lot of stories and anecdotes about yourself and your task).

Tips for an effective Support-Raising Presentation

-Don't rely on letters. **Letters alone are the least effective means of communicating your mission and your need.** If you do send a letter, make sure it's followed up by a personal phone call and a specific request for a prayerful response.

-Make a personal visit. **This is most effective, with a sixty percent favorable response.** Call first. Look sharp. Show up on time, and keep it short and to the point.

-Telephone calls are second only to personal presentations, with a forty percent effectiveness rate. The same principles that apply to a face-to-face presentation apply over the phone. Once you've told them what you want, be sure to send follow-up information.

-One good method is to use a response card. **Your donors will need to know pertinent information like how to give, where to send the check, how to get in contact with you, and whether tax credit can be received.**

We've barely scratched the surface of the whole ministry of support raising, but this should provide a few suggestions of how to begin. Be ready for a challenge; be ready for a blessing.

WHO DO I CONTACT TO RAISE SUPPORT?

People who have been influential in your life:

- Former pastors, elders, youth pastors, and Sunday school teachers.
- Strong Christians in your family
- Older Christians from your local church or local churches you have attended in the past.
- Christian friends of your parents or parents of your Christian friends.
- Former professors, teachers and coaches.

People whom you have influenced in the past:

- People you went to school with who are now working.
- High school classmates
- Former students from your college fellowship
- Older or younger siblings and cousins.
- Parents of children at youth and sports camps where you have worked.
- Get someone to host a coffee & dessert for you and invite their friends to hear about your trip.

Local Churches:

- Meet with the pastor or an elder
- Speak at an adult bible study
- Speak at a men's or women's fellowship
- Meet with a member of the missions board.

Influential men and women on campus, in the community, and in society:

- Christian administrators & professors of your university
- Business men's fellowships
- Friends and acquaintances
- Christian lawyers, accountants, etc.
- Businessmen / businesswomen in your local church or in your church back home.
- Family barber, doctor, dentist, etc.
- Civic and social groups
- Pray and believe for God to direct your steps!

WRITING MISSIONS SUPPORT LETTERS

Support letters for a summer missions project can be frustrating when staring at a blank screen. However, there is a basic format that can be followed as well as some simple "Do's" and "Don'ts" you may want to consider.

Format For Missions Support Letter:

I. First Paragraph - **Introduction**

- A. Briefly discuss your own life over the past year (i.e. *"My first year in college has been a life-changing one. I've grown from being a girl who had to be drug out of bed each week to go to church to someone who is passionate about living out my life for the glory of God."*).
- B. Introduce your missions plans for the summer (i.e. *"This summer I'm wanting to take a step out in obeying God to go on an evangelistic summer missions trip to Suriname"*).

II. Second Paragraph - **Describe the missions trip**

- A. Describe means of outreach (i.e. open air preaching, multimedia evangelism, crusades, drama & music on the streets, etc.)
- B. Mention what type of training you will be receiving (i.e. how to share my testimony, one-on-one evangelism, church-planting, leading Bible studies for new believers, etc.).
- C. Briefly overview the country you are going to, and any specific locations where you will be traveling.

III. Third Paragraph - **Group vision and personal goals**

- A. What is your group's vision for this particular summer mission project? [You can take excerpts straight from the description of the trip provided in the conference program, or take notes at the meeting with your missions team leader].
- B. What are some personal goals you wish to achieve on this trip?

IV. Fourth Paragraph - **Sponsoring missions organization**

- A. Give a small amount of information concerning the sponsoring organization for your missions trip. (i.e. *"Campus Harvest Missions works to help plant and establish indigenous, local churches across the globe, especially in key university cities"*).

V. Fifth Paragraph - **Asking for support**

- A. Request their financial support
 - 1. State the overall cost of the trip (i.e. *"I need to raise \$2,300 by June 1"*)
 - 2. Include a breakdown of costs if available (i.e. flight cost, food, housing)

3. State the amount of money you are contributing, or a dollar amount that you have already raised, if applicable.

4. Request a **specific** amount, or provide them with a few options:

"Would you be able to give \$100, \$50, or \$30 towards helping me go on this missions trip to China?"

** Some students like to make out a support response card stating:

YES, I'd like to support you for

Other _____ \$100 _____ \$50 _____ \$30 _____

** Don't forget to include how to make the check payable to "Campus Harvest"

** Include a preaddressed envelope for your supporter to mail his/her check.

** You may want to include a clause such as, *"I know that some can do more or less than others... any amount would be greatly appreciated."*

5. Say that you will be calling in the next week to answer any questions.

B. Request that they join a prayer team of people wishing to be updated with prayer concerns and testimonies before, during, and after your trip.

VI. Sixth Paragraph - **Closing**

A. Summarize your feelings/ anticipation for the upcoming trip (i.e. *"I am anticipating a summer of challenge as I help plant a church in Romania, as I grow spiritually in my prayer life, and as I learn how to share the gospel with Romanians"*).

B. Be sure to thank them! (i.e. *"Thank you for taking the time to consider being a part of my "sending team" so that I can be a part of fulfilling the Great Commission in Peru"*).

SOME GENERAL "DO'S AND DON'TS" FOR WRITING MISSION SUPPORT LETTERS

DO:

- ❑ Include a recent photograph in your letter. A xeroxed photo, in the upper left hand region of your letter, would be appropriate.
- ❑ Send letters to former employers, former teachers, etc., even if they are not Christians. You would be surprised how many non-Christians will contribute financially to your missions trip.
- ❑ Telephone each person you contact by letter, especially if you mention in your letter that you will be contacting them.
- ❑ Mail your letters 2-4 months prior to your missions project. Mailing to your supporters earlier will reveal to them that you are organized, efficient, and determined to truly go. In addition, if not enough support is generated by merely sending a letter, then you still have time to work on other options for raising support.
- ❑ Have at least two others read through your letters checking for grammar, spelling, and reader comprehension.

DON'T:

- ❑ Don't write over two pages as a maximum for your support letter. Since you will be following up these letters with a phone call, you can give further information at this time.
- ❑ Don't saturate your letter with overused Christian expressions or phrases. Try to be as real as possible to communicate why you are wanting to go on this missions trip.
- ❑ Don't forget to keep a database, or a good list, of names, addresses, & phone numbers of the people you have sent a missions letter. Keep it in a safe place, and don't forget to bring this file home for summer!

REMEMBER:

You will hear many say that being faithful in support raising and writing letters is "being faithful with the small". However, realize that without these friends, family members, and supporters, you would have been unable to go on your missions trip. People who send you support money towards you going on a missions trip should be viewed as a **partnership team**. . . not "check writer's" whom you never contact again. Let your thankfulness for their support flow over into thank-you cards, prayers on their behalf, and several follow-up letters of how the Kingdom of God was advanced through your trip and by their generous support!

TIPS ON HAVING A SUPPORT TEAM

One of the greatest ways to maintain a support team is communicate that you appreciate them. Even the author of Hebrews took time to exhort believers, "*Do not forget to do good and to communicate, for with such sacrifices God is well pleased*" (Heb.13:16). Therefore, as students on a short-term missions trip, it is important that you treat your supporters with the utmost respect and appreciation by faithfully communicating with them BEFORE the trip, DURING the trip, and AFTER the trip.

COMMUNICATING BEFORE THE TRIP:

Send a hand written thank you note immediately upon receiving financial contributions. An easy way to handle this may be to have thank-you cards on hand and already stamped so when you pick up your mail, you can turn around that very day and send a handwritten thank-you note.

When following up your support letters with phone calls, have thank-you cards right beside the telephone. As you hang up the phone, jot a brief thank-you at that moment & drop it in the mail the same day.

When you receive a check or a "yes" to supporting you, immediately transfer their name, address, amount, and phone number to a database for easy mailing. If you don't have great computer skills, ask a friend to "support" you by helping handle your support database and communication while out of the country.

Consider dropping a postcard with prayer requests & dates of the trip as a reminder just a few days before leaving. This is especially a good way to boost prayer support.

REMEMBER YOUR PARENTS! Leave them as detailed a schedule as possible, including dates, any phone numbers or fax numbers in case of an emergency, flight information, etc.

COMMUNICATING DURING THE TRIP:

Leave pre-stamped envelopes & printed labels of your supporters before leaving. Ask a responsible friend to help you by receiving a fax or e-mail from you while "on the field." Then, he/she can type out your letter to supporters with initial testimonies and additional prayer requests. Supporters generally appreciate this contact while you are still gone, especially during the time they are praying for you.

REMEMBER YOUR PARENTS! Make sure you fax or call upon arriving safely. Many teams develop "parent chains" where only one student calls home with details, and that parent starts up the phone chain to let other families know that everyone is safe. [This was especially important in '93 when a C.H. Missions Team to Guam experienced an 8.2 earthquake!]. Also, try to mail a postcard or bring back a special gift.

COMMUNICATING AFTER THE TRIP:

After resting for a few days, overcoming jet lag, and developing your trip photos, write a letter (not over 3 pages; include photos when possible). Do not wait more than a week or two to write your letter. . . time slips away really quickly, and classes start up again before you know it. Remember, these are the people who made it possible for you to go in the first place. Take time to make it an excellent correspondence!

KEEP THEIR NAMES & ADDRESSES (both a hard copy and on computer). Especially if you are considering full-time ministry or another missions trip in the future, these people are invaluable friends who now believe in you and in God's hand on your life. Keep them a part of your life in some way. . . send them a Christmas card, call them sometime and ask how you can pray for them, etc.

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CAMPUS HARVEST FINANCIAL PROCESS

As you begin raising support for your mission project, it is important to understand the Campus Harvest financial process of contributions. Please read through and follow these instructions to insure the proper receipting of your missions support.

1. Be sure to communicate to your donors that all gifts are tax-deductible and made payable to "Campus Harvest Missions." Donors who give online will receive a receipt immediately by email. Donors who give by check will receive their gift receipts in the mail in January of the following year.
2. IF GIVING BY CHECK, have them write your account number in the memo section of the check. Your account number can be found in the initial email acceptance letter you received from the Campus Harvest Missions Office.
 - a. Donors may send their checks directly to Campus Harvest Missions at PO Box 14244, Durham, NC 27709. OR:
 - b. Donors may send their checks to you.

When you are ready to send in the contributions you have received for your missions project, be sure to fill out a Contribution Invoice (see below) and enclose it with your support checks to be mailed to our office. This will insure that your support will be properly credited to your account. Contribution Invoice forms can be found directly following this section. Please refer to the example below regarding how to fill a Contribution Invoice form.

3. Reports of contributions received for each missionary (listed by account number) will be posted to the website each Friday.
4. Be sure to send in your contributions by the posted financial deadlines for your missions project. Failure to meet these deadlines can result in the forfeit of your participation in the missions and any funds raised being redistributed to the mission. No contributions can be refunded.
5. Any support that comes in beyond your goal will be applied to help scholarship other team members on your missions project or go to the general missions fund.

** EXAMPLE OF COMPLETED CONTRIBUTION INVOICE **

campusharvest

CONTRIBUTION INVOICE

MISSIONARY NAME

MAXIMUS MISSIONARY

ACCOUNT NUMBER

5926

NUMBER OF CHECKS ENCLOSED

8

TOTAL AMOUNT ENCLOSED \$

1450

OFFICE USE ONLY: HC

ACS

B#

Please mail your completed contribution invoice and all contributions to:
CAMPUS HARVEST MISSIONS P.O. BOX 14244 RTP, NC 27709-4244



CONTRIBUTION INVOICE

MISSIONARY NAME

ACCOUNT NUMBER

NUMBER OF CHECKS ENCLOSED

TOTAL AMOUNT ENCLOSED \$

OFFICE USE ONLY: HC

ACS

B#

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