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CHAPTER 1



The Benefits of Raising Funds

Many people who are called to be missionaries are given the assignment to raise funds, and yet the reality is they have never raised funds before. So it is fair to ask the question, “Why raise financial support?” I want to unveil for you the benefits of raising funds—and there are many.

Maybe you are considering missionary service or church planting, or maybe you have already been involved in ministry. In either case, the question, “Why raise financial support?” is a crucial one for you.

I grew up in a missionary home, where I saw faith at work. I attended Moody Bible Institute and heard every conceivable missionary message. I talked with many missionaries and read missionary biographies. However, it was not until I personally raised funds for our ministry that I comprehended the important reasons for developing a base of consecrated supporters. After nearly forty years, I have come to understand that raising financial support is necessary for many reasons.

Raising Financial Support Attracts a Base of Prayer Support

If you worked on our staff at Inner City Impact in a salaried position, few people would commit themselves to pray for you. However, when you serve in a missionary capacity, the people who invest financially in you are inclined to pray for you. Prayer follows financial investment.

Raising Financial Support Stretches Your Faith

To those about to begin raising funds, David Tucker of Regions Beyond Missionary Union International says: “You are about to embark on what can be one of the most maturing and spiritually fulfilling ventures of your life.”

Raising financial support stretches your faith.

Raising financial support can be a spiritual adventure. You’ll love many aspects of it. But we rarely grow and mature by doing what is easy. When friends you expected to give do not, it’s discouraging. When days go by and your level of support does not increase, you may be tempted to question your call. Those are the days when you step forward in faith, trusting that God has called you and that in His time He will supply every need. Raising financial support will teach you what it means to walk by faith.

Raising Financial Support Stimulates and Encourages Vision in the Body of Christ

Raising financial support calls for the missionary or church planter to interface with other believers who make up the body of Christ. When Christians meet face-to-face, they communicate Christ’s vision, His call. Another person’s enthusiasm and dedication will stimulate your interest and involvement in kingdom work.

In his article “The Tin-Cup Image Can Be Shattered,” Daniel Bacon describes the missionary who raises financial support as accomplishing three goals.

First, *the missionary is a model for missions*. That may seem scary, but you must never forget God has given you your status. In essence, you are a walking testimony of God’s coveted plan for world evangelism. Bacon says, “The presence of a missionary is a living illustration of obedience to the Great Commission.” In raising support, you keep God’s priority of ministry in front of the body of Christ and help others become mission-minded.

Second, *the missionary becomes a mobilizer for kingdom work*. You provide believers the opportunity to participate in God’s program for world evangelism financially and through prayer. Because of your deputation ministry, some may sense God’s heart for mission and join the workforce.

Third, *the missionary serves as a minister for missions and ministry*. You facilitate effective communication that will bring together the mission agency and the local church. Bacon says, “The missionary obviously needs the church for

support, but the church needs the missionary to extend, in obedience to the Great Commission, its ministry worldwide.”¹ We will talk more about opportunities to minister later in the book.

Raising Financial Support Broadens the Base of Financial Support for Your Organization

If your organization were to hire staff members based on their financial resources, you would have only a handful of staff. Rather, the organization counts on the staff member through his network of people to broaden its financial base. When your friends support you financially, you play an integral part in broadening your organization’s financial base.

Raising Financial Support Develops You as a Person

Bud Taylor of Source of Light Ministries, International, offers this perspective:

There are many things that God will teach you that you could not possibly learn anywhere else. You learn how to work with people and how to adapt under divergent, difficult, and sometimes desperate circumstances. That is when the realization dawns that we are so limited and God is so limitless! It is not as is so often misrepresented a punitive measure, but a privilege. It is not a promotional gimmick, but a prerequisite. In the process one learns poise, polish, and proficiency and how to use time, tact, and talent to [one’s] best advantage.²

Raising Financial Support Stimulates Fellowship among Other Believers

As you contact your network of people and add friends to that network, you become involved with caring, praying, and burdened people. Rewarding times of fellowship result as you interact with believers through the fundraising process.

Raising Financial Support Opens Opportunities to Witness

As you travel from place to place, making new contacts, God gives divine appointments with the unsaved world. And through those opportunities, you begin to participate in others’ call to fulfill the Great Commission.

Scott Steele and Tom Frieze of International Missions say, “Missions was and is God’s idea, and it is a real privilege to speak to God’s people about God’s program and to enlist their petitions.”³

Raising financial support is far more than raising money. It is ministry. It is relationships. It is watching God work His eternal program for the ages in a practical way.