

# THE JOURNEY

## **Raising Funds for the Journey**

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***“Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest” (Ecclesiastes 9:10).***

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As with many other things about ministry, fund raising begins with a right ATTITUDE. This is the umbrella that covers every other part of every effort to raise funds for God’s Kingdom. Ten percent (10%) of life is what actually happens to us. Ninety percent (90%) is how we respond to it.

The very idea of raising funds for an overseas trip that lasts for months or years can strike fear into the stoutest of hearts. However, we are here, among many witnesses, to let you know IT CAN BE DONE!

Raising funds for your journey is a vertical endeavor. It is between you and God, the one who called you and asked you to take this journey. Then, it becomes horizontal as you join with others and reach out for partners. This actually makes a triangle, a three-fold cord (Ecclesiastes 4:12), as you respond to God’s call and ask for support from others to fulfill this calling.

The journey of every AIMer begins long before the fund-raising starts. It begins with a deep desire to follow God’s will and plan for your life, no matter where that may lead. For me, the journey began with a whole lot of prayer and crying out to God for direction and assurance that He was the one speaking to my heart. So much so, that the spiritual leadership in my life recognized God’s call even before I began talking about it. These leaders had already seen FAITHFULNESS and DEDICATION in my walk with God. Proving yourself in the kingdom first goes a long way toward any fund raising efforts (Luke 10:7; Matthew 10:10). God calls, we listen and obey, and those who love and lead us will confirm and support.

These same leaders are part of the sending process. Raising funds is much easier with the backing of our local church and pastor, as well as the church as a whole that we are going to represent in a foreign land. This sending process also determines the difference between a nice trip and the possibility of a longer period of service in God’s kingdom mission.

Anyone can take a trip and visit a mission field. But to be sent with the support and endorsement of an entire organization and church body is another thing entirely. Our example is found in the New Testament with the sending out of Paul and Barnabas as the first missionaries of the new church. Acts chapter thirteen tells the story of the sending of these great men, and it also reminds us of their SUBMISSION to leadership and OBEDIENCE to the call of God on their lives, as witnessed by their leaders. Without this attitude of submission and obedience, the life of a missionary is a lonely and difficult one from the very beginning. Raising support without this backing of the church is next to impossible for the long haul. It also lacks the ACCOUNTABILITY factor needed in any fund raising endeavor.

***“Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you” (Hebrews 13:17).***

Some people fear the fund raising so much, they will not attempt to become involved in missions. Sis. Else Lund, veteran missionary to Africa (over 42 years) and a dear friend and co-worker once said, “Fund raising will never hinder the call of God on a missionary’s life.” It is another way to prove COMMITMENT, PERSISTENCE, and DETERMINATION to obey God.

The proper attitude will go a long way in helping a missionary fund raiser see this endeavor as:

- 1) An opportunity to prove his faith in God.
- 2) A chance to inform fellow Christians of God’s work.
- 3) A way to inspire others to invest in things of eternal consequence.
- 4) A hope to encourage others to pray for him as he does the work of the Lord.
- 5) A possibility for God’s people to invest and partner in God’s eternal program.

It is during this process of raising support that we move from an obligation to have enough funds, to the opportunity to do God’s will. This then becomes the prerequisite of the greatest PRIVILEGE ever . . . becoming a partner in the saving of souls.

What is a partner? According to Webster’s dictionary, the origin of the word “partner” is in the realm of old wooden sailing ships. (Think about the word “partnership.”) These old wooden vessels had tall masts extending down through each deck level. On each deck were strong timber wedges around the masts. These timbers supported the masts as each mast bore the stress and strain of full sails, strong winds, and unpredictable seas. Can you guess what these strong timbers were called? PARTNERS. Do you see why it is appropriate and meaningful to call a missionary’s friends and church supporters, partners? This partnership is invaluable.

Your primary network of partners is the people with whom you already have a high level of TRUST and value. This all begins with trusting the Lord and His call on your life. It grows from

there to include those who see God's call and hand on you, and it continues to grow to include your complete list of partners.

***“Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.”  
(Proverbs 3:5-6)***

Who will be on your list of people to contact to join your partnership in reaching lost souls? Here is a starter list of possibilities to build from:

- ✓ Your Pastor
- ✓ Your Missions Board (committee members) or Church Elders/Leaders
- ✓ Job Associates
- ✓ High School and College Friends
- ✓ Parents & Grandparents
- ✓ Siblings
- ✓ Cousins
- ✓ Aunts & Uncles
- ✓ Church Members
- ✓ Contacts & Hosts from Missions Outreaches
- ✓ Pastor Friends
- ✓ Church Camp & Conference Friends

One of the major things to remember in every fund raising effort is your own giving. If you expect others to give to you, what are you investing in the kingdom? I am not talking about tithes. That is not giving, but a returning to God what belongs to Him already (Malachi 3:8). I am talking about the offerings of your spirit because of a felt and expressed need.

***“Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again” (Luke 6:38).***

An attitude of GIVING is another thing that lays the foundation for all you will receive from God's hand. Throughout the history of our mission endeavors, missionaries are some of the top givers. As a group, last year (2016) they gave more than any church in our fellowship, number one in the UPCI.

Not only should you be generous yourself, your partnership will require an attitude of CREDIBILITY and INTEGRITY. Sharing your burden and vision will go a long way toward keeping your partners happy and rejoicing with you over the victories God sends your way. This will be accomplished with consistent COMMUNICATION and APPRECIATION on your part for their involvement.

All of this will require a large dose of EXCITEMENT to keep it going. Are you thrilled that God has called YOU to reach out to a certain group of people? Does your heart rejoice that you have been chosen, and will get the chance to go to places the gospel has never penetrated before? Let that excitement show!

***“I will bless the Lord at all times: his praise shall continually be in my mouth” (Psalms 34:1).***

Did you know that support raising leads to worship? When God is experienced and given His rightful place (especially with our money, talents, and time) worship is bound to happen. God is glorified and our hearts rejoice that we are a small portion of His plan and will that the whole world hear the truth of His Word.

***“And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come” (Matthew 24:14).***

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In addition to the truths of God’s Word, there are some really good resources that can encourage and challenge you to begin your journey of raising funds for your mission trip. Here is a short list, and some of these are available at Global ConNEXTions for purchase:

**God and Elephants** – Heather Ricks

**The God Ask** – Steve Shadrach

**Viewpoints** – Steve Shadrach

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A number of recent AIMers have shared the different ways they raised their support. These ideas come from single young ladies, single young men, married couples, and even a few families. Many of these are timeless, and have been used over and over through the years, even as far back as when I was an AIMer. They are tried and proven. Others may be new to you, but they too have been proven to work. May this short list give you the jump start you need to begin the journey of raising funds for the cause of His kingdom around the globe.

## ***Fund Raising Ideas from Other AIMers***

- 1) Letters – Send out letters to close family and friends asking for financial and prayer support. Mention your burden (the need) and vision (what you hope to do to fill the need). Break your financial needs into smaller portions so everyone can help out.
- 2) Letters – Contact pastors and churches asking for financial and prayer support. This letter will be more formal and ministry oriented than the person letter to family and friends.

- 3) Garage Sale – Ask people to donate old items for you to sell for your trip.
- 4) Bowling/Basketball tournaments – can be lots of fun and also give you an opportunity to share your burden and vision with people not as closely connected with you otherwise.
- 5) Bake sale – Ask people to donate baked goods, and have a sale at church or outside Walmart or the grocery store. Be sure to have a poster board with pictures and facts about your trip.
- 6) Pet sit – for dogs, cats, horses, fish, hamsters, or any other animal you are not allergic to.
- 7) Baby sit – this can be for children of all ages.
- 8) House sit – watch over someone’s home as they travel on vacation or for business.
- 9) Ask businesses to sponsor you. Businesses are usually looking for tax deductions.
- 10) Ask to speak at local churches. Go through your pastor, and be sure you contact the pastor of the church, not just one of his saints.
- 11) Can you make something? Anything handmade sells well. Pinterest will be your fundraising best friend giving you all sorts of ideas, and helping you determine what is in your capabilities. Make sure you consider the cost of supplies when setting a price on your handmade articles.
- 12) Photo sessions – if you are into photography, schedule sessions with families, children, school seniors, and even real estate options. (\$75 an hour is a reasonable fee.) Use a decent camera, edit pictures and put them on a disc for the customer.
- 13) SAVE as much as possible from your own paychecks (after tithes and expenses).
- 14) Do odd jobs (house cleaning, yard work, etc.)
- 15) Personalize t-shirts and sell for your trip.
- 16) Have a Pampered Chef, Tupperware, or Scentsy party.

- 17) Do a coin drive, and make it a contest between male/female or youth/senior ministry teams.
- 18) Create a short video presentation and present it at local churches while being open to ministering as the pastor allows (singing, preaching, speaking, and so forth).
- 19) Make and sell sugar scrubs.
- 20) Put together a power point DVD and make copies and send them along with letters to the churches in your district.
- 21) Fundraising dinners decorated with items from the country you are going to along with music and food from that country. Advertise in the local newspapers and sell tickets.
- 22) Salsa – homemade salsa sells better at conferences or other church functions.
- 23) Play to your strengths – whatever skill you are good at, market that. Skills such as art prints, cards, and other graphic designs are great for a graphic artist.
- 24) Fundraiser/auction – write letters to local businesses about your missions trip, asking them to donate something (a gift card, or other type of donation unique to their business) to an auction that will help raise necessary funds for your trip. With help from your family and friends, give something like a “spaghetti dinner and auction” where people pay for the dinner and participate in the auction.
- 25) Post-church snack booth – such as a loaded baked potato or taco snack.
- 26) Car wash at church – recruit friends and family to help, and advertise the purpose for your fund raiser.
- 27) Peanut brittle or other types of homemade candy sells really well, especially at conferences and other church events. It can even be sold at local businesses during lunch breaks.

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This is in no way an all-inclusive list of fund raising ideas. The use of these will depend on the size of your local church, and even the place you call home. Use these with prayer, asking

God to give you ideas and to lead you to what will work for you. And happy selling and partner-making!