



SUPPORT DISCOVERY

WHAT IS SUPPORT DISCOVERY?

There is something you shouldn't leave home without – A SUPPORT TEAM! What's a SUPPORT TEAM? It's people who are committed to joining you in ministry through prayer, finances and encouragement. No one can stand alone. We all need the body of Christ.

So, what is Support Discovery? God provides support for those He calls. In other words, "where God guides, God provides!" Therefore, He has a Support Team for you! Support Discovery is finding out who these people are. Two primary areas for short-term mission support are prayer and finances. These go hand in hand. Those giving are usually the ones praying for you. Jesus said, "Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also." Matthew 6:21

Those who support you need to see themselves as a team, united together with the common cause of making you as effective as possible in your cross-cultural ministry. They must feel a part of your ministry and not just see themselves as one involved in charitable giving. In a team concept, everyone has a responsibility. In short-term missions, those who give and pray are just as important as those who serve cross-culturally.

IS IT BIBLICAL TO BUILD A SUPPORT TEAM?

A basic prerequisite for Support Discovery is a clear understanding of the biblical basis for this ministry. If you are embarrassed by the thought of asking for support and do not understand the biblical basis, you will not properly challenge people to join you. There are those who are anxious to join with you in funding your mission opportunity, and you don't want to deprive them of the blessing of giving to God's work by not giving them the opportunity to share financially with you. It is critical that you take the time to search the Scriptures. Read the verses following each question and then write your answer before reading the comments.

FROM WHERE WILL MY SUPPORT COME?

Read –

Philippians 4:19 – *"And my God will meet all your needs according to his glorious riches in Christ Jesus."*

I Chronicles 29:12-14 – *"Wealth and honor come from You; You are the ruler of all things. In Your hands are strength to all. Now, Our God, we give thanks and praise Your glorious name. 'But who am I, and who are my people, that we should be able to give as generously as this? Everything comes from You, and we have given You only what comes from Your hand."*

Mark 12:41-44 – *"Jesus sat down opposite the place where the offerings were put and watched the crowd putting their money into the temple treasury. Many rich people threw in large amounts. But a poor widow*

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came and put in two very small copper coins, worth only a fraction of a penny. Calling His disciples to Him, Jesus said, 'I tell you the truth, this poor widow has put more into the treasury than all the others. They all gave out of their wealth; but she out of her poverty, put in everything - all she had to live on.'

Record your answer_____.

GOD IS THE SOURCE

God is the source of all you have and the one you entrust with all you give. Biblical giving is always to God, not to an individual or church. And the reverse is also true. Biblical receiving is always from God and not from an individual. Even though people want to support your ministry personally, they must know that their giving is as unto the Lord. Thus, their giving is a response to their faithfulness to Him and not just their individual concern for you and your ministry.

As you look to individuals and churches for support, you must keep in mind that the Lord is the prompter of those who give and pray. Therefore, you must pray for God to call those He desires to support you – SUPPORT DISCOVERY!

AM I AND MY MINISTRY WORTHY OF SUPPORT?

Read:

II Corinthians 5:20-21 – *“We are therefore Christ’s ambassadors, as though God were making His appeal through us. We implore you on Christ’s behalf: Be reconciled to God. God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in Him we might become the righteousness of God.”*

Matthew 10:10 – *“take no bag for the journey, or extra tunic, or sandals or a staff; for the worker is worth his keep.”*

Galations 6:6 – *“Anyone who receives instruction in the work must share all good things with his instructor.”*

Philippians 4:10-20 – *“I rejoice greatly in the Lord that at last you have renewed your concern for me. Indeed, you have been concerned, but you had no opportunity to show it. I am not saying this because I am in need, for I have learned to be content, whatever the circumstances. I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. I can do everything through Him who gives me strength. Yet it was good of you to share in my troubles. Moreover, as you Philippians know, in the early days of your acquaintance with the Gospel, when I set out from Macedonia, not one church shared with me in the matter of giving and receiving, except you only; for ever when I was in Thessalonica, you sent me aid again and again when I was in need. Not that I am looking for a gift, but I am looking for what may be credited to your account. I have received full payment and even more; I am amply supplied, now that I have received from Epaphroditus the gifts you sent. They are a fragrant offering, an acceptable sacrifice, pleasing to God. And my God will meet all your needs according to his glorious riches in Christ Jesus. To our God and Father be glory for ever and ever. Amen.”*

I Corinthians 9:3-14 – *“This is my defense to those who sit in judgment on me. Don’t we have the right to food and drink? Don’t we have the right to take a believing wife along with us, as do the other apostles and the Lord’s brothers and Cephas? Or is it only I and Barnabas who must work for a living? Who serves as a soldier at his own expense? Who plants a vineyard and does not eat of its grapes? Who tends a flock, and*

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does not drink of the milk? Do I say this merely from a human point of view? Doesn't the Law say the same thing? For it is written in the Law of Moses: "Do not muzzle an ox while it is treading out the grain." Is it about oxen that God is concerned? Surely He says this for us, doesn't he? Yes, this was written for us, because when the plowman plows and the thresher threshes, they ought to do so in the hope of sharing in the harvest. If we have sown spiritual seed among you, is it too much if we reap a material harvest from you? If others have this right of support from you, shouldn't we have it all the more? But we did not use this right. On the contrary, we put up with anything rather than hinder the Gospel of Christ. Don't you know that those who work in the temple get their food from the temple, and those who serve at the altar share in what is offered on the altar? In the same way, the Lord has commanded that those who preach the Gospel should receive their living from the Gospel."

I Timothy 5:18 – *"For the Scripture says, 'Do not muzzle the ox while it is treading out the grain, and, 'The worker deserves his wages.'"*

Record your answer: _____

THE MINISTRY AND THE MINISTER IS WORTHY OF SUPPORT

You are valuable in the sight of God. God provided for your salvation and provides for your every need. As one called by the Lord to certain tasks, we can be sure He will provide for personal needs and ministry needs. Consistently throughout Scripture, God provided for His servants' earthly needs through the gifts and offerings of His children. If God leads you to missionary life then you can be confident that He will provide.

WILL RAISING SUPPORT BE EASY?

Read:

Ephesians 6:10-12 – "Finally, be strong in the Lord and in His mighty power. Put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms."

Record your answer: _____

SUPPORT DISCOVERY, LIKE MISSIONARY SERVICE, IS A SPIRITUAL BATTLE

Satan will try to discourage you in Support Discovery process. Satan is against you. He will cause you to think of yourself as a beggar or one not worthy of support. Remember, the easiest way for Satan to keep us from a cross-cultural ministry is to discourage us before we even leave home.

SHOULD PEOPLE BE CHALLENGED TO GIVE OF THEIR FINANCES?

Read:

II Corinthians 8:7 – "But just as you excel in everything – in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in complete earnestness and in your love for us – see that you also excel in this grace of giving."

Romans 10:15 – "And how can they preach unless they be sent? As it is written, 'How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!'"

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Record your answer _____

YES! The need to give to missionary service is greater than your need to receive. God could provide for you in a different way to accomplish His will. However, He has chosen to do so through the gifts of other believers. By giving, believers are able to be involved in the advancement of God's kingdom and they are able to exercise dependence on the Lord in their finances. Believers are able to serve as senders by giving!

It is critical to challenge people to give. Be honest and straightforward in this challenge. Just as you need to be challenged spiritually, others do too. (Hebrews 10:24). Do not be afraid to challenge people to pray for you, your ministry and the World. Also, as people are challenged to be involved, you too will be spurred on in your faith.

SHOULD I ASK DIRECTLY FOR FINANCIAL SUPPORT?

Read:

Romans 15:24 – *“I plan to do so when I go to Spain. I hope to visit you while passing through and to have you assist me on my journey there, after I have enjoyed your company for a while.”*

Philippians 4:14-20 – *“Yet it was good of you to share in my troubles. Moreover, as you Philippians know, in the early days of your acquaintance with the Gospel, when I set out from Macedonia, not one church shared with me in the matter of giving and receiving, except you only; for ever when I was in Thessalonica, you sent me aid again and again when I was in need. Not that I am looking for a gift, but I am looking for what may be credited to your account. I have received full payment and even more; I am amply supplied, now that I have received from Epaphroditus the gifts you sent. They are a fragrant offering, an acceptable sacrifice, pleasing to God. And my God will meet all your needs according to his glorious riches in Christ Jesus. To our God and Father be glory for ever and ever. Amen.”*

Record your answer _____

THERE IS NOTHING IN SCRIPTURE THAT PROHIBITS ASKING DIRECTLY FOR FINANCIAL SUPPORT

It is true that there are a number of men and women in the history of missions who did not ask directly for support. Their reasons were based on personal convictions, not on explicit biblical principles. Paul directly tells the Romans in 15:24 he hopes to have them “assist” him on his journey to Spain. Paul’s motivation in Philippians 4:14-20 for having people involved in his ministry is for

their blessing! Your challenges will allow others to experience God’s blessing.

It is important to be open about finances. Most people would much rather hear what your needs are and how they can be involved than to have you “hint” about giving. It is important to present your financial needs clearly, directly and honestly, without being pushy. Let the Lord speak to them about joining your support team.

SUPPORT TEAM LEVELS OF COMMITMENT

Not everyone on your support team will be equally involved. That's OK. Everyone has different gifts and abilities. You will need people to be involved at two different levels:

- 1) As Givers – They may give a one-time gift and pray for you occasionally. These are valuable members of your team. Be sure to keep them informed.
- 2) As Prayers – You need people committed to pray for you once a week before you leave and daily while you are on the trip. Ask them to continue to pray for you once a week for a month after your return. Pray and look for at least 10 people to pray for you on this level.

ORGANIZING SUPPORT FOR YOUR MISSION PROJECT

PRAYER WILL DETERMINE THE SUCCESS OF YOUR TRIP

If a music group is going to be prepared and honor the Father with their effort, they must seek Him in prayer. Please enlist prayer partners to pray for God to show you His will, and as a result, the team will be better prepared spiritually and physically to accomplish His purpose on this project.

PRAYER SUPPORT

Prayer partners could include co-workers, friends, classmates, neighbors, Sunday School class members, members of the congregation and family. Be creative when enlisting prayer partners. Create prayer cards, bookmarks, prayer calendars, etc.

PRAYER

As the group begins rehearsal preparation, make prayer a focus of your meetings. Pray for God's leading during rehearsal, in decisions, for understanding of the mission, and for willing and submissive hearts. Offer the opportunity for prayer partners to meet together in small groups and pray for the participants.

FINANCIAL SUPPORT

How will you cover the expense of the project? Following are some ideas for you to consider in making your financial needs known:

- Church Newsletter
- 50-100 prayer support letters should be sent to family, friends, Sunday School teachers, business associates who would be willing to pray for you, and others who God brings to mind. The focus is prayer support, but an opportunity should be given to support the trip financially should one desire to do so. Even if you don't NEED financial support for this trip, it is a good idea to leave that option open, as that overage may be applied to the trip of a needier participant.
- Personal phone calls
- Speak to church/community groups about the project
- Personal contact with businesses which may have special interest in your project
- Church prayer meetings/business meetings

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There are also ways that you can be involved in raising financial support for yourself and/or your project music team. Here are a few suggestions:

- Yard sales
- Rent yourself out for yard work, house work and errands
- Take orders for any homemade items you can sell
- Speak to Sunday School classes and mission groups in your church
- Challenge the children and youth of your church to contribute supplies for your project and speak to them about the country where you will be going on mission
- Ask businesses to donate supplies

BEFORE YOU GO

Enlist prayer support from mission organizations in your church. Team members may wish to speak to Sunday School departments and other organizations within the church to encourage them to provide prayer support. The Group Leader may ask the Pastor to conduct a special commissioning service for the music team. Brainstorm about other possibilities to involve your church and community to create awareness of your mission project.

GENERAL SUPPORT

Here are some ways that your church, family and friends can support you as you go on this mission project:

- 1) Provide for some of your personal expenses
- 2) Provide supplies for your project
- 3) Hold a “commissioning service” to bless and encourage you before the Project begins
- 4) Write notes of encouragement which you will open each day while you are gone
- 5) Go with you to the airport to see you off
- 6) Hold a short prayer time just before you board the plane
- 7) Give you a small package filled with items of encouragement – bookmarks, tapes, poems, notes, special scriptures, etc.
- 8) Welcome you home with banners and signs when you arrive at the airport
- 9) Allow you to share your experience

PERSONAL JOURNAL

Beginning with the first meeting and rehearsals, participants are encouraged to keep a journal of their walk with God as they prepare, go and return from the mission project. List prayer requests, concerns and answered prayer. Write down significant scriptures. The group is encouraged to write about events as well as what God is teaching them (including their response). Answer the question, “What does He want me to do next?” God will use your journal to reveal something of Him and something about yourself. The entire team is encouraged to record these moments of inspiration while they are fresh on their hearts.

RETURNING HOME

The Group Leader should plan a special service to share testimonies about what God has done through the project. Participants should seek opportunities to bear witness of the project and what the Lord has done in their life. The group may want to make a large bulletin board displaying photos

of the trip for their church members to see. This could be a means to create interest for future mission projects and to invite the church to a special service where a report of the project would occur.

WHERE DO I BEGIN IN SUPPORT DISCOVERY?

So how do you go about Support Discovery? Time, energy and hard work. But, the best place to start is with prayer. It's not work that makes it happen – it's GOD (Isaiah 26:12, Zechariah 4:6)!

- 1) **PRAY** – Prayer plays a vital role in the process of Support Discovery. Even though it is through God's people that you receive the support, remember that it is the Holy Spirit who leads people to be involved.

Here are some things you should be praying for:

- a) Pray for God's direction in making your list of potential support team members.
 - b) Pray for the Holy Spirit to guide people as they consider committing themselves to praying, giving and helping.
 - c) Pray for people to be open to God's leading.
 - d) Pray for boldness as you share your needs.
 - e) Pray for wisdom and clarity as you share about your ministry.
- 2) **List Potential Support Team Members.** Pray about who should be on the list. Ask God for ideas. Include on your list your home church, friends from school, work, neighbors and relatives. Pray about how and when you can best share your needs with them. Remember, you are praying and looking for people at two different levels of commitment. In thinking about your financial sources, you may want to use some of your own savings or earnings. "Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also." One way to help find additional funds in your own back pocket is by cutting down on your own normal spending. Be creative.
 - 3) **Send Prayer/News letters.** You will want and need to write a prayer/news letter to invite people to join you in this ministry through prayer and financial giving.
 - 4) **Final Letter** – (Soon after returning Home)
 - a) Summarize your ministry
 - b) Thank your supporters for their faithful part in your ministry
 - c) List prayer requests for those whom you served and for yourself
 - 5) **Thank You Notes** – Whenever you receive a pledge of prayer support or a monetary contribution, be sure to send a personal acknowledgement and thank you.

DEVELOPING YOUR SUPPORT LETTER

In discovering your support team, relationships are key. You may be raising support now, however, throughout your life and your individual ministry you have been raising credibility for a long time. Those with whom you have shared your life and your ministry are usually part of your team already. Unless the Lord specifically directs you to inform someone you do not know about joining your support team, don't. Make a list of friends, family, ministry partners, parents of friends who know

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you, your hometown church, work colleagues, etc. If possible start a data base (DB) of addresses for continued use.

Provide quality information to your future supporters. This means you should proof your letters and add personal notes. Sign letters in blue ink. A mistake often made is the misspelling of someone's name or sending letters to the wrong address. Be sure to do your homework.

People want to be involved and they need to know how. Provide clear ways for them to respond. In your communication, you may want to include:

- A stamped, self-addressed envelope to you or the agency where the support is to be sent.
- Clear instructions on how the check is to be written
- Your phone number so you can specifically know who is on your prayer team
- Information on your departure and arrival home dates. They may want to send you off/or welcome you home
- Special prayer times for your trip so they can join you and others in praying for your ministry

These suggestions do not all need to be included in your first letter, but as your support team builds, you can determine each individual's involvement.

Be specific in your Support Letter:

- Where are you going and with what organization?
- Why you are going?
- What will you do?
- What are your prayer needs?
- What do you hope to learn?
- How does this fit in with your life plans?
- How much support do you need?
- What is your support for (Airfare, materials, housing, Etc.)?
- Where is support sent and to whom should the check be made to?
- Provide a brochure of the organization (if available) or information on the trip.

When support comes in, respond promptly with a personal handwritten thank you note. Realize this is a special gift. Think about it, if someone makes \$10/hour and sends you \$50, they are sending you five hours of their work! Clearly this warrants some thoughtful, personal communication on your part. Here are some ideas on showing your appreciation:

- Before you depart, send a prayer letter to your team with your final itinerary. This is a good opportunity for a card with specific prayer requests.
- Take a set of mailing labels or your address list with you and send everyone a postcard. People love foreign postmarks and stamps.
- Collect something small to bring back for all your supporters as a gift – pictures, stamps, small coins, or bills.

- When you return, send out a prayer letter with at least one story or something specific you learned. Add a sheet of copied pictures and enclose your small gift.
- If possible, host a report time for your support team. Give them the opportunity to see where they were able to minister by being on your team.

Whether you have faith that the money will be provided or you're wondering how it ever will be, God knows your needs. Included in those needs are people, prayers and money. Allow the Lord to build your team. Allow Him to work through you to impact their lives. In the midst of support discovery, you may have the tendency to focus on the task and forget the people the Lord is bringing to be part of your team. Continually take this process to the Lord.

OTHER SUPPORT-RAISING IDEAS

- 1) PRAY that God would provide the necessary funds, BUT CONSIDER:
 - a) Sell un-necessary items
 - b) Sell extra car
 - c) Garage sale
 - d) Work at temporary extra job for a few months
 - e) Use tax refund
 - f) Delay other financial needs (home repairs, etc.) until after you return from the trip
 - g) Prioritize budget to find extra funds
 - h) Build a lemonade stand in front of your house
 - i) Sell your car and buy a bike
 - j) Sell your bike and walk

Just kidding, but we as Americans are considered extremely wealthy by the standards of most if the rest of the world, and we really do need to evaluate our possessions in light of the Great Commission and determine whether we could do without some of our comforts for the sake of the Gospel.

SHORT-TERM MISSIONS SUPPORT PARTNER IDEAS

- 1) Parents _____
- 2) Siblings _____
- 3) Grandparents _____
- 4) Uncles and Aunts _____
 - a) _____
 - b) _____
 - c) _____
- 5) Sunday School Class Friends
 - a) _____ (teacher)
 - b) _____
 - c) _____
 - d) _____
 - e) _____
 - f) _____
- 6) Pastors
 - a) _____

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- b) _____
- c) _____
- 7) Spouse's family
 - a) _____
 - b) _____
 - c) _____
 - d) _____
- 8) Christmas Card List (friends who live out of town)
 - a) _____
 - b) _____
 - c) _____
 - d) _____
 - e) _____
 - f) _____
 - g) _____
 - h) _____
 - i) _____
 - j) _____
- 9) Co-workers who have a heart for ministry
 - a) _____
 - b) _____
 - c) _____
- 10) Friends in your ministry area or other ministry areas (Choir/Orch. or Discipleship, etc.)
 - a) _____
 - b) _____
 - c) _____
 - d) _____

SUPPORT LETTER SAMPLE

The Support letter can be a vital tool in developing the financial support you need towards a project. Although this letter is just an example, it contains many aspects that make up a well communicated document to potential supporters. You can request this as a WORD document by writing to kenn@globalmissionsproject.com and asking for the GMP.Support.Discovery document.

Month Day, Year

Dear Name,

I am writing to share with you a fantastic opportunity that the Lord has provided for me. I have been asked to serve on a short-term mission team to **location!** The team is composed of **church/organization** members, and we will be working in partnership with Global Missions Project. They are a non-profit music mission's organization based in Kennesaw, Georgia.

WHEN:

Day, Month Date, Year

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WHERE:

Location

PROJECT COST:

\$\$\$\$ per team member. The cost covers airfare, 1 meal, accommodations, insurance, ground transportation and materials. Each team member is responsible for raising 100% of his/her financial and prayer support.

WHY:

The first and foremost reason to go is of course to share the Good News of Jesus Christ. We will be working with local Mission Leaders to support their ministry strategies and objectives. The primary objective of our work will be to:

- To share Christ with the people in the community
- To support Ministry Leader's strategies and objectives

The second purpose of this Project is to develop relationships with local musicians.

- To encourage believers and edify the Body of Christ
- To become friends with "not yet" believers and continue to correspond and share Christ

PRAYER NEEDS

1. That God will prepare the hearts of the people to whom we will minister and that they will be open to hear the Gospel.
2. Unity in the team. "By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you have love one for the other." John 13:35
3. That each member of our team will be open to learn all that God has to teach them.
4. That God would supply my financial need for this Mission Project.

I'm so excited about this Project! As the Lord leads you to pray and/or give, will you please consider sharing this opportunity with me? Financial support is of course essential to my participation, but of equal or greater importance is your commitment to pray! If you would like to contribute financially, please make checks payable to Global Missions Project and put my name on the memo line. You can also contribute directly into my account by visiting www.GlobalMissionsProject.com and clicking "Give to a Participant" on the home page. All contributions are tax deductible.

I would also love to know if you can commit to prayer. I'll send a report upon my return. Thanks so much for your help and may God richly bless you!

In Christ,

NAME

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All mailed contributions can be sent to:
Global Missions Project
Attn: Finance Office
2090 Baker Road, Suite 304-196
Kennesaw, GA 30144

CONCLUSION

Raising support for a mission trip is an act of FAITH. It may also require a priority adjustment for a time. If God wants you to participate, He will provide, but He also expects us to be wise with the resources He has already entrusted to us. The power of prayer can NOT be overestimated! Ask Him for wisdom and for the resources, and watch Him provide, often in supernatural ways. “Without faith it is IMPOSSIBLE to please God.” While He doesn’t expect us to act foolishly, or to jeopardize our family’s security, He does expect us to be willing to make a sacrifice to see folks won to Him in a far away land. When we get to Glory, the only resources we will take with us are those we have sent on ahead, in the form of people who found Jesus as a result of our **witness** and **sacrifice**. PRAY for wisdom, and be willing to obey the voice of the Spirit in answer to your request.