

What Does the Bible Say About Raising Prayer Support?

Raising support doesn't just involve inviting people to financially support your trip. It also, and maybe more importantly, involves asking people to prayerfully support the work of which you will be a part.

John Piper connects prayer and seeing the nations brought to faith. He says, "I believe the proclamation of the Gospel in word and deed is the work of missions. And prayer is the power that wields the weapon of the Word, and the Word is the weapon by which the nations will be brought to faith and obedience."¹ This is what you will be asking supporters to be a part of when you ask them to pray, that they would commit to asking God to move mightily through your trip.

To build a more robust understanding of the importance of prayer support, read through the Scripture passages and answer their associated questions on this page and the next two.

Read Ephesians 6:12-20

- Is Paul requesting or commanding the Ephesians to pray? (Ephesians 6:18)
When and in what contexts does Paul command the Ephesians to pray?
- What is the importance of prayer according to Paul in this Passage? (Ephesians 6:12)
- As a missionary, how did Paul ask the believers in Ephesus to pray for him? (Ephesians 6:19-20)

Read John 14:13 and 16:24

- What is the connection Christ is making about the results of prayer in these two passages?

¹ John Piper, "Prayer: The Work of Missions," *Desiring God*, July 1988, <https://www.desiringgod.org/messages/prayer-the-work-of-missions>.

- 1 Chronicles 28 and 29
- 2 Corinthians 8 and 9
- Nehemiah 1-2:10

Scriptures Response

Matthew 6:19-21.

- Many people do not feel comfortable raising support. Your feelings are valid, and you should acknowledge them. On the other hand, we cannot be ruled by our emotions. Asking others to participate in the Great Commission by becoming financial partners will take you out of your comfort zone. Any cause that is worthwhile is worth asking others to give. You are asking people to give to God's work, not to you.

2 Corinthians 5:11-21 and 1 Kings 17:7-16.

- God's calling is sacred, and He has called you to go on this trip to proclaim His name. This calling is not dependent upon your self-worth. The question to ask yourself is, "Is this calling worth raising support for?" The answer is an unequivocal "yes." We have no need to beg.
- We are giving people an opportunity to invest in what God is doing.

Philippians 4:14-20.

- The work that God does through the generous gifts of people around you is credited not only to you as the participant, but also to the ones who give toward the trip.
- Giving can be a blessing and an opportunity for spiritual growth for the supporter and trip participants.

1 Chronicles 28, 29 and 2 Corinthians 8, 9.

- God entrusts resources to people to be used for His purposes. By asking for support, you are giving people an opportunity to be generous with what God has given them. You don't know how God is working in their life and finances.

Nehemiah 1-2:10.

- Many people do not ask unbelievers to give because they are fearful of rejection. When you share Christ with others, some will say "yes." Others will reject the message. Similarly, many will say "yes" to supporting you, and some will say "no." A "no" is not a personal rejection. God has not called everyone to support your ministry.
- In the Scriptures, we find that God provides in both ways, asking and not asking. Some are tempted to say it is more spiritual not to ask. That is simply not true. It takes great faith to ask for support. How can one be willing to ask scores of people to consider Christ, but not be willing to ask people to consider giving to the most significant thing they could ever give to—the Great Commission?
- The added benefit of involving non-Christians is that, as you share with them about your trip, there will be opportunities to share the gospel with them.

In Summary

- The success is not in the **money** you raise, but in the **partnerships** you build. The team you build is partnering with you in the work of the Great Commission.
- The support raising process reminds us that **God owns everything**. Psalm 24:1 states “The earth is the Lord’s, and everything in it. The world and all its people belong to him.”
- **God’s supply is never ending**. 2 Corinthians 9:8 states “And God will generously provide all you need. Then you will always have everything you need and plenty left over to share with others.”
- Everything we have is God’s.
- Missions is a team effort — some go and others give.
- Raising support requires counter-cultural humility.

Overview of the Support Raising

There are many ways to communicate with potential partners. It’s important to know how to share about your trip and why you are going because you will use that information in any letters, phone calls, or in person meetings. **As you begin the support raising process, it is important to contextualize the process with the person.** Think about what would show the most value and respect to the other person as well as what would be the most helpful for the other person. For example, if you are not relationally close with someone, you might go through the process more formally.

Plan // Preparing to Support Raise

1. [Namestorming](#): Brainstorm names of people to ask
2. [Tracking](#): Using a database to stay organized
3. [Casting Vision for Your Trip](#)
 - a. The what, why, and how of your trip
4. [Writing and sending letters](#)
 - a. The first point of contact

Execute // Building your Support Team

5. [Follow up](#) with people through text, phone calls, or in person
 - a. The invitation
6. [Write thank you notes](#)
7. [Sending out updates to supporters](#)
8. [Pray](#)

Put Simply

1. Think of people.
2. Send letters or emails to people.
3. Follow up with people.
4. Thank and update people.

1. Namestorming

As you begin the support raising process, one of the first questions you may ask is, “*Who will I ask to support me?*” The answer is God is working in and through people in your life to provide for your trip. But to find those people, you need to develop a list. This list will include people you know well, along with acquaintances and people you may not know.

Your objective is to develop a list of names without evaluating their potential for supporting you.

Do not decide for an individual whether they are interested or in a position to support you spiritually or financially. If you limit yourself to those you feel will or can support you, you may prematurely disqualify those God wants to support you. Don’t say “no” for them. Later, you will need to prioritize whom to contact first, but for now, do not disqualify anyone.

- Pray that the Lord will bring to your attention the names of individuals you should contact.
- Create your contact list by namestorming everyone you can think of. Do not count anyone out. The average person knows hundreds of people. Everyone is a candidate! To begin this process, write down all the spheres of influence in which you are and have been involved, such as work, church, school, Bible studies, prayer groups, etc.
- Go through the following list to help you think of potential contacts and begin praying for those you plan to contact.

Christmas card lists	Dermatologist	Immediate family	Parents’ employers
Church friends	Doctor	Leaders	Relatives
Coaches	Employer	Mentors	Teachers
DCOMM Leader	Former neighbors	Neighbors	
Dentist	Friends of parents	Parents’ associates	

Namestorming List

2. Tracking Resource: Stay Organized

Once you have a list of names, start with the people you know well and move down the list to those you know less well.

We recommend that you track names and their status through tools like Excel, Google sheets, or Airtable—whichever tool you find most helpful. These tools will maximize your effectiveness in raising support. You'll be able to see once someone has given through the Funding tab on ServiceReef.

3. Casting Vision for Short-Term Trips

Why Cast Vision

Casting vision for your trip is important because it answers questions like “why does the team exist?” and “where are we going?” Having a shared vision is important for two reasons. First, it unifies the team. Second, it creates a central purpose for your supporters. We encourage you to reinforce the vision through **repetition** and **celebration** with both your team and your supporters.

Sharing the Vision of Your Trip

Casting vision and inviting people to partner with you in what you will be doing can be done in a letter, over the phone, or in person.

1. **Why is this short-term trip important?** Share why this opportunity matters.

2. **Why are you going on the trip?** Share the Kingdom need you are serving, your passion to meet the need, and how you can serve that need.

Invite Them to Partner with You

3. Asking for Financial Commitment

- Before you ask for a financial commitment, stop and ask if they have any questions pertaining to your ministry and what you will be doing. Be prepared by knowing how the trip will work and your role in it.
- If they don't have any questions, say, ***"As I seek to go and serve, I am looking for a team of supporters who will partner with me prayerfully and financially."***
- Then comes the most important part. If you do not ask people for support, there is a good chance they won't give support. Say, ***"Would you (or you and your spouse's name) consider making a commitment of \$100 or some other amount?"***
- After you have asked, remain silent. Give the person time to answer. Some people are ready to make a decision after hearing about your ministry. In fact, some people will have made a decision about supporting you before you arrived for the appointment.
- **"Yes"**
 - Express appreciation. *"Thank you so much. That is a great help. I am really encouraged that you can join as a partner with me in ministry. In a minute, I will explain how to give contributions to this ministry work."*
- **"Maybe":** "Maybe" will be your most common response.
 - Set a time to call back for a decision. Most people can make a decision within 24-48 hours.
 - Say, ***"If I were to call you tomorrow evening, would that give you enough time to make a decision?"*** (That may seem too rushed or pushy, but it's not. A set time communicates urgency to people. If you were to say, "I will give you a call back some time next week," the person may forget to make a decision because your need does not feel urgent.)
 - Move into asking for referrals. (See below.)
 - ***Note:** When you call the person who gave you a "maybe" response, if their answer is "yes," share how to give by check or online.
- **"No"**
 - Say something like, ***"I'm so grateful for your willingness to meet with me. I understand that not everyone is able to support financially. If anything***

changes, I would love to have you be a part of my team. I would surely appreciate your prayers during this time.”

- Move into asking for referrals. (See below.)
- **After Answer**
 - Begin writing thank you letters immediately, sending them to each person who joins your prayer or financial support team.
- **Build Referrals (If needed)**
 - Ask everyone you meet, regardless of their financial response, if they know of anyone else who might be interested in joining your support team.
 - Get people’s contact information.
 - Thank them for any new names that they are able to give and make a plan to reach out to the new names as soon as possible.

4. Writing and Sending Letters

Make a Plan

Who are you able to meet up with or visit? Who will you need to ask over the phone? Look at your calendar and create a timeline for when letters/emails will be out, when you will make your calls, when you will visit people, etc.

Writing the Letter

The letter should be no longer than one page (front and back) and should be personalized. Don’t use a form letter. Avoid long words and sentences. Your letter sets the stage for you to contact your potential supporters! Your letter should include:

1. Person Life Update

- First paragraph can be an update on your life. Keep it short and simple.
 - i. What are some ideas of updates you can include?

2. Your Exciting Opportunity - Your Mission Trip

- Share about the opportunity you have and why you are going.

3. How They Can Be Involved

- Finish by asking them to join your support team through prayer and giving.

4. Steps to Give:

- **Explain that there are two options for donating:**

- Online through the Personal URL provided on your ServiceReef Dashboard page. (You can make this a QR code)
- Checks made payable to The Austin Stone Community Church and mailed to this address:
 - The Austin Stone Community Church Attn: Finance
 - 104 East Highland Mall Blvd., Suite 110
 - Austin, TX 78752
- **Make sure they put your name and trip name in the memo line of the check.**

5. Mention Follow Up

- Mention that you will call them to follow up.

Helpful Tips

- Make it one page - front and back is fine!
- Personalize it to the sender.
 - Write a small note at the beginning of your letter, *“Hey George and Janet! Hope you and the kids are doing well. I miss seeing you guys at church on Sundays. We’ll have to grab lunch the next time I’m home!”*
 - Sign with a handwritten signature.
 - Handwrite a short P.S. that includes, *“I’m looking forward to talking with you.”*
- Make it fun, engaging, and colorful.
 - Add a few pictures.

Sending the Letter

Helpful Tips

- Remember to stay organized.
 - Use Airtable, Excel, Google Sheets.
- Add a QR code with the giving link.

Feel free to use the sample letter below as inspiration. Don’t forget to **make it your own and personalize it.**

Sample Letter

For security purposes, please don't post this information online or forward this without talking to me first.

Greetings,

I am so excited to reach out to you and share a bit about what has been going on in my life recently and about an exciting opportunity I have this upcoming {summer}.

Life Update (First paragraph can be an update on your life. Keep it short and simple)



This past fall, I made the football team! I was a backup so I didn't get to play very much but it was fun to learn the position. I was also on the A/B honor roll at school.

For spring break, we went to Colorado and went skiing. I did my first blue run which was exciting but a bit scary at first.

Short-Term Trip (Share about the opportunity and why you are going)

I have the opportunity to go to {Trip Location} with a team of students from The Austin Stone to partner with {Ministry Working With}. Our team will be hosting a VBS with one of the churches we will be working with.

Partnering with You (Finish by asking them to join your support team)

I can't do this alone. As I prepare to go to {trip location}, I need a team who will commit to pray for me and my trip. God uses prayer to move mightily and I would love for you to be a part of my trip this way.

Prayer Requests (You can also print a separate card with this info and ask them to put it somewhere they'll see it and be reminded to pray)

- God would provide financially for my trip
- Team unity
- God would use our time there for His glory

In addition to your prayers, please consider partnering with me and my team financially as we need to raise {AMOUNT} per person to cover the cost of the trip, which includes everything needed for the trip. Please note that all contributions toward this trip are given to The Austin Stone and are therefore tax-deductible. As you can imagine, raising the money is incredibly

overwhelming, but I am trusting God to fully fund all of these things. He's a big God, and He can do it.

I'm asking you to pray through partnering with us by giving \$50, \$100, \$200, or some other amount toward the TRIP NAME trip.

How to Give:

1. Give Online or through the QR Code: {Giving Link from ServiceReef} {Attach QR Code}
1. Checks made payable to The Austin Stone Community Church and mailed to this address: The Austin Stone Community Church; Attn: Finance; 104 East Highland Mall Blvd, Suite 110, Austin, TX 78752
 - o Make sure they do put your name and trip name in the memo line of the check.

I'll be calling you in the next couple of weeks to see if you have any questions and if you would like to join my support team.

Thanks You,

[Your signature here]

P.S. Handwritten postscript that includes, "I'm looking forward to talking with you."

5. The Follow Up to the Letter or Email

Reminders for Before You Begin

The purpose of your letter is to prepare the way for a conversation. **The conversation is the most critical factor in the whole process.** An added benefit of making the phone call or having an in person conversation is that you have the opportunity for two-way communication with the person. Spend some time planning and rehearsing brief talking points. Don't wing it. Write, edit, and rewrite your template before making calls. Avoid being too wordy, vague, or general.

Having the Phone Call or In Person Conversation

1. Identify yourself (if doing a phone call).
1. Chat briefly (3-5 minutes) with the individual. Be natural and sincere, and ask questions. Be sure to listen and respond as needed. Speak in a natural way - speed and tone. Be a good listener.
 - a. Ask questions about them (church involvement, familiarity with goers, family, etc.).
 - b. Transition to sharing about your trip.
 - i. The following statement can help you make the transition: *"Thanks so much for taking the time to talk. I am so excited to share what God is*

doing around the world and ways that you could partner with me as I engage in that work. Did you receive my letter regarding my trip this summer?"

2. Ask if they received your letter or come to a decision. The purpose of this is to invite them to be a part of your trip through some form of support.
 - a. They haven't received it or haven't read it.
 - i. You will then need to be prepared to share about your trip over the phone.
 - b. They have read it, but **have not come to a decision**
 - i. **Ask them if they have any questions. If they still need more time to make a decision, ask if 48 hours would be enough time for them to make one. If so, make plans with them to call back then.**
 - c. They have read it and have come to a decision.
 - d. If you didn't send a letter, this is where you share about the trip and ask them to be a part of it. (You can reference the "[Inviting Them to Partner](#)" section.)
3. Be ready to respond appropriately to whatever decision they made. If they have committed to involvement, thank them for it. If they cannot support you at this time, thank them for their prayerful consideration.
4. Confirm your follow up action, whether that is restating when you'll call them back or sending them the giving information.
5. Close with thankfulness, no matter the course of the conversation.

After the Conversation

Take time today to prepare an "after phone call/after meeting" email or text. This is communication that you can send immediately after you finish talking with someone about your upcoming trip.

1. Thank them for taking the time to hear about your short-term trip.
2. Remind them of key details.
3. Make a note advising them not to share this information or your email without your permission.
4. Give a specific date for having a decision or donating. You can do this lovingly while being direct.
5. Place the donation link in the email. This makes it possible for them to give shortly after your meeting or phone call.

Don't be afraid to be graciously persistent!

Helpful Texts to Send to Follow Up

Maybes

“Hi ___! Thank you so much for being willing to consider donating to my trip coming up! I wanted to circle back around and see if you’ve had time to decide if you’ll be able to contribute? I can also check back in in a few days if you need more time!”

Yes

“Hi ___! Thank you so much for being willing to donate to my trip coming up! I wanted to check in and see if you’ve had time to put in the donation? I know things are busy so please let me know if you need any help or if you want me to keep reminding you.”

Set Expectations with your Supporters

- How you will be committed to your support team: an example is how often you plan to email them with updates and specific prayer requests.
 - Example: once a month
- What you expect of your support team: their commitment to pray, etc.

6 & 7. The Thank You Note and Updates

Thank you Note

Sending a thank you note is absolutely crucial! Do not be guilty of ingratitude. (It’s best to do a thank you note to people who give, and then a follow-up note once you return that tells them about your trip.)

Send a thank you note the day you get their decision. Be sure to keep a record so that you know who has received notes. Express appreciation, including the exact amount of the gift, what the gift will help achieve, and something personal in your note (i.e., *“See you in church on Sunday!”*)

You can also send thank you notes after your trip returns with information about your trip in it. One idea is to buy postcards on your trip and send them to your supporters.

Sample Thank You Note:

Dear (insert name),

Thank you so much for supporting my trip to the (Trip Name). Your gift of \$ _____ will be a great help to me as I prepare for my trip. It is a privilege to have people like you praying with me and for me!

I look forward to sharing with you all that God does in and through this trip. Please pray with me that God would quickly bring in the support for my trip.

Thank you again for your gift.

Your Name

Updates

- Send an update before your trip with how training went and then once after trip to tell them how the trip went.
- Being faithful to update your supporters will help build trust with them and make sure they feel involved with the mission.

8. Pray

Unless the Lord builds the house, those who build it labor in vain. Unless the Lord watches over the city, the watchman stays awake in vain.

-Psalm 127:1

The prayer of a righteous person has great power as it is working.

-James 5:16

Helpful Reminders

- Prayer is the first and continued work of support raising. Commit to regularly praying for God's provision for your trip.
- Find 2-3 people who you enlist as your prayer team for trip support raising. Bi-weekly, send this team your prayers and fundraising deadlines.