

# SUPPORT AND COMMUNICATION



## *Financial, Logistic, & Communication Support*

### SCRIPTURE FOCUS

*“Therefore do not be anxious, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ For the Gentiles seek after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them all. But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you. Therefore do not be anxious about tomorrow, for tomorrow will be anxious for itself. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble.” Matthew 6:31-34*

*“But as it is, God arranged the members in the body, each one of them, as he chose. If all were a single member, where would the body be? As it is, there are many parts, yet one body. The eye cannot say to the hand, ‘I have no need of you,’ nor again the head to the feet, ‘I have no need of you.’” I Corinthians 12:18-21*



### QUOTES

*“God’s work in God’s timing will never lack God’s resources.” Hudson Taylor*

*“Let us more and more insist on raising funds of love, of kindness, of understanding, of peace. Money will come if we seek first the Kingdom of God – the rest will be given.” Mother Teresa of Calcutta*

*“I believe God has a master plan. He moves people in and out of each other’s lives and each leaves his mark on the other. You find you are made up of bits and pieces of all who ever touched your life and you are more because of it and would be less if they had not touched you.” Anonymous*



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### LEARNING OBJECTIVES

As a result of studying this learning session the cross-cultural witness candidate should be able to:

- Identify and describe six types of support that are essential for cross-cultural workers.
  - Develop a framework for a support system.
  - Explain his/her philosophy/theology of support based upon Biblical material.
  - Define various types of communication that sustain his/her support system.
  - Identify the appropriate recipients for each type of communication.
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Read the following articles:

- *Are Missionaries Beggars?* by Don W. Hillis originally published in *Moody Monthly*. International Messengers website (<http://www.internationalmessengers.org/pub/beggars.pdf>)
- *Financing the Task: Revisiting the Western Church's Role in Funding Global Missions* by Ellen Livingood, originally published in *Catalyst Services* newsletter Interchange Postings (<http://catalystservices.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/08/Finance.pdf>).

In His sermon from the mount recorded in Matthew 6, Jesus clearly identifies the source of all provision when He declares, “Seek first the Kingdom of God and all these things will be given to you.” But as the Biblical witness bears out, many times the provision and support God provides to sustain Kingdom workers comes from Kingdom people. One of the biggest questions you face as you train for cross-cultural service is “**Who is going to send me?**” When you ask that question, you are really asking several questions:

- Who will equip me and commission me for service?
- Who can I depend on to help me with the logistics of my mission?
- Who will serve as my base of spiritual support?
- Who is going to pay my way and financially support my ministry?

Of course, these are not the only questions that must be answered before you purchase your plane ticket, but unless you are a spiritual Lone Ranger, these are questions that must be answered in order for you to consider yourself a serious candidate for cross-cultural ministry. Aside from the few sending agencies and boards that provide full logistical and financial support with employment benefits for those it commissions, most missionaries in the world today represent churches and sending agencies that require the missionary to raise some measure of his or her support. Depending on the church that is commissioning you, there are various support structures you are expected to establish prior to your departure for the field.

In this unit, you will identify some of the key support structures you should have in place in order to carry out the mission God has called you to fulfill. You will also begin to identify specific people-types as well as particular individuals whom God has placed in your life to serve in a supportive role. The task of supporting a cross-cultural worker is a ministry in itself.

## PANORAMA

As you think about those who will provide these ministries, you may find that there are some individuals, organizations or groups who provide support in multiple arenas.

In his book, *Serving as Senders*, Neal Pirollo of SIM identifies six basic types of support that are foundational for your cross-cultural ministry:

- Prayer support
- Logistical support
- Financial support
- Communication support
- Moral support
- Re-entry support

Developing these foundational support systems will provide for a stronger and more enduring ministry. People respond to the expectation of establishing their own support systems in various ways. Some missionary candidates have no problem asking for support while others shudder to think of asking anyone for assistance. Some individuals are so uncomfortable with the task of raising support that they surrender the call to cross-cultural ministry altogether. Others feel it both a privilege and an obligation of the church to support them in their ministry.

Because the topics of spiritual support and prayer support are given attention in the PANORAMA sessions Advocacy and Prayer, this session will focus a greater measure of attention on the issues of financial, logistical, re-entry and communication support.

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### CASE STUDY: DANIEL AND CINDI

Daniel and Cindi were both reared in a denomination that carried out its international mission efforts through a “cooperative giving model”. In other words, all the churches within the denomination gave “cooperative” gifts to support the mission efforts of the denomination. Seeking support of any kind within the context of the local church was uncommon to non-existent for missionaries in their denomination. Daniel and Cindi never considered any other sending option. Each of them had been called by God to serve overseas prior to meeting near the end of their seminary training. When they met at a denominational missions event, they quickly discovered that God had called them to serve together. They soon married, went through the process required for appointment and were commissioned by the sending board to serve among an unreached people group doing urban youth ministry through sports and recreation.

During their training process, Daniel and Cindi moved away from their local church to do training in another state. Their commissioning was performed at a national denominational level with other candidates in their training program. Only five of their home church members were able to attend. Once on the field, Daniel and Cindi were primarily connected to their sending board for support, direction, and community but they maintained some level of contact with people in their home churches through email and newsletters.

On the field, Daniel and Cindi discovered that most of the missionaries in their area were

working under a “faith model” of support, when missionaries are required to raise their own support, depending on the provision of individuals from their families, home churches, other churches, and friends to sustain their ministries. It seemed to Daniel and Cindi that the other missionaries wasted a lot of time in communication and fundraising. They were shocked to learn that there were even missionaries working in their area who did not have medical insurance and who were dependent upon local transportation. Daniel and Cindi thanked God often for the fact that they did not have to worry about such things.

They were amazed at the determination and longevity of these other missionaries – some of them who had been on the field for over twenty years. Because Cindi had been raised by her parents to be self-sufficient, she could not imagine herself in their shoes. Because they seemed so willing to make their needs known, she found herself thinking of them as beggars. She found herself drawn more closely in relationship to missionaries from her own organization or similar organizations who viewed themselves as employees of an agency. However, she was at times bothered by the fact that others did not possess reliable vehicles or live in houses with indoor plumbing and cooling systems. She was a little embarrassed about her sense of “well-being” while others seemed to have so little in comparison.

Two years passed. The pastors from both of their home churches were called to serve in other churches. One of the older women who had distributed their newsletter for their ministry was no longer able to do so. Daniel and Cindi soon had very little contact with their home churches aside from an occasional newsletter and email from a couple of their close friends.

There were also changes in the leadership of their sending board that elicited tremors on the mission field. It seemed that almost out of the blue, the strategic importance of Daniel and Cindi’s assignment was being questioned. Because they had seen the results of their work among the youth of their city and they had not heard a clear word from God to terminate the sports program, they soon found themselves in a position of questioning whether they could remain connected to their current sending board. After an ineffective meeting with their supervisor, it became apparent that the continuation of their current ministry was not an option.

As they looked to the future, Daniel and Cindi were overcome with anxiety. Who would pay to sustain them if they chose to stay on the field and continue the youth program? Where

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would they get the funds to carry out their ministry? Who would take care of all their logistical needs? With whom would they discuss strategy issues? What would they do about medical insurance? They would have to surrender their vehicle to their sending board.

How would these changes affect the relationships with their fellow missionaries? If they were no longer working for their current agency, who would replace their team on the field? Where would they live?

The anxiety produced by these issues was too great. To ease the tension that was tearing them apart, Daniel and Cindi decided to dissolve the sports program and assume a new assignment as church-planters so that they could remain with their current sending board. Work among their people group was slow as the people in their area were very resistant to direct evangelistic methods. Neither of them felt gifted in working with adults. Within two years, Daniel had

become so depressed that he spent much of his time at home working on the computer or reading. Cindi, who was inclined to make the best of any situation, soon began struggling with her ability to respect Daniel. After four years on the field, Daniel and Cindi returned to the states where they resigned from their sending board. Daniel took a job as a high school coach and Cindy took a job with a state-funded social service program.

**REFLECT #1**

1. Which seemed to play a larger role in Daniel and Cindi's decision-making, their call to cross-cultural mission or their need for security? What other issues might have prevented them from continuing the youth sports program?
2. What are some ways Daniel and Cindi might have developed a support system to assist them in their decision-making and in continuing in their ministry?
3. What scriptures might you have used to give Daniel and Cindi direction or encouragement?
4. What were Daniel and Cindi's options at their most crucial point of decision-making?
5. Which of these two types of missionaries in this story do you more closely identify with – those who depend on their church for support or those who work for an agency? Why?

FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR CROSS-CULTURAL MISSIONS

**Terms and Definitions**

*Tentmaking*

The utilization of a person's professional or market skills to sustain him/herself while living out a religious ministry or cause.

*Support*

Refers to the undergirding and sustaining forces that maintain the missionary in his/her call among a people or in a place of designated service. Support may include advocacy, personal financial provision, pastoral care, prayer, platform financial provision, and services. In order to stimulate further thinking on the concept, find the definition of support here: <http://www.dictionary.com/browse/support>

*Sending*

A term describing the process of preparing, supporting and sustaining individuals sent by a church or organization to serve cross-culturally.

*Church-based sending* (versus sending through a mission agency or board):

A type of cross-cultural assignment in which the worker is living out his/her calling as an extension of a local church or network of churches. In this model, the cross-cultural worker is vitally connected to the local church to both represent the church and to be sustained by it.

The word *fundraising* tends to arouse an immediate reaction from most people. There are many factors that affect our views on financial support and fundraising. Because we have been affected by these various factors, each missionary candidate has his/her own unique set of feelings about methods of financial support.

Those with an entrepreneurial spirit may be very comfortable with the concept of tentmaking, sustaining oneself by working for a living in a cross-cultural setting. Other people, raised in denominations that do not possess a cooperative giving system, are likely accustomed to a

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model in which a missionary depends on friends, church members, and others for financial support. If the model of sending that you are most familiar with is one in which a board or agency provides funds and support systems for mission sending, you may be quite uncomfortable with the idea of raising your own financial support.

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Even the values instilled in you by your parents regarding work ethic, independence and self-sufficiency have strong influence on the way you feel about the issue of raising support. Some people have been raised in cultures where revealing need or asking for assistance is considered shameful or taboo while others were

reared among people who freely communicate their needs to others. Raising support comes quite natural to some people while for others it evokes extreme feelings of discomfort. If you are a person who has been placed in the position of raising support, it is important to come to a healthy resolve regarding the feelings you have about fundraising.

As we consider our need for financial support, we begin to ask questions.

- Do I tell other people about my needs?
- Should I just pray to God and tell no one?
- How do I share my financial needs with others and not appear to be begging?
- What part should my church play in my financial support?
- Who should I appeal to for support?
- What are the various means by which I can make my needs known?
- Is it wrong for me to expect others to support me?
- Is it my pride that keeps me from desiring to ask others for support?

To address these types of questions, it will be important to first look at the Biblical material that surrounds the concepts of giving and support. We must align our thinking with the truth of Scripture. Secondly, it will be wise to look at various philosophies of support that have been lived out by others serving in Kingdom ministries.

### REFLECT #2

1. What kinds of feelings are evoked as you consider raising some or all of your own financial support?
2. What values have been instilled in you by your family or your culture that contribute toward these feelings?
3. If you were told that you had to raise your full financial support, would you still be committed to cross-cultural service? Why or why not?
4. On the scale below, mark your present attitude toward raising funds for cross-cultural missions. Describe your position and the reasons behind it.

Tentmaking \_\_\_\_\_ Raise Partial Support \_\_\_\_\_ No Fund Raising

## BIBLICAL EXAMPLES OF SUPPORT

As early as Genesis 4, we find Biblical examples of God's people making offerings and sacrifices unto God as an act of worship.

God begins to clearly define His expectation of his people in regard to giving in Exodus 25:2-3:

*The Lord said to Moses, "Tell the Israelites to bring me an offering. You are to receive the offering for me from each man whose heart prompts him to give." (NIV)*

As God continues to reveal His desires through Moses, he sets aside one of the twelve tribes of Israel for service at the tabernacle. This Levite clan differs from the other tribes in that they are to receive no inheritance and own no land. Numbers 18:21-24 explains that the Levites are to receive the tithes of the people as their inheritance. From this passage, we understand that it is God's desire for those who are set apart for unique Kingdom service to be supported by the tithes and offerings of God's people.

God is not limited to just one way of meeting the needs of His servants. As you read the pages of Scripture, there is story after story of the provision of God. Elijah is a wonderful example of a servant of God who received both miraculous provision from God (feeding by ravens) and the provisions of others God had chosen to support him (the widow of Zarapheth). In this story, not only is Elijah provided for by the widow, but the widow receives provision from God because of her willingness to give to God's servant.

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It is true that God sometimes uses miraculous provision to meet the needs of His servants. However, the instruction we receive from Scripture also implies that God expects His people to give tithes, offerings, and practical support to sustain those He has called out for ministry.

As we move to the New Testament, we find a good deal of instruction as well as Biblical examples that provide models of how the ministries of God's servants were sustained. Luke 8:1-3 describes the band of disciples traveling with Jesus at one point in His earthly ministry. Besides the twelve disciples, Jesus was also accompanied by a group of women who had been cured of evil spirits and various diseases. Luke describes the ministry of these women to Jesus and the disciples by saying these women were helping to support them out of their own means.

Although Jesus possessed a clearer understanding of God's power and provision than anyone, He apparently viewed the ministry of these women as God's provision for that season of His earthly life. He apparently did not consider His "equality with God something to be grasped" (Philippians 2:6-7), but rather, chose to humble Himself in order to receive financial provision from others. This is a rather bold challenge from the Lord Himself for those of us who are too proud to consider depending upon others for the support of our ministry.

The Biblical account of the missionary journey of Paul provides tremendous insight into the issues of support and communication. Paul's communications with the churches that supported his ministry make up nine of the books in the New Testament. The accounts of Paul's travels and ministry with his missionary companions have served as the first and most significant model for missionary practices throughout the history of the church. Depending upon his circumstances and the leadership of the Holy Spirit, we find Paul sometimes working as a tent-maker to sustain himself in ministry. At other times, he is so intently focused on the ministries of preaching and teaching that he is totally dependent on other believers to provide for his needs.

On occasion, we find Paul working hard to provide not only for his own needs but also for

the needs of his missionary companions. Paul at times chose to not be a burden on the local believers while at the same time serving as a model for them by not sitting idly waiting upon others to care for him. It is from the myriad of examples Paul provides that we can conclude that there is no **one right way** to financially sustain a mission call.

**REFLECT #3**

Read the following New Testament passages. Summarize what you believe to be the teaching of each passage as it relates to the issues of financial support and fund-raising.

Luke 10:1-8

Luke 16:1-13

Acts 18:1-5

Acts 20:33-35

2 Corinthians 8-9

2 Corinthians 12:13-14

Philippians 4:10-20

1 Thessalonians 2:9

2 Thessalonians 3:7-10

1 Timothy 5:17-18

What new insight do you have about this topic after having looked at Scripture?

### THREE MODELS OF FUNDRAISING FOR MISSIONS MINISTRY

In his book, *People-Raising: A Practical Guide to Raising Support*, William P. Dillon utilizes the three characters in Sweeting's article – Hudson Taylor, George Mueller, and D.L. Moody – as three distinct models of fund-raising.

#### **George Mueller: Minimal Information and No Solicitation**

Throughout the biographical information available on George Mueller, we find that Mueller was committed to the practice of revealing his financial and resource needs to God alone. Mueller spent a great deal of time in prayer asking God to provide resources for his orphan-care ministry in Bristol, England.

Stories from his ministry life are filled with miraculous accounts of God providing needs just in the nick of time. Although Mueller did inform the public and his supporters of the progress of his work and offered reports regarding the utilization of contributions, Mueller never directly solicited funds. He trusted in God alone to provide. Dillon summarizes Mueller's fund-raising methods as *minimal information and no solicitation*.

#### **Hudson Taylor: Prayer Information but No Solicitation**

A second model of fundraising discussed by both Dillon and Sweeting is that of Hudson Taylor. Hudson Taylor was the founder of the China Inland Mission. He was a pioneer in the modern mission movement. Hudson Taylor was committed to the mobilization of the church to go beyond missions to coastal areas which had become reasonably accessible to missionary efforts, but to take the gospel into harder to reach areas of the world.

In order for this task to be accomplished, Taylor knew that he must encourage the European and American churches to invest in the sending of missionary forces. In biographical accounts of his life, one finds that Taylor was excellent at providing information in order to encourage the church to give generously to the task of missions. However, like Mueller, he did not rely

upon direct methods of solicitation for funding. William Dillon summarized Taylor's model of fundraising as *prayer and information – but no solicitation*.

### **Dwight L. Moody: Prayer, Information, and Solicitation**

The third model of fundraising presented by Dillon and Sweeting is that of D.L. Moody, a former businessman who became an evangelist.

Moody's methods of fundraising were proactive and aggressive, distributing letters and speaking openly about the financial needs not only of his own ministry but of other worthy causes such as the development of the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA). Moody was respected by other businessmen and philanthropists who supported the causes he promoted. Dillon summarizes Moody's methods of fundraising as **prayer, information, and solicitation**.

## DEVELOPING YOUR PERSONAL FINANCIAL SUPPORT MODEL

As you consider the solicitation of funding, it is wise to seek the guidance of your church and missions leadership to help you shape your methodology. Some churches are open to direct solicitation of funds from church members while others' churches tend to have a more defined method of raising support for those it sends into cross-cultural service.

It will be important for you to harmonize your methods of solicitation with those of your church. However, it is likely that your sphere of support will not only include your own local church but perhaps others who have a heart for you or your work. Some of the types of people you might consider as potential supporters include:

- Family and extended family
- Friends
- Church members from former churches
- Individuals who have taught you
- Individuals who have nurtured/mentored you
- Friends of your parents
- High school, college, and graduate school friends
- Ministry partners who are not raising their own support
- Team members who are tentmakers
- Believers in the region you are serving
- People you work with
- Former and current employers
- People who respect you
- Acquaintances with a heart for your work or people group

Before you begin fundraising, it will be important for you to assess the financial requirements of your mission. Restore Hope offers a list of potential expenses you may need to consider.

There is an abundance of literature and internet resources available on the topic of fundraising. Refer to the section in this unit called "Additional Resources" for a list of highly recommended books that contain effective fundraising tools and methods that may be helpful as you seek to design your own system of support.

**REFLECT #4**

1. With which of these three models of fundraising do you most identify – Mueller, Moody or Taylor? Why?
2. When contrasting your personal feelings about fundraising with the Biblical models you have studied, identify three issues that you need to deal with to align your thinking and behavior with Scripture.
3. Utilizing the list of potential supporters above, make a list of people from each category that will serve as the beginning of your supporters list.

LOGISTICAL SUPPORT

Logistical support is a broad term that describes the types of support services you will need from your home base as well as services you will need in your location of ministry. Examples of logistical support can be as simple as finding someone to park your car in their garage for the next three years or as complex as a contingency plan to assist you in escaping a volatile military conflict or national disaster. There will be multiple individuals, groups and organizations to assist you with the various types of logistical needs you will encounter. No one person can provide all of the logistical needs your ministry will require. Perhaps reliable family members, friends, and advocates will be willing to support you in ways that are practical and possible for them to do so. However, you need to clarify and covenant with your sending church or agency to see that some of the more complex needs are being appropriately addressed. Following is a list of some types of questions you will want to ask yourself:

- Who will manage my personal properties and finances that remain intact at my home base?
- Who will serve as my power of attorney to carry out business transactions in my absence?
- Who is managing the medical and life insurance coverage for my family?
- How am I to receive money at my place of service on a regular basis?
- Who can assist me with technology support
- What is my contingency plan in the case of war, natural disaster or medical emergency?
- Who will maintain my email distribution network in a secure manner?
- How do I obtain a visa?
- Who will file my taxes for me while I am out of the country?
- Who will assist me with strategy development?
- Who will partner with me in developing goals and objectives and hold me accountable?
- Who is my supervisor?
- Who will help me with the logistics of re-entry?

It is good to pause at this point in our discussion to be reminded that you are a part of the body of Christ – your church. It is the church’s responsibility to maintain connection with you regardless of distance. But it is also your responsibility to stay connected to your local church.

While the church should serve to provide you with spiritual support, prayer support, encouragement and pastoral care, you should keep in mind that the church is also placed by God in an authoritative role over you. Your ministry should be carried out in harmony with

the will and desire of your church. Therefore, as you keep logistical issues in mind, seek the advice and counsel of your church leadership in your decision-making.

If your church does not feel qualified to assist you with these types of decisions, you should attempt to include the church in the decision-making processes of your sending agency. You should make it very clear to your sending agency that you are being commissioned and supported by your church and therefore, the church should be included in the significant decisions between you and your agency. Any agency that does not allow your church input and information about your ministry is not living out the Biblical model of the Body of Christ as described in I Corinthians 12.

Mike Stroope, Professor of Christian Witness at Truett Seminary once said to a group of students, “We do not cut off our thumb and ship it away.” To be true to God’s intention for the church, we should strive to maintain our connectedness. Connectedness is a two-way street.

With the image of the Body of Christ in your mind, it is also important for you to connect to the body of Christ in the area you will be working. You are not a spiritual Lone Ranger. God is working in the world and likely has already planted other believers in the area where you will be working. It will be important for you to scout your people and region to see what God is already doing there. Is there a functioning mission team already working in this area? How do you partner with them? They will likely be able to assist you with many of your logistical issues as well as provide you with a Christian community from which you may receive encouragement and support. Conversation with people who are already working on the field can answer many of the questions you may have at this point in your ministry. If possible, take a leader from your church with you to investigate your people and place of service prior to your commissioning.

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*YOUR MINISTRY SHOULD BE CARRIED  
OUT IN HARMONY WITH THE WILL  
AND DESIRE OF YOUR CHURCH.*

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There are many churches that do not understand the needs of or the responsibility of supporting their missionaries on the field. Be patient with your church. Rather than being angry at your church or defecting from your church, try to bring your church along with you as you grow through this preparation process. Beginning with a core group of advocates, help them to understand the roles they can play in supporting you in your cross-cultural ministry.

**REFLECT #5**

Read I Corinthians 12:12-26 and answer the following questions:

1. Is your calling as a cross-cultural witness superior to the callings of others in your church body? Why?
2. How can the other parts of your body join you in your call to reach unreached people?
3. Assuming that your church has little or no experience in providing a support base for missionaries, identify 5 proactive steps you can take to encourage your church to join you in your calling.
4. Based upon the Scriptures you have read, what role do you have in continuing to encourage and support the other ministries of your church body? List 5 actions you can take to be a support and encouragement to those who remain in your local congregation.
5. Review the questions posed in the first paragraph of this section and begin identifying by name the individuals or groups who can play these logistical support roles.

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### COMMUNICATION SUPPORT

George Bernard Shaw once said, “The single biggest problem in communication is the illusion that it has taken place.” The task of maintaining communication with your support system will be one of the un-ending functions of your cross-cultural ministry role. Some people carry out this task with the mastery of an artist. Others tend to get so absorbed in that which is local and immediate that they struggle to keep others involved in the process and progress of their life. However, the breadth and strength of your support base will largely depend on your ability to provide others with adequate information and vision.

Communication is a broad subject that requires some thought and intentionality. The task of communication is both functional and relational. Organizing your recipient communities by function will help you to maintain healthy communities of support. Following are some general categories of communities you will be maintaining communication with:

- People who play an authoritative role in your ministry.
- People who want to know the little details of your everyday life.
- People who are committed to pray for your ministry and your people group.
- People who are your financial supporters.
- People who are partnered with you in strategic decision-making.
- People who are your advocates.
- People on your ministry team.
- People who are your emergency response system.

Following are some facts regarding your communication network that will be beneficial to remember:

**There is some communication that is not appropriate to be shared with all of your support communities.**

While your parents or siblings might be interested in the frequency of your child’s potty-training success or the color of the bedspread in your spare room, this is not information that others will necessarily need to know. On the other hand, a significant team conflict on the field is a “must share” with those who are serving in roles of authority and strategic thinking for your team, while it would be inappropriate to share with the church at large, particularly if your other team members are also a part of your home church. You will maintain relationships with various communities of people. All of them will play a support role in your life. However, they are not necessarily congruent in nature. It is important to determine the appropriate recipients of your various types of communication.

**It is necessary to prioritize the order in which others receive your communication.**

A Minister of Missions from a church in our network described some of his church’s challenges in the area of communication. It seems that appropriate protocol had not been clearly defined with the missionaries the church placed on the field. He described the frustration of receiving news about strategic changes that were taking place on the field without the input or agreement of the church’s mission leadership. Word of these changes came from church members who received email communication about the team’s decision to divide the team and relocate a portion of the team into another region which the church

had previously decided was not an area of focus. Protocol should be defined clearly with your authority sources prior to your departure for the field.

**Communication should be delivered in consumable portions.**

If you are the current recipient of numerous newsletters from missionaries on the field, then you are likely aware of the myriad of communication forms and lengths. There are some newsletters from the field that are frequent, consolidated and consumable. There are others who send occasional lengthy letters that require substantial reading time. For some, this cannot be avoided as access to communication methods is infrequent or unreliable. While your forms of communication should reflect your thoughts and personality, thoughtful and concise communication will have greater impact than lengthy ramblings.

**There is no replacement for communication in maintaining your support structures.**

Regular informative communication is essential to keep people connected to and supportive of the work you will be doing.

Although it may seem a bit trite or unnecessary for you to discuss issues of communication with your support team prior to your departure, you will find that clarification of communication issues will prevent much confusion, hurt feelings and loss of interest. Additionally, the clarification of lines of communication could even save your life or the life of your family in an emergency situation.

**Security issues should be considered as you develop your communication systems.**

In an age of complex technology, we cannot assume that others are unable to view information which we send via electronic means. Nor can you trust that everyone who reads your communications will approve of your work and efforts among the people you serve even in areas that seem religiously or politically benign. If you consider yourself *technologically impaired*, not possessing an affinity for understanding the complexities of electronic communication, seek the advice of a missionary support service like Greater Good Global Support Services in developing a secure communication system.

**REFLECT #6**

The chart below contains a list of various types of communication you will be sending while on your field of service. It also contains a list of potential recipients of communication.

1. Match each type of communication with its appropriate recipient/recipients. There may be more than one recipient for each. Some recipients may not apply in your scenario.
2. Prioritize the recipients of each item based upon the order in which your communication should be received.
3. Discuss this with your community group at your next meeting.
4. Determine a time to discuss this issue with those who are in roles of authority within your ministry.

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Type of Recipient	Type of Communication
Sending Council/Elders	Prayer requests for your ministry
Family/Close Friends	Financial report for your ministry
Advocates	Information about a conflict on your team
Church at large	Praises about what God is doing among your people
Financial Supporters	Information about financial need/crisis
Restore Hope or Board/Agency	Problem you are experiencing with your church/Sending Council
Pastor	Security-sensitive information containing names, locations, developments, or changes
Support Services Company	Personal letter/emails
Regional Catalyst	Requests for strategic guidance
Field Supervisor	Educational information about your people group
All the above	Health issues
	Information about government or opposition group
	Developments that affect you/your mission
	Information about spiritual warfare/fears
	Quarterly Goals/Objectives Reports
	Business as it relates to your work

### MISSION SUPPORT MODELS FROM THE REAL WORLD

Following are three models of mission support that are real and current. These “out of the box” models are proving effective in taking the gospel to unreached people of our world. Names have been changed for security purposes.

#### **Tentmaking for Team**

Dave pastors a church in a large urban city in the United States. Because both of his parents were Asian by birth, Dave considers himself a third culture product – genetically Asian, culturally Asian/American and living in American culture. He is one of many third culture young professionals in his city. Most of his congregation is under age forty, third culture, professional people. Dave and his congregation have a heart for two worlds – the lost community that surrounds their church and the masses of unreached peoples in the lands of their ancestry. Dave has committed himself to reach both with the gospel of Christ’s love.

Considering the corporate giftedness of his church, Dave’s strategic model of sending missionaries is compatible with the attitude of his congregation. Possessing an affinity for teamwork and community, this highly-educated congregation of young professionals possesses many highly marketable skills in the areas of medicine, business, marketing, public relations, education, etc. With an emphasis on team-development and team-sending, each mission team sent out from Dave’s church is made up of multiple types of people. There are certain individuals on each team who are solely committed to discipleship and church-

planting, but there are others whose giftedness lies in the area of generating income. Each mission team has prescribed money-makers who understand their calling to be the generation of income to sustain the team. Some team members are solely committed to non-income-producing endeavors.

Dave describes the process this way:

When a team senses that God is calling them to a particular area, we first send out our money-makers. They start researching on the internet for job opportunities in the area we are targeting or begin a process of establishing a business. They are typically the first people on the field, finding employment and constructing a stable financial and residential base for the others who will follow.

All of the financial and support needs of the team are not typically met through the money-makers. However, this model of tent-making for teams provides the means for Dave's church to broaden their missional scope while allowing people in his congregation to work out of their area of giftedness.

### **Why I'm Not a Missionary**

Jamie works as a professor at a university in a country with a predominantly Islamic population. She receives no funding from her home church but maintains other systems of support such as advocacy, prayer, strategic guidance, logistical assistance, re-entry support, and accountability. Jamie tells her own story as follows:

In the nineteenth century, some Chinese leaders were suspicious of missionaries, believing they were involved in the opium trade. Whether fact or fiction, this perception led to the doors of China slamming shut. Today, although the Chinese government has allowed churches to be reopened and 40 million Bibles to be published, it still denies entrance to those who call themselves missionaries.

The mission movement made great strides in 19th and 20th centuries, laying the groundwork for Scripture to be translated into many tongues and for a movement of the Spirit to transform peoples of many cultures. Health conditions improved. Living conditions improved. People from every continent embraced the Living Word. Unfortunately, in many places, Western culture was not clearly differentiated from Christianity. Because of this, along with the rise of patriotism, nationalism and a desire to assert their own cultural identity, many governments see Christian missionaries as a threat to the survival of their cultures and deny entrance to those who call themselves missionaries.

In the latter part of the 20th century, governments began to oppose missionaries at the very core of who they are. Some of these governments made proselytizing illegal, especially for Christians, regardless of their citizenship. Other governments oppose missionaries precisely because of their identity in Christ. Thus, a large proportion of governments across Asia deny entrance to those who call themselves missionaries.

Christ's directive to the Church is clear: "Go into all the world and proclaim the gospel to the whole creation." (Mark 16:15). Some mission organizations have countered the edicts of non-sympathetic governments by changing the words they use. They refer to their personnel in much the same way that international business agencies refer to their employees: agents,

representatives, or field personnel. Since governments were not opposed to educators, medical personnel, or relief workers helping the country, some organizations sent teachers, doctors, nurses, and engineers to the field.

To some extent, these measures have been successful. Christian doctors, nurses, teachers, businessmen, engineers, and other field personnel were allowed entrance into countries that denied entrance to missionaries. However, in order to protect such field personnel, the sending organizations have to cover any paper trails that financially connects them with those on the field. They purge their names from the media (devotionals, newspapers, and the internet) that reminds supporters of the organization to pray for them. If a disgruntled official in any of the host countries discovered the Christian worker was tied to a mission organization, the Christian would be expelled.

What if there were no paper trail? If Christian workers were hired and fully supported by institutions or businesses in the host country, there would be no financial connections to hide from discovery. If friends and ministers, sensitive to the laws of the host country, upheld their responsibility to encourage and pray for each other as Christian workers should, could a disgruntled official oppose anything more than the worker's Christian integrity?

Though Christ's directive is often the focal passage in commissioning services organized by missionary sending agencies, mission agencies and the missionaries they send do not have exclusive rights to the verse. The directive was first addressed to the eleven disciples. Carrying out the commission to "preach the gospel to all creation" is the right and responsibility of all those who believe Jesus' message.

In carrying out Christ's commission of all disciples, it does not really matter whether we are called field representative, teacher, doctor, engineer, or even tourist. It does not matter that we give up being called missionary; after all, it is not a biblical title. The important point is (and this is quite biblical) it is the root meaning of *ekklesia*, the Greek word for church, which we are all called.

### **Business as Mission**

Aimee began to sense the call of God to serve cross-culturally while doing her university studies. She took several mission trips and began personal study to prepare for a life of cross-cultural service. As her focus began to be more defined by God, she understood that He was calling her to serve among a Muslim population. She spent a summer after her sophomore year teaching ESL (English as a Second Language) in a Muslim country. The following summer, she went with a group of students from her university on a mission trip to another Muslim area. It was the people of this region that grasped her heart. Seeking the counsel of her church leadership and spiritual mentors, she determined to look for a position of service among this population. Aimee completed several months of church-based training. During this time, she also went through a series of assessments that were required by her church. The development of her advocacy and financial support systems were an important part of her preparation.

Aimee's church, through contacts from Restore Hope, connected her to a catalyst whose job was to assist Christian workers in the remote area of the world where Aimee wanted to serve. Because he was familiar with the work of God in the region and had a relationship with many of the Christian people and organizations partnering in that area, he was able to help her connect to an existing network to find a place of service among the unreached population

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she loved. In partnership with an NGO (Non-governmental Organization) she would work for and her Church Sending Council, Aimee developed her goals and objectives in harmony with the overall missional objectives of her church. Working closely with her partners on the field and the Council, she developed a financial plan that would be suitable for the work she was to accomplish. Her church asked her to raise a certain percentage of her funds from outside sources. The church committed to complete the additional required funds.

Once she had completed all of her church's requirements, Aimee was commissioned and sent to her place of service. Aimee spent her first year acquiring language, working for an NGO and refining her sense of call. Maintaining strong communication and strategic guidance from her church, Aimee accepted an offer to join an existing mission effort in the region in her second year of service. Because the government of this region is not open to missionary presence, a group of young believing businessmen started an ethno-tourism business as an entry point into culture. The tourism business Aimee worked for is a legitimate business that stimulates economic development for the people in that area. It is open to any tourist or group who desires an educational island adventure. However, certain groups of tourists who utilize the business have been training in the area of Christian evangelism to Muslims. Local believers are hired as translators to go out with these teams to develop relationships with island people and share their faith as opportunity arises.

Aimee is accountable on a daily basis to the business by which she is employed. She has the community and accountability of other partners and the workers in her area. But Aimee strives to maintain a vital connection to her church body and to incorporate them as possible into her work on the field. Many of her stateside church members have gone through training in order to be prepared to share their faith with Muslims. They are one of multiple believing tour groups who take ethno-tours with her business organization.

### REFLECT #7

1. What do you view as the strengths and/or weaknesses of Dave's Tentmaking for Team sending model? What questions if any do you have about the sustainability of this model? Identify potential problems that might arise for Dave's team.
2. Could you picture yourself serving on a team from Dave's church? Why or why not?
3. Would you classify tent-making as a means to do mission or a mission in itself? Why?
4. Since Jamie is financially self-supporting, what other types of support systems should she have in place?
5. Do you think it is important for Jamie to view her home church as authoritative in her life since she is not financially dependent upon it for support? Why or why not?
6. Jamie feels an apparent need to be true to her identity as a professor and not be viewed as a missionary in disguise. How will you resolve any dissonance you might feel between your purposes and your official entry status?
7. Aimee is employed by an ethno-tourist business. What do you view as the strengths and/or weaknesses of this Business as Mission sending model?
8. What are some attitude issues that could arise for Aimee in terms of her relationship to her own church body as her business continues to prosper financially?

## CLARIFYING SUPPORT FROM YOUR CHURCH

God is a creative God. He has designed as many ways to take the gospel to the nations as He has people to deliver it. For some who are called this will mean taking a job or attending school in another culture as an entry point for the gospel. For others, it may mean exercising entrepreneurial skills and starting a business in another culture. The range of entry points into

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culture can range from very traditional forms of missionary activity to forms that have never been done before. The common denominator in all of these forms of mission is the calling from God to *live Christ* in whatever culture He places you. But God does not call you to go alone. Upon the Rock, Christ has built His church so that even the gates of hell will not prevail against it. You are a part of this powerful Kingdom force – the Church. The authority of Christ rests upon the church to represent Him throughout the world. As a part of the church, you are a *royal ambassador*. You are a *minister of reconciliation*. The tasks of knowing Him and representing Him to the world are the highest of all purposes.

Not only has God chosen you for this purpose, He has also chosen others to join with you as a support system for your ministry. The process of identifying and inviting these individuals into your work begins long before your departure for the field. During your period of preparation, begin to nurture the relationships that will constitute your support structures. From your first point of contact with these individuals, begin to invite them into a mutual investment in your Kingdom work.

The forms of communication that you will utilize on the field should emerge during this preparation phase. It is not too early to begin relating to your financial and prayer supporters through a regular newsletter. Journeying with you through your preparation and departure phases will give them a strong sense of involvement in your ministry. You will have established a familial means of relating that will provide for a strong bond and commitment to prayer once you are on the field.

It is also never too early to begin strategic development with those in your church and on the field who will play strategic partnership roles in your life. Making decisions in community with your ministry partners is wise. There is wisdom in an abundance of counselors. As people assist you in your decision-making, the stronger the sense of responsibility they will have for seeing that your mission is accomplished. You cannot overestimate the importance of this community. You will mutually hold one another accountable for the implementing of God's revealed will.

Ecclesiastes 4:12 says a *cord of three strands is not easily broken*. The implication of this passage is that there is strength in partnership. One or two people functioning alone, regardless of how called they feel, will be vulnerable in the face of certain adversity, cultural and spiritual challenge. God has given you partners. Now is the time to begin praying for God to reveal this support system to you. He desires for you to be successful as you accomplish His will.

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## SELF-AWARENESS, SURVIVAL, AND SOLUTION

You were intended by God to live in community. He has surrounded you with people whom He has chosen to join with you in your cross-cultural calling. Because He never calls us to do anything He is not going to provide for, He will continue to bring support systems into your life. Your job is to:

- Prayerfully identify those support systems
- Invite them into partnership with you

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- Do your part in maintaining these supportive relationships, particularly through providing adequate communication.

### Imagine

Imagine that God is sending you on a journey by boat to an inhabited island that has never been explored by anyone else. You can choose 5 godly people you already know personally to go with you. Who would you take in your boat and why?

### Lifestyle

Communication that leads to healthy support systems doesn't emerge once you are on the field. It begins now. You should begin the process of communicating with those who will later be your supporters on the field. Prayerfully select names that you could place in the categories below. You may use the same name in more than one category.

- A **lead advocate** to be your primary prayer supporter and encourager. This person would be willing to champion your cause.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Three additional **advocates** within your church that will be a part of your advocacy team to provide moral support, prayer support and encouragement.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

- As you are being sent out by your church it will be important to have a clear understanding of your church's position on fundraising. Identify the person in your church's missions leadership whom you will contact for discussions about this matter.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

- Make an appointment with someone in your church's missions leadership to discuss the role of your church in logistical support. The person you will contact:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

- Make an appointment with someone in your church's communication area to discuss the development of a newsletter format for your future use. The person you will contact:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

### Formation

Regardless of how many supporters you have, it is important to remember that the true source

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of all provision is from your heavenly Father. Read the following passages on God's provision and care. Spend some time reflecting on His character. Express your thankfulness to Him.

- Matthew 6:25-34
- Ephesians 3:14-21
- Psalm 23
- 2 Corinthians 9:8-11

### Stretch Life on Life

The process of developing a mission support system is a relational process. You will need to be intentional about sharing your story, your call and your vision for your people with others.

William P. Dillon says the following in *People Raising*:

*People give to people.  
People give to people they know.  
People give to people they know and trust.  
People give to people they know, trust and care for.*

Begin developing the following lists of names of potential supporters:

- People Who Care for Me
- People Who Trust Me
- People Who Know Me
- People Who Believe in My Cause

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## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES FOR *SUPPORT AND COMMUNICATION*

For various views on the issues of support and fundraising as well as practical suggestion and helps see the following recommended readings and resources:

Shadrach, Steve. *The God Ask*. Fayetteville, AR: CMM Press, 2013.

The *God Ask* is the primary, and first, resource we could recommend to anyone who is support raising. It is a must read for anyone raising support. We also highly recommend future cross-cultural workers to attend their Support Raising Bootcamp. More information can be found at <https://supportraisingsolutions.org/>.

Dillon, William P. *People Raising: A Practical Guide to Raising Support*. Chicago: Moody Press, 1993 (<http://www.peopleraising.com>).

This book is frequently referred to as a primer for raising personal support. It is a very practical book that is foundational in understanding the issues and essentials of a mission support system.

Barnett, Betty J. *Friend Raising: Building a Missionary Support Team*. YWAM, 2003.

This book focuses on the practical pillars of lasting support raising: intimacy in

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relationships, interdependence, mutual love, and sharing, bearing one another's burdens, generosity, communication, and prayer with promises. In a world swamped by fund-raising hype and gimmicks, Betty Barnett presents a refreshing biblical alternative based on relationship.

Morton, Scott. *Funding Your Ministry*. Colorado Springs: NavPress, 2001.

Though filled with humor and fun, this book seriously addresses the issue of raising support through the development of prayer and financial supporters. This book is highly recommended by numerous mission organizations including Navigators and Frontiers.

Sommer, Pete. *Getting Sent: Relational Approach to Support Raising*. Madison, WI: InterVarsity Christian Fellowship/USA, 1999.

A very practical book on support raising. Gives step by step processes for building a support team.

Pirola, Neal. *Serving as Senders: How to Care for Your Missionaries While They are Preparing to Go, While They are on the Field, When They Return Home*. San Diego: Emmaus Road International, 1991.

This book is written to the sending church as an educational manual for missionary care. However, a read of this book will help those in cross-cultural preparation to explore the essential systems of support that are foundational for a strong and healthy cross-cultural ministry.

Jordan, Peter. *Re-Entry: Making the Transition from Missions to Life at Home*. Seattle: YWAM Publishing, 1992.

This book provides advice about preparing yourself and your family for re-entry beginning from the point in time prior to your departure from the field to the point of being re-assimilated into your home culture. It addresses re-entry issues from spiritual, social, psychological and practical perspectives.

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## AUTHOR

**Cindy Wiles** is executive director of Restore Hope. She has been personally invested in global ministries for nearly three decades while serving alongside her pastor husband Dennis, who is currently pastor of First Baptist Church, Arlington, Texas. Cindy's driving passion is to see local churches fulfill their roles as ministers of reconciliation to a lost world.

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