



Ministry of Partner
Development

10 Essential Attitudes of a Biblical Support-Raiser

10 ESSENTIAL ATTITUDES

An introduction

You may know a few support-raising techniques or a couple of buzzwords - and they may even work. But that doesn't mean you're doing biblical fundraising. Just as effective evangelism is more than tricky questions and nifty illustrations, so is biblical support-raising more than cliches, like "Give until it hurts" or "I'm raising friends, not funds."

Many salespeople going into ministry say, "Support-raising will be easy for me because I'm good at sales." But they have the same struggles as others. **Sales and support-raising are *not* the same.**

Before you step into one more living room or church meeting hall, check your attitudes. **There are 10 crucial attitudes (or values) we must bring into our support-raising we if intend to be biblical.** Check to see which ones are yours already and which you need to shore up.

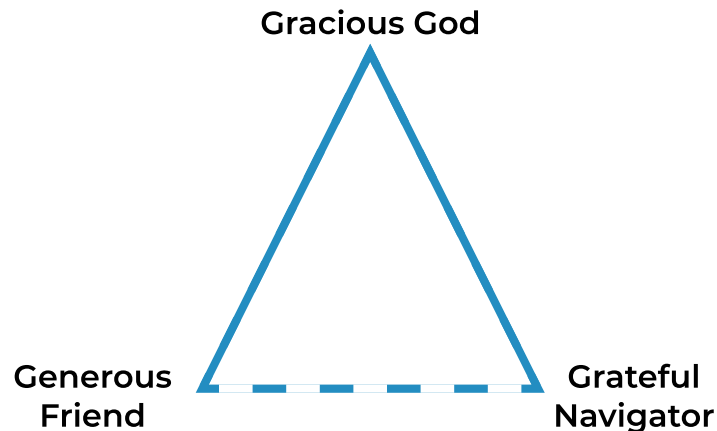
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10 ESSENTIAL ATTITUDES

#1: God is the source

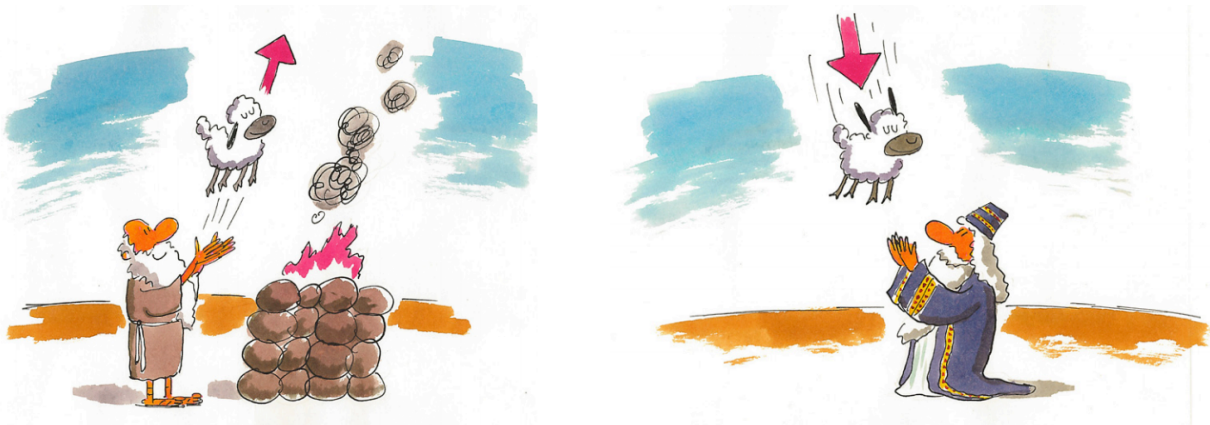
Be clear and convinced about biblical giving and receiving. Biblical giving means a ministry partner gives to God - vertically. Since ministry partners give to God, missionaries receive from God - vertically.



If you view ministry partners as your source of funding, you have a horizontal view. That's merely worldly charity. Furthermore, you alternately may feel deserving or undeserving on ministry partner gifts. Are you trying to earn income from your ministry partners? This produces pride or resentment depending on their response. Are you dependent on human effort or slick letters and presentations? Or are you dependent on the Lord, looking to Him as the source of your funding?

Key Verses

- Numbers 18:24
- 1 Chronicles 29:12
- Philippians 4:18,10
- 2 Corinthians 8:3-5



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#2: Prayer demonstrates dependence on God as the source

We should pray about our financial support every day. Ask the Lord specifically to supply our needs. Jesus taught us to pray, "Give us this day our daily bread" (Mt. 6:11). This attitude of humble trust in God keeps our focus on Him and His provision, not our efforts. It also reminds us that only God can move the heart of a prospective ministry partner to give. Thanksgiving to God and gratefulness to our ministry partners are evidences of prayerful dependence.



Key Verses

- Matthew 6:11, 7:7-11
- Psalm 55:1, 86:6
- Luke 18:1
- Philippians 4:6,7

"From beginning to end, fundraising as ministry is grounded in prayer and undertaken in gratitude."

- Henri Nouwen, *The Spirituality of Fundraising*, p. 33

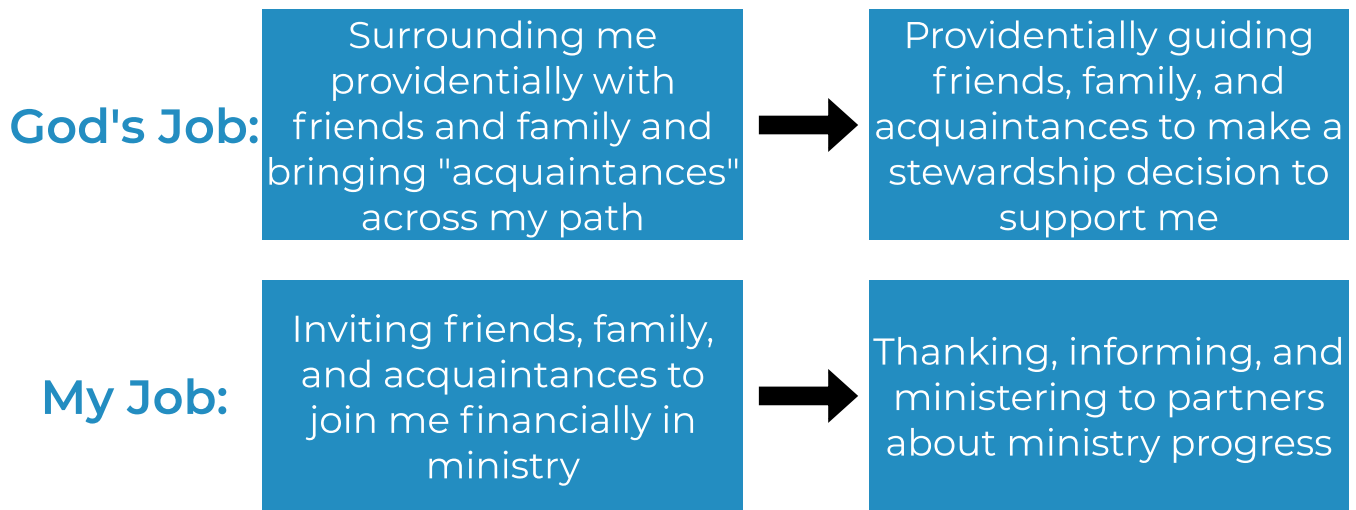


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#3: Be clear on your job versus God's job.

Clearly define your job and God's role in funding your ministry. Yes, there is work you need to do: making calls, setting appointments, writing thank-you notes, keeping up to date on contact information, sending newsletters. Do these tasks with faith and professionalism.

However, when you try to do God's job in fundraising, you will be frustrated. He is the One who brings friends and acquaintances across your path, who gives you courage and grace to ask a skeptical friend to give, who rewards your faith with "manna." Who can turn a heart to give, to become interested and invested in the Great Commission and your particular part in it except Almighty God?! Leave these cares to the providential leading and work of the One who is committed to provide for you.



Key Verses

- Deuteronomy 8:16
- Matthew 6:11
- Matthew 6:31-34

"God's 'miraculous' provision comes when He does His part and you do yours."

- Scott Morton, *Funding Your Ministry*, p. 18



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#4: The Bible is the standard for support-raising practices

Flagrant abuses of fundraising principles exist today in many organizations, including ministries. Our task is not simply to raise our support but to do it in a biblical, God-honoring manner because we represent the King. We must not allow manipulation to enter our support-raising appeals. Be honest with your ministry partners about your goals, and honor God in the way you present your appeal.

We all come into the support-raising process with family values, opinions, and personal convictions concerning money. Studying what the Bible says about money or raising financial support ensures a sound biblical base to help you evaluate support-raising practices from God's perspective.

Key Verses

- 2 Corinthians 4:2
- 1 Corinthians 2:4,5
- Ezra 7:10

"Just because a fundraising tactic works doesn't make it right."

- Rod Sargent (1923-1987), former Director of Development and Communications, The Navigators



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#5: Biblical support-raising is a spiritual ministry

It's tempting to separate life into sacred and secular activities. Bible study, prayer, conferences, and worship usually qualify for "sacred" ministry activities. Budgeting, paying bills, and the dreaded support-raising get relegated to "secular work." Moses carefully received God's detailed instructions for the Tabernacle, then invited the people to give. And give they did, in abundance! Paul collected contributions for the saints in Jerusalem; he also received the personal gifts from the Philippians church with gladness, blessing them for their concern and generosity.

A financial appeal gives people an opportunity to demonstrate their concern and invites them into the "gracious work" of giving.

Raising support also opens doors to further ministry. A personal appeal may take 20 minutes, but it gives an entrance into other areas of relationship, with mutual encouragement as the result.



Key Verses

- Exodus 25:1-40, 35:21
- 2 Corinthians 8:6-7,19
- Philippians 4:10



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#6: Receiving support is a biblical "right" but not a demand

If God is the source of all, and prayer demonstrates our dependence on Him for our funding, then a pushy attitude is totally out of the question! An *invitation* for support leaves the results in God's hands and leaves your reputation blameless. Strong-arm tactics are not biblical and do not honor God or our giving friends.

Key Verses

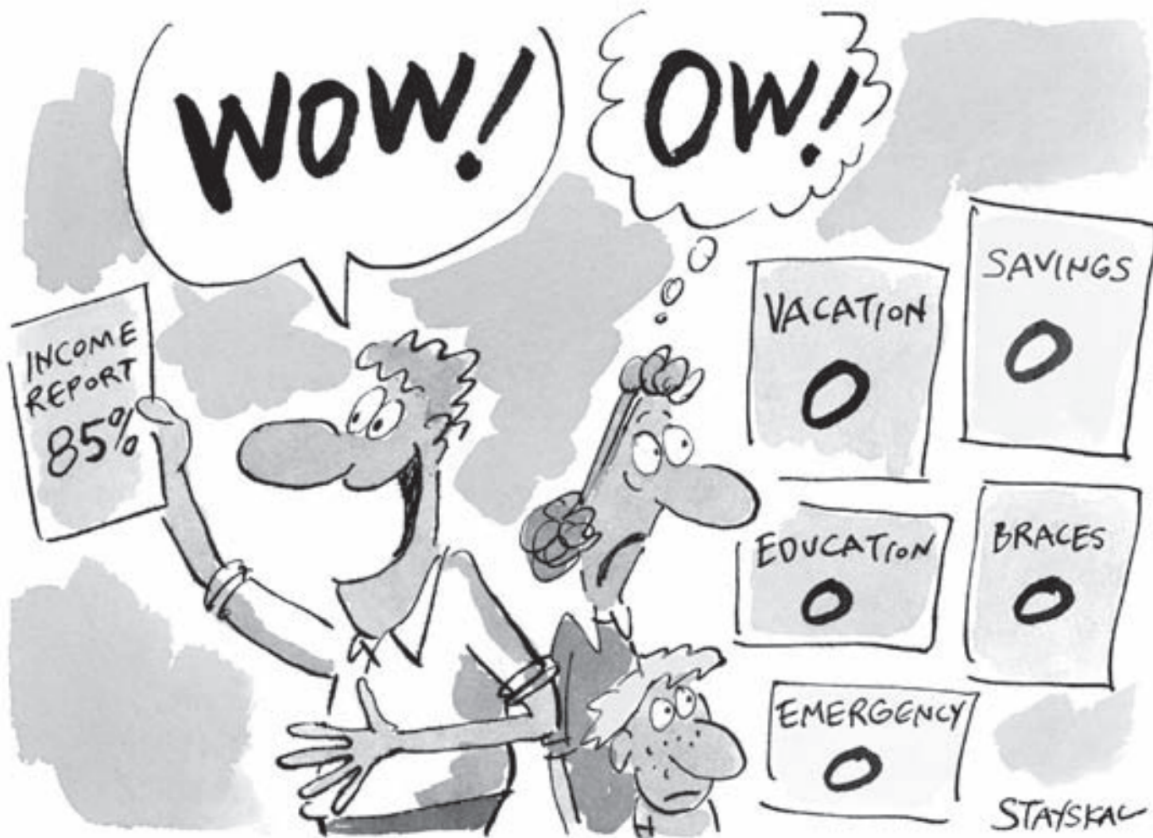
- 1 Corinthians 9:9-15
- 1 Timothy 5:17-18
- Exodus 36:3-6
- Deuteronomy 16:17
- Philemon 14



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#7: Expect to raise 100% of your approved budget

Many cultures support the mentality that missionaries are supposed to be poor - "That's part of their calling. After all, they are in the ministry." But there are enough resources in God's world to fully supply your prayed-over annual budget if God has truly called you. If you don't believe every dollar on your funding goal ought to be there, you will not seriously try to raise it. Being realistic about your household and ministry expenses and setting goals for savings and emergencies are first steps toward biblical stewardship. Don't just "get by" on only 75% of your budget. Work at your funding goals, and believe God for 100% and nothing less!



Key Verses

- 1 Timothy 6:17
- Luke 10:7
- Proverbs 30:24,25
- Ecclesiastes 9:10



#8: Poor talk dishonors God

Poor talk is a mentality of wishing there were more money, usually expressed in complaining, hinting, or whining. These expressions, when publicly made, can be considered manipulative if your goal is sympathy leading to support. Depend on God who "owns the cattle on a thousand hills." Approach your ministry partners with honesty and integrity, not hinting at your financial needs. Be graciously direct!



Key Verses

- Philippians 4:11-13
- Hebrews 13:5
- 1 Timothy 6:6-8
- Psalm 24:3,4
- Proverbs 16:8
- Galatians 5:26



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#9: Focus on the giver, not the money

Though grateful for the generous gift from the Philippians church, Paul was not preoccupied with their money but with their spiritual progress. Ministry partners are not ATM's! They have needs, too. They must be treated with dignity and respect - not just so they will keep giving but because they are worthy of it as fellow pilgrims.

Listen to the Holy Spirit's leading as you approach prospective ministry partners. Is this a time for relationship building or for financial appeal? If it is a ripe time for an invitation, don't hint; be clear about why you want to meet, and ask them to consider investing in what God is doing through your life.

Key Verses

- Philippians 2:3,4, 4:17
- Proverbs 19:6
- Colossians 1:3
- 2 Corinthians 9:11



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#10: Emphasize the greatness of your vision, not the greatness of your need

Most people want to give to a ministry that is going somewhere. It doesn't have to be big or spectacular or even humanly successful, but it does need to have God's fingerprints all over it. Invite people to give to God's most exciting work: your ministry!

Before you appeal for support, ask yourself three questions: (1) What is my "dazzling vision"? (2) Am I genuinely excited about it? (3) How can I articulate it in an interesting and compelling way?

Use Romans 15:20-24 as your model. Paul's vision was motivated by a promise from God and charged with passion. Your enthusiasm for your ministry will inspire prospective ministry partners to want to become involved with you and your vision.



Key Verses

- Romans 1:1, 10:1, 15:20,-24
- Acts 20:18-21
- 1 Corinthians 9:16
- Colossians 1:28,29

"Asking people for money is giving them the opportunity to put their resources at the disposal of the kingdom."

- Henri Nouwen, *The Spirituality of Fundraising*, p. 25



Adopting these 10 crucial attitudes will relieve support-raising pressure. Most missionaries who struggle emotionally with raising support do so not because of their people skills or technique, but because of unresolved issues of attitude. Review these attitudes now; check one or two about which you feel the Lord is speaking to you. Bring it to Him in your prayer time for the next few days.

Attitudes to Check:

1. Do I consider God the source, or am I trying to "solicit" horizontally?
2. Do I pray specifically every day about my funding, or am I counting on my own efforts as revealed by my lack of prayer?
3. Am I clear and confident about doing "my job," or am I hoping God will do it for me?
4. Is the Bible my standard for fundraising behavior, or am I looking to "what works"?
5. Do I believe fundraising can be a spiritual ministry, or do I consider it a worldly activity I've got to do?
6. Do I believe I have a "right" to be supported, or do I abuse my right by being "pushy"?
7. Do I expect to raise 100 percent of my budget, or am I merely trying to "get by"?
8. Do I honestly explain my finances, or do I "talk poor" or whine about money?
9. Is my focus on the givers and their needs, or am I more interested in having my own needs met?
10. Do I radiate dazzling vision from God with a biblical promise underlying it, or am I just presenting my needs?



