

*Biblically
Funding the Work
of God*



*Fund-raising is a very rich
and beautiful activity.
It is a confident, joyful, and hope-
filled expression of ministry.
In ministering to each other,
each from the riches that he or she
possesses, we work together for the
full coming of God's Kingdom.*

Biblically Funding the Work of God

Overview

Developing ministry partners (what has traditionally been called fundraising) is an adventure—and an opportunity to learn to trust God. God calls us to serve Him in vocational ministry, then our sending agency requires us to build a team of financial partners to join us in this ministry! Building this team requires hard work, persistence, courage, and skills. Ministry partner development (MPD) is full of surprises and blessings and occasionally disappointment. A deep conviction that MPD is biblical will encourage any missionary to believe that God will provide as he or she steps out in faith.

5 Part 1: God Is the Source of All

Estimated time to complete: 2 – 3 hours

Everything we have to give and all we receive ultimately comes from God. Grasping this essential principle puts ministry partner development in perspective. God is the source of all provision for both the giver and the receiver. This section explores two passages: David preparing to construct the temple and the Apostle Paul teaching about giving.

13 Part 2: Clarifying Your Calling

Estimated time to complete: 2 hours

A clear calling often helps a missionary find the courage to raise financial support. In this section, you will review how God called you to minister.

19 Part 3: Biblical Examples of Funding

Estimated time to complete: 3 hours

Accounts of “fund development” from both the Old and New Testament are crucial to assure missionaries that raising financial support is biblical. This section highlights six examples.

25 Part 4: Giving Partners

Estimated time to complete: 3 hours

God usually provides for our needs through other people. In this section, you will analyze several “donors” God used to meet the needs of His people and explore what motivated the people to give.

33 Part 5: Finding the Courage to Raise Support

Estimated time to complete: 2 hours

Developing ministry partners is a process in our spiritual formation that God may use to bring emotional issues, doubts, and fears to the surface to build our courage and our trust in Him.

39 Part 6: Conclusions and Applications

Estimated time to complete: 2 hours

One way to apply MPD principles is by working out biblical answers to tough, real-life issues. In this section you will think through some questions that many missionaries have been asked.

Design of This Study

The Bible passages included in this study are from the New International Version (NIV). If you prefer another version, simply use the study ideas with your own Bible. The variety of study methods and activities are designed to appeal to a wide range of learners. Questions intentionally focus on both the *head* (principles, truths, observations) and the *heart* (feelings, emotions, passions, fears, desires). We hope this study will help you form strong biblical convictions about raising financial support and ministry partner development.

The study methods include:

- Observation questions (“Observe”)
- Study and opinion questions (“Reflect”)
- Feeling questions (“Explore Feelings”)
- Summary questions and community activities (“Conclude”)
- The use of color to organize ideas
- Charts
- Scripture memory
- Cartoons

Throughout the study, you will notice sidebars to enhance your understanding of a passage. Be sure to add your own insights from your personal study as well.

This edition of this Bible study was compiled by Becky Brodin and Judy Gomoll with help from the Staff Funding Team of The Navigators, including Kevin DiFelice, Sydne Ebel, Molly Gilberts, and Scott Morton. The “Explore Feelings” section in each part draws extensively from a workshop called “Overcoming Emotional Barriers in Fundraising from the Scriptures” presented in February 2009 by Donna Wilson of InterVarsity Christian Fellowship (used by permission).

We are indebted to Alma Morton who asked her husband, Scott, “Are you going to support this family or not?” Then we are indebted to Scott who listened to Alma and found out for himself that ministry partner development is indeed biblical. Scott, your commitment to study and apply what you learn to your life has resulted in blessing for all of us. Thank you.

Part 1: God Is the Source of All

God is the source of all. Everything we have comes from God. All we give comes from God, too. This fundamental principle forms the basis for understanding ministry partner development. A missionary's financial support comes from God usually through giving partners. Look at this principle through the experience of King David in the Old Testament and from the teachings of the Apostle Paul in the New Testament.

You'll read the following Scripture passages then interact with them in the "Observe," "Reflect," "Explore Feelings," and "Conclude" sections that follow.

- 1 Chronicles 29:1-20
- 2 Corinthians 9:5-15

Study idea: Highlight or underline what **God provides** in one color, what the **donor gives** in another color, and what the **recipient receives** in a third color.

1 Chronicles 29:1-20

DAVID & THE TEMPLE

¹Then King David said to the whole assembly: "My son Solomon, the one whom God has chosen, is young and inexperienced. The task is great, because this palatial structure is not for man but for the LORD God. ²With all my resources I have provided for the temple of my God—gold for the gold work, silver for the silver, bronze for the bronze, iron for the iron and wood for the wood, as well as onyx for the settings, turquoise, stones of various colors, and all kinds of fine stone and marble—all of these in large quantities. ³Besides, in my devotion to the temple of my God I now give my personal treasures of gold and silver for the temple of my God, over and above everything I have provided for this holy temple: ⁴Three thousand talents of gold (gold of Ophir) and seven thousand talents of refined silver, for the overlaying of the walls of the buildings, ⁵for the gold work and the silverwork, and for all the work to be done by the craftsmen. Now, who is willing to consecrate himself today to the LORD?"

⁶Then the leaders of families, the officers of the tribes of Israel, the commanders of thousands and commanders of hundreds, and the officials in charge of the king's work gave willingly. ⁷They gave toward the work on the temple of God five thousand talents and ten thousand darics of gold, ten thousand talents of silver, eighteen thousand talents of bronze and a hundred thousand talents of iron. ⁸Any who had precious stones gave them to the treasury of the temple of the LORD in the custody of Jehiel the Gershonite. ⁹The people rejoiced at the willing response of their leaders, for they had given freely and wholeheartedly to the LORD. David the king also rejoiced greatly.

¹⁰David praised the LORD in the presence of the whole assembly, saying, "Praise be to you, O LORD, God of our father Israel, from everlasting to everlasting. ¹¹Yours, O LORD, is the greatness and the power and the glory and the majesty and the splendor, for everything in heaven and earth is yours. Yours, O LORD, is the kingdom; you are exalted as head over all. ¹²Wealth and honor come from you; you are the ruler of all things. In your hands are strength and power to exalt and give strength to all. ¹³Now, our God, we give you thanks, and praise your glorious name.

¹⁴"But who am I, and who are my people, that we should be able to give as generously as this? Everything comes from you, and we have given you only what comes from your hand. ¹⁵We are aliens and strangers in your sight, as were all our forefathers. Our days on earth are like a shadow, without hope. ¹⁶O LORD our God, as for all this abundance that we have provided for building you a temple for your Holy Name, it comes from your hand, and all of it belongs to you. ¹⁷I know, my God, that you test

Marble stones: Parian marble. Paros was one of the Cyclade islands, and produced the whitest and finest marble of which most of the finest works of antiquity have been made... Josephus says that the temple was built of large blocks of white marble, beautifully polished, so as to produce a most splendid appearance.

(Adam Clarke Commentary)

Observe

List or highlight the resources provided for the temple (vv. 2 and 3). Who provided them (also see v. 16)?

Besides physical resources, what else were the people asked to give (v.5)?

Why did the people rejoice when the leaders gave (v. 9)?

David asked a question in verse 14, *"But who am I, and who are my people that we should be able to give as generously as this?"* How did David answer his own question in verse 16?

the heart and are pleased with integrity. All these things have I given willingly and with honest intent. And now I have seen with joy how willingly your people who are here have given to you. ¹⁸LORD, God of our fathers Abraham, Isaac and Israel, keep this desire in the hearts of your people forever, and keep their hearts loyal to you. ¹⁹And give my son Solomon the wholehearted devotion to keep your commands, requirements and decrees and to do everything to build the palatial structure for which I have provided." ²⁰Then David said to the whole assembly, "Praise the LORD your God." So they all praised the LORD, the God of their fathers; they bowed low and fell prostrate before the LORD and the king.

Reflect

1. Notice what David says comes from God and is in His hands (v. 12). How do you think David developed this belief?
2. Describe the relationship between
 - a. giving and integrity (v. 17).
 - b. giving and worship (vv. 9-10 and 20).
3. How do you think knowing God is the source of all affects a person's generosity?
4. As a missionary, how will knowing God is the source of all affect your ministry partner development?

2 Corinthians 9:5-15

PAUL ON GIVING

⁵So I thought it necessary to urge the brothers to visit you in advance and finish the arrangements for the generous gift you had promised. Then it will be ready as a generous gift, not as one grudgingly given. ⁶Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously. ⁷Each man should give what he has decided in his heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver ⁸And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work. ⁹As it is written: "He has scattered abroad his gifts to the poor; his righteousness endures forever." ¹⁰Now he who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will also supply and increase your store of seed and will enlarge the harvest of your righteousness. ¹¹You will be made rich in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God. ¹²This service that you perform is not only supplying the needs of God's people but is also overflowing in many expressions of thanks to God. ¹³Because of the service by which you have proved yourselves, men will praise God for the obedience that accompanies your confession of the gospel of Christ, and for your generosity in sharing with them and with everyone else. ¹⁴And in their prayers for you their hearts will go out to you, because of the surpassing grace God has given you. ¹⁵Thanks be to God for his indescribable gift!

Reflect

1. Why do you think God loves a cheerful giver (v. 7)?
2. List all the results of generosity you can identify in verses 6, 10-15.
3. Try to explain the relationship between sowing and reaping.
4. Write verse 8 in your own words in the margin on this page or copy it from another translation. Underline or highlight the words or phrases that are meaningful to you.

Cheerful: "propitious," signifies that readiness of mind, that joyousness, which is prompt to do anything; hence, "cheerful," "hilarious"
(*Strong and Vines*)

The Jews had in the temple two chests for alms; the one was *shel-chuwbah*, of what the law required; the other was *sheledabah*, of the freewill offerings. To escape perdition some would grudgingly give what necessity obliged them; others would give cheerfully, for the love of God, and through pity to the poor.
(*Adam Clarke Commentary*)

Observe

How does a person decide what to give (v. 7)?

Describe how you think it feels to (a) give reluctantly, (b) give under compulsion, and (c) give cheerfully (v. 7).

5. If you believe the truth in verse 8, how will this affect your attitude toward ministry partner development?

Explore Feelings

Frankly, ministry partner development isn't just about principles and biblical truths. It's also about our hearts and often-changing emotions. So at the end of each part in this Bible study, you'll be asked to do a reality check on your feelings toward your funding. This isn't about your theology! There are no right or wrong answers about your feelings. For each statement, circle the option(s) that best and most honestly describes how you sometimes or usually feel (not how you think you're supposed to feel or how you always feel!)

We may project our own feelings about money onto our giving friends. In each statement below, circle the option(s) that *most honestly describe how you sometimes feel*.

- Poverty is *more spiritual / no more spiritual* than affluence.
- Christians with tons of money *are probably / are probably not* living obediently.
- People *won't give / will give* even if they don't think I'm needy.
- I believe I am *the owner / the manager / both owner and manager* of the wealth God gives me.
- I tend to feel *content / discontent* with money and possessions.

Scriptural Truth: We are the managers—not the owners—of the wealth God gives us, and we are called to be content and generous with money.

Express the key thought in each verse or passage.

Leviticus 25:23	Psalms 24:1
Haggai 2:6-9	Proverbs 3:9
1 Timothy 6:6-10	Ecclesiastes 5:18-20

Summarize your convictions about God as the Source of all:

We may fear failure when it comes to the task of ministry partner development. In each statement below, circle the option(s) that *most honestly describe how you sometimes feel*.

- Most people are going to say “no” / say “yes” to my requests for support.
- Talking about money *is* / *isn't* scary to me.
- I *sometimes struggle* / *rarely struggle* with believing that God will provide for me.

Scriptural Truth: God is our Provider—not our giving partners.

Express the key thought in each verse or passage.

Deuteronomy 8:1-10	Deuteronomy 8:11-20
Psalm 37:25-29	Matthew 6:19-21, 24
Acts 17:24-28	

Summarize your convictions about God as your Provider:



God used the Israelites' gifts to provide for the Levites. (Num. 18:21-24)

Conclude

Scripture Memory. Here's a key verse on God as the Source of All that you'll re-visit later in this Bible study. Read the verse in context, perhaps in several translations, and meditate on its meaning. Then paraphrase it in your own words below.

Source of All

Romans 8:32

He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all—how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things?

Romans 8:32 NIV

Your paraphrase of Romans 8:32:

Community (optional): You stand on the shoulders of giants when it comes to fund development. Write below the names 4-6 donor-supported missionaries you know. This week, pray for each of them—especially for their financial support and their giving partners.

Names

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.

Part 2: Clarifying Your Calling to Ministry

A “calling” from God is mysterious. The Scriptures don’t give a “formula” for how God calls His servants (like you) into special service or vocational ministry. Your call is different from all others. Complete the following chart to see how God called some of His earlier servants.

(Note: This study refers to an individual’s call to ministry, not to a general or “salvation” call.)

Person	Describe mission or task	How was the call given?	Response to the call	Location change?	Length of mission or task
Moses Ex. 3:1-15, 4:1-8					
Elijah 1 Kings 19:9-18					
Isaiah Isaiah 6:1-10					
Jeremiah Jeremiah 1:4-10					
Jonah Jonah 1:1-3, 3:1-5					
Mary Luke 1:26-35					
Barnabas Acts 13:1-5					
Peter John 21:15-23					

Reflect

1. What common characteristics and differences do you notice about how God called these people?

Common Characteristics	Differences

2. What key observations do you have about how these people responded when God called them to their various missions?

3. How does your call from God resemble the experiences of any of these biblical people? How is your call different?

4. Think back and make notes about your decision to be in vocational ministry.

Significant People	Significant Scriptures	Significant Circumstances

Optional

Draw out your “*Calling Lifeline*.” Segment and label the phases of your life and spiritual journey, e.g., Early Childhood, Middle/High School, College, etc. What people, Scriptures, and circumstances significantly influenced you during each phase—for better or for worse? What decisions did you make in order to move into vocational ministry (e.g., schooling, job change, relocate, putting off major decisions, children, training and reading, experiences, purchases, seeking specific advice, etc.)? Also recall negative circumstances, obstacles, and setbacks. List these on your Calling Lifeline below, or use a separate piece of paper to record your story. Recording some of the key steps of your calling will help you gain confidence in describing God’s call on your life.

Sample:

Early childhood / school age	Middle school / High school	College	Early adult years	Later adult years	Recently
Grandmother prayed for me Sunday school teacher	Youth pastor and youth group Was angry at God when parents divorced	Christian professor Had lots of school debt to pay off	Small group at church Joined support team for some missionaries	Spouse w/ missions heart Childless—hard but also freed us to go Workshop on missions	Met some believers from the country where God has called me

Your Calling Lifeline

Early childhood / school age	Middle school / High school	College	Early adult years	Later adult years	Recently

Note to younger people:
This activity may seem less helpful to you than to older people simply because you have fewer years and experiences to reflect on. That’s OK. Each person’s story is unique. Feel free to adjust these headings to fit your story.

Clarify Your Own Call from God

1. Consider the U.S. Navigators' mission statement, *"To advance the Gospel of Jesus and His Kingdom into the nations through spiritual generations of laborers living and discipling among the lost."* (NOTE: If you will be serving with an agency other than The Navigators, substitute your agency's mission statement here.)

a. What motivates you about this mission statement?

b. How does this organizational mission relate to your personal calling?

2. Describe the vision you have for your own life. (Picture yourself at the end of your life looking back. What did you do that you know God wanted you to do?)

3. Imagine a prospective giving partner asking you, "So what do you hope God will do through you?" In the box at the left, state the specific vision God has given you for ministry in **25 words or fewer**. For example, "I am believing God to introduce students to Christ in four fraternities at the University of Colorado."

4. If a prospective partner were to ask you the following questions, how would you answer them?

"Why are you joining the staff of The Navigators (or your mission agency)?"

"Why couldn't you do mission work as a part of your regular career?"

"Why don't you go with a church or mission agency that would pay your salary?"

5. How will a clear calling from God impact your ministry partner development?

**My vision for
ministry**

Explore Feelings

We may question why we're going into vocational ministry. In each statement below, circle the option(s) that *most honestly describe how you sometimes feel*.

- People *understand / question* why I'm going into ministry.
- I feel *confident / hesitant* about developing funding to do ministry.
- I feel *uncertain / reasonably certain* about my call.
- I feel like I'm *wasting / not wasting* my education and experience.
- I do ministry *in obedience to God's call in my life / because it's expected of me*.

Scriptural Truth: We minister in obedience to God's call in our lives.

Express the key thought in each verse or passage.

John 15:12-17	1 Timothy 4:12-16
2 Timothy 1:5-7	1 Thessalonians 5:24

Summarize your convictions about God's calling.

We may doubt we are "up to" God's calling, so we may struggle with fear or self-doubt. In each statement below, circle the option(s) that *most honestly describe how you sometimes feel*.

- I *don't feel qualified / feel equipped* to serve God.
- I *struggle with self-doubt about being "up to" God's call / I'm confident that God will empower me to accomplish His purposes*.

Scriptural Truth: God has called us and is at work in us, and He will also equip and empower us to accomplish His purposes.

Express the key thought in each verse or passage.

1 Corinthians 1:25-31	2 Corinthians 2:14-17, 3:4-6
1 Peter 3:13-17	1 Peter 4:7-11
John 14:10-14	1 John 3:18-24

Summarize your convictions about God empowering us to fulfill His calling.



Conclude

Scripture Memory. Meditate on and memorize Romans 8:32—either from the NIV as shown below or from your favorite translation. Write it on a card you will see or carry with you so you can review it daily.

Source of All

Romans 8:32

He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all—how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things?

Romans 8:32 NIV

Community (optional). Contact a missionary from the list you made in part 1 and ask how he or she recognized God's calling into vocational ministry.

Part 3: Biblical Examples of Funding

Woven throughout the Bible are examples of people who experienced God’s provision through others as they obeyed God’s call. Consider the rich the variety of ways God has resourced His work.

Passages to study:

- Levitical Example – Numbers 18:21-24
- Disciples’ Example – Matthew 10:5-14
- Jesus’ Example – Luke 8:1-3
- Tentmaking Example – Acts 18:1-5
- Personal Appeal Example – Romans 15:20-24

Numbers 18:21-24

LEVITICAL EXAMPLE

²¹“I give to the Levites all the tithes in Israel as their inheritance in return for the work they do while serving at the Tent of Meeting. ²²From now on the Israelites must not go near the Tent of Meeting, or they will bear the consequences of their sin and will die. ²³It is the Levites who are to do the work at the Tent of Meeting and bear the responsibility for offenses against it. This is a lasting ordinance for the generations to come. They will receive no inheritance among the Israelites. ²⁴Instead, I give to the Levites as their inheritance the tithes that the Israelites present as an offering to the LORD. That is why I said concerning them: ‘They will have no inheritance among the Israelites.’”

Reflect

1. What are your observations of this passage?

2. Why do you think God required the Levites to rely on the gifts of the other eleven tribes instead of just giving them land of their own?

3. Do a word study on the Old Testament concept of the “tithe” from the following verses. Don’t focus so much on “the letter of the law” (e.g., how much [one-tenth?], what type [animal sacrifices?], etc.). Instead focus on “the spirit of the law” (e.g., how the tithes were to be used, what the desired heart attitude was, how tithing related to worship, etc.).

Leviticus 27:30	Numbers 18:26, 29
Deuteronomy 12:10-12	Deuteronomy 14:22-29
Deuteronomy 26:12	Malachi 3:8-10 (context Malachi 1:6-8)

Levites: The designation of a tribe for special service to God grew out of a concept of the Hebrew people known as the first fruits - the first part of a crop to be harvested was dedicated to God and even extended to firstborn children in a family. Because the Levites were the ones who voluntarily returned to their Lord after worshipping the golden image, they were chosen for service to the sanctuary replacing the firstborn as God’s representatives of the holiness of His people.
(Nelson’s Illustrated Bible Dictionary)

Observe

What was the tithe (v. 21)?

Describe the work of the Levites (v. 23).

What were the Levites to inherit (v. 24)?

An apostolic preacher, who goes to the wilderness to seek the lost sheep, will be exposed to hunger and cold, and other inconveniences; he must therefore resign himself to God, depending on His providence for the necessities of life. If God had sent him, He was bound to support him. Anxiety therefore, was a double crime, as it insinuated a bad opinion of the Master who has employed him. Every missionary should make himself master of this subject.

(Adam Clarke Commentary)

Jesus and the Apostles encouraged giving to God's work, too—giving cheerfully, generously, even sacrificially. But they did not require believers to obey the Old Testament laws on tithing.

Observe

Where were the disciples instructed to go and not go (vv. 5-6)?

What were the disciples instructed to do (vv. 7-8)?

What were they not allowed to take (vv. 9-10)?

4. How does this short study of the tithe compare or contrast with the way tithing is taught and practiced today?

Matthew 10:5-14

DISCIPLES' EXAMPLE

⁵These twelve Jesus sent out with the following instructions: "Do not go among the Gentiles or enter any town of the Samaritans. ⁶Go rather to the lost sheep of Israel. ⁷As you go, preach this message: 'The kingdom of heaven is near.' ⁸Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse those who have leprosy, drive out demons. Freely you have received, freely give. ⁹Do not take along any gold or silver or copper in your belts; ¹⁰take no bag for the journey, or extra tunic, or sandals or a staff; for the worker is worth his keep.¹¹" "Whatever town or village you enter, search for some worthy person there and stay at his house until you leave. ¹²As you enter the home, give it your greeting. ¹³If the home is deserving, let your peace rest on it; if it is not, let your peace return to you. ¹⁴If anyone will not welcome you or listen to your words, shake the dust off your feet when you leave that home or town.

Reflect

1. What are your observations of this passage?
2. Why do you think the disciples were told to leave their money and extra possessions instead of using them or selling them to finance their ministry trip?
3. Describe "some worthy person" (vv. 11-14). How could the disciples recognize this worthy person?
4. List one or two lessons the disciples may have learned from this experience.
5. How does this passage relate to ministry partner development?
6. Think of a situation in which you realized you had to be totally dependent on God. Describe the situation, how you felt, and what you learned about trusting God. How will these lessons help you in your fund development?

Luke 8:1-3

JESUS' EXAMPLE

¹After this, Jesus traveled about from one town and village to another, proclaiming the good news of the kingdom of God. The Twelve were with him, ²and also some women who had been cured of evil spirits and diseases: Mary (called Magdalene) from whom seven demons had come out; ³Joanna the wife of Cuza, the manager [steward] of Herod's household; Susanna; and many others. These women were helping to support them out of their own means.

Reflect

1. What reflections do you have about the members of Jesus' "ministry team"?
2. Why do you think these women (Mary Magdalene, Joanna the wife of Cuza, Susanna, and others) followed and supported Jesus?
3. Did Jesus need gifts of support? Why do you think Jesus accepted the support of the people following Him?
4. Did Jesus ask for support?
5. What are the possible implications for you accepting support from others?

Acts 18:1-5

TENTMAKING EXAMPLE

¹After this, Paul left Athens and went to Corinth. ²There he met a Jew named Aquila, a native of Pontus, who had recently come from Italy with his wife Priscilla, because Claudius had ordered all the Jews to leave Rome. Paul went to see them, ³and because he was a tentmaker as they were, he stayed and worked with them. ⁴Every Sabbath he reasoned in the synagogue, trying to persuade Jews and Greeks. ⁵When Silas and Timothy came from Macedonia, Paul devoted himself exclusively to preaching, testifying to the Jews that Jesus was the Christ.

Tents. The Israelites did not dwell in houses until their return from Egypt. Their tents, in material, form, and furniture, no doubt resembled the tents of the present Bedouin, consisting sometimes of plaited mats, but generally of cloth coverings, either of goat hair, or woven from yarn. The tent is divided into two rooms, separated by a caret partition drawn across the middle of the tent and fastened to the three middle posts. The manufacture of tents formed a regular trade, at which Paul occasionally labored, especially in connection with Aquila.

(New Unger's Bible Dictionary)

Observe

Why did Paul make tents (v. 3)?

When and why did he stop making tents (v. 5)?

Observe

Describe Paul's dazzling vision (v. 20).

What was Paul asking for (v. 24)?

Notice the simple and passionate clarity of Paul's statement. Review your 25-word calling on page 16. What changes would you make to your statement?

Reflect

1. "Tentmaking" today usually refers to a missionary earning part or all of his/her income from a job or business rather than through donors' gifts. Give an example of what tentmaking may look like in contemporary contexts.
2. List some reasons to
 - a. combine tentmaking and ministry.
 - b. avoid tentmaking as a missionary.
3. If a missionary chooses tentmaking, how could he/she explain this to prospective giving partners and not sacrifice fund development?

Romans 15:20-24

PERSONAL APPEAL EXAMPLE

²⁰It has always been my ambition to preach the gospel where Christ was not known, so that I would not be building on someone else's foundation. ²¹Rather, as it is written: "Those who were not told about him will see, and those who have not heard will understand." ²²This is why I have often been hindered from coming to you. ²³But now that there is no more place for me to work in these regions, and since I have been longing for many years to see you, ²⁴I plan to do so when I go to Spain. I hope to visit you while passing through and to have you assist me on my journey there, after I have enjoyed your company for a while.

Reflect

1. What are your observations of this passage?
2. Paul's calling (verse 21) was rooted in Isa. 52:15, "Those who were not told about him will see, and those who have not heard will understand." Why would this passage have appealed to Paul's audience—the believers in Rome?
3. How did Paul deepen his relationship and partnership with his "donors" over time?
4. Is there a passage that is foundational to your calling? If so, record it below and describe why it is important to you.

Summary

1. God has funded His work in a wide variety of ways. Use the chart below to record your key observations of the different examples we've considered. List potential applications for your own fund development.

	Key observations	Potential applications
Levitical		
Disciples		
Jesus		
Tentmaking		
Personal Appeal		

2. What stands out to you or means the most to you about these examples of support?

3. In what ways will the variety of these biblical examples impact your approach to your ministry partner development?

Explore Feelings

We may wonder if fund development is biblical for Christian workers. In each statement below, circle the option(s) that *most honestly describe how you sometimes feel*.

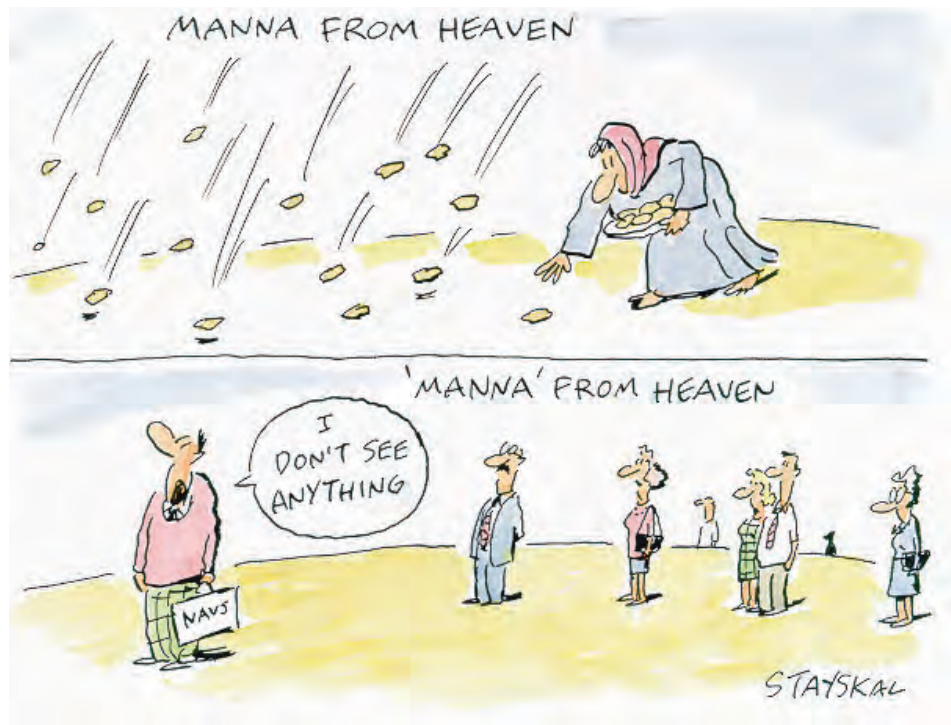
- Ministry partner development *is / is not* biblical.
- People in ministry *should / should not have to* support themselves with another job.
- In ministry partner development, I feel like I'm "*begging*" from donors / I'm *inviting donors* to partner with me.
- I feel *guilty / free* asking for money *because / even though* some people are needier than I am.
- It feels *wrong / exciting* to be paid for doing something I love.
- I *have questions / am enthusiastic* about the model of those in full-time ministry being supported by the people of God.

Scriptural Truth: God commands appropriate compensation for Kingdom workers, so the Bible models those in full-time ministry being supported by the people of God.

Express the key thought in each verse or passage.

Luke 10:7	Galatians 6:6
1 Corinthians 9:1-14	1 Samuel 30:7-10, 21-25
1 Corinthians 15:58	1 Timothy 5:17-18

Summarize your convictions about being supported in ministry by others.



Conclude

Scripture Memory. Ask a friend to check you on your memorization of Romans 8:32. Also explain to him/her what this verse means to you. (And keep reviewing it daily!)

Community (optional). Contact another missionary from your list and ask him or her to share a “war story” about ministry partner development—perhaps a big blessing or surprise, worst mistake, most creative appeal, etc.

Part 4: Giving Partners

Who are ministry or giving partners? Where are they located? What do partners give and how do they give? How do they decide to contribute to a missionary? Most importantly, why do they give? These are critical questions to answer in understanding your giving partners—people who are an important part of your ministry.

Passages to study:

- Philippians 4:10-20
- 1 Kings 17:1-16
- Nehemiah 2:1-9
- Mark 14:1-9

Study idea: Highlight or underline each of the following in a different color in the passages in this part of the study.

- Who
- Where
- When
- What
- Why
- How

Philippians 4:10-20

FRIENDS WHO GAVE

¹⁰I rejoice greatly in the Lord that at last you have renewed your concern for me. Indeed, you have been concerned, but you had no opportunity to show it. ¹¹I am not saying this because I am in need, for I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances. ¹²I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. ¹³I can do everything through him who gives me strength. ¹⁴Yet it was good of you to share in my troubles. ¹⁵Moreover, as you Philippians know, in the early days of your acquaintance with the gospel, when I set out from Macedonia, not one church shared with me in the matter of giving and receiving, except you only; ¹⁶for even when I was in Thessalonica, you sent me aid again and again when I was in need. ¹⁷Not that I am looking for a gift, but I am looking for what may be credited to your account. ¹⁸I have received full payment and even more; I am amply supplied, now that I have received from Epaphroditus the gifts you sent. They are a fragrant offering, an acceptable sacrifice, pleasing to God. ¹⁹And my God will meet all your needs according to his glorious riches in Christ Jesus. ²⁰To our God and Father be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Reflect

1. Why do you think the Philippians gave so eagerly to Paul's ministry? (List several reasons or benefits.)
2. Sometimes missionaries don't want to confuse ministering to people with asking for support. How could Paul talk about giving but not "look for the gift" (v. 17)?
3. Paul had learned to be content in a variety of circumstances. How do you think he learned this (v. 12)?

They had helped him before, (Phil 2:25) they had ceased for a time, and now they began again. This is evidently designed by the apostle, as the word *anethalēte* implies, which is a metaphor taken from the reviviscence of flowers in spring which seemed dead in winter. For the time in which they were apparently remiss he makes a delicate apology.

(Adam Clarke
Commentary)

Observe

What did Paul think would be credited to the account of the givers (v. 17)?

How did Paul respond to the gifts he received (v. 18)?

What do you think Paul meant when he wrote, "And my God will meet all your needs according to his glorious riches in Christ Jesus" (v. 19)?

4. Describe the connection between the *concern* the Philippians had for Paul with the *opportunity* they had to show it (v. 10).

5. Philippians 4:13 is a familiar verse. What insights do you have about the verse in the context of contentment with income?

1 Kings 17:1-16

A PROPHET AND A WIDOW

¹Now Elijah the Tishbite, from Tishbe in Gilead, said to Ahab, “As the Lord, and the God of Israel, lives, whom I serve, and there will be neither dew nor rain in the next few years except at my word.” ²Then the word of the Lord came to Elijah: ³“Leave here, turn eastward and hide in the Kerith Ravine, east of the Jordan. ⁴You will drink from the brook, and I have ordered the ravens to feed you there.” ⁵So he did what the Lord had told him. He went to the Kerith Ravine, east of the Jordan, and stayed there. ⁶The ravens brought him bread and meat in the morning and bread and meat in the evening, and he drank from the brook. ⁷Some time later the brook dried up because there had been no rain in the land. ⁸Then the word of the Lord came to him: ⁹“Go at once to Zarephath of Sidon and stay there. I have commanded a widow in that place to supply you with food.” ¹⁰So he went to Zarephath. When he came to the town gate, a widow was there gathering sticks. He called to her and asked, “Would you bring me a little water in a jar so I may have a drink?” ¹¹As she was going to get it, he called, “And bring me, please, a piece of bread.” ¹²“As surely as the Lord your God lives,” she replied, “I don’t have any bread—only a handful of flour in a jar and a little oil in a jug. I am gathering a few sticks to take home and make a meal for myself and my son that we may eat it—and die.” ¹³Elijah said to her, “Don’t be afraid. Go home and do as you have said. But first make a small cake of bread for me from what you have and bring it to me, and then make something for yourself and your son. ¹⁴For this is what the Lord, the God of Israel, says: ‘The jar of flour will not be used up and the jug of oil will not run dry until the day the Lord gives rain on the land.’” ¹⁵She went away and did as Elijah had told her. So there was food every day for Elijah and for the woman and her family. ¹⁶For the jar of flour was not used up and the jug of oil did not run dry, in keeping with the word of the Lord spoken by Elijah.

Reflect

1. Describe Elijah’s circumstances (vv. 1-7).

2. How did Elijah respond to the widow’s life challenges (vv. 13, 14)? Does his response seem selfish or selfless to you? Explain.

3. What motivated the widow to share her last meal with Elijah?

Widow (*almana*, “bereaved” “deficient,” as of a husband). In the Mosaic legislation special regard was paid to widows. It is true that no legal provision was made for their maintenance. They were left dependent partly on the affection of relatives, especially the oldest son, whose birthright, or extra share of the property, imposed this duty upon him. They also were dependent on the privileges provided for other distressed classes, such as participation in the triennial third tithe.

(*Unger’s Bible Dictionary*)

4. What are your key observations of this passage?

5. How would you respond to the widow's objection (v.12)?

6. What considerations would you keep in mind when approaching someone on a limited income?

Nehemiah 2:1-9

AN ANCHOR PARTNER

¹In the month of Nisan in the twentieth year of King Artaxerxes, when wine was brought for him, I took the wine and gave it to the king. I had not been sad in his presence before; ²so the king asked me, "Why does your face look so sad when you are not ill? This can be nothing but sadness of heart." I was very much afraid, ³but I said to the king, "May the king live forever! Why should my face not look sad when the city where my fathers are buried lies in ruins, and its gates have been destroyed by fire?" ⁴The king said to me, "What is it you want?" Then I prayed to the God of heaven, ⁵and I answered the king, "If it pleases the king and if your servant has found favor in his sight, let him send me to the city in Judah where my fathers are buried so that I can rebuild it." ⁶Then the king, with the queen sitting beside him, asked me, "How long will your journey take, and when will you get back?" It pleased the king to send me; so I set a time. ⁷I also said to him, "If it pleases the king, may I have letters to the governors of Trans-Euphrates, so that they will provide me safe-conduct until I arrive in Judah. ⁸And may I have a letter to Asaph, keeper of the king's forest, so he will give me timber to make beams for the gates of the citadel by the temple and for the city wall and for the residence I will occupy?" And because the gracious hand of my God was upon me, the king granted my requests. ⁹So I went to the governors of Trans-Euphrates and gave them the king's letters. The king had also sent army officers and cavalry with me.

Reflect

1. Why do you think Nehemiah was afraid to ask for help from the king (v. 2)?

2. Analyze Nehemiah's request to the king:

Nehemiah's dazzling vision	Nehemiah's need
How Nehemiah prepared to ask	How Nehemiah asked

Artaxerxes the son of Xerxes, commonly called Longimanus, who reigned from 465 to 424 BC was the third son of Xerxes and was raised to the throne by Artabanus, the murderer of Xerxes. Artaxerxes put his older brother Darius to death; and a little later, Artabanus. *(International Standard Bible Encyclopedia)*

The cupbearers of the Median, and consequently the Persian, monarchs performed their duty of presenting the wine to their royal master. Having washed the cup in the king's presence, and poured into their left hand a little of the wine, which they drank off in his presence, they then handed the cup to him, not grasped, but lightly held with the tips of their thumb and fingers. *(Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown Commentary)*

3. Why do you think the king responded positively to Nehemiah's request (v. 8)?
4. What principles about fund development can we draw from Nehemiah's appeal?
5. If you had the opportunity to appeal to a person with the ability to give a large gift, what would you ask for? Work out your wording of how you would ask for what you need.
6. Notice the passion in Nehemiah's "dazzling vision" in verses 3, 5. Review your 25-word description one more time (page 16) and edit it appropriately.

Mark 14:1-9

GIVING AS WORSHIP

¹Now the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread were only two days away, and the chief priests and the teachers of the law were looking for some sly way to arrest Jesus and kill him. ²"But not during the Feast," they said, "or the people may riot." ³While he was in Bethany, reclining at the table in the home of a man known as Simon the Leper, a woman came with an alabaster jar of very expensive perfume, made of pure nard. She broke the jar and poured the perfume on his head. ⁴Some of those present were saying indignantly to one another, "Why this waste of perfume? ⁵It could have been sold for more than a year's wages and the money given to the poor." And they rebuked her harshly. ⁶"Leave her alone," said Jesus. "Why are you bothering her? She has done a beautiful thing to me. ⁷The poor you will always have with you, and you can help them any time you want. But you will not always have me. ⁸She did what she could. She poured perfume on my body beforehand to prepare for my burial. ⁹I tell you the truth, wherever the gospel is preached throughout the world, what she has done will also be told, in memory of her."

Reflect

1. How much was the woman's gift to Jesus worth (v. 4)?
2. Why do you think she gave so extravagantly? What made her gift so "beautiful" to Jesus (v. 10)?
3. When you think about your own giving to God and His work and about the giving of your partners, what part does "worship" play in the motivation to give?

4. Look back over your study of Philippians 4:10-20, 1 Kings 17:1-16, Nehemiah 2:1-9, and Mark 14:1-9 when completing the following questions.
 - a. What were common characteristics of the giving partners you studied?

 - b. List all the things that motivated the partners to give.

 - c. What were some of the common blessings for the givers?

 - d. When you invite people to financially partner with you in your ministry, what benefits or blessings do you desire for them?

Explore Feelings

We may suspect our own motives for asking or may fear that asking people to support us will damage relationships. In each statement below, circle the option(s) that *most honestly describe how you sometimes feel*.

- Asking people to support my ministry feels *embarrassing / right*.
- Asking people for support will *damage / not damage* my relationships.
- Asking people to support my ministry feels like *using them to get money / inviting them to partner with me*.
- I feel free to ask people to give *only if they are / even if they're not* committed to the spread of the Gospel.

Scriptural Truth: Paul boldly asked both for himself and others on the basis of a mutual commitment to the spread of the gospel, a bond of love, and a desire to worship God.

Express the key thought in each verse or passage.

Philippians 1:1-7	2 Corinthians 8:1-11
2 Corinthians 9:5-11	2 Corinthians 9:12-15
2 Corinthians 1:15-16	

Summarize your observations on what you have discovered usually motivates partners to give.

We may feel guilty or selfish in ministry partner development. In each statement below, circle the option(s) that *most honestly describe how you sometimes feel*.

- Developing ministry partners is all about *my getting from them / mutual giving and receiving*.
- Raising support feels like a *one-way / two-way* relationship.
- I ask people to give on the basis of *my need / worshipping God through giving*.

Scriptural Truth: God created us for both giving and receiving, and He indicates that those who give will experience joy and reap spiritual rewards.

Express the key thought in each verse or passage.

1 Chronicles 29:6-9, 14-18	Deuteronomy 16:13-17
Romans 12:1-13	2 Corinthians 9:8
Acts 20:35	Proverbs 3:9-10

Summarize your observations about the benefits and blessings of giving.



Conclude

Scripture Memory. Share Romans 8:32 with someone you're ministering to and pray its truth and hope into both of your lives.

Community (optional). Contact another missionary from your list and ask the person to share a story about one of their giving partners—an anchor partner, receiving from “the poor,” what partners say about why they give, etc.

Part 5: Finding the Courage to Raise Support

Raising support takes courage: courage to make phone calls, courage to write (and mail) an appeal letter, and courage to ask people for a decision about giving to your ministry. If God has called you to this ministry, you need to trust Him for the courage needed to raise the support.

Passages to study:

- Joshua 1:1-9
- Matthew 14:22-33
- Matthew 6:25-34

Study idea: Highlight or underline references to **fear** in one color, **courage** in another color, and **strength** in a third color.

Joshua 1:1-9

JOSHUA'S CALLING

¹After the death of Moses the servant of the Lord, the Lord said to Joshua son of Nun, Moses' aide: ²"Moses my servant is dead. Now then, you and all these people, get ready to cross the Jordan River into the land I am about to give to them—to the Israelites. ³I will give you every place where you set your foot, as I promised Moses. ⁴Your territory will extend from the desert to Lebanon, and from the great river, the Euphrates—all the Hittite country—to the Great Sea on the west. ⁵No one will be able to stand up against you all the days of your life. As I was with Moses, so I will be with you; I will never leave you nor forsake you. ⁶Be strong and courageous, because you will lead these people to inherit the land I swore to their forefathers to give them. ⁷Be strong and very courageous. Be careful to obey all the law my servant Moses gave you; do not turn from it to the right or to the left, that you may be successful wherever you go. ⁸Do not let this Book of the Law depart from your mouth; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful. ⁹Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be terrified; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go."

Courageous *amats* (aw-mats'); a primitive root; to be alert, physically (on foot) or mentally (in courage): confirm, be courageous (of good courage, steadfastly minded, strong, stronger), establish, fortify, harden, increase, prevail, strengthen (self), make strong (obstinate, speed).

Reflect

1. In this passage, God prepares Joshua to lead the people of Israel into the Promised Land. There are two parts to the passage: God's *promises* to Joshua and God's *commands*. First, look at God's *promises*. Describe God's commitment to Joshua by completing the phrases that begin with "I."

I am about to . . . (v. 2)	I will give you every . . . (v. 3)
As I was with Moses, so I will . . . (v. 5)	I will never . . . (v. 5)

2. Now consider the interesting progression of God's *commands* for Joshua to have courage.
 - a. "*Be strong and courageous*" (v. 6). Why was Joshua to be courageous?
 - b. "*Be strong and very courageous*" (v. 7). Why do you think the second command is in the context of keeping God's law?
 - c. "*Be strong and courageous. Do not be terrified; do not be discouraged*" (v. 9). What do you think is the relationship between fear and courage?
3. What similarities do you see between Joshua's challenges and what you face in following God's call into vocational ministry and partner development? (See also 2 Corinthians 5:7)
4. As a prayerful meditation, imagine God talking to you about raising support as he talked with Joshua about the challenges he faced. What do you think God wants to say to you right now?

Matthew 14:22-33

DISCIPLES IN THE STORM

²²Immediately Jesus made the disciples get into the boat and go on ahead of him to the other side, while he dismissed the crowd. ²³After he had dismissed them, he went up on a mountainside by himself to pray. When evening came, he was there alone, ²⁴but the boat was already a considerable distance from land, buffeted by the waves because the wind was against it. ²⁵During the fourth watch of the night Jesus went out to them, walking on the lake. ²⁶When the disciples saw him walking on the lake, they were terrified. "It's a ghost," they said, and cried out in fear. ²⁷But Jesus immediately said to them: "Take courage! It is I. Don't be afraid." ²⁸"LORD, if it's you," Peter replied, "tell me to come to you on the water." ²⁹"Come," he said. Then Peter got down out of the boat, walked on the water and came toward Jesus. ³⁰But when he saw the wind, he was afraid and, beginning to sink, cried out, "LORD, save me!" ³¹Immediately Jesus reached out his hand and caught him. "You of little faith," he said, "why did you doubt?" ³²And when they climbed into the boat, the wind died down. ³³Then those who were in the boat worshipped him, saying, "Truly you are the Son of God."

Sea of Galilee: A fresh-water lake, fed by the Jordan River, called by four different names in the Bible: the Sea of Chinnereth, Lake Gennesaret, the Sea of Tiberius and the Sea of Galilee. It is situated some 60 miles north of Jerusalem. The lake is nearly 13 miles long and 8 miles wide. As a result of cliffs on three sides, cool winds frequently rush down the slopes and stir up violent storms on the warm surface of the lake. The fourth watch is from 3 AM – 6 AM.

Reflect

1. What are some of your key observations of the passage?
2. What impact do you think this experience may have had on the disciples?
3. In what ways is raising financial support like being a storm?
4. List several things you fear about ministry partner development.
5. Try this exercise: Look over your list of fears and picture them as angry waves about to overcome your boat. Then look up and imagine Jesus walking toward you. What will help you get out of the boat and walk toward Him?
6. What would it mean for you to “take courage” in fund development?

Matthew 6:25-34

GOD'S PROVISION

²⁵“Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more important than food, and the body more important than clothes? ²⁶Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they? ²⁷Who of you by worrying can add a single hour to his life? ²⁸And why do you worry about clothes? See how the lilies of the field grow. They do not labor or spin. ²⁹Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these. ³⁰If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, will he not much more clothe you, O you of little faith? ³¹So do not worry, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ ³²For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. ³³But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. ³⁴Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.”

Observe

Jesus sent the disciples on ahead. Why didn't Jesus go with the disciples (vv. 22, 23)?

What did Jesus mean when he said to “take courage” (v. 27)? On what basis should they take courage?

What do you think motivated Peter to walk out to Jesus on the water (v. 29)?

Reflect

1. List everything Jesus told his disciples not to worry about—and why not.

Verses	What not to worry about	Why not to worry
25		
26-27		
31-32		
34		

2. Write verse 33 in your own words. Or copy it from another translation that touches you.
3. What is one truth from this passage that calms your anxiety about ministry partner development? Explain how this truth affects you.
4. What might it look like in your current phase of fund development for you to obey Jesus (with your trusting, contented dependency)?

Explore Feelings

We may sense disapproval or lack of support from our parents or family, or we may fear their rejection. In each statement below, circle the option(s) that *most honestly describe how you sometimes feel*.

- My parents/family/closest friends think ministry is good *but want to know when I'm going to get a "real" job / and view ministry as a "real" job.*
- Most of my family members and closest friends are not Christians, *so what I'm doing doesn't make any sense to them / but at least they support my choice.*
- My parents/family/closest friends are *okay with / embarrassed that I'm asking people for money, and they don't want me / encourage me to ask their friends.*
- When someone says no to supporting my ministry, it *feels / doesn't feel* like a personal rejection
- When I think of my parents/family/closest friends, I sense *rejection and disapproval / confusion and ambivalence / support and affirmation.*
- If my parents are disappointed about my going into ministry, *I can still honor them / would be dishonoring them* by moving ahead.

Scriptural Truth: We are called both to obey God and to honor our parents.

Express the key thought in each verse or passage.

Exodus 20:12	Romans 12:14
Colossians 3:12-20	Matthew 10:34-39
Matthew 12:46-50	Matthew 19:27-29

Summarize your thoughts about both obeying God and honoring parents.

We may get anxious and discouraged about ministry partner development. In each statement below, circle the option(s) that *most honestly describe how you sometimes feel*.

- When I get a “No,” it *feels / doesn’t feel* like a personal rejection
- I feel *fearful / hopeful* whenever I’m making a call.
- My hands *shake / don’t shake* when I’m making a presentation.
- Sometimes it seems like I’ve been raising funds forever. *I don’t think I can keep going / I’m determined to keep going.*
- I usually feel that reaching full funding *is impossible / is possible* with God.

Scriptural Truth: God calls us to let go of our anxiety and remember that nothing is impossible with Him.

Express the key thought in each verse or passage.

Isaiah 41:10, 13-14	Philippians 4:4-7
Haggai 2:4-5	Psalm 34:4
Mark 10:17-31	Psalm 27:1, 13-14

Summarize your convictions about facing the challenges of partner development.



Conclude

Scripture Memory. Contact someone you know who is struggling. Either share or write out Romans 8:32 as a means of encouragement. (And keep reviewing this verse daily!)

Community (optional). Contact another missionary from your list and ask what struggles, fears, or disappointments he or she has experienced in ministry partner development, as well as what has helped him or her be “strong and courageous” in asking.

Part 6: Conclusions and Application

Raising money is one part of fund development. Using the income well is another part. Integrity and wisdom in managing funds are critical for any missionary. Thoughtful stewardship frees a person to pursue his or her passion and vision, and it gives confidence to ministry partners that their gifts are serving God’s purposes. This section will address some basic principles of stewardship.

The last section in this part will invite you to summarize what you’ve learned in this whole study on “biblically funding the work of God.”

Committed to Wise Stewardship

Every missionary needs personal convictions about stewardship in at least three areas:

1. Planning / Saving
2. Debt
3. Giving

Reflect on these verses from Proverbs that address the use and effects of possessions. Determine the category the verse addresses using the code below.

Study Idea—fill in the code column
 * P = Planning and Saving (highlight with pink)
 * D = Debt (highlight with yellow)
 * G = Giving (highlight with green)

Passage	Code	Advice, Warning, or Observation
Proverbs 6:1-5		
Proverbs 10:2,4		
Proverbs 11:24,25		
Proverbs 11:28		
Proverbs 13:7		
Proverbs 13:22		
Proverbs 19:6		
Proverbs 21:20		
Proverbs 22:7		
Proverbs 23:4,5		
Proverbs 28:19-20		
Proverbs 28:27		
Proverbs 30:8,9		

Reflect

1. What are your overall observations of the teaching from Proverbs about possessions?
2. What verse(s) caught your attention and why?
3. Summarize the advice/teaching from Proverbs about:

Planning and Saving

Debt

Giving

4. Rate your own past or current stewardship in the following areas:

Planning and Saving

Poor 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 Great 10
What are you doing well?

What would you change?

Debt

Poor 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 Great 10
What are you doing well?

What would you change?

Giving

Poor 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 Great 10
What are you doing well?

What would you change?

Ready to Give an Answer

Now that you have worked through this study on biblically funding the work of God, give a *biblical* answer to the following real-life questions or situations.

Ministry Partner Development

1. "I just feel like I'm on 'welfare.'"
2. "How can I make an appeal for my own ministry?"
3. "Couldn't I raise money from people I don't know?"
4. "Shouldn't the people I've ministered to support me?"
5. "Is it OK to make a financial appeal to nonbelievers?"
6. "Can I ask my family to support me?"
7. "How can I ask for support from people I know are not as well off as I am?"

Personal Financial Management

1. "Can I use my credit card to make up for a shortfall in my support?"
2. "Is it right to use personal savings or personal investments if a missionary is below budget?"
3. "What are the pros and cons of accepting personal loans from friends or family members?"
4. "At what standard should missionaries set their lifestyle?"
5. "Can I set my budget lower than I'm allowed?"

Accountability in Ministry Partner Development

1. What support systems do you need to reach your full support goal?
2. How can you build the support systems you need to ensure that you reach full funding?
3. List the names of 5-10 people who could become your foundational prayer team.

Conclude

In what ways has this study affected your values and beliefs about raising financial support by developing ministry partners? List your top three lessons below.



Scripture Memory. Write out Romans 8:32 from memory. Pray over this verse, asking God to deepen your convictions about His gracious provision and to give you freedom and joy in inviting partners to help fund God's work through you.

Community (optional). Contact a missionary you have supported (or are still supporting) financially. Ask how his or her funding is going then pray for and with your missionary friend.

The spiritual ministry of asking, giving, and humble receiving calls both the asker and the giver:

- To a deeper trust in God as Provider ... a true act of worship
- To consider the meaning of life from an eternal perspective
- To actions of love by meeting spiritual and physical needs of people
- Into the jealous heart of God, who calls us to love Him, not the idol of money
- To the way of the cross, of sacrifice
- Into a character of humility and generosity and away from self-righteousness and greed
- To embrace our identity in Jesus as His disciples and friends
- To pray for God's guidance and grace
- To partner in building the Kingdom of God within a specific arena of ministry

This is a spiritually transformative journey for both asker and giver!

Ralph Ennis, *Asking, Giving, and Receiving Material Wealth*, October 31, 2006
(unpublished Bible study)

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