



FUNDRAISING MANUAL

FUNDRAISING

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INTRODUCTION

Faith: The Ability To Trust God.

“Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see. This is what the ancients were commended for...And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him.”
(Hebrews 11:1,2,6)

Thanks is a small token considering the wealth of faith that has been taught us over these years of ministry by many Southern Baptist leaders, Navigator and Campus Crusade friends, and other mission organizations. Much of the information in this manual is a compilation of their journey to trust God. We give thanks that they have taught us well.

PURPOSE STATEMENT

First, making disciples by planting churches in global cities. Second, carrying the name of Jesus to nearly 3 billion unreached people. Third, doing justice in dark places.

BIBLICAL PRINCIPLES FOR FUNDING A CHRISTIAN MINISTRY

The Bible identifies three ways in which a Christian ministry can be supported financially. These principles apply to support for either an individual or an organization.

1. THERE IS THE PRINCIPLE OF SELF-SUPPORT. There were times in Paul's ministry when he provided for his own financial needs by making tents. "And because he was a tentmaker as they were, he stayed and worked with them." (Acts 18:3)

I Thessalonians 2:9 - "For you recall brethren, our labor and hardship, how working day and night so as not to be a burden to any of you, we proclaimed to you the Gospel of God." In Acts, I Corinthians, and in I and II Thessalonians we are told that Paul labored in self-support.

2. THERE IS THE PRINCIPLE OF LOOKING TO GOD ALONE. This means making one's need known to no one but God. While there seems to be no text specifically describing this method, we do have His promise of provision. "And my God will meet all your needs according to His glorious riches in Christ Jesus." (Philippians 4: 19) The Navigators practiced the principles of never making needs known for the first fifteen years of their ministry.

3. MAKING NEEDS KNOWN HAS BOTH OLD TESTAMENT AND NEW TESTAMENT EXAMPLES. Making needs known means sharing the vision and ministry with friends and asking them to prayerfully consider supporting the ministry financially.

Some Biblical examples of making needs known are:

A. In Exodus 12:35, God instructed Israel to ask the Egyptians for articles of silver and gold and clothing. In verse 36 we are told, “The Lord made the Egyptians favorably disposed toward the people and gave them what they asked for...”

B. In Exodus 25, God commanded Moses to build a tabernacle and instructed Moses to ask the people of Israel to contribute the necessary building materials. “Tell the sons of Israel to raise My contribution” (Exodus 25:2). In Exodus 35, Moses had presented the need and the response was more than enough! “And everyone whose heart stirred him and everyone whose spirit moved him came and brought the Lord’s contribution for the work of the tent of meeting and for all its service and for the holy garments” (Exodus 35:21).

C. In I Kings 17, the Lord instructed Elijah to make his needs known to a widow living at Zarepath.

As a result, she provided food and lodging for Elijah for as long as he needed it.

D. In Acts 11:28-29, a prophet by the name of Agabus came making a need known in a manner that prompted the following response. “Then the disciples, each according to his ability, decided to provide help for their brothers living in Judea which they did.”

E. It seems the Corinthians had at some point made a financial commitment to give toward a specific need. (**II** Corinthians 9:5). In chapters 8 and 9, Paul writes encouraging them to follow through with their commitment. He also sent Titus to ensure that they would follow through. It seems Paul was very aggressive in his fundraising.

The three principles of financial support are:

- 1. To use personal earnings**
- 2. To ask no one but God**
- 3. To make needs known**

STRATEGY FOR MISSIONS FUNDRAISING

- I. Before Fundraising or Raising a Support Team
 - A. Know you are called; it gives you credibility.
 - B. Understand your task; it helps you share the vision.
 - C. Be commissioned by a body of Believers; it makes you accountable.

- II. Guidelines for fundraising
 - A. Be committed before asking for funds.
 - B. Thoroughly examine your attitudes and your need. Know your need and ask in a Christ-like Spirit (1 Thessalonians 5:16-18).
 - C. Pray for God's leadership, direction and provision.
 - D. Believe that God will answer your prayers and provide for your needs. Do not wait until He provides to thank Him. Faith says, "Thank you" (Mark 11:24).
 - E. Assume as much responsibility for fundraising as the Lord directs.

III. INVOLVING OTHERS IN FUNDRAISING

A. Individuals who participate on mission projects are asked to put together a support team to sponsor them. The support team can involve individuals:

1. In prayer support.
2. In financial support.
3. In prayer and financial support.

B. Although some individuals will handle finances on their own, all are urged to still put together a team of prayer supporters.

C. Other team members will need to enlist a team of supporters for prayer and finances.

Support teams are a means of accountability.

Team members who have other people investing in their life tend to be more accountable for their time, attitudes and service while on a mission project. No one owes you because you are volunteering for mission service, but God may impress upon His people to accept responsibility for your commitment as their representative.

D. Because individuals are accountable, they are urged to send thank you cards and also a report of their mission experience after they return home.

E. Team members are asked to consider the meeting of their financial need in the following order:

1. How would God want me to help myself?
2. How would God want my family to help me?
3. To whom would God want me to present the remainder of my financial need for support?

IV. PROCEDURES FOR FUNDRAISING

A. Each team member is asked to raise a certain amount of money to go toward the total cost of the mission project on which they are participating.

B. People who give money are technically giving to Houston's First Baptist Church with the understanding that "you" are the mission volunteer for whom their gift is designated in order to meet "your" needs.

C. Money is usually **non-refundable**; therefore, be committed before you raise funds.

D. Once money is deposited, the team leader is given a check to cover costs while on the mission project. The team is a family and all family needs will be met from the team money. Eliminate the attitude of my money, for the funds are no longer viewed as individual contributions but funds for one corporate body.

E. Realize that many times the actual cost of the Missionary Journey exceeds the actual amount of individual dollars raised.

F. Extra money will be dealt with in the following options:

1. It can be applied to another member's account on your team.
2. It can be applied to someone else's account on another team.
3. It can be put into an account for you to go on another mission trip in the future.
4. It can be withdrawn to pay for passport expenses or other necessary items for the mission trip. Funds cannot be withdrawn for

film, souvenirs, or spending money.

5. We will do our best to communicate regularly any overfunding. In the event we have not heard from you most likely your funds will be used to support another team member.

G. All money is to be turned in to Houston's First Baptist Church's Missions Office. If your account is paid off and you receive more money made out to you, you may keep it for mission trip expenses only. However the donor will not receive a tax-deductible gift, and you must notify them of this fact.

H. Expenditures of funds are carefully screened to ensure good stewardship of those funds.

I. General guidelines are given for expenditures of funds. These guidelines are ones successfully used and approved by past mission volunteers. Direct any questions to the Missions Office.

J. Have all checks made payable to "Houston's First Baptist Church".

K. We also receive online contributions for mission trips at: HoustonFirst.org/missions

Go to: Mission Trips

Click: Give online to Mission Trips

THE FOUNDATIONS OF FUNDRAISING

FOUNDATION #1 – PRAYER

Some aspects of the Lord's work seem to require more prayer than others. Evangelism is probably one of these, as is fundraising. Perhaps more than any other single factor, prayer can be the key to raising funds.

As Andrew Murray observed, "God's will needs prayer as its indispensable condition."

In fundraising, it is necessary that we admit we need God and begin our prayers before Him. The Lord can work without us but He desires that we ask Him. "Until now you have not asked for anything in my name. Ask and you will receive, and your joy will be complete" (John 16:24).

Daniel understood the principle that God's will needs prayer as its indispensable condition. Reading Jeremiah's prophecy (25:12) Daniel realized Jerusalem was to be desolate and the nation of Israel was to be in bondage for 70 years after which God would bring His people back to Jerusalem and to the Promised land.

Daniel also knew the 70-year period was completed. But instead of sitting back like a spectator at a ball game waiting to see the prophecy come true, Daniel began to pray. He prayed earnestly, fervently day after day--praying that the prophecy might become a reality. Moses understood this principle.

Exodus 17:11 says, “When Moses held up his hand, Israel prevailed. When he let down his hand, Amalek prevailed.” Prayer made the difference.

Jesus endorsed this principle when he taught His disciples to pray, “Thy kingdom come, thy will be done.”

Prayer gives God an opportunity to work in the hearts of those with whom you will be sharing.

Proverbs 21:1 tells us “The King’s heart is in the hand of the Lord; he directs it like a watercourse wherever he pleases.” You should pray that God will lay it on people’s hearts to give in response to our solicitation. An important aspect of prayer is faith: faith that God has led you to be associated with Houston’s First Baptist Church Missions. . . faith that He has chosen you for this particular trip. . . faith in the fact that He desires you to make your needs known. . . and that He will provide your needs. . . and that He will provide you the time and energy to assume the responsibility He wants you to take.

You can have the attitude of the people in Matthew 13:58, “And He did not do many works there because of their unbelief.” Or you can have Sarah’s attitude as it is described in Hebrews 11:11,

“Through faith Sarah herself received strength to conceive seed and was delivered of a child when she was past age because she judged Him faithful who had promised it.” Sarah believed God. She believed

to think about the impossibilities of her physical limitations, and a miracle resulted. Sarah trusted God to do the impossible and He did it.

The question to ask yourself is -- Am I really trusting God or is my mind preoccupied with possible problems and failure? By an act of the will you can determine to trust God to make you effective in raising funds. You should pray that your own commitment to the task of personal solicitation of prayer support (and financial as God directs) will be wholehearted. If you secretly hope to ease yourself through this program, putting minimal effort into it when God has directed otherwise, you should reevaluate your commitment.

FOUNDATION #2- SPIRITUAL PREPAREDNESS

The most important element in your success in raising support is your spiritual life. Set aside time everyday to get alone with the Lord. Spend time reading the Scriptures, praising God and claiming His promises.

A. God has promised to meet the needs of those that are called according to His purpose. He abundantly supplies, and He knows all of our needs (Phil. 4:18-19).

B. God promises that . . .

1. He will give you what it takes to develop your support team (I Thes. 5:24).

2. He will guide and direct you (James 1:5).
3. He will give you a joyful time of raising support (John 15:10-11).
4. He will protect you from the enemy's lies, such as:
"You're a beggar."
"These people don't want to see me."
"I'm not good enough for Christian work" (Tim. 1:7).
5. He will not allow anything to happen to His children that is not for the best (Romans 8:28).
6. He will not fail or forsake you (Romans 8:35).
7. He will prepare hearts (Psalms 139:3-5).

FOUNDATION #3- PLANNING AND PREPARATION FOR MAKING NEEDS KNOWN

"Any enterprise is built by wise planning, becomes strong through common sense, and profits wonderfully by keeping abreast of the facts." Proverbs 23:3,4 (Living) If the Lord directs you to make your need known, you need to ask the Lord how to plan and prepare. In the process of developing plans, it's always necessary to set clear-cut objectives. Some claim the primary objective of a fundraising program is money. To claim otherwise, they say, would be devious, disguising fundraising behind a cloak to make it more palatable.

But money is not an end in itself. Money is simply a resource: an indispensable way for achieving one

of the objectives Jesus gave you which is “to go and make disciples of all nations.” Before raising funds, be sure and understand the strategy and guidelines of Houston’s First Baptist Church Missions fundraising.

FOUNDATION #4- THE PRESENTATION

The thing to remember is that *people give to people*. It is not a fancy brochure or a clever presentation that evokes a giver as much as it is who asks and how they do it. The point is - are you asking in the humility and sincerity of the Holy Spirit? Keep in mind that you are not going for the person’s money, but you are going for Him.

Avoid the approach that communicates “I’m here to get something.” Emphasize the idea that “I want you to join me in this exciting ministry of helping to fulfill the Great Commission.” This places the emphasis where it ought to be -- on developing friendships rather than on getting money.

If you create the impression that you are after their money, they will never forget it. But if you make them feel that you care about them and want them to become part of a ministry that is accomplishing something significant, you will be giving them a lift and enriching their lives. You will make them feel they are joining a meaningful, worthwhile effort, and not that someone has just picked their pocket. The point is to emphasize that they will be part of a ministry that is helping win the world to Christ.

This is very important to understand:

- 1. If the Lord has called you, and**
- 2. If you are responsible to share Jesus every opportunity you have on the field, you are not sharing your need. You are asking for the people on the field: a little child, older adult or youth with whom you will be sharing.**

GUIDELINES FOR MAKING YOUR NEED KNOWN

It is important to maintain a proper understanding of making your need known. You are putting your trust in God because He has called you to the mission field and will provide for your needs. You can be free from any fear and anxiety about sharing your needs because the Lord is going to provide -- He has chosen to use those people you know, love, live and work with. When you share your need, remember that it will be the Lord who prompts them to give (Exodus 35:21) --- not you! Therefore, relax, share and leave it with God. Below are some practical suggestions for how to make known your need.

I. DEVELOPING A SUPPORT TEAM

You may use the attached Support Team Worksheet to compile a list of prospects. Do this in two phases. Phase one is creative. During this phase don't analyze or evaluate the names you think of. This stifles creativity. Simply write down every name you can possibly think of as the Lord brings

them to mind! The second phase is analytical. Think about each prospect -- pray about them and eliminate the names of those you have no freedom to visit or write. However, don't eliminate names too casually -- the Holy Spirit may lead some of your most unlikely prospects to give.

II. CATEGORIES FOR POTENTIAL PROSPECTS

The following list of categories will give some ideas about potential prospects. Do not go to Houston's First Baptist Church Deacons or major donors of the Church; they are usually inundated with opportunities to give. You do not have to share with just Christians; the Lord can also use non-believers. Remember in Exodus 12:35 how the Lord used the pagan Egyptians to supply the needs of the Israelites.

- A.** Yourself - what is your personal commitment?
- B.** Family - your parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles, etc.
- C.** Your home church - visit your pastor first and share with him your plans. You need his support. Then contact individuals whom you know personally in the church.
- D.** Association - contact the Director of Missions or use a contact person to help you.
- E.** Christian Businessmen
- F.** Referrals - ask supportive friends for suggestions
- G.** Former Employers
- H.** Civic groups in your community

- I. Former Teachers
- J. Christian organizations in your community
- K. Bible studies and prayer groups (Sunday School classes)

* **PLEASE DO NOT** *make public appeals in any class other than where you are a member and then only with your Director's approval.*

III. HOW TO EXPAND YOUR CONTACT LIST THROUGH A KEY MAN OR WOMAN

This could be your pastor, youth director, prominent Christian businessman or woman, or someone who has a very special interest in you that wants to help you raise support.

- A. Benefits of Using a Key Contact Person**
 - 1. Multiply your time
 - 2. Get into places or with individuals you might not be able to otherwise
 - 3. You are developing a close friend and someone who will be interested in you throughout your life
 - 4. This key person will grow spiritually

- B. Brief your key contact person thoroughly**
 - 1. On your ministry at First Baptist, your school, or in the city
 - 2. Your personal testimony
 - 3. On your purpose in ministry

C. Ways you might want your key contact person to help

1. Support you financially
2. Pray for you daily
3. Give you referrals
4. Write a letter of introduction
5. Go with you on appointments

SUPPORT TEAM WORKSHEET

Now is the time to brainstorm; you probably know more people than you think. Think of people that you have met or ministered to during the past year. Also, think of people you have gotten to know better or you feel might be interested in what you are doing. List as many prospects as you possibly can!

- **Former givers**
- **People I have ministered to in the past year**
- **friends from church**
- **Friends from Sunday school class**
- **Possible churches I could approach**
- **People I have met in the last year**
- **Friends from back home**
- **Spouse's friends**
- **Wedding list from your wedding or siblings wedding**
- **Other**

LETTERS TO PROSPECTIVE CONTRIBUTORS

The purpose of letter writing is to help pave the way for you so that people are expecting your call and are introduced to your ministry. In some cases you may want to use letter writing as your primary contact. You might do this if the individuals you want to contact live a long distance away. If that is the case, you should enclose in the envelope a fact sheet or brochure on your missions opportunity, and a return addressed envelope to return the contribution.

SUGGESTED CONTENT OF A LETTER TO SOMEONE YOU KNOW PERSONALLY:

- 1. INTRODUCTION:** Begin with some good opening statements (i. e., family news, ask how they are doing, how school has been going, etc.). Make the letter warm and personal.
- 2. PRESENTING YOUR MINISTRY:** You want to emphasize your call to this ministry and your excitement to be involved. Share about the specifics of the work in which you will be involved and the practical training you are receiving.
- 3. PRESENT YOUR NEED:** Explain your need for financial and prayer support in order to be involved in practical Christian ministry. Explain the concept of a support team and accountability system.

4. FOLLOW UP PLANS: Tell the person you are writing about any plans you have to call them or visit them to discuss your letter in person. You may also want to include a commitment to write after the trip, sharing what the Lord did.

5. CLOSING: Finish your letter with a personal touch and express appreciation for the friendship of the person you are writing. After you mail the letters (mail around 25 at a time) you should call the prospective contributors in seven days.

(Note the sample letters provided in the appendix)

SPECIAL HINTS FOR YOUR LETTERS:

- 1.** You can hand write or type personal letters depending on how many you want to send.
- 2.** Write correctly. Incorrect use of the English language can be offensive.
- 3.** If you are sending more than about 25 letters, you may want to consider using a form letter. Take note that it does not lose its personal touch! **Please** don't ask for mailing lists for an entire class or group (i.e., the choir). Mass mailings lose the personal touch and are ineffective.
- 4.** Write simply and clearly. Vague details and muddled paragraphs can prevent a letter from communicating effectively.

5. Write positively. Negative attitudes or criticisms of other groups can defeat a person faster than any other problem. Strive to give your letter a pleasant, joyful tone (Phil. 4:4). You want your reader to be encouraged by the work the Lord is doing in your life.

6. Write explicitly. Hidden messages are no good. Be bold! Communicate your message openly. Say what you mean and mean what you say. They will know you need money; share your need clearly and leave the rest in the Lord's hands.

7. Write personally. Personal letters say that the individual receiving the letter is important. They say fundraising is important enough to you to give special time for your efforts. Mass produced letters when done very carefully and with special guidelines will work but the general rule is be personal. A form letter can give a negative impression. Be very careful! Hand sign each form letter and perhaps add a few personal handwritten lines.

8. Write concisely. A well-written letter should be one page (there are exceptions to the rule). Edit your letter until you are confident you have used the least amount of words to share the most important message.

9. Have your letter read by the Missions Office or friend if you need assistance.

10. Use the prepared materials: Trip fact sheets and return address envelopes. They will help you in communicating your need. These materials give you credibility that a program of Houston's First Baptist Church sponsors you.

SCHEDULING APPOINTMENTS WITH SUPPORT TEAM PROSPECTS PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS

Before visiting a prospect, it is important to make an appointment by phone. There are several reasons for this. First, it is usually more courteous to make an appointment than to drop by unannounced. It also gives the prospect an opportunity to schedule the visit at a time which is more convenient for him which means he is likely to be more attentive and responsive to your presentation.

1. Work at setting up appointments several days in advance since people are often quite busy. If a prospect is unable to schedule an appointment in the near future, ask if you can call for an appointment the following month.

2. When working in a large metropolitan area it is helpful to make appointments in the same general vicinity. This should enable you to see at least two prospects in one morning, afternoon or evening. Using a city map, locate the addresses of your prospects, then plan your appointments according to their geographic locations. Allow adequate time for travel during these hours.

3. A good time to phone is usually between 6 and 9 p.m.. Saturday is also an excellent time for making appointments, particularly between 9 a.m. and noon. People can usually be found at home during these hours.

4. An important prerequisite for a telephone caller is sensitivity to discern the reactions and attitudes of the person with whom he is talking. By being sensitive, you will know better how to respond -- whether or not to try to make an appointment.

5. Smile as you talk. This gives a friendly tone to your voice. Do not talk too rapidly or loudly.

SCHEDULING APPOINTMENTS: SAMPLE PHONE CALL PRINCIPLE IDEAS

1. Your first concern is to determine if you are talking to the right person.

2. The second step in your phone conversation is to clearly identify yourself and the purpose of your call.

3. By this time your prospect will probably be ready to express himself, so pause and give him a chance to respond.

4. Ask him when it would be convenient to visit. Give the prospect a couple of alternative times and then let him choose the time most convenient for him.

5. If your suggested times are not convenient for him, ask him when it would be convenient.
6. It is also good to check the address for accuracy.
7. As soon as an appointment is decided upon, you should conclude the call with an appropriate comment reminding them of the day, date and time.
8. When a prospect indicates they are not interested in an appointment, simply end the conversation on a warm note.

YOU COULD SAY

“Hello, is this Mr./Mrs. _____?”

“This is _____. I am calling on behalf of Houston’s First Baptist Church and myself.

This month I am calling on friends, and I would like to make an appointment to visit with you for 20-30 minutes to bring you up to date on what is happening in my life and in a ministry opportunity I will have this June for mission work.”

“I would like to visit with you personally for a few minutes. Would it be convenient if I came around next Thursday evening at 7 or 8pm?”

“When would a visit best suit your schedule?”

“Let me see if I have your correct address.”

“Mr./Mrs. _____ I have enjoyed talking with you and look forward to seeing you on Thursday, February 18, at 7pm.”

“Mr./Mrs. _____ thank you for your time. I have enjoyed talking with you. Goodbye.”

Adapt these suggestions to your style and language. Immediately following the phone conversation, write down the day and time of the appointment. If a prospect indicates he is not interested in an appointment, make a note on your prospect list.

SOME REMINDERS FOR MEETING WITH PROSPECTS

A. Arrive on time. Make certain you know where the prospect lives. If you do not know, locate the address on a city map and estimate the necessary travel time.

B. Dress appropriately. Casual clothes are suitable for calling on team members or young singles, but for home or office calls, more formal attire is necessary.

C. Use a breath freshener. Nothing is more distressing than talking with someone who has bad breath. “I can’t remember his face, but I’ll never forget that breath.” And do not crowd people you are talking with. This makes them uncomfortable. Stay at a comfortable distance of at least three feet away.

D. Never speak despairingly. Never criticize other Christian organizations or churches. Also be careful not to create the impression that you think you are the chosen one or that you alone have the key to world evangelism.

E. Pray with the person before each interview, but not while sitting in front of the prospects home!

F. Expect the unexpected. Then, whatever happens, it will not catch you off guard. Look upon the unexpected as a challenge.

G. Keep in mind that influencing others to give is a spiritual activity; and it results in blessings to the giver. This is true for several reasons:

1. “It makes one happier to give than to get” (Acts 20:35, Williams). A sense of fulfillment and joy comes to those who, in obedience to the Holy Spirit, give as He directs.

2. Giving is an investment for eternity. While it is true that we can't take it with us, we can send it on ahead. Jesus told the rich young ruler to “sell everything you have and give it to the poor and you will have riches in heaven” (Mark 10:21-22, **NEB**).

3. God blesses in proportion to one's giving. “Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you” (Luke 6:38). They get a return on their investment now in this life! “Whoever sows generously will also reap generously.” (2 Corinthians 9:6)

4. “One man gives freely, yet gains even more; another withholds unduly, but comes to poverty. A generous man will prosper; he who refreshes others will himself be refreshed.”
(Proverbs 11: 24-25).

Remember: Your job is not to persuade people to give, but to simply share needs, trusting the Holy Spirit to direct each individual in his decision.

MEETING WITH SUPPORT TEAM PROSPECTS

Establish Rapport

Introduce yourself (and your partner if someone is with you).

Be sure to mention the prospect's name.

“Good evening. Is this the Green residence?”

“My name is _____ and this is my friend _____.

We certainly appreciate the opportunity to visit in your home, Mr. Green, and thank you for allowing us a few minutes from your busy schedule.”

Allow five to ten minutes for small talk and getting acquainted. If the prospect brings up a subject show interest in that subject by asking questions or commenting about it. If not, comment about something in their home or office or be prepared to ask questions that will stimulate conversation. Questions you might ask are:

“How long have you lived here?”

“Are you acquainted with Houston's First Baptist Church?”

“What type of work do you do?”

Make the transition from small talk to the presentation.

“We have a brochure/fact sheet here telling about our mission trip. Could I take a few minutes to go over it with you?”

Sometimes it is helpful to suggest a change in seating arrangement so the prospect can conveniently follow along. As you go through the presentation, speak clearly. Dialogue with the prospect as you proceed through the presentation is also important. If the prospect remains silent throughout the

presentation, it is more difficult to get a response at the end of your presentation. Do not rush through the presentation, but be alert to the interests of those you are visiting. They will sometimes show interest in some specific phase of your schooling or the missions trip. Develop the conversation along the lines of their interest. If the prospect wants more information or asks questions you can't answer, just say, "I don't know but if you would like, I'll find out and let you know."

Ask for prayer support and/or financial need. Some feel the closing is the most difficult part of the interview, but if you have prepared what you are going to say and rely on the Holy Spirit to do His work, it can be handled graciously and effectively. Ask the prospect to prayerfully consider supporting the work in prayer and finances. "Mr. Green, I am looking to the Lord to enable me to put together a support team for my missions trip this summer. I want to ask if you would consider joining my support team for prayer and/or finances, as I have an opportunity to share the gospel. Would you consider supporting me in these ways?"

Let silence reign. After asking for support, you must stop talking! Allow them time to think and to give you an answer to this question. Do not continue talking! Wait for their reply even if the silence seems deafening for a few moments. The prospect may be ready to give you their decision at that time. If not, ask if you can call in three or four days for their decision. Once you have risen to leave, do not linger. Standing around talking another ten or fifteen minutes is not courteous.

NOTES

THANK YOU NOTES

Always send a thank you note to those that desire to invest in your work. Hand write these notes personally. Be sure and ask also for their prayer support as you serve in missions.

SAMPLE:

Dear (Investor's Name):

Thank you for joining my support team with your financial gift. I greatly appreciate the affirmation you have given to me in my commitment to missions. I pray that my service will be an honor in your investment and to the Lord Jesus Christ. Please keep me in your prayers as I serve this January in _____. Your prayers are also an important part of my ministry.

When I am back from my mission trip, I will send you a report of my work. Again, thank you.
Sincerely,

FOLLOW-UP LETTERS

1. Send a letter to your support team (anyone to whom you sent an initial letter) after you return from your mission trip.
2. Send another letter during the next few months to let your team know how your mission experience is affecting your everyday life at school or at home.
3. Again, thank your support team for their gifts and prayers.
4. Such follow-up will make your support team feel they are and were important to your missions experience.
5. In your letter, be specific. Tell the person how your life was affected, the people you met, special experiences you had, and the long-range effect your work had on your life personally. Do not be vague; be real, honest and specific.
6. If you have many people to write, you might want to adapt a newsletter type way of sharing with each individual about the mission experience. Enclose a personal note in the newsletter.

SUGGESTIONS FOR MAKING A CHURCH/CLASS PRESENTATION

1. Talk with your Team Leader or Missions Pastor at Houston's First Baptist Church about what he prefers concerning approaching the church Sunday School Class or individual about your

prayer and financial needs. He may want to share for you, or he may rather you just write letters to individuals. Sometimes the church will decide to give out of a special mission account, the general budget, or a love offering. See if your church will take a little time before you leave to commission you.

2. In most cases individuals at Houston's First are not allowed to make class presentations, but in some churches this is acceptable. Always seek permission. Do not assume access to your Bible Study class as a whole.

3. If your Minister of Missions or Sunday School teacher approves, confirm a date and how long he can give you in the class.

4. Make careful plans to prepare your presentation taking into consideration the needs of your church family.

A. Introduction--Introduce yourself clearly because some may not know you. Mention that you going to Houston's First Baptist Church and the Lord has called you to participate in the missions program. If you have time, you may want to briefly explain the program. Therefore, so as to not put a burden on the churches and missionaries, each mission team raises its own support to go and minister.

B. Body of Presentation--Share what trip the Lord has called you to and the work you will do.

Some team members have shown video or

pictures from last year's trip to give the people a clearer vision of the work. (There may be video or pictures from every trip available for you to check out in the Missions Office.)

**Be sure to share any personal goals the Lord has spoken to you concerning the trip. Perhaps He wants you to learn complete servanthood for the time of your trip or maybe learning about another culture. Make yourself vulnerable with your church family.

C. Closing--Share your need for a support team of people that will commit themselves to pray consistently for you (this can be done in a variety of different ways as the Lord directs them.)

Also share your financial responsibility as a team member. Mention as much detail as you feel you should about money. You can mention the total cost of your trip includes all needs (travel, lodging, food, supplies, training, etc.) State you are trusting the Lord to provide the funds and prayer support necessary for the trip. Tell them if they have any questions that they can come talk with you. (At this point some pastors will have an offering or make some final comments.

Some churches set up an account just for you so individuals who cannot give right then can send their gift to the church. You can also leave some giving envelopes with the church for them to use.)

****Remember the main purpose in sharing is to be honest and sincere with your calling and your need, then leave it with the Lord to stir people's hearts to pray and give.**

SAMPLE LETTER 1

Dear _____,

Hi! How are you doing? I hope that God is doing as many exciting things in your lives as He is in mine! I am having a wonderful first semester here at [the university]. I did not think anything could top off this past summer, but as usual God is blessing my socks off!

Every day I wake up anticipating what God will do next, and he has recently begun a new and exciting work in my life. From January 4-16 I will be in Haiti with a team of thirty-five people, working to spread the good news of Jesus Christ among the people there. We will be doing hut-to-hut visitation, holding worship services and Backyard Bible clubs, teaching hygiene workshops, and a medical team will also accompany us. Our time will be spent in two villages, one of which has never been reached by the gospel! What an awesome opportunity to let these people know that their Creator loves them and has provided a way for them to have a personal relationship with himself through Jesus Christ! We will be living among the Haitians as they do—in huts, so I anticipate learning what it is truly like to live without the luxuries and conveniences that are so easy to take for granted in the United States. I am hoping this will give me a greater heart of compassion for people around God's world. But wait! That is not all! I have more exciting news for you because you can be involved in our mission trip. First and foremost, you can pray for us in the following ways: 1) That God will prepare each team member and also each Haitian

spiritually for our visit. 2) That God will provide financially for our trip (each team member needs to raise \$_____, so that is quite a challenge). 3) That God will bless our journey, keep us safe, and move powerfully through our team as we minister His love, compassion, and grace to the Haitians.

Secondly, you can be involved by seeking God's direction in helping us financially. I have included a postage-paid envelope for you to use if you are so led, and also a brochure explaining more about the Missions Program. Please make checks payable to "Houston's First Baptist Church."

I look forward to letting you know about all that God has done once we return home in January. Thank you so much for your support and the love you have shown me in the past making known to me the same Jesus I so earnestly desire to share with others.

SAMPLE LETTER 2

Dear _____,

Hi! I hope this letter finds you and your family well, I'm doing fine. It's getting down to the wire as far as this semester goes; I have one more paper, 2 tests then finals. Yuck. I've had a very good semester academically and I love apartment life.

In case I haven't told you, last May I surrendered to God's call to a career in missions. I still don't know exactly when or where He'll lead me, but I am trusting that He'll reveal that in His time.

This summer He has given me a wonderful opportunity to minister and experience the mission field for a short term, July 9 through August 4. I will be going with a team from Houston's First Baptist Church to Canada where we are working at Hope Baptist Mission and Friendship Baptist Church.

We will be doing door-to-door survey work, Backyard Bible Clubs, running a day care, a puppet ministry and Special Church Services. I am really excited about this opportunity because I feel like it will help prepare me to eventually be on the mission field full time.

So as not to put a burden on the churches we are working with, our team will be raising our own support to finance this trip. I am writing you to enlist your prayer and financial support. God has given me a special call to "go" and I am counting on Him to call those of you He has called to "send." I also know that He has a special team picked out for prayer support. As I made out a list of people to send this letter to God kept giving me names. Some of them I questioned, but He assured

me that I am to obey and He will do the calling. I had qualms about writing this letter and I have put it off for weeks because I felt as if I was asking for myself. God has shown me that I am asking on behalf of the people that do not know Jesus. Both of these churches are in areas where Southern Baptist Work is very small. Hope Baptist Mission is 150 miles from the nearest Southern Baptist Church. After growing up in the Bible Belt I cannot imagine a small core of excited young Christians with very little training. Their pastors are working at discipling them, and we hope to ease their load a little this summer.

I don't know what else to share with you in this letter. Please understand that I realize that everyone is not called to help every cause. I trust that you will hear God's voice and know if this is an area in which you can minister. Either way, I know everyone is called to pray, and I would very much appreciate your prayer support. My team leader's name is Bob Power. I respect him and love him and would appreciate it if you would lift him up too. If for no other reason, he has to put up with me for a month!

I plan to write all of you again after I get back and let you know how the trip went so you can share in praising God for the results I know will come on this trip.

Thank you for being people that love me and love Jesus. I really do appreciate all of you.

(This is a warm personal letter that brought results even though no blunt appeal for money was made. The letter emphasizes the support team concept.)

GIVING ENVELOPE

Envelopes are provided upon your selection to a team to assist you in your fundraising efforts.

ONLINE GIVING

Now available is an easy and secure way to provide financial support. We invite you to tell your friends and family that they can give their support online at HoustonsFirst.org/missions.

Mission Trip:

Dates:

Fundraising Goal:

Potential Prospects:
