

Faith, Finances, and Fundraising

Youth With A Mission West Virginia @ Keyser

God sometimes uses finances as a way to stretch our faith when we consider getting involved in His work. Experience has shown us that many people coming to a YWAM program lack good understanding of faith and finances. It is important to put our trust in God and to believe that He will provide for all of our daily needs, including tuition fees and outreach costs.

YWAM'S FINANCIAL POLICY

Every leader, staff member, and volunteer in YWAM is dependent upon God for his or her own needs. No one in YWAM receives a salary. While we look to the Lord for provision, we realize that He usually does this through His people. It comes in different ways for each individual. Some receive regular support from their home church while others see their needs met through gifts from interested friends and family. Many times, YWAMers will give to one another as the Lord leads. In any case, each YWAMer have the right to personal ownership and responsibility of the money with which one has been entrusted. YWAM embraces this policy because of following reasons:

1. IT IS BIBLICAL

There are a number of examples in Scripture that show where God has others provide for those in full-time ministry "for His name's sake." Below are some biblical answers to fundraising questions.

- Is it biblical to be supported by others? (Num. 8:14, 18:21-24, Luke 8:1-3, Phil. 4:15-18)
- Is it biblical to make financial appeals for a missions project? (1 Cor. 16:5,6, 1 Kings 17:1-16)
- Is it biblical to ask people you don't know very well? (3 John 5-8)
- What about asking those who aren't as well off as you are? (2 Cor. 9:6,7, Luke 21:1-4)
- Does the Bible give guidelines for becoming wealthy? (Prov. 10:4, 11:24-26, 28:27, 21:5)

2. IT PROMOTES HEALTHY AND STRONGER RELATIONSHIPS

As we give to each other and pray for each other, we naturally gain a deeper friendship with that individual or group.

3. WE LEARN TO TRUST GOD MORE

Leaning on God helps us to be more dependent upon Him and interdependent of others.

WHAT IS FAITH?

The biblical definition of faith from Hebrews 11:1 is "being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see." Faith is when we hear God's word (Romans 10:17) and believe that what God said will come to pass. We must also understand what faith is not. Faith is not presumption. Presumption in financial areas is dangerous because it presumes God will provide money in an area He has not necessarily promised. Many people come up short on finances because they mistake presumption for faith. If you're attempting to get to the right place but at the wrong time, this may be the reason for hold up on financial provision. If the timing is right, then God will provide the necessary funds and orchestrate financial releases.

Faith is not wishful thinking. Faith is always based on God's character and His word that He has given us. It is believing and trusting that whatever God has promised will happen.

STEWARDSHIP PRINCIPLES

1. LIVE SACRIFICIALLY

Consider saving the money you usually spend on eating out, movies, coffee, and other non-essentials. If you do the possible, God will do the impossible.

2. BE FAITHFUL IN TITHING

The Bible instructs us to give God 10% of everything He provides for us. If you have a job or an allowance, are you giving God the small amount that He asks for? If not, that may be why you aren't receiving the bigger amounts you need for your trip. Jesus said, "Give and it will be given to you." Are you giving to other missionaries and people like you who have made missions a priority? It would be insincere for you to want money for your missions trip and not to support others.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS

1. PRAY (Phil. 4:6, James 2:26).

Spend time with God. Spend whatever amount of time it takes to discern His leading. The Bible instructs us that "you have not because you ask not" (James 4:2). Remember also that God's greatest priority is not just to supply us with the finances we need but to draw us closer to Himself. When God leads us in a certain direction and we do not have the funds to go further, we need to spend more time in prayer and seek additional counsel from our pastor and other mature Christians before proceeding.

2. WORK (2 Thes. 3:10; 1 Thes. 2:9; and 1 Cor. 4:12).

When we are faithful in the little He has given us He releases more (Luke 16:10-12). We must also be wise and disciplined by setting aside funds to pay for our upcoming fees. God may not provide if we squander what He brings our way, no matter how small.

3. SELL

Pray about possibly selling a personal possession. Selling a car, for example, can be a good means of providing funds.

4. SHARE YOUR VISION WITH PASSION

People need to see why you want to serve Jesus in this way. Get personal and meet with people face-to-face whenever possible. Don't use newsletters to raise support. It is the least personal and least effective way. Tell your friends, family, youth group, teacher, coach, employer—anyone you know who might be interested in your exciting plans. A face-to-face visit includes the following points:

a. Tell them why you need support

Show them YWAM materials and, if you can, your specific projects. God wants to tie the hearts of others into missions through their giving. Matthew 6:21 says, "Where your treasure is your heart will be also." God has not called us to be independent ministers but part of a team accountable to one another and confirmed in our calling by those who are led to support us.

b. Inform and give an overview of YWAM

Know the basics YWAM is an international, interdenominational mission founded in 1960 by Loren Cunningham. He had a vision of waves of young people splashing onto every continent in the world with the gospel. YWAM works through three main ways; Evangelism, sharing the gospel of Jesus Christ in every nation; Training, discipling people of all ages to know God and make Him known; and Mercy Ministry, demonstrating God's love to the needy in practical ways. YWAM has 17,000 full-time staff serving in more than 1,100 different locations in over 170 nations. YWAM trains 30,000 short-term volunteers annually in programs all over the world. Have something on paper, such as YWAM information or a personal prayer card to leave with them.

c. Illustrate and inspire

Don't just tell people you are going into missions. Explain how God called you to mission work. Share your testimony. Let them know what God has done in your life. Include any time when God used you in a specific way. Share what you believe He is calling you to do or be

Ask them to prayerfully consider sponsoring you for your mission work. If God leads them to give, they will depend on Him to do it. They will be blessed for their faith and sacrifice. Tell them how much money you need and your need for sponsorship. Here is a suggestion: If you need to raise \$750, you could ask 10 people for \$75, 15 people for \$50, or 20 people for \$37.50. Look them in the eye and ask them to go to God about your need. Get their prayer commitment on the spot! Ask them to pray about supporting you and make them aware of your deadline for raising finances.

e. Follow up

Be sure to call or visit those persons that you've asked to pray about giving financially to find out how the Lord has shown them to be involved. Follow up is essential in fundraising. It brings closure for you and for them. Without closure, the relationship could be strained. Call or visit them in a week or two and ask them how God is leading them to be involved. Remind them of their commitment, if they made one. Offer to pray for any personal needs they may have. Make sure to get their names and addresses so you can send a thank you note the next day.

HOW TO BLESS YOUR SPONSORS

- Send a thank you note immediately for any gifts you receive. Be sincere and straightforward with your appreciation.
- You should not only expect your sponsors to pray for you, but you should ask God to bless them. If you know they have specific needs, pray for those needs.
- Get your sponsors' names and addresses and send them a post card while you are gone. Bring back a small gift for each of your sponsors.

FOR FURTHER STUDY

Funding Your Ministry

Whether You Are Gifted Or Not

by Scott Morton / Dawson Media.

Friend Raising

Building A Missionary Support Team That Lasts

by Betty Barnett / YWAM Publishing.

Stepping Out

A Guide To Short Term Missions

YWAM Publishing

