



Biblical Perspective on MPD

Biblical basis and attitudes

Undoubtedly, attitude is the biggest determining factor in successful ministry partner development. No matter how great our expertise with the various support methods and materials, we can expect problems unless we have the proper attitude. Since our experience has found wrong attitudes to be at the root of most staff support problems, this entire first section will deal with the subject.

Four preliminary questions

Four preliminary questions need to be answered before we can get to the heart of this whole area of attitude. First, *"Exactly how is Campus Crusade for Christ International financed?"* The answer: By taking the initiative to approach people and present what we are doing, why we are doing it, and what we need financially to continue our activities.

This usually leads to the second question, *"Is our manner of generating funds consistent with biblical principles regarding financing full-time Christian workers?"* The answer is an unequivocal *"Yes!"*

Throughout history, God has freed His full-time workers financially to be able to carry out His work. Both Numbers 18:21 and 35 (entire chapter) point out the Israelites' responsibility to use their tithes to fund the work of the Levites (God's full-time workers in the Old Testament). Leviticus 27:30 and Malachi 3:10 reiterate the Old Testament mandate setting aside one-tenth of all Israel's wealth for the Lord's work.

The New Testament teachings are equally clear. Philippians 4 points out that Paul was supported financially by the church at Philippi and that this pleased God (see verses 10, 14-16 and 18). I Corinthians 9 teaches that those who do the Lord's work should be provided for financially. In fact, almost all of I Corinthians 9 and II Corinthians 8 and 9 is a rebuke to the church at Corinth for not supporting God's people. (Read

these three chapters in the Living Bible to get a feel for Paul's concern that the Corinthians support the Lord's workers.) Even Jesus and His friends displayed the truth of I Timothy 5:18 (*"The laborer is worthy of his wages"*) by depending on the gifts of friends for their financial needs.

Not only do we, as God's workers, depend on others for finances, but both the Old and New Testaments show that it is perfectly legitimate to take the initiative and ask for funds. In II Corinthians 8:6, Paul not only asks the Corinthians to support God's workers, he actually sends a delegation to make sure they come through on their support pledge. Nehemiah, when returning from exile to rebuild Jerusalem, asked and got the necessary funds from a pagan king (see Nehemiah 2:1-8). This incident in Nehemiah also sets a biblical precedent for approaching non-believers for financial involvement in Campus Crusade.

The third question that arises is, *"Why do we use this particular method?"* There are several reasons, but we'll touch on only two major ones. First, our method allows the rapid growth that is absolutely essential if we are to accomplish our objectives. Central fund raising systems would greatly hinder us. Second, this method provides a built-in control that helps maintain the high standards of excellence our work demands. In other words, it helps pare out those who are not called to staff as well as those who are insincere in their commitment to seeing lives changed through Christ.

A fourth question is *"What are the benefits for me and my ministry partners?"* Some benefits are:

- Your relationship to God will be enriched as you cling to Him and trust Him as never before. Going out on a limb for God will drive you to the Word and prayer.

- Your faith will greatly expand as you see God reach your support goal.
- This time often prepares you for these close-and sometimes demanding- interpersonal relationships that are a part of staff life, as God alters various attitudes and actions.
- This experience develops a prayer base for your ministry as you form personal relationships with your ministry partners.
- This is an opportunity to minister to people who may never be reached for Christ in any other way.

Your ministry partners will also benefit from this method as they are allowed to invest in something that has eternal consequences. They can personalize their giving by investing in a specific staff member's ministry. And, perhaps best of all, God promises to bless them for helping you (see Malachi 3:10, Philippians 4:17, Luke 6:38 and II Corinthians 9:6). Not only will He bless them financially, but many of your ministry partners will be blessed by their involvement in your life, by becoming Christians, by understanding the Spirit-filled life or perhaps by being called into full-time Christian service.

We are committed, as a ministry, to an emphasis on the "why's" of what we do. Hopefully, the answers to those four basic questions will help clarify the "why's" of our method of ministry partner development. If, for some reason, you still have questions about our method of generating support, contact one of the Campus Crusade directors for further explanation and clarification.

God's call

The key to a successful ministry partner development time is a proper understanding of God's call, His character, and His promises. Of foremost importance is an assurance of God's call. Hebrews 5:4,5 (Living Bible) points out that even Christ did not set about His earthly task without being called by the Father to do it. The reign of King Saul over Israel (I Samuel) underscores the absolute necessity of being called by God. With God's hand of blessing on him, Saul made tremendous strides; but as soon

as God revoked the call (I Samuel 15:26 is the turning point); Saul's refusal to acknowledge that revocation led to miserable failure. We need to ask ourselves why we are on staff. Is it a Christian graduate school for us? Is it because all our friends came on staff? Was it the only job available? Or did God call us to it? Before we ever attempt to develop a ministry team, we must be sure in our hearts and minds that God and only God has called us to be laborers. If we know God has called us, we can be assured of having our needs met. Moses, David, and Joshua, among others, are examples of God miraculously providing the needs of His called ones. If you are called, you, too, will become a living example of this. *"Faithful is He who calls you, and He also will bring it to pass"* (I Thessalonians 5:24).

God's character

But what are the character and resources of this God who promises to meet our needs? First, He is **all knowing**. He knows all your needs (not just financial). He knows who will be on your ministry team and how you are uniquely suited for one another. And He knows your weaknesses, strengths, and bad and good attitudes. Therefore, He can tailor-make your ministry partner development time for you.

God is also **all powerful**. He can turn the world upside-down if necessary to meet your financial needs. In Genesis 18:14 and Jeremiah 32:27, God asks the question, *"Is anything too difficult for me?"* Obviously not! Paul underscores the limitless power of God in his exhortation in Ephesians 1:19,20.

Since God's resources are infinite, He can **abundantly** provide. He is rich, rich, rich!! Psalms 50:10-12 teaches that **everything** on earth is God's and Ephesians 3:20 says that God is able to do infinitely beyond our highest prayers, desires, thoughts or hopes, -far more than we would ever dare to ask or even dream!

The Bible further teaches that God is **immutable**. Both Titus 1:2 and Hebrews 6:17,18 tell us that God can't lie. Numbers 23:19 states, *"God is not a man that He should lie, nor a son of man, that He should repent; has He said, and will He not do it? Or has He spoken, and will He not make it good?"* God does what He promises.

Proper attitude

In light of God's call, character and promises, what attitudes should we have toward ministry partner development?

First, we should have that "**ambassador glow.**" II Corinthians 5:20 says that we are Christ's ambassadors. It is important that we understand who we are: Royalty, children of the King of the universe, those who will one day rule the angels (I Corinthians 6:3); blessed with every spiritual blessing (Ephesians 1:3); holy and blameless before God (Ephesians 1:4); those who have been given all authority to reach the world (Matthew 28:18-20); etc. As we realize who we are, our attitude will reflect these facts, resulting not in brash confidence, but in the quiet, calm assurance and confidence of a representative of the King of kings.

Second, in view of all this, we must constantly have the attitude that **everything belongs to the Lord.** In Psalms 50:12, God says, "*For the world is Mine, and all it contains.*" Therefore, we should not be afraid to ask for what is already the Lord's.

Next, our attitude should reflect **the urgency of the time we live in.** Even most secular experts agree civilization seems to be moving toward a climax. At the same time, people have never been so open to the gospel. But history shows that this type of openness won't last forever. Never before has there been such a need for harvesters. Truly, people today are like sheep without a shepherd (Matthew 9:36,37). There is a desperate need for laborers to give these "sheep" help and guidance.

Fourth, we should realize that we can **have no higher calling than serving God full time.** Our culture considers accumulating things like power and money the high callings. In our present society, money is not that scarce. The rare and priceless commodity is committed, loyal and trustworthy people (Matthew 9:38). What more significant work could we have than affecting lives for eternity as we serve our King?

Fifth, we need to have the attitude that investing in us is a privilege for our investors. Our emphasis on the lordship of Christ, the ministry of the Holy Spirit, aggressive evangelism, strategic planning and intensive training is being used of God for unprecedented results. Nowhere could an investor get better mileage out of his dollar than by supporting God's work through

our staff. Our investors have a significant part in seeing men come to Christ; and, to top it off, our immutable God promises to give them multiplied blessings for helping us (Luke 6:38; Malachi 3:10 and Philippians 4:17,19). We can't repay our investors, but we know that God can and will.

Sixth, our attitude must be one of **quiet assurance and confidence** in God's character, promises and call. We must convey to our prospective investors that God will definitely raise our support; we just want to find out if they want to have a part in our lives and work.

The seventh attitude is that of **expecting results.** Remember, God is rich. He desires to abundantly provide for us (I Corinthians 9:8).

Finally, we need to have the attitude of **trusting the Lord,** rather than our plans and methods. Be flexible to the Lord's leading (Isaiah 55:8,9--Living Bible).

Bad attitudes

As we get involved in ministry partner development, some bad attitudes and problems sometimes creep in. One is that of seeing **dollars as the total goal.** When this occurs, we begin to regard support money as an end in itself. This can lead to staff vying for the same investor, or even detracting from a fellow staff member's support. In these instances, we need to remind ourselves that we are seeking to involve people in a **total** ministry and to develop personal relationships with these people. God will provide. We just need to **graciously** go about finding those He has chosen to be on our team. As far as our fellow staff are concerned, remember that God wants us to submit to one another and to be generous and kind to one another. In other words, we are our "brother's keeper."

A second bad attitude yields **an apologetic image** (i.e., "I hate to bother you. You don't want to invest, do you?"). This is basically a problem of poor self-image or a lack of boldness. Recall who you are, who has called you, what you've been called to, who owns everything and the privilege of the investor. To remedy timidity, follow the formula for boldness in Acts 4:5-31 (Living Bible): Be sure you are filled with the Spirit (v. 8), spend time with Jesus (v. 13), have the proper perspective concerning who has commanded you to talk to this prospective

investor (v. 19) and pray for boldness (vs. 29,31).

One of the most serious attitude problems that comes up is an erroneous view of our salary and reimbursement structure. This is the philosophy of getting by on as little as possible. Often accompanied by guilt at presenting our salary structure (especially to those who make less than us), a feeling persists that taking partial salary and no reimbursements is "spiritual." The real root of this problem is usually an attitude of "**God is on His last dime**," resulting in shoddy homes, poor dress and other things unbecoming to a royal ambassador of the King of Kings.

We must realize that godly, Spirit-filled men have spent long hours seeking the Lord's will regarding our salary and reimbursement structure. It has been set at the minimum necessary to properly carry on a worldwide ministry (i.e., homes in which you need not be embarrassed to have key people visit to challenge them to help us, dress that reflects well upon the Father and His work, and so forth).

Let's not forget that too little money can make us just as materialistic as too much money. If we are constantly operating on a financial shoestring, our minds will always be dwelling on one subject, not to mention the valuable ministry time that will be wasted as we spend long hours on such things as do-it-yourself repairs on our dilapidated cars, driving all over the city for the best price on toothpaste, etc. This attitude also calls God a liar. He says that He is rich and that He doesn't want us to just get by, but rather to have an abundance (II Corinthians 9:8), so we can be generous with others. We might note in passing, the extreme importance of our generosity in cheerfully giving to the Lord's work. We, too, are subject to the law that we "get" in proportion to what we give (II Corinthians 9:6). Many staff support problems can be traced to poor giving habits.

Also, recall (especially when talking to those who make less than we do) that God has called each of His children to a different role in life. If we are in His will, we don't have to feel guilty about making more than some of our investors. We need the salary we get to execute God's will for this movement and its staff.

Men with families should be aware of the fact that the Bible teaches that an inadequate provider is worse than an unbeliever (I Timothy 5:8). Our goal before God should be that of financial integrity in all areas, along with developing good financial habits now that will stand us in good stead for the rest of our lives. This will be a great testimony to the Lord, as people marvel at how well we live on such limited salaries. We should be aware that portraying a loser's image--one that hints, "*You should feel sorry for me and help me because I live so meagerly*"--hurts our ministry and support, since people are usually repelled by this negative frame of mind.

Attitude problem number four is an **inferiority complex**. The enemy often accomplishes this by convincing you that you aren't as good as the wealthy prospective investors to whom you talk. The antidote to this is, again, remembering who you are (i.e. royalty, a child of the King, etc.) and recalling the privilege of the investor. Reaffirm to yourself that the prospective investor could not get better mileage from his dollars than from investing in you--yours is a high calling and your work will have eternal impact.

A fifth problem that sometimes appears is the feeling that **we are just another worthy cause**. We begin to consider ourselves on the same level as hundreds of charities seeking funds, with the result that we feel we are bothering people and putting another drain on their budget. However, what God has called us to do as His servants and "just another worthy cause" shouldn't be even mentioned together in the same sentence. Our ministry is in response to a mandate from the God of the universe. By the eternal nature of our solution, we will get lasting results that deal with the root of man's problems. Unlike secular organizations, we have God's promise that He will bless our ministry team. To refrain from approaching a person for team development is to steal from him that opportunity for divine blessing.

The last attitude problem we will touch on is the "**Comparison Blues**." This results when you find out that another staff member has generated much more financial backing than you. So, you begin to think that God is unfair or that there is something wrong with you. Perhaps you even wonder if you are in God's will. When this attitude threatens, consider the fact that God is not rushed by the clock. He is working from and for eternity. His prime concern is your total

needs, not just getting you to your assignment. He has tailor-made your support time perfectly for you, including how long it takes. Galatians 6:4 (Living Bible) says that we should do the best we can in the power of the Holy Spirit, then we won't have to compare ourselves with others. After all, Jesus Himself taught that it isn't any of our business how He handles others (John 21:21,22). We should concentrate on how He is dealing with **us** and rejoice that He won't allow anything to happen to us that is not in our best interest.

Handling problems

But no matter how much we concentrate on good support attitudes, problems are going to arise. The question is how should we respond to them. Ephesians 5:20 (Living Bible) gives the answer: "*Always give thanks for everything to our God and Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.*" That "*everything*" includes problems that arise during support time.

The logical question that comes up is, "*Why in the world should we give thanks for the bad things that befall us?*" Scripture again provides some answers. I Thessalonians 5:18 says that we should give thanks because it is God's will. That in itself is enough, but the Word elaborates far more. Philippians 4:6,7 (Living Bible) points out that praying and thanking God for problems will result in God's peace which operates independently of circumstances. Also, Romans 8:28 teaches that **everything** (including problems) that happens to us is working for our good.

Perhaps the most encouraging Scripture on the positive results of problems is found in James. "*Dear brothers, is your life full of difficulties and temptations? **Then be happy**, for when the way is rough, your patience has a chance to grow. So let it grow, and **don't try to squirm out of your problems**. For when your patience is finally in full bloom, then you will be ready for anything, strong in character, full and complete.*" (James 1:2-4, Living Bible) Note that we are admonished to rejoice when we have problems. Why? Because if we meet our problems head-on in the power of the Holy Spirit (as opposed to squirming out of them), we will be developing those priceless commodities we call patience and strength of character. Never before has there been such a need for people with strong character to provide firm, patient leadership for God's flock. Frankly, problems are the method

God uses to provide you with character that is strong--full and complete.

Romans 5:3-5 (NIV Bible) continues in this same vein, "*Not only so, but we also rejoice in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope. And hope does not disappoint us, because God has poured out his love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, whom he has given us.*" What a tremendous perspective on problems Paul gives. Not only does he mention patience and strength of character as results, but he gives us a preview of where God is taking us: God is actually using problems in our lives so we can come to the point where we can live totally above circumstances. What freedom God wants us to have--freedom from circumstances! No wonder the Bible commands us to respond to problems by thanking God for them.

Tips on prayer

In this section, we'll consider three tips on prayer that are invaluable during this time. First, **pray and act as if the support you need is already yours**. Jesus made an outstanding statement in Mark 11:24 when He said, "*Therefore I say to you, all things for which you pray and ask, believe that you have received them, and they shall be granted you.*" He did not say believe that you will receive, and then your request will be granted. He said we need to believe that we already have what we are requesting and then we will receive it. Many times a day we should thank God that we already have our support and that it is just a matter of time before the human reality catches up with the divine reality. Not only will this revolutionize our prayer life, but it will also make the actual ministry partner development time a lot more relaxed and joyful, because the only uncertainty is **where** the support will come from, not if it will come in.

Second, our **prayer life needs to be honest**. Too often we tell God what we think He wants to hear, rather than what's really on our hearts. When we are discouraged, we need to tell Him. When we feel He has let us down, we need to express that opinion to Him. This is especially important during support time because of its rigorous and demanding nature. Many times God will be the only one to whom you can pour your heart out, so learn to be transparent with Him.

A last tip is to **refuse to operate without joy**. John 15:10,11 promises that a natural result of obedience is joy. As we obediently go out to develop our ministry team, we can expect a joyful experience because an immutable, all-powerful God promises it. When the enemy steals our joy, ask God to reveal any unconfessed sin (don't introspect). If God clearly puts His finger on something, we need to confess it and appropriate the fullness of His Spirit. Then move out in the power of the Spirit and persistently claim that promised joy through prayer until God blesses us. (See Luke 18:1-7 for a great parable on the importance of persistent prayer.) As we go about our Father's business, that promised joy will come flooding in, making our whole support time a joyful experience rather than a dreadful obligation