

Why YWAMers Raise Support

*An interview with YWAM's founder, Loren Cunningham
regarding why we raise support.*

By Loren Cunningham

Why are all YWAM missionaries required to raise support?

I think it would be wrong to say all YWAM missionaries are required to raise support, because many of them have independent support. We have those that have retired from the military, and those that have other kinds of financial arrangements where they've made investments, and so on. But certainly the majority would need to be concerned about what system they're going to use in order to take care of their needs.

Jesus Himself gives us the pattern. And I think the Jesus way of fund raising is the key. In Luke 8:1-3 it says He had a team who supported Him. It wasn't a fund. It wasn't someone else doing it for Him. It was relational, between Jesus and the ones He had ministered to. He was accountable, in a sense, to them because of their giving.

How did Paul get his support? Obviously, he was following the Jesus way, where individuals who knew him and that he had ministered to were able to give to him.

What are the benefits of this type of funding?

I think the main benefit is that the leader is not able to use money to manipulate people. When you remove money, you remove a major area of control. And the spirit of control is one of the most devastating spirits to ministries.

Another one of the strengths of this is that it's all done personally. Then prayer also becomes one of the keys, not only my praying for the supporters, but the supporters will pray for me, because where they put their treasure there their heart will be. Where their heart is their prayer support will be. And then in turn they get the news out to their nieces, nephews, friends, relatives, sons, daughters, parents and they might end up coming with YWAM and being part of the mission force.

So it's recruitment, it's accountability, it's good communication, it's prayer support, it's a stability financially. It's a whole lot of things, but the key goes back to relationship.

To ask for money or not to ask. What is YWAM's view?

I think it's not a matter of what YWAM's view is, but what is appropriate. And appropriateness depends on society, and it depends on the closeness of relationship. If you build everything on relationship, then you don't do anything that'll violate the relationship. When you're close, and you communicate, I don't think you're always communicating about money. It comes in maybe once a year, but if you make it a big

deal, and that's your purpose, they're going to know it's your purpose and nobody wants that kind of relationship.

Some organizations have a reputation of being very assertive about asking, but on the whole, YWAM isn't that way. Is there a reason for this?

I think our ethos has grown up with us, and most of the people who are with us appreciate the way we do it because they're used to it, if nothing else. But by saying that, I don't judge others that have been assertive. But they need to be consistent in the way they do it because people will get used to that. If you startle people, if you are abrasive or abusive, then that will destroy the friendship. It all comes back to understanding and being sensitive within the relationship, and that's the whole key.

Is it okay for YWAM staff to supplement their support income by working part time?

I think the first issue is you have to clarify your call. Is your call full-time into YWAM? And if it is yes, then you should expect to give at least a 40-hour week. Now, can you with your time do other things? Well, the answer would be obviously, it is your own time. But it should not conflict, nor should it in any way compromise who you are in your mission work.

In other words, if you're always saying, "Well, I'm sorry I can't go over there and teach because of my part-time job," that part-time job needs to go. If I can't say anything in YWAM, I can't do this kind of thing in YWAM because it will reflect on my part-time job, you're in the wrong job. There are some roles that you could take, depending on who you are in YWAM, what role you take in YWAM, and how mobile you are in YWAM. In a sense, it's second best, but it's certainly not disapproved.

What would you like to say to YWAMers who might be struggling because of a shortage of personal support?

The thing I would encourage is that you would get alongside a mentor in this area and find someone who will really walk you through it. Many of you are thinking you don't have relationships like this. But you do somewhere, and somebody else can help you find them.

Secondly, I would always start with communicating the big picture. What is YWAM doing worldwide? What is YWAM doing in my region? What is YWAM doing on my base? I'm a part of that. And then, what I am doing is last. If you give them the big picture, then they see where you fit into it.

When this is done, you will find it takes a while, but usually their involvement comes along. I've watched my own daughter do this, and she's not a strong communicator, and yet she has her faithful supporters because she's had help and she did it right.

Ref: categorie(s): GLT's Advice, Support Raising