

Writing Support Letters

- A. Never make your first communication with your sponsors a newsletter, make it a personal one. Write a handwritten note to accompany each printed letter. Give your correspondents encouragement and remind them of your prayers for them. Share with them what God is doing, be honest about your own needs. If you have not written or spoken to them in a long time, do not make your first contact with them a fundraising letter. Think of how you would feel. Make a call, go see them etc.
- B. Our obligation is not to preach but to inform, encourage, develop greater friendships, edify our friends, and evoke responses of widening obedience and deepening relationships to the Lord as we share how He meets us in real ways and expresses grace through our lives.
- C. Make it as personal as possible.
- D. If possible, handwrite the address.
- E. Include an exact date, not a month and year, it will hold you accountable to get it out by then and it makes it more personal.
- F. Make the presentation clean and clear. Using a text that is easy to read (use serif texts-those with hooks). Your letter should sound natural and from the heart. Try imagining what you would write to one of your closest friends and use that.
- G. Say more with less. Make short sentences, with punchy, powerful words.
- H. Your letter should only be one page of text at most!!! Make sure to tab and paragraph often, to make the letter easier to read.
- I. Include photographs, including one of you. Include a caption under each one.
- J. Your first paragraph should catch your reader's attention immediately. Make it inviting in a friendly way or dynamic in impact, maybe with a story of a recent event etc.
- K. Be specific about your needs. Most Westerners don't like hints, they prefer specifics: what the need is (\$1500), the time frame for response (within three weeks), and the purpose of the donation (transportation to a specific field etc.) Include where they should send it to (Checks payable to.... Your donation is tax deductible...) SEND THE CHECKS TO YOUR CHURCH! And have them make out the checks to your church, including your name and trip in the memo line.
- L. PROOFREAD!!!! No one likes a letter with misspelled words.
- M. Avoid state-of-being verbs. (is, was, are, am, be) ex: You can **be** praying for our ministry this summer. Please **pray** for our ministry this summer.
- N. Add a personal note, even if it's just at the bottom of the letter. Sign each letter as well. Write it in blue ink.

- O. Include a response card and a self addressed envelope for them to send back their support in. (This is optional)
- P. Keep copies of your own letters, for future reference and so each letter can build on the next.
- Q. Write regularly. Every two to three months is recommended. Update those who have given to your trip when you get home!
- R. PRAY!!!! Pray over the letters before you send them out.

An example:

January 21, 2016

Dear friends and family,

Can you envision a land where cows are holy, animal sacrifices are a weekly occurrence and human cremations take place daily? I want to share with you a challenging ministry opportunity God has presented to me. During March 28 - April 10, I will be going to Bangkok and Nepal with a team from Church on the Hill.

Our one week trip will focus on Hindu and Buddhist cultures in this area of the world that is often referred to as 'the heart of darkness.' The purpose of our trip is threefold:

First, we will be allowing God to work in our lives through the personal enrichment that comes from this type of a mission trip.

Second, this Prayer Journey will help us focus our individual prayers by traveling to a foreign land and praying 'on-site with insight.' We will pray for the Hindu and Buddhist people that God may open their eyes and hearts to the message of Jesus.

Third, we will encourage local Christians in Bangkok and Kathmandu. Our presence will bolster their spirits and support their work. We will visit many small villages in Nepal where we will develop relationships with the Christians there.

I'm excited about the opportunity and experiences that lie ahead. As you can imagine, a trip like this requires financial support from a number of people. I need to raise \$1,800 by March 5th. If you can support me in a financial way or in prayer, I would be very grateful. I believe that God answers prayers, and I'm asking you to pray for safety, good health, smooth travel, and financial support. Just knowing that you will be praying will give me peace as I go into an unfamiliar place.

If you would like to be part of this mission through your financial support, send a check to: Church on the Hill, PO Box 3815, Cedar Hill, Texas 75106. Please make your check payable to Church on the Hill and write "(The name of your missions country)" and my name on the memo line. All contributions are tax deductible. Thank you for supporting me in reaching the people of Bangkok and Nepal, you are making a difference. May God bless you and your family.

Because They Haven't Heard,
Sam Student

