

Name:



Leader's Guide

Caring for Global Missionaries

Updated May 2023

1. How have you seen others care for missionaries? How does your church/ campus group care for missionaries?
2. What makes it hard to care for missionaries?

Answers might include: out of sight and out of mind, not sure where to begin, concerns about security for some locations, too much effort for too little gain (searching for 'tangible' results)

3. Is caring for missionaries important? Why? What is something missionaries might find difficult or impossible to access where they serve that we have here?

This question offers an opportunity to draw out some of the unique challenges of global mission and therefore why missionaries need particular support. For missionaries are not 'spiritual giants,' but ordinary Christians facing big differences: culture, language, a lack of spiritual resources, far from family and simple Christian community. It may also be worth asking another question prior to or alongside this: 'Whose role is it to care for missionaries?' Answers could include: God, themselves, family, mission agency, partner churches, individual partners, receiving churches.

<p>3 John 5:5-8</p>	<p>Beloved, it is a faithful thing you do in all your efforts for these brothers, strangers as they are, who testified to your love before the church. You will do well to send them on their journey in a manner worthy of God. For they have gone out for the sake of the name, accepting nothing from the Gentiles. Therefore we ought to support people like these, that we may be fellow workers for the truth.</p>
<p>Matthew 10:40</p>	<p>“Whoever receives you receives me, and whoever receives me receives him who sent me. The one who receives a prophet because he is a prophet will receive a prophet’s reward, and the one who receives a righteous person because he is a righteous person will receive a righteous person’s reward. And whoever gives one of these little ones even a cup of cold water because he is a disciple, truly, I say to you, he will by no means lose his reward.”</p>
<p>Philippians 1:3-12</p>	<p>I thank my God in all my remembrance of you, always in every prayer of mine for you all making my prayer with joy, because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now. And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ. It is right for me to feel this way about you all, because I hold you in my heart, for you are all partakers with me of grace, both in my imprisonment and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel. For God is my witness, how I yearn for you all with the affection of Christ Jesus. And it is my prayer that your love may abound more and more, with knowledge and all discernment, so that you may approve what is excellent, and so be pure and blameless for the day of Christ, filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God. I want you to know, brothers, that what has happened to me has really served to advance the gospel, so that it has become known throughout the whole imperial guard and to all the rest that my imprisonment is for Christ.</p>
<p>Philippians 1:27-2:2</p>	<p>Only let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear of you that you are standing firm in one spirit, with one mind striving side by side for the faith of the gospel, and not frightened in anything by your opponents. This is a clear sign to them of their destruction, but of your salvation, and that from God. For it has been granted to you that for the sake of Christ you should not only believe in him but also suffer for his sake, engaged in the same conflict that you saw I had and now hear that I still have. So if there is any encouragement in Christ, any comfort from love, any participation in the Spirit, any affection and sympathy, complete my joy by being of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind.</p>
<p>Philippians 2:25-30</p>	<p>I have thought it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus my brother and fellow worker and fellow soldier, and your messenger and minister to my need, for he has been longing for you all and has been distressed because you heard that he was ill. Indeed he was ill, near to death. But God had mercy on him, and not only on him but on me also, lest I should have sorrow upon sorrow. I am the more eager to send him, therefore, that you may rejoice at seeing him again, and that I may be less anxious. So receive him in the Lord with all joy, and honor such men, for he nearly died for the work of Christ, risking his life to complete what was lacking in your service to me.</p>
<p>Philippians 4:10-19</p>	<p>I rejoiced in the Lord greatly that now at length you have revived your concern for me. You were indeed concerned for me, but you had no opportunity. Not that I am speaking of being in need, for I have learned in whatever situation I am to be content. I know how to be brought low, and I know how to abound. In any and every circumstance, I have learned the secret of facing plenty and hunger, abundance and need. I can do all things through him who strengthens me. Yet it was kind of you to share my trouble. And you Philippians yourselves know that in the beginning of the gospel, when I left Macedonia, no church entered into partnership with me in giving and receiving, except you only. Even in Thessalonica you sent me help for my needs once and again. Not that I seek the gift, but I seek the fruit that increases to your credit. I have received full payment, and more. I am well supplied, having received from Epaphroditus the gifts you sent, a fragrant offering, a sacrifice acceptable and pleasing to God. And my God will supply every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus. To our God and Father be glory forever and ever. Amen.</p>

4. What can we learn from the Bible about partnership and caring for missionaries?

This table offers a significant selection of 'partnership passages.' One way to use this question is to read through all passages then draw out what participants have observed about partnership. You could use only some passages, draw observations in stages, and/or begin by asking which book of the Bible is almost entirely about caring for missionaries (i.e. 3 John). PLEASE NOTE: Prayer and financial support are not the only ways to care for missionaries, yet they are two of the most significant. This study is intended to be used in conjunction with the praying and giving studies. If using as a stand-alone, perhaps emphasise this point. If using together with the other studies, this study could come first and lead into a deeper study of the two fundamental means OR the connection could be made explicit.

Some observations: Believers love missionaries, even when they are strangers, sending them on their journey and by so doing become their fellow workers. Paul's affections are deep. He remembers them and remembers to pray. Paul informs his partners. Holiness matters for prayer and partnership - Paul will hear of their united endurance, their obedience completing his joy. The Macedonians sent manpower to meet Paul's need. What is lacking in our service? In his contentedness, Paul does not 'need' them to meet his needs, but rejoices in the gift.

Something to ponder: DeYoung and Gilbert argue concerning Matthew 10:40-42 and Matthew 25:31-56 that "The context is Jesus's sending out his disciples to do itinerant ministry (10:5-15). In the face of persecution and a hostile world (10:16-39), Jesus wants to encourage his followers to care for the traveling minister no matter the cost. The disciples would be solely dependent upon the good will of others to welcome them, feed them, and support them in their traveling work. So Jesus assures his followers that to show love in this way is actually to love him...Matthew 25 is certainly about caring for the needy. But the needy in view are fellow Christians, especially those dependent on our hospitality and generosity for their ministry...What Jesus says is this: if we are too embarrassed, too lazy, or too cowardly to support fellow Christians at our doorstep who depend on our assistance and are suffering for the sake of the gospel, we will go to hell."

Note: Ed Grudier, missiologist at SMBC, points to 2 Corinthians 7:5-7 as another significant partnership passage and notes that in the many hardships Paul faced he found encouragement from visiting co-workers (and the encouragement they experienced from God's people).

5. What ideas do you have/can we come up with for caring for missionaries?

Brainstorm before turning the page for some pre-supplied ideas. This may be a good time to mention the reality of secure missionaries who require careful communication (see the first of the further resources on the last page – [appendix 1](#)).

6. Which will you do?

Start by asking your missionary partner how you can care for them.	Share something encouraging with your missionary. A verse, a sermon, a podcast, a book, etc.	Ask your missionaries' agency if your skills or labour could be of service.
Reply (consistently) to your missionaries' updates. Pray for them. Then tell them you're praying.	Give sacrificially, regularly, and cheerfully.	Send resources to help with their work. Ask them first!
Advocate for your missionary. Pray for them with friends. Adopt them as a small group. Promote them at church.	Whenever your missionary returns: welcome them. Be at the airport, send a gift, visit/ invite.	<i>Your idea:</i>
Ask your missionary if there is a structure set up to care for them (prayer group, home support group). Join and participate.	When your missionary returns for a short time: Could you meet a need – small (groceries/meals) or big (lend a car)? Ask first!	<i>Your idea:</i>
Remember special events. Celebrate their birthdays. Include them in church events.	When your missionary returns for a long time: How could you help them resettle?	<i>Your idea:</i>

Appendix 1: Further Resources

1) **CMS** (The Church Missionary Society)

a) Caring & Security:

cms.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/Security-A-Communications-Guide-for-CMS-Supporters-2016.pdf

b) Get Involved/ care: cms.org.au/get-involved/care

c) Caring from afar: cms.org.au/blog-nswact/how-to-care-for-your-missionaries-from-afar

2) **Missions Interlink**

Caring as a church:

missionsinterlink.org.au/resources/guide-for-local-churches-on-caring-for-missionaries-on-the-job

3) **Missions Interlink**

Caring as a church:

resonateglobalmission.org/stories-more/8-ways-your-congregation-can-care-missionaries

4) **IMB** (International Mission Board)

Caring- "The 3C's":

imb.org/2019/08/07/caring-missionaries-connection-three-cs

5) **Serge** (International Mission Board)

Ways to care:

serge.org/blog/10-unique-ways-to-care-for-your-missionary

If appropriate, further resources recommended (by Ed Grudier) in book format on

'caring' for missionaries include:

- [Missionary Care: Counting the Cost for World Evangelisation](#) (Kelly O'Donnell)
- [Mind the Gaps: Engaging the Church in Missionary Care](#) (David J. Wilson)
- [Worth Keeping: Global Perspectives on Best Practice in Missionary Retention](#) (Multiple Authors)