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**Staying the Course – Giving**

We can stay the course after a short-term mission trip by continuing to support missions financially. While giving starts as an act of obedience, it can become a joyful journey with God. Giving to the local church is our first priority, yet it continues with offerings and sacrificial gifts to those in need, local ministries and missions around the world. You’ve experienced this personally if others gave financially to help you serve on your short-term mission. Here are some strategic ways to grow in your generosity and some ideas for your next steps.

**RESOURCES TO HELP YOU LEARN AND GROW AS A GENEROUS GIVER**

[God and Your Stuff: The Vital Link Between Your Possessions and Your Soul](http://www.ecfa.org/Content/God-And-Your-Stuff)
by Wesley K. Willmer, NavPress, 2002

Countless Christians are not aware of the connection between their faith and their finances. Many believers feel their income is too limited to give. Others want to share in the work of God’s Kingdom but don’t know where to start. In God and Your Stuff, Wesley Willmer challenges the thinking that what we do with our stuff has no effect on the Christian life. An established authority on stewardship as a spiritual discipline, Willmer lays a biblical foundation for the crucial connection between our eternal souls and our earthly possessions.

 [Igniting a Life of Generosity](http://www.ecfa.org/Content/Igniting-a-Life-of-Generosity)
by Chris McDaniel, ECFA publishing, 2011.

A devotional for those who desire to better understand the wonderful experiences the Bible offers when we grow in the grace of giving. The devotional is divided into three sections: “What does God want you to know?” “What does He want you to do?” and “Ignite the Fire.” Each day contains anecdotes and stories from popular Christian leaders and authors that explore the heart of giving.

[The Treasure Principle: Unlocking the Secret of Joyful Giving](http://www.epm.org/store/product/treasure-principle/)
by Randy Alcorn, Multnomah Books, 2005

"You couldn't pay me enough not to give," exclaims the bestselling author, who believes there's a higher motivation for giving than guilt. "Giving infuses life with joy. It interjects an eternal dimension into even the most ordinary day." Alcorn bases his brief, motivational message on the words of the world's foremost financial consultant, Jesus Christ, who advised listeners to "store up for yourselves treasures in heaven" (Matthew 6:20). In a concise power-packed style, he leads the reader toward the Treasure Principle mindset by proposing and illustrating key truths. "God owns everything," writes Alcorn. "I'm His money manager. What I call my money is really His. The question is, "What does He want me to do with His money?"

**PRACTICAL NEXT STEPS**

**Time**

* Volunteer to serve on your church mission team.  If there are no openings on the team, volunteer to serve where needed for various projects or as a mentor for future short-termers.
* When missionaries are back on home assignment and visiting, volunteer to coordinate a dessert or reception for them with supporters and friends.
* Find a local ministry that your church is connected with and volunteer to serve where needed.

**Talent**

* Look at your special abilities and experiences after completing the S.H.A.P.E. assessment.  Ask the missionary or national that hosted your short-term team if they could use any of these from a distance to help further their mission on the field. If yes, begin utilizing your talents to make a difference on the field.
* If your host or national doesn’t see a fit, ask the missionaries your church supports a similar question. Most likely there will be a fit for you. You have an opportunity to strengthen your connection with them and your commitment to the missions your church regularly supports.
* Offer your talents to assist the church mission team or one of the local, ongoing ministries your church is involved with.

**Treasure**

* Find out if your church has a missions fund.  If so, start giving to it.
* If you made a connection with your host missionary or national while on your STM, find out what their financial needs are and start supporting them.
* Visit some recommended generosity sites that offer multiple opportunities for giving. Pray, review and pick a mission or ministry and start supporting them.