

## How to Pray for Missionaries

Jesus gave us a prayer request. Only once in Scripture do we find that He asked His believers to pray specifically for anything. Nowhere did He ask us to pray for the harvest that it would bring forth much fruit. Rather, Jesus said, "The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few; pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth laborers into his harvest" (Matthew 9:37-38).

We have been commissioned to go into all the world and to preach the gospel. Not all of us can physically go to the far-flung corners of this world, but there are men and women who have answered the call to "go." Those of us who cannot go in person should still have the same commitment to win the lost. We, too, must have a burden and love for the lost humanity. We must develop a strong prayer support system for our missionaries.

You may ask, "How can I pray for the missionaries? What are their needs? How do I pray for someone so far away whom I do not know and perhaps may never see?"

1. First of all, pray for the missionaries' personal needs. Call their name in prayer.

\*Pray for the missionary children by name.

- Pray for the missionaries' personal relationship with God, realizing that missionaries are people like we are. They have their spiritual conflicts; they are not super humans. In fact, many times they face a stronger onslaught from Satan than we may have to face in our North American church culture.

\*Pray for the missionaries' physical and emotional needs. Good health is so needed to enable them to fulfill the great responsibility that God has placed upon their lives and ministries. The medical facilities in many countries are far below the expected or desired. If a missionary should become very ill, it may be almost impossible to receive adequate treatment.

\*Pray against emotional distress such as discouragement, depression, loneliness, and homesickness.

\*Pray that the missionaries can make the necessary adjustments to living on their fields of labor. Many times missionaries live in extreme climates.

\*Pray also for protection as they travel, often under adverse conditions.

2. Pray for the effective ministry of the missionaries. The Lord is able to open doors that are seemingly locked tight—if we but pray!

\*Pray for revival in each nation and region of our world. Do you know that when we pray in this manner that we are actually speeding up the return of our Lord Jesus Christ? "And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come" (Matthew 24:14).

\*Ask Jesus to make the missionaries effective soulwinners.

\*Pray that they can communicate the gospel of Jesus Christ to a people who may have never heard before. Include in your prayer for the Lord to give to the missionaries boldness and spiritual understanding in dealing with the people to whom they are ministering.

\*Pray that God's love will fill the missionaries' hearts for the people they desire to win.

\*Pray for God's anointing to rest upon the missionaries and their efforts.

\*Pray for freedom to preach the gospel and that the people will be responsive to the message.

3. Relationships are very important to all of us, even more so in the life of missionaries. Many times they have very few close friends, perhaps just their family. Ask the Lord to keep the missionaries' family knit together—husband and wife, parent and child.

\*If more than one missionary is working in the same country, pray for unity among them that they together could reach the people that are waiting to hear this saving message. If one can put to flight a thousand and two ten thousand, then we can surely see the importance of unity among co-workers.

\*Pray for good relationships among the national workers. The missionaries are in no way superior to those among whom they work.

\*Pray that the Lord will help the missionaries develop good national leaders that will multiply their efforts. May the missionaries' burden become also the burden of the national workers.

4. A great need exists to pray for the countries where the missionaries live and minister. Include in that prayer the governmental leaders of the nations and the political situations.

\*Pray that the missionaries would find favor in the eyes of those in high places that can help to further the kingdom.

\*Pray for any special meetings in the country where the missionaries are located, such as revivals, crusades, or conferences.

\*Pray for the establishment of a strong national church and for the national leaders and ministers as they carry forth this same great commission that has so occupied the hearts and minds of their missionaries. Discipling is very important to evangelizing the world.

\*Pray for the national Bible schools—the students, the teachers, the support staff.

5. All the above prayer has been for the missionaries living and working abroad. We need also to pray for the time that they are in the homeland. Traveling many months away from their home and often from their family is a very difficult time. The fact that the missionaries' burden is for their work many miles away adds to this difficulty.

\*Pray for protection for our missionaries as they travel throughout North America and share their burden with the home church. Pray that the missionaries would quickly raise all the necessary funds and support needed to be able to return to the field as soon as possible.

## Conclusion

\*An almost unending list of needs can help you pray for our missionaries. Those cited here are but a few suggestions. Pray knowledgeably. Learn all you can about the mission work in general and any one, two, or three missionaries in particular. Focus on a specific missionary family, rather than just the generalization of praying for all the missionaries. This will help you to target in on specific needs and prayer requests.

\*Pray with fasting. When you add fasting to your prayers, Satan's strongholds are broken down.

\*Pray believing. "Whatever things you ask when you pray, believe that you receive them, and you will have them" (Mark 11:24). Pray with confidence, knowing that you are making a difference. "The effectual fervent prayer of the righteous man availeth much" (James 5:16).

\*Do you forget to praise God for answered prayers. Give Him praise due for answering your petitions.

\*As you pray, praise Him in advance for the prayers He is going to answer. Revival is taking place all around the world. Missionaries are seeing and experiencing God's mighty move. These victories will continue as you pray.

\*Focused prayer for missionaries will also help you receive a greater love and vision for the lost around you. You will become closer to God in your personal walk.

\*Pray consistently. Have a regular, systematic method of praying. No matter how many times you fail in your prayer commitments, you can start again. Do not be discouraged. You can make a difference. Your missionaries are depending on you and your prayers!

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