

Praying for Missionaries

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The very nature of mission work demands that we as the church pray for missionaries. When the church does not pray for missionaries, we are sending them out to fight a very dangerous and destructive enemy without any weapons. Praying for missionaries is essential for every church! The fulfillment of the Great Commission becomes possible as the church is on its knees praying for “Missionaries” and the advancement of “Kingdom Work.”

When it comes to mission work, many believers may not feel called to go to Africa, Asia, or Europe. But Jesus made it very clear that every believer is called on to “**PRAY**” for more workers to go work!

Then He said to His disciples, “The harvest is abundant, but the workers are few. Therefore, pray to the Lord of the harvest to send out workers into His harvest.” (Matthew 9:37, 38)

How important “then” is prayer when it comes to mission work? Can God’s global kingdom work continue without His people praying? James reminds us that, “*The intense prayer of the righteous is very powerful.*” (James 5:16)

According to scripture, the key to mission advancement and success is for the church to pray for missionaries and mission work. Three things take place when the church is praying for its missionaries and for mission work.

1. More missionaries will be called and sent.

How can we get more missionaries on the mission field? Jesus said that it is “YOUR PRAYER” and “MY PRAYER” that puts believers on the mission field. **Prayer gets people to the mission field!** There is a great vacancy of missionaries on the mission field today. The population growth of lost-ness is staggering in all parts of our world. Regardless of where you live or go, the vast majority of people are lost and without Christ! As the church prays, God will call believers to go into the harvest fields of lost-ness. **Prayer gets people to the mission field!**

James tells us that “*we have not because we ask not*” (James 4:2). Jesus said, “*Ask and it will be given to you*” (Matthew 7:7). We are told to “pray” so that the Father will call and send more workers into the harvest. God has chosen to include “you and I” as part of the process for Kingdom Advancement. What a privilege we as believers have! God did not “have” to do it that way but He “chose” to do it that way.

2. More missionaries will stay on the mission field.

Prayer “keeps” missionaries on the mission field! Missionaries are bombarded with many different kinds of problems. They will struggle with loneliness, isolation, and often **time** sickness. Our prayers will help to keep missionaries on the mission field. The Apostle Paul asked the Roman church to help him in his mission work by praying for him.

Brothers and sisters, I beg you to help me in my work by praying to God for me. ... (Romans 15:30).

Pray in the Spirit at all times with all kinds of prayers, . . . Always pray for all God’s people (Ephesians 6:18).

Do you know that one of the biggest concerns on the mission field is “How to keep missionaries on the field?” Often times while I was living overseas, I would get discouraged and want to “go home.” It was the prayers of churches that kept me on the mission field. The attrition rate for veteran missionaries is very low. There are many reasons why it is low such as sickness, finances, the physical needs of aging parents back home, the needs of missionary kids, discouragement from language learning, the slow progress of the mission work, and hundreds of other issues.

Listen to the encouraging words of the Apostle Paul as he wrote to the Corinthians while he and his group of missionaries were serving in Asia.

*Brothers and sisters, we want you to know about the **trouble we suffered** in Asia. We had **great burdens** there that were beyond our own strength. We even **gave up hope of living** . . . And you can help us with your **prayers**. Then many people will give thanks for us – that God blessed us because of their many **prayers** (II Cor. 1:8-11).*

Did you notice that Paul mentioned to them that his mission team was suffering? Notice, that the team was burdened “beyond their own strength” to bear the burden. Also notice that Paul and the others were so discouraged that “some gave up hope of living.” Most important in this passage is Paul’s request that the Corinthian Church “**pray**” for him and his team.

There is nothing more encouraging, more profitable and of more value to missionaries than when the church is on its knees praying for them. It is when the church is on its knees praying for their missionaries that the missionaries are empowered to do their work effectively! If the church is not praying for their missionaries, then the missionaries will be weak in faith and powerless in ministry.

3. More missionaries will take part in the harvest of lost souls.

Prayer makes ministry effective on the mission field! Paul’s number one request from the churches of Asia Minor and Macedonia was that the churches pray so that the mission work would advance in every way.

*And now, brothers and sisters, **pray** for us that the Lord’s teaching will continue to spread quickly. . . (II Thessalonians 3:1).*

*Also **pray** for me that when I speak, God will give me words so that I can tell the secret of the Good News without fear (Ephesians 6:19).*

*Also **pray** for us that God will give us an opportunity to tell people his message. **Pray** that we can preach the secret that God has made known about Christ. This is why I am in prison. ⁴**Pray** that I can speak in a way that will make it clear, as I should (Colossians 4:3).*

How can your church personally increase their prayer activity for missionaries and mission work? What are some strategic intercessory prayer needs that missionaries face almost every day? Below are a couple of lists that can help your church become more strategic in praying for missionaries.

How to Get Started Praying for Missionaries

1. Commit yourself to pray daily for missionaries.
2. Be specific not generic in your praying.

3. Communicate with missionaries (by email or letter to know their current needs).
4. Be strategic in your prayers.

Intentional Strategic Praying for Missionaries

Physical Needs of Missionaries

- **Pray** for their preparing stages prior to their leaving.
- **Pray** that their heart and mind's will be open to new areas of training.
- **Pray** that they will have wisdom in knowing what to take and not take with them to the mission field.
- **Pray** for their travel time whether by air, car, train, or boat (or other).
- **Pray** for their physical adjustment to the culture that they will be faced with (different foods, different housing, different climate, etc.).
- **Pray** for their homesickness or loneliness times.
- **Pray** for physical safety and personal health needs.
- **Pray** for their financial needs.

Spiritual Needs of Missionaries

- **Pray** for a quick language learning time.
- **Pray** for spiritual protection while out on the streets doing ministry.
- **Pray** for them to overcome the spirit of fear, phobias, prejudices, etc.
- **Pray** that revival will come to their area.
- **Pray** that the ministry schedule of activities will be Spirit led.
- **Pray** for clarity of thought and communication of the Gospel message.
- **Pray** for the “plowing, planting and watering stages of church planting.
- **Pray** for wisdom for team leaders.

