

March: Missions

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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.

1. First of all, pray for the missionaries’ personal needs.
2. Pray for the missionaries’ personal relationship with God
3. 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.
4. Pray against emotional distress such as discouragement, depression, loneliness, and homesickness.
5. Pray that the missionaries can make the necessary adjustments to living on their fields of labor. Many times missionaries live in extreme climates.
6. Pray also for protection as they travel, often under adverse conditions.
7. Pray for the effective ministry of the missionaries. The Lord is able to open doors that are seemingly locked tight—if we but pray!
8. Ask Jesus to make the missionaries effective soulwinners.
9. 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.
10. Pray that God’s love will fill the missionaries’ hearts for the people they desire to win.
11. 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.
12. 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.
13. Pray that the missionaries would find favor in the eyes of those in high places that can help to further the kingdom.
14. Pray for the national Bible schools—the students, the teachers, the support staff.

How to Pray for Missionary Kids

Missionary kids are unique. They often do not seem to fit anywhere. In North America, they are too foreign. Overseas they are considered too American or Canadian. The missionary kids did not choose their lot. They only accompanied their parents who were answering a call from God. As a result, they were forced into situations that most of our children never face and often face problems many of us would never consider. They are children keenly in need of prayer.

1. Pray for a strong Christian family. Daily plead the blood of Christ over the family unit through intercessory prayer. Pray that the family would take quality time to spend together to nurture each member. Pray that the parents would encourage their children and involve them in their ministry as much as possible.
2. Pray that the missionary kids would establish their own spiritual lives. Every child needs to recognize his need for a personal walk with God. Pray that each one would be filled with the Holy Ghost and walk with Him daily.
3. Pray that they would take the opportunity to reach out to the lost while they are overseas.
*Pray that the MKs would be strong in Christ, an example to others, mature and faithful (I Timothy 4:12).
4. Pray they would have a hunger for the Word of God.
5. Pray that the Mks would keep their priorities straight.
6. Pray that they would be protected from the bad influences in their lives.
7. Pray for emotional stability and personal growth.
8. Pray for victory over feelings of isolation from friends and family in the homeland.
9. Pray that they would have good mentors and be able to discuss their problems, doubts, and fears.

How to Pray for National Pastors

Jesus said, "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father; and the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world" (Matthew 28:19-20). While it is an obligation of the North American church to send forth missionaries into all the world, the task far exceeds the availability of its missionaries. That is one reason Jesus said to teach all nations. As nationals are taught and grow in Christ, He calls them into the ministry, and the number of laborers in the harvest multiplies.

National ministers are one of the greatest assets of the church. They speak the language that the missionary struggles to learn. They know the customs and mannerisms of their people. They can reach areas that are often closed to North American missionaries. Their potential to reach their nations is greater than the missionaries'. The national ministers are men and women called of God and worthy of our prayers.

Pray for the national ministers as you would pray for missionaries, pastors, and those in leadership.

1. Personal - Pray that the national minister would be godly.
2. Family - Pray that the national minister would be the husband and father that his family needs and deserves.
3. Finances - Many national ministers live in third world countries and in what many North Americans would consider gross poverty. Pray that God would meet the financial needs of the national minister and his family. Pray that they would have comfortable lodging, sufficient

clothing, and a well-balanced diet. Pray that they would have transportation for their personal needs as well as the needs of the ministry. Pray that their children would have educational opportunities.

4. Physical Health and Needs - Ministry is taxing work—physically, mentally, and spiritually. Pray that God would strengthen the national minister and give him good health
5. Ministry - Pray that the anointing of the Holy Ghost would rest upon the national minister. Pray that he would be a student of the Word, rightly dividing the Word of truth. Pray that his work for the Lord would be productive and fruitful.
6. Leadership - A minister, whether in North America or on foreign soil, must be a leader and influence people. Pray that the national pastor would have favor with people—both in the church and without. Pray that he would have wisdom and understanding to lead his people

As more and more nations close their doors to foreign missionaries, the importance of the national ministers soars. They are key men and women in God's kingdom. Let us lift up their hands by bowing on our knees before the King of kings.

How to Pray for Nations

"Ask of me, and I will make the nations your inheritance, the ends of the earth your possession."
Psalm 2:8

Two hundred and fifty-three times the plural word *nations* is mentioned in the Scriptures. This word could be rendered as *ethnos* or ethnic groupings. The idea that is being conveyed here is that there are also nations within nations--people groupings that make up a nation.

Praying for a nation and for an unreached people group is no small order. Maybe you have not even considered the possibility of praying for anyone or anything beyond your own circle of friends and family. It is possible! In fact, it is a command from the Lord. God asks us to do the possible and He will take care of what we see as impossible.

The Old Testament abounds with examples of the course of an entire nation being changed as the result of intercessory prayer.

Two biblical admonitions give starting points in praying for a nation: "I urge, then, first of all, that requests, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for everyone--for kings and all those in authority..." (1 Timothy 2:1-2). Also, "The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field" (Matthew 9:37-38).

In addition, for every society there are seven basic areas which shape the thinking of individuals, and subsequently, a nation. These "spheres of influence" have a tremendous effect on the direction of a nation. Fervent intercession is needed for godly change in these areas:

- Home and Family
- Church
- Media
- Education
- Government
- Arts and Entertainment
- Business and Commerce

What can we do? We can pray...pray regularly...and pray believing!