

ENCOURAGING PRAYER FOR MISSIONS

Devote yourself to prayer, being watchful and thankful. And pray for us, too, that God may open a door for our message, so that we may proclaim the mystery of Christ, for which I am in chains. Pray that I may proclaim it clearly as I should.

– Colossians 4:2-4

The Apostle Paul knew how much his ministry depended on the prayer of others. He actively enlisted the prayer support of as many people as possible, confident that unless God worked, his labors were in vain. His friends knew they were a meaningful and vital part of his ministry through their prayers. In the same way, our church members can “do the work of missions” without even leaving their home, by praying on behalf of missionaries.

The following suggestions for encouraging prayer will help your members become active participants in world missions:

1. Model prayer. Others will see and follow your example of praying for missions as part of your regular life.
2. Create a prayer book or pamphlet listing all the missionaries your church supports. Include basic information about them and their ministry and general prayer goals. As you produce this material, be mindful of any security guidelines for missionaries serving in sensitive contexts.
3. Encourage regular prayer for missions and missionaries in the worship service. Provide worship leaders with information on the missionary and prayer requests.
4. Plan a church-wide prayer emphasis. These could include a month or a week of praying through a prepared guide, an all-night prayer meeting, or a 24-hour prayer time with members signing up for a 30 to 60 minute commitment.
5. Schedule special times of congregational prayer.
6. Participate in the International Day of Prayer for the Persecuted Church. More information on this worldwide event can be found at www.idop.org.
7. Encourage existing groups to include prayer for missions. Such groups include Sunday school classes, men's and women's ministries, youth groups, and home Bible studies.
8. Teach people how to pray for missionaries. The topics on the following page will help people expand their prayers. Feel free to copy and distribute them.

PRAYING FOR MISSIONARIES

With this in mind, we constantly pray for you, that our God may count you worthy of his calling, and that by his power he may fulfill every good purpose of yours and every act prompted by your faith.

– 2 Thessalonians 1:11

Then he said to his disciples, “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

RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD

- Delight in God’s Word
- Walk in repentance, faith, and obedience
- Protection from flesh, world, and devil
- Holy Spirit renewal
- Greater dependence upon God in prayer

FAMILY

- Husband and wife relationship
- Parents and children relationships
- Children’s growth in grace
- Contentment in singleness

TEAM RELATIONSHIPS

- Fellowship with other missionaries
- Relationship with leaders
- Humility and submission to one another
- Spirit of peace and unity
- Patience
- Understanding in differences
- God to raise up laborers

CULTURAL UNDERSTANDING

- Language learning
- Cross-cultural insight

NATIONAL PARTNERS

- Growth of national church
- Development of leaders
- Relationship of church to community
- Safety and protection

RELATIONSHIPS WITH NON-BELIEVERS

- Depth of relationships
- Boldness in evangelism
- Words of truth and love

PHYSICAL AND MATERIAL NEEDS

- Safety in travel
- Protection against illness
- Financial support

DAILY MINISTRY

- Heart of love for all people
- God-given insight into other’s needs
- Wisdom and discernment
- Open doors for discipleship

COUNTRY OF SERVICE

- Political stability
- Currency exchange rate