

25 C PRAYING FOR MISSIONS AND MISSIONARIES

Every missionary tells us that that they value and desire the regular prayers of God's people. "Lord, bless all the missionaries around the world" is not a useful prayer. We are urged to pray for specific people in specific places with specific needs. (That way we also see specific answers to prayer.)

"Prayer is 'the first work' – it comes before, during and after all things. By prayer Christians learn the heart of God, discern their own hearts and connect to the world in which Jesus is always working." [1]

For what should we be praying?

- For effective ministry.
- For a deep love for the people they want to reach.
- For the specific individuals they're reaching.
- For strong families.
- For their children, especially if they are away at school.
- For good relations with fellow workers.
- For adjustment to the culture.
- For ability to work with a different language.
- For health and safety.
- For them to overcome obstacles, opposition, and discouragement.
- For persecuted believers in closed countries.
- For openings to "hidden people" in the 10/40 window.

Mark Collins writes-

Modern travel makes getting to the mission field easier than ever. Once there, endurance is the precious commodity. In many places, living cross culturally means enduring frustration and frequent setbacks. Missionaries share the gospel and have to leave the results in God's hands, but it may mean years without discernible fruit. Even in places where the Spirit is bringing about conversion, it takes incredible patience to see a ministry all the way through to indigenous leadership.

When we pray for missionaries, we should pray for their endurance. We should pray for toughness and resolve which would characterize soldiers on the front lines of ministry. [2]

A sample powerful prayer for missionaries-

"Holy Spirit, please fill each missionary with the knowledge of Your will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding. Stir their hearts to hunger and thirst after You. Father, bless them

physically, spiritually, emotionally and financially. Bless their families and homes and bestow upon them traveling mercies.” [3]

David Platt offers sixteen ways to pray for missionaries based on the account of the first missionary journey in Acts 13 and 14: [4]

1. Pray that they would be confident in God’s Word. Acts 13:4-5

2. Pray that they would be filled with God’s Spirit. Acts 13: 6-9

3. Pray for their victory in spiritual warfare. Acts 13:10-12

When our brothers and sisters take the gospel into the nations, they are going into a war. The devil is dead set on destroying souls and diverting mission.

4. Pray for their success in gospel witness. Acts 13:12

5. Pray for peace with other believers. Acts 13:13

6. Pray for favor with unbelievers. Acts 13:14-15

7. Pray that the gospel will be clear through them. Acts 13:16-47

Although cross-cultural communication is difficult, pray that missionaries, by grace, would clearly communicate the character of God, the sinfulness of man, the sufficiency of Christ, the necessity of faith, and the urgency of eternity.

8. Pray that God will open hearts around them. Acts 13:48

9. Pray for their joy in the midst of suffering. Acts 14:1-2

10. Pray for their kindness in the midst of slander. Acts 14:1-2

11. Pray for supernatural power to accompany them. Acts 14:3

12. Pray for Christ-like humility to characterize them. Acts 14:4-18

13. Pray for their patience. Acts 14:8-18

14. Pray for their perseverance. Acts 14:19-20

15. Pray that God would use them to make disciples. Acts 14:21-23

16. Pray that God would use them to multiply churches. Acts 14:24-28

Pray for the multiplication of churches filled with people who know the Word led by pastors who teach the Word.

References

1. Christian and Missionary Alliance, “Pray,”
<https://legacy.cmalliance.org/pray>
2. Collins, M., “How to Pray for International Missions,”
<https://www.crossway.org/articles/how-to-pray-for-international-missions/>
3. Prayer Institute, “Prayer for Missionaries,”
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4. Platt, D., “Sixteen Ways to Pray for Missionaries,”
<https://www.imb.org/2016/11/08/16-ways-to-pray-for-missionaries/>