



# how then should we pray: a guide to praying for missionaries

# How Then Should We Pray?



**Have you noticed** that missionaries almost always say that their greatest need is prayer? Perhaps you sometimes think that is just what they are supposed to say—the standard missionary speech. The real issue is the money, right?

The truth is, without prayer, the money is useless. Through the ages, missionaries have known that only God can save the lost, heal the sick, or accomplish anything for His kingdom. And He chooses to work through prayer. Jesus said, “I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Son may bring glory to the Father. You may ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it” John 14:13-14.

How then should we pray? Is it enough to say “God bless Bill and Beth”? Praying daily for the needs of missionaries and their ministries can be difficult if we are not in close contact with them. But in order to keep our prayers fervent and consistent, drawing us into closer communion with God, we often need more specific direction.

Most missionaries, regardless of their location or ministry, have some needs in common, simply because they are missionaries. And, like all of us, missionaries are fallen people in need of God’s daily grace at work in their lives.

There is a nine-week prayer guide on the following pages with one significant request for each day of the week. There is a category for each week, with a specific prayer need for each day of the week. Weeks one through five are missionary specific, while weeks six through nine are directed at missions in general. We urge you to communicate with your own missionaries so that you might know other prayer needs as well as how to apply each day's request in even more specific ways. Once you have prayed through Week Nine, you could begin again with Week One.



*God does nothing but by prayer, and everything with it.*

—John Wesley

## week 1 **Faithfulness in Ministry**

1. Gospel-driven perseverance, regardless of results; protection from discouragement and strength in persecution
2. Joyful service and faithful prayer for the ministry; growing love of the Church and missionaries of other denominations
3. Long-term faithfulness to stay the course of ministry
4. Many brought to faith and beginning a lifelong journey of discipleship
5. Wisdom and skill in mobilizing and training leaders
6. Continuing growth in grace, leading to a life of self-sacrificing love, repentance, humility, and faith
7. Heart for evangelism; boldness in taking opportunities to share the gospel

## week 2 **Building Relationships**

1. Effective grasp of language and ability to communicate; growing understanding of the way nationals process information, which is different from ours
2. Cultural adjustment, ability to fit in appropriately
3. Freedom in Christ to be transparent and real; willingness to accept people as they are
4. Deepening love for the peoples of the ministry region
5. Grace, humility, friendship, and love in relationships; teachable hearts
6. Encouragement of those in persecution
7. Deepening love for the poor, demonstrating mercy, doing justice

## week 3 **Protecting their Witness**

1. Loving and respectful team relationships, team unity
2. Protection from sin and Satan's attacks
3. Constant abiding in the Word of God; a spirit of loving obedience to the Word
4. Vibrant and consistent prayer life
5. Regular and joyful family worship, and discipling of children
6. Vital, growing, and deep experience of God; personal accountability for spiritual growth
7. Humility, flexibility, and openness to learning; protection against pride

## week 4 **Resources**

1. Financial support
2. Good stewardship of resources
3. More laborers for the field
4. Greater numbers of short-term workers returning for long-term service
5. Power of the Spirit in their ministries
6. Faithful and effective prayer letters to prayer support base, in the midst of overwhelming ministry
7. An effective prayer movement in each region, team, or country for budding churches and teams

## week 5 **Home and Family**

1. Strong marriages and families; saving faith for all MTW children, that they would be faithful disciples
2. Friendships on the field
3. Family issues such as separation from college-age children, aging parents, and other issues at home
4. For missionary kids – issues of transition, schooling and friends; love for team and adoptive peoples
5. Health, safety, and physical well-being; faithfulness in rest, fun, exercise, and eating
6. Safe, adequate, and affordable housing
7. Spiritual nourishment in a cross-cultural context where there may be no church or a small, perhaps immature, church; spiritual nurturing for their children and youth when there may be no ministry for young people

## week 6 **Our Global Family**

1. Godly national church leaders and church-planting facilitators; national church-planting movements
2. Christian marriages and healthy family relationships; children of believers, especially 2nd generation, coming to faith and being disciples
3. Protection for young believers in the faith, so that they may grow strong, protected from societal pressures and false teaching
4. Courage in persecution
5. Wisdom in leadership for national leaders; missions vision to go where North Americans can't
6. True biblical understanding, not compromised by cultural pressures or traditional religions of the region
7. Disciples and disciplers with true hunger for the Word

## week 7 **People in Restricted-Access Countries**

1. Church-planting movement in closed countries
2. Wisdom for national Christians in discipling and encouraging new believers
3. Personal safety of Christians
4. Fellowship for believers
5. Opportunity for believers to share the gospel safely
6. Inroads for bringing the gospel message into the country
7. Availability of Bibles, books, and literature for ministry

## week 8 **The Church at Home**

1. Worldwide missions vision that translates into praying, giving and going
2. Local, cross-cultural heart that welcomes people of all races and socio-economic backgrounds
3. Growing pastors with hearts for missions
4. Enthusiasm for sharing the gospel
5. Community outreach in word and deed
6. Love and peace within the PCA
7. Growth in number and depth

## week 9 **Behind the Scenes**

1. Godly, gifted, competent, heart-for-missions home office staff
2. Financial support of MTW, particularly by PCA churches
3. God's leading in selection of committee members, MTW leaders
4. Biblical and effective missions vision, strategies, and methodologies
5. Significant participation in partnerships between MTW, PCA churches and the field
6. Effective use of technology to serve missionaries, churches, and partners around the world
7. Servant's hearts for all MTW staff, hearts that are growing in grace