

## **PRAYING FOR MISSIONARIES: SOME PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS.**

### **PROSPERITY, PERSEVERANCE, PROVISION, PROTECTION, PREPARATION**

#### **PROSPERITY:**

Many missionaries labor in spiritually difficult and dark places where there is little evidence of fruit for their labor.

- Pray that there will be visible and encouraging spiritual results to the ministry to which they are called.
- Pray that they will see the ministry grow and multiply in a culturally appropriate, Biblical manner.

We don't often think about "prosperity" when we discuss spiritual issues, but it is very important that we "prosper in our spiritual lives. The Bible speaks a lot about spiritual prosperity within the context of obedience to God's law.

Jeremiah 29:11 "For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future".

3 John 1:2 Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospers.

- Pray that our missionary's spiritual life will prosper as a result of time spent in the Word of God and obedience to it.

#### **PERSEVERANCE:**

Of course, missionaries face all the normal and regular temptations that all of us do, but the loss of the clear cultural cues that comes from living outside your native culture often brings with it new and different temptations not expected.

- Pray that our missionaries would be quick to recognize temptation that may come in new forms and take the escape God provides. "God is faithful, and He will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation he will also provide a way of escape, so that you are able to bear it. (I Cor. 10:13b)
- Pray that our missionaries would run from the pride that often comes from being the best educated, skilled, and trained. Often big American fish in a small pond.
- Pray that our missionaries would avoid the temptation to only "touch" the place and people they serve, but that they would be invested and involved completely with those to whom God has sent them.

The need for perseverance is demonstrated in all areas from spiritual to emotional to physical.

We all have need of perseverance, but our missionaries face unique challenges to persevere during holiday seasons.

- Pray for our missionaries as they strive persevere in their relationships and cross-cultural connection during a time of year when they naturally miss home, family, and holiday traditions.

#### **PROVISION:**

From personal experience, I can tell you that, despite their inability to communicate it sufficiently, missionaries are particularly thankful for God's provision. Most of them depend on the giving of others who God uses to provide for their daily needs. The process of trying to raise and maintain financial support can be both demanding and humbling.

- Giving to Christian ministries is down significantly over the past year or two. This directly impacts our missionary families. Pray that God will supply all that they need to continue to live and accomplish the ministry God has called them to.
- Pray that God will open new doors for financial support to compensate for support that has dropped off.
- Consistent ministry is often hampered by the amount of time and energy missionaries have to invest to keep their support. Pray that their efforts at raising and maintaining support will be fruitful.

#### **PROTECTION:**

Spiritual protection. As we all know, Satan is alive and well, but our missionaries are often serving in locations where Satan has a powerful stranglehold which can be manifested in many ways that we tend not to see here in the developed west.

- Pray for protection from temptations and ability to resist when temptations come.
- Pray for protection against culturally accepted sinful values.
- Pray for protection from those who would intentionally attack or destroy the ministry.
- Pray for protection against hostile governments and religions.
- Pray for protection against discouragement.

Physical Protection: Most of our missionaries live and work in places where there are many physical dangers that are only cross-culturally deduced. Like the proverbial small-town country boy who goes to the big city and believes everyone wants to be his friend.

- Pray that our missionaries will be kept safe from those who would do them harm or those who would take advantage of them as they try to minister to a variety of needs.
- Pray for the protection of our missionaries who labor in areas where drugs, prostitution, and crime are common. These are the strongholds of the enemy and he will often protect his

territory from those who would bring the good news of the Gospel.

- Pray for the protection of the children of our missionary families. Americans are increasingly seen as profitable targets for those looking for a quick profit.
- Pray for them as they navigate traffic (both in cars and as pedestrians) in locations where traffic is not nearly as regulated or orderly as it might be here in the US.

**PREPARATION:**

All our missionaries, whether they have been serving for many years or just a few months, always face the need for preparation in all areas of life. Apart from spiritual preparation which all of us need, missionaries face a unique need for preparation in several other areas:

- As you pray and “workout” your own salvation, please remember to pray for the spiritual preparation of our missionary families. Quiet, consistent time to spend in the Word and prayer is desperately needed for preparation for life in general and their unique calling.
- Pray for the cross-cultural preparation of our missionaries. To minister effectively, they need to function well in the language as well as accept and understand the nuances of a culture that is not and will never be their own.
- Pray for emotional preparation for our missionaries. The constant barrage of living and working where you are a foreigner can lead to discouragement and even depression in some cases. Being away from family, especially during holiday seasons can be very emotionally difficult.