

Guide to Praying for Missionaries

GETTING BEYOND

"GOD BLESS THE MISSIONARIES"

[Warren Wiersbe](#) writes that when we pray for our missionaries, "our praying ought to be purposeful: "Praying also for us" (Col. 4:3-[note](#)). Too often our prayers are vague and general. "Lord, bless the missionaries!" How much better it would be if we would pray for specific needs. By doing so, we would know when God answered and we could praise Him for it (Suggestion: Keep a prayer journal and date specific requests). Perhaps it is our lack of faith that causes us to pray generally instead of specifically."

[Jonathan Edwards](#) said that "There is no way that Christians, in a private capacity, can do so much to promote the work of God and advance the kingdom of Christ as by prayer."

And as [A B Simpson](#) so rightly said "Prayer is the mighty engine that is to move the missionary work."

That said...

- Pray Regularly.
- Pray Specifically.
- Pray whenever your missionary just comes to your mind, praying in the Spirit (Ephesians 6:18-[note](#), Jude 1:20-[note](#))

"When I get to China, I will have no claim on any one for anything. My claim will be alone in God and I must learn before I leave England to move men through God by prayer alone." - [J. Hudson Taylor](#)

"Every step in the progress of missions is directly traceable to prayer. It has been the preparation for every new triumph and the secret for all success." - [A.T. Pierson](#)

WEEKLY GUIDE TO AID YOU IN PRAYING FOR YOUR MISSIONARIES

DAY 1: THE MISSIONARY'S OWN RELATIONSHIP TO GOD

- That they would put aside all malice, guile, hypocrisy, envy & slander so that like newborn babes they would long for the pure milk of the word
- That they would pray without ceasing, praying at all times in the Spirit, ever on the alert with all perseverance and petition for all the saints
- That they would be careful how they conduct themselves, not as unwise but as wise, redeeming the time, continually filled with God's Spirit
- That they would grow in grace and the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ
- That they would deny self daily, take up their cross and follow Jesus, submitting to Him, resisting the devil.

DAY 2: THE MISSIONARY'S PHYSICAL & EMOTIONAL LIFE

- Adaptation to the climate
- Health in the midst of disease
- Safety in danger
- Victory over loneliness
- Victory over depression

DAY 3: THE MISSIONARY'S FAMILY

- Husband/wife relationship

- Children
- Relationship with others
- Family life as a model to nationals

DAY 4: THE MISSIONARY'S ABILITY TO COMMUNICATE

- Language study
- Continual fluency improvement
- Cultural adaptation and understanding

DAY 5: THE MISSIONARY'S MINISTRY

- Teaching (Col 1:28-note, Col 1:29-note), preaching (1Co 1:23,2:2), witnessing (Acts 1:8) making disciples (Mt 28:19, 20 2Ti 2:2-note)
- Pray that God may open up to them a wide door for the Word of the Lord so that it would spread rapidly and be glorified (Col 4:2, 3-note, 2Th 3:1, 2, 3)
- Pray for prepared hearts that hear the Word (Mk 4:33, Mt 13:23, Lk 11:28), receive it (Acts 11:1, Jas 1:21-note), and bear fruit with perseverance (Lk 8:15, Mk 4:20)
- Pray that when they speak, God will give them the words (cp Mt 10:19, Mk 13:11, Lk 12:11, 12, Lk 21:14, 15) so that they can speak forth the mystery of the Gospel with boldness and without fear (Ep 6:19-note).

DAY 6: RELATIONSHIP WITH FELLOW WORKERS

- Other missionaries
- Other mission groups
- National evangelists, pastors and teachers

DAY 7: HIS COUNTRY OF SERVICE

- Government – national and local
- Political situation
- Visas, continued open doors
- Outreach to cities, villages and tribes

**Adapted and modified from guidelines originally published by [Overseas Missionary Fellowship](#)

MISCELLANEOUS THOUGHTS ON PRAYER AND MISSIONS

He who cannot reach the mission field on his feet can reach it on his knees.

It's amazing how many coincidences occur when one begins to pray

David Bryant

Pursuing prayer is prayer on a mission. It is diligent, fervent, constant, persevering, determined, and convinced.

Prayer is action. By it we step out in advance of all other results . . . Praying is an activity upon which all others depend. By prayer we establish a beachhead for the kingdom among peoples where it has never been before. Prayer strikes the winning blow. All other missionary efforts simply gather up the fruits of our praying.

Lack of world vision in any Christian produces a 'pea-sized Christianity'.

One is not old until Dreams become Regrets.

[William Carey](#)

I cannot go to India on my feet, but I can go to India on my knees.

[James O Fraser](#) (missionary to China)

Believers at home can do as much for overseas missions as those actually on the field. I believe it will only be known on the last day how much has been accomplished in overseas missions by the prayers of earnest believers at home.

Solid, lasting missionary work is done on our knees.

[Billy Graham](#)

Sometimes I'm asked to list the most important steps in preparing for an evangelistic mission, and my reply is always the same: prayer . . . prayer . . . prayer.

[Andrew Murray](#)

Christ has opened the school of prayer specially to train intercessors for the great work of bringing down, by their faith, and prayer, the blessings of His work and love on the world around. ([With Christ in the School of Prayer](#))

Alice Kahokuoluna

Before the missionaries came, my people used to sit outside their (idol) temples for a long time meditating and preparing themselves before entering. Then they would virtually creep to the altar to offer their petition and afterwards would again sit a long time outside, this time to "breathe life" into their prayers. The Christians, when they came, just got up, uttered a few sentences, said Amen and were done. For that reason my people call them haolis, "without breath," or those who fail to breathe life into their prayers.

[Mary Slessor](#) (Scottish missionary to Nigeria)

If you are ever inclined to pray for a missionary, do it at once, wherever you are.

Prayer is the greatest power God has put into our hands for service - praying is harder than doing, at least I find it so, but the dynamic lies that way to advance the Kingdom.

[C H Spurgeon](#)

All other passions build upon or flow from your passion for Jesus. A passion for souls grows out of a passion for Christ. **A passion for missions builds upon a passion for Christ.** The most crucial danger to a Christian, whatever his role, is to lack a passion of Christ. The most direct route to personal renewal and new effectiveness is a new all-consuming passion for Jesus. Lord, give us this passion, whatever the cost!

If there be any one point in which the Christian church ought to keep its fervor at a white heat, it is concerning missions. If there be anything about which we cannot tolerate lukewarmness, it is the matter of sending the gospel to a dying world.

Howard Taylor says of his father. [J. Hudson Taylor](#)

For forty years the sun never rose on China that God didn't find him on his knees. ([Hudson Taylor and the China Inland Mission](#))

[J. Hudson Taylor](#) (missionary to China)

When I get to China, I will have no claim on any one for anything. My claim will be alone in God and I must learn before I leave England to move men through God by prayer alone.

As a rule, prayer is answered and funds come in, but if we are kept waiting, the spiritual blessing that is the outcome is far more precious than exemption from the trial.

Do not work so hard for Christ that you have no strength to pray, for prayer requires strength.

I have seen many men work without praying, though I have never seen any good come out of it; but I have never seen a man pray without working. (see also the book - [Hudson Taylor's Spiritual Secret](#))

[Warren Wiersbe](#)

I ministered for several weeks in Kenya and Zaire, and when I arrived home, I was more convinced than ever that the greatest

need of missionaries and national churches is prayer.

[Samuel Marinus Zwemer](#)

The history of missions is the history of answered prayer. From Pentecost to the Haystack meeting in New England and from the days when [Robert Morrison](#) landed in China to the martyrdom of [John and Betty Stam](#), prayer has been the source of power and the secret of spiritual triumph.

Are You Holding Your Missionary's Rope? - The story is told of a long-ago couple who said farewell to their home church as they were about to leave for an African mission field known as "The White Man's Grave." The husband said, "My wife and I have a strange dread in going. We feel much as if we were going down into a pit. We are willing to take the risk and go if you, our home church, will promise to hold the ropes." One and all promised to do so. Less than two years had passed when the wife and the little one God had given the couple succumbed to the dreaded fever. Soon the husband realized his days were also numbered. Not waiting to send word of his coming, he started back home at once and arrived at the time of the Wednesday prayer meeting. He slipped in unnoticed, taking a back seat. At the close of the meeting, he went forward. An awe came over the people, for death was written on his face. He said, "I am your missionary. My wife and child are buried in Africa and I have come home to die. This evening I listened anxiously as you prayed for some mention of your missionary to see if you were keeping your promise, but in vain! You prayed for everything connected with yourselves and your home circle, but you forgot your missionary. I see now why I am a failure as a missionary. It is because you have failed to hold the ropes."

The Value of Praying for Our Missionaries - [J. O. Fraser was a missionary](#) to China in the early 1900s. He credited the conversion of hundreds of Lisu families to the prayers of his very earnest little prayer group back in England. He said,

Christians at home can do **as much** for foreign missions as those actually on the field. It will only be known on the Last Day how much has been accomplished in missionary work by the **prayers of earnest believers at home**. (cp 1Thes 2:19,10-[note](#))....Solid, lasting missionary work is done on our knees.

Related Resources:

- [Prayer: The Work of Missions - Desiringgod.org](#)
 - Film on [The Life of James O Fraser and the Lisu People - Breakthrough: the Docudrama - IMDb review](#)
 - [Lisu People - Joshua Project](#) - 45% of 911,000 are evangelical Christians (June, 2016)!
 - [Lisu People - OMF Article](#)
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Hudson Taylor's Secret - Intercessory Prayer — (Ephesians 6:18) - Some years ago the record of a wonderful work of grace in connection with one of the stations of the [China Inland Mission](#) attracted a good deal of attention. Both the number and spiritual character of the converts had been far greater than at other stations where the consecration of the missionaries had been just as great. This rich harvest of souls remained a mystery until [Hudson Taylor](#), on a visit to England, discovered the secret. At the close of one of his addresses a gentleman came forward to make his acquaintance. In the conversation which followed, Mr. Taylor was surprised at the accurate knowledge the man possessed concerning this [China Inland Mission](#) station. "But how is it," Mr. Taylor asked, "that you are so conversant with the conditions of that work?" "Oh!" he replied, "the missionary there and I are old college mates; for years we have regularly corresponded; he has sent me names of enquirers and converts, and these I have daily taken to God in prayer." **At last the secret was found — a praying man, praying definitely, praying daily.** —[E. M. Bounds, Purpose in Prayer](#) (see [Hudson Taylor's Spiritual Secret](#))

A Stinging Indictment - Instead of praying to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers, we pray, 'O Lord, keep my body right; see after this matter and that for me.' Our prayers are taken up with our concerns, our own needs, and only once in a while do we pray for what He tells us to." - Oswald Chambers

The 100-Year "Prayer Chain" - In 1722, [Count Nicholas Ludwig von Zinzendorf](#) ([note](#)), troubled by the suffering of Christian exiles from Bohemia and Moravia, allowed them to establish a community on his estate in Germany. The center became known as [Herrnhut](#), ([founding of Herrnhut](#)) meaning "Under the Lord's Watch." It grew quickly, and so did its appreciation for the power of prayer ([see Life at Herrnhut](#)). On August 27, 1727, twenty-four men and twenty-four women covenanted to spend an hour each day in scheduled prayer, praying in sequence around the clock. Soon others joined the prayer chain. More signed on, then others still. Days passed, then months. Unceasing prayer rose to God twenty-four-hours a day as someone—at least one—was engaged in intercessory prayer each hour of every day. The intercessors met weekly for encouragement and to read letters and messages from their brothers in different places, giving them specific needs to pray about. A decade passed, the prayer chain continuing nonstop.

Then another decade. It was a prayer meeting that lasted over one hundred years. Undoubtedly this prayer chain helped birth Protestant missions. Six months into it, Zinzendorf, twenty-seven, suggested the possibility of attempting to reach others for Christ in the West Indies, Greenland, Turkey, and Lapland. Twenty-six Moravians stepped forward the next day to volunteer. The first missionaries, [Leonard Dober](#) and [David Nitschmann](#) ([note](#)), were commissioned during an unforgettable service on August 18, 1732, during which one hundred hymns were sung. The two men reached the West Indies in December of that year, beginning the “Golden Decade” of Moravian Missions, 1732–1742. During the first two years, twenty-two missionaries perished and two more were imprisoned, but others took their places. In all, seventy Moravian missionaries flowed from the six hundred inhabitants of Herrnhut, a feat unparalleled in missionary history. By the time William Carey became the “Father of Modern Missions” over three hundred Moravian missionaries had already gone to the ends of the earth. And that’s not all. The Moravian fervor sparked the conversions of John and Charles Wesley and indirectly ignited the Great Awakening that swept through Europe and America, sweeping thousands into the kingdom. The prayer meeting lasted one hundred years. The results will last for eternity. —[Robert Morgan "On This Day"](#)

Related Resources:

- [Moravian Slaves](#)
- [The History of the Moravian Church](#)
- [Foreign Missions and Their Influence](#)
- [The Moravian Missionary Machine - \(Video - 1:06:35\)](#)
- [First Fruits: Zinzendorf and the Moravians \(1982\) | Full Movie](#)

Praying for Open Doors - In the early days of Wycliffe Bible Translators in Mexico, Cameron Townsend, the founder, tried to get permission from the Mexican government to translate the Scriptures into the languages of the Indian tribes. But the government was adamantly opposed to it. The official to whom he had to appeal told him, "As long as I am in this office the Bible will never be translated into the Indian languages—it would only upset them." Townsend did everything he could think of, went to every official he could find, and had all his Christian friends praying that God would open this door. But it seemed to remain totally closed. Finally, Townsend decided to give up pressing the issue. He and his wife went to live in a little, obscure Indian village, learned the language, ministered to the people as best they could, and waited for God to move. It was not very long before Townsend noticed that the fountain in the center of the village plaza produced beautiful, clear spring water, but that it ran off down the hill and was wasted. He suggested that the Indians plant crops in an area to which the water could easily be diverted and thus make use of it. Soon they were growing twice as much food as before, and their economy blossomed as a result. The Indians were grateful. Townsend wrote this up in a little article and sent it to a Mexican paper he thought might be interested. Unknown to him, that article found its way into the hands of the President of Mexico, Lazaro Cardenas. The President was amazed that a gringo would come to live in and help a poor Indian village where he couldn't even get many of his own people to live. The President wanted to meet Townsend, so he, his limousine, and his attendants drove to that little Indian village and parked in the plaza. Cameron Townsend is not one to miss an opportunity. He went up to the car and introduced himself and, to his amazement, heard the President say, "You're the man I've come here to see! Tell me more about your work." When he heard what it was, he said, "Of course you can translate the Scriptures into the Indian languages!" That began a friendship that continued throughout the lifetime of President Cardenas. His power and authority were used of God all those years to open doors to Wycliffe Translators throughout Mexico.- [Michael Green - Illustrations for Biblical Preaching](#)

Answered Prayer - In about 1949 a group of retired missionaries from China, with a few faithful praying friends, met for their regular missionary prayer meeting in Adelaide, South Australia. A great prayer burden and sense of urgency came on them as they gathered together. All felt especially burdened for Hayden Melsap, then assigned to the China Inland Mission. They unanimously decided to drop all preliminaries and go “straight to prayer.” They prayed until they all felt a sense of peace and relief. A few years later, when Hayden Melsap was on deputation in Australia, the missionaries asked him if he recalled any unusual occasion at that time. To their amazement, they found that on that day and hour Hayden and at least two other missionaries were backed against a wall in a courtyard in China, with communist guns leveled at them. Just as the officer was about to issue the command to fire, the door of the courtyard opened and a higher official entered. Shocked to see what was about to happen, he shouted, “Stop!” He then stepped up, put his arm around Melsap, and led him and the others to safety. I heard this testimony from Hayden Melsap himself and also have it in writing from an Australian friend. —Wesley Duewel

Sugar Cube Prayers - Imagine a set of scales with a half kilo weight (1.1 pounds) on one side and a pile of sugar cubes being added to the other. The first cubes added seem to make no difference at all in shifting the weight. Neither do the next ten cubes...or the next ten. However, by the time one hundred cubes have been added, a point is reached where the addition of one more sugar cube starts to tip the scales. The question is which sugar cubes played the most important part in shifting the weight? Was it the first ones placed on the scales or the ones that finally tipped the weight? The answer of course is that all were equally important. The

ones that tipped the scales would never have done so had the first ones not played their part. When we pray, doesn't it seem sometimes as if our prayers make no difference at all while at other times we see immediate answers? Assuming we are praying in line with God's will, the prayers that seem to make no difference are just as essential as those that bring immediate answers. There seems to be a certain "weight" of intercession that God requires to answer each prayer, whether it is removing a stronghold of the enemy, releasing funds or opening new doors for ministry. The sugar cube illustration can also be applied to evangelizing an unreached people group. Was it the playing of a [Gospel Recordings](#) cassette or CD that first drew people to Christ? Was it the showing of the Jesus film? Was it the work of a missionary or church planting team? Which was the most important component? Does it seem sometimes that our recordings make no discernible difference to the hearers while at other times they are the means that God uses to bring about the salvation of souls? If the efforts of the workers who were the first to engage the people group did not seem to bring about any results, they should not be discouraged. They are sowing where someone else will eventually reap. And those who reap and see results can be grateful for the "sugar cubes" that faithfully sowed without which there would be no reaping. So let us ask God to make us faithful 'sugar cubes' wherever we fit in His timeline-willing to pray and willing to work even without seeing visible results. And one more thing we can learn from the sugar cubes...it wouldn't do us any harm to be a little sweet either! - [Colin Stott](#)

What Transpires When a Spirit of Unity is Present? - "And day by day continuing **with one mind** (see Greek word - [homothumadon](#)) in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they were taking their meals together with gladness and sincerity of heart, praising God, and having favor with all the people. And the Lord was adding to their number day by day those who were being saved." (Acts 2:46, 47, cp Eph 4:3) - The power of Christ in the world is demonstrated most perfectly **when believers are united in the church**. A pastor was speaking at a missionary conference in Quito Ecuador. He spent some time with a missionary couple who had worked with an Indian tribe for a number of years. The missionary wife reflected on a revival that broke out in the tribe, resulting in thousands of conversions to Christ and many evidences of God's power among them. "It was at that very time," she said, "that there was a spirit of unity among the missionary leaders that we had never experienced before." - Gene A. Getz, *Praying For One Another* (Wheaton, 1982), p. 56, adapted.

Power of Intercessory Prayer in the Spirit - During one of [Dr. Wilbur Chapman's](#) campaigns in England, the attendance was consistently small. He received word that an American missionary was going to pray for him. Almost instantly the hall became packed, and at his first invitation 50 men accepted Christ as Savior. One night the missionary was in the congregation. When Dr. Chapman was introduced to him, he asked him to pray for him. The two went to Chapman's room, dropped on their knees and for five minutes the missionary was quiet. "I could hear my heart thumping," Chapman said. "I felt hot tears running down my face. I knew I was with God." Then the missionary said, "O God!" and was silent for another five minutes. When he knew he was talking with God there came from the depth of his heart such petitions for men as I have never heard before. When Chapman rose from his knees, he knew what prayer is. He had learned from the missionary, Praying Hyde, who knew the power of supplication **in the Spirit** (Eph 6:18, Jude 1:20).

[Chapman](#) later wrote -

It was a season of prayer with [John \("Praying"\) Hyde](#) that made me realize what real prayer was. I owe to him more than I owe to any man for showing me what a prayer life is and what a real consecrated life is. Jesus Christ became a new ideal to me, and I had a glimpse of His prayer life, and I had a longing which has remained to this day to be a real praying man.

The Key to the Master's Orders - Pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest. (Matthew 9:38) The key to the missionary's difficult task is in the hand of God, and that key is prayer, not work— that is, not work as the word is commonly used today, which often results in the shifting of our focus away from God. The key to the missionary's difficult task is also not the key of common sense, nor is it the key of medicine, civilization, education, or even evangelization. The key is in following the Master's orders— the key is prayer. "Pray the Lord of the harvest..." In the natural realm, prayer is not practical but absurd. We have to realize that prayer is foolish from the commonsense point of view. From Jesus Christ's perspective, there are no nations, but only the world. How many of us pray without regard to the persons, but with regard to only one Person— Jesus Christ? He owns the harvest that is produced through distress and through conviction of sin. This is the harvest for which we have to pray that laborers be sent out to reap. We stay busy at work, while people all around us are ripe and ready to be harvested; we do not reap even one of them, but simply waste our Lord's time in over-energized activities and programs. Suppose a crisis were to come into your father's or your brother's life— are you there as a laborer to reap the harvest for Jesus Christ? Is your response, "Oh, but I have a special work to do!" No Christian has a special work to do. A Christian is called to be Jesus Christ's own, "a servant [who] is not greater than his master" (John 13:16), and someone who does not dictate to Jesus Christ what he intends to do. Our Lord calls us to no special work — He calls us to Himself. "Pray the Lord of the harvest," and He will engineer your circumstances to send you out as His laborer. [Oswald Chambers - My Utmost for His Highest](#)

Three Levels of Prayer - One of the most famous missionaries in Christian history was [J. Hudson Taylor](#) (1832-1905), English missionary to China, who founded the China Inland Mission. Taylor said that through his experience he learned of three levels of praying:

- First: "O, God, let me do your work."
- Second: "O, God, let me help you do your work."
- Third: "O, God, do your work through me."

[Bruce McIver, Riding the Wind of God](#)

Long Distance Prayer - Eighteen-year-old [J. Hudson Taylor](#) wandered into his father's library and read a gospel tract. He couldn't shake off its message. Finally, falling to his knees, he accepted Christ as his Savior. Later, his mother, who had been away, returned home. When Hudson told her the good news, she said, "I already know. Ten days ago, the very date on which you tell me you read that tract, I spent the entire afternoon in prayer for you until the Lord assured me that my wayward son had been brought into the fold."—[Our Daily Bread](#)

Here's another variation of this same story - On a day I shall never forget, recalled Hudson Taylor, the famous missionary to China, when I was about fifteen years of age, because my mother was absent from home, I had a holiday, and in the afternoon looked through my father's library to find some book with which to while away the hours. I turned over a basket of pamphlets, and selected from among them a Gospel tract which looked interesting. I sat down to read the little book in an utterly unconcerned state of mind. Little did I know at the time what was going on in the heart of my mother, eighty miles away. She rose from dinner with an intense yearning for the conversion of her boy, and she went to her room and turned the key in the door, resolved not to leave until her prayers were answered. Hour after hour did she plead for me, until at length she was constrained to praise God for that which His Spirit taught her had been accomplished. In the meantime I had taken up this little tract, and while reading was struck with the sentence, "The finished work of Christ." The thought passed through my mind, "Why does the author use this expression?" Immediately the words "It is finished" came to mind. What was finished? I replied, "A full and perfect atonement for sin: Christ died for our sins." As light flashed into my soul by the Spirit, that there was nothing to be done but to fall down on one's knees, and accepting this Savior and His salvation, to praise Him forever. When mother came home a fortnight later, I was the first to meet her at the door to tell her I had glad news. I can almost feel her arms around my neck, as she said, "I know, my boy; I have been rejoicing for a fortnight." You will agree with me that it would be strange indeed if I were not a believer in the power of prayer.

[J. Hudson Taylor](#) (1832-1905) was a missionary to China and later founder of the [China Inland Mission \(now OMF\)](#) which, at his death, included 205 mission stations with over 800 missionaries, and 125,000 Chinese Christians. He spent 51 years in China. The webmaster of this web site preceptaustin is fruit of Hudson Taylor's ministry. I came to Christ almost 80 years after Taylor died, so how did he impact my conversion? [Miss A W Johnson](#) was a missionary in the China Inland Mission and returned to America where God's Spirit used her as His tool to begin [Bible Study Fellowship](#). I came to Christ in the study of the Minor Prophets in Bible Study Fellowship, some 80 years after Hudson Taylor died. His legacy will echo down the "halls of eternity." Will mine? Will yours (under grace of course, not law!)? (See [My Personal Testimony](#))

A Heart for Revival - Missionary John 'Praying' Hyde [1865-1912] poured out his soul four hours a day begging God for revival in India where he labored. When an autopsy was performed after his untimely death, although a malignancy had taken him, it was discovered that his physical heart had actually shifted some distance in his chest cavity because of his agonizing hours of prayer." — Lewis A. Drummond

Twenty-Six Men - The following true story reported by a worker with the Overseas Missionary Fellowship:

While serving at a small field hospital in Africa, I traveled every two weeks by bicycle through the jungle to a nearby city for supplies. This requires camping overnight halfway. On one of these trips, I saw two men fighting in the city. One was seriously hurt so I treated him and witnessed to him about the Lord Jesus Christ. I then returned home without incident.

Upon arriving in the city several weeks later, I was approached by the man I had treated earlier. He told me he had known that I carried money and medicine. He said, "Some friends and I followed you into the jungle, knowing you would camp overnight. We waited for you to go to sleep and planned to kill you and take your money and drugs. Just as we were about to move into your campsite, we saw that you were surrounded by 26 armed guards."

I laughed at this and said, "I was certainly all alone out in the jungle campsite."

The young man pressed the point, "No sir, I was not the only one to see the guards. My five friends also saw them, and we all counted them. It was because of those guards that we were afraid and left you alone."

At this point of my church presentation in Michigan, one of the men in the church stood up and interrupted me. He asked, "Can you tell me the exact date when this happened?"

I thought for awhile and recalled the date.

The man in the congregation then gave his side of the story. He stated, "On that night in Africa it was day here. I was preparing to play golf. As I put my bags in the car, I felt the Lord leading me to pray for you. In fact, the urging was so great that I called the men of this church together to pray for you. Will all of those men who met to pray please stand?"

The men who had met that day to pray together stood—there were 26 of them! -

- David Jeremiah in [Prayer: The Great Adventure](#) says this was a story included in an InterVarsity Christian Fellowship mailing.

Our prayers must embrace the globe as well as our nearest and dearest. I cannot help but recall [F B Meyer's](#) account of awaking early one morning at a conference with [A. B. Simpson](#) (founder of the [Christian and Missionary Alliance](#)) and discovering Simpson weeping in prayer as he clutched a globe. May his tribe increase! - Kent Hughes

The Birth of Modern Missions - We see Paul and Barnabas, the first foreign missionaries, starting westward from Antioch (Acts 13:2-3). The greatest enterprise in the world is foreign missions, and this is the very start of this great movement. The whole idea began just the way it should, at a prayer meeting....Lydia was converted in a prayer meeting (Acts 16:14), but it took an earthquake to arouse the next convert—a jailer (Acts 16:26). The jailer's question is one of the most important questions in all the world (Acts 16:30).—[Henrietta Mears - What the Bible is All About](#)

Life Changing Prayer - Dr. Keller ([Frank A. Keller](#), medical evangelist and educator; in 1924 he had already spent twenty-seven years in China), on loan from the China Inland Mission to the Hunan Bible Institute, tells of a barber who was marvelously converted. He had been an opium addict and a moral degenerate. In desperation, he came to the missionaries, and prayer was answered for him. His appetite for opium left and he became a living witness for Christ.—[Henrietta Mears - What the Bible is All About](#)

It Happened on Wednesday Night! - Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving. (Colossians 4:2) When a missionary to Haiti returned to the United States, she reported a wonderful answer to prayer. She explained that during her most recent term on the field she had been told that she might have cancer. A biopsy was performed and sent away for analysis, but the medical report didn't come back for several weeks. As she waited for word, she could find no peace of mind. She recalled that she was afraid of what might happen to her husband and their small children. There seemed to be no relief to her distress. But one evening her anxiety suddenly lifted like a cloud. She had a deep and inexpressible awareness that the Lord would take care of the needs of her family, regardless of the outcome. Then it occurred to her that it was Wednesday evening—prayer meeting night back in the States. She also realized that it was the first Wednesday night after she and her husband had notified friends and supporters of their struggle. These facts convinced this faithful missionary couple that God had given them an opportunity to sense His answer to the prayers of others on their behalf. In addition, the medical report soon came back with the welcome news that there was no cancer. This true incident carries a needed reminder to all of us who are Christians. The emphasis given to prayer in Colossians 4 highlights the kind of support we should be giving one another. Let's pray for the needs of others and then watch to see what the Lord does. —M R De Haan II

Prayer and Missions - Consider the fact that the U.S. evangelical slogan, "Pray, give or go" allows people merely to pray, if that is their choice! By contrast the Friends Missionary Prayer Band of South India numbers 8,000 people in their prayer bands and supports 80 full-time missionaries in North India. If my denomination (**Ed**: Baptist) (with its unbelievably greater wealth per person) were to do that well, we would not be sending 500 missionaries, but 26,000. In spite of their true poverty, those poor people in South India are sending 50 times as many cross-cultural missionaries as we are!—[Desiring God - John Piper - page 201 of 399](#)

Praying for Jabez - In his nineteenth-century book, *The Holy Spirit in Missions*, [A. J. Gordon](#) relates a powerful story from an earlier book by Rev. Dr. Cox on the history of missionary work by English Baptists. It involves England's first missionary, [William Carey](#), who sailed for India in 1793. It was while Carey was almost alone in India, and greatly distressed for lack of another missionary, that the annual meeting of the Baptist Missionary Society was held in London. During the session, Carey's friends Andrew Fuller and John Ryland had preached. In his discourse, Ryland mentioned that two of Carey's sons, Felix and William, were devoted to the Lord and to the work of missions. "But," he said, "there is a third who gives him pain; he is not yet turned to the Lord." Then Ryland's voice failed as he wept from grief and concern. Finally "in a voice which seemed to exhaust a whole soul of feeling" he said, "Brethren, let us send up a united, universal and fervent prayer to God in solemn silence for the conversion of Jabez Carey." As though the Holy Spirit had suddenly fallen upon the assembly, the whole congregation of two thousand persons pleaded

in silent intercession. The result? One of the first letters afterward received bore news of the conversion of this son who had greatly pained his father by his apparent disregard for Christianity. And the time of his awakening was found to accord almost exactly with the hour of this memorable intercession. Almost immediately, he applied for missionary service, and soon Dr. Carey and the other two sons united in laying hands on the third, ordaining him to ministry. "I trust," wrote Dr. Carey, "that this will be a matter of everlasting praise. Oh, praise the Lord with me, and let us exalt His name together! To me the Lord has been very gracious. I trust all my children love the Lord; and three out of four are actually engaged in the important work of preaching the Gospel among the heathen. —[Nelson's Complete Book of Stories, Illustrations and Quotes](#)

Hot Water Bottle Prayer - The LORD is far from the wicked, but He hears the prayer of the righteous. (Pr 15:29) -[Dr. Helen Roseveare](#), missionary to [Zaire](#), told the following story. "A mother at our mission station died after giving birth to a premature baby. We tried to improvise an incubator to keep the infant alive, but the only hot water bottle we had was beyond repair. So we asked the children to pray for the baby and for her sister. One of the girls responded. 'Dear God, please send a hot water bottle today. Tomorrow will be too late because by then the baby will be dead. And dear Lord, send a doll for the sister so she won't feel so lonely.' That afternoon a large package arrived from England. The children watched eagerly as we opened it. Much to their surprise, under some clothing was a hot water bottle! Immediately the girl who had prayed so earnestly started to dig deeper, exclaiming, 'If God sent that, I'm sure He also sent a doll!' And she was right! The heavenly Father knew in advance of that child's sincere requests, and 5 months earlier He had led a ladies' group to include both of those specific articles." Not all of our prayers are answered so dramatically, but we know that God always sends what is best. —H. G. Bosch

Related Resources:

- [Watch Dr Roseveare tell this story!](#) - This will bring tears to your eyes!
- Watch the 1 hour gripping movie of Dr Roseveare in Zaire - [Mama Luka Comes Home](#)
- Dr Roseveare's address to Desiring God 2007 National Conference - [A Call for the Perseverance of the Saints](#)

God not only prompts the asking
but He also provides the answers.

Angelic Protection in Answer to Prayer - On a dark night about a hundred years ago a Scottish missionary couple found themselves surrounded by cannibals intent on taking their lives. On that terror-filled night the couple fell to their knees and prayed that God would protect them. It was a horrible time. Intermittent with their prayers, the missionaries heard the cries of the savages and imagined them coming through the door to take their lives. As the sun began to rise, to their astonishment they found that the natives were retreating into the forest. The missionaries were absolutely amazed and filled with joy. Their hearts soared to God. It was a day of rejoicing! The couple bravely continued their work. A year later the chieftain of that tribe was saved. As the missionary spoke with him, he remembered the horror of that night and asked the chieftain why he and his men had not killed them. The chieftain replied in surprise, "Who were all those men who were with you?" The missionary answered, "There were no men with us. It was just my wife and myself." The chieftain began to argue with him, saying, "There were hundreds of tall men in shining garments with drawn swords circling about your house, so we could not attack you." That story, recorded in Billy Graham's book *Angels*, is one of the greatest stories in missionary history. The missionary was the almost legendary [John G. Paton](#) of the New Hebrides. What a glorious story for the church—a story not often repeated or experienced, yet one that does have contemporary parallels.

Divine Intervention - Another vivid story was shared with me by a respectable Southern California pastor's wife. One evening she was driving down the Santa Ana freeway, which is always busy. As she drove down that freeway, somehow the car door opened, and her four-year-old child tumbled out onto the freeway amidst the high-speed traffic. With her heart pounding and with horrible expectations, she pulled her car to a screeching stop and ran frantically back along the freeway. But she did not expect to see what she saw. Her child was sitting up in the fast lane of the freeway amidst the glare of headlights, his only injuries a few abrasions. The first words that came out of his mouth were, "Mommy, Mommy, I saw Jesus put up his hands and stop the cars!" Was that a child's imagination? Possibly. None of the drivers saw anyone. They just managed to stop their cars and miss him. The boy had been raised in a pious home, so perhaps he was just parroting what he had heard others say. On the other hand, it may indeed have been angelic intervention, considering the incredible danger in that unusual situation. —[Kent Hughes - Preaching the Word: John](#)

Related Resource: [Lessons from the Life of John G Paton](#)

Praying Hyde - Draw near to God, and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double-minded. Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep; let your laughter be turned to mourning, and your joy to heaviness. Humble yourselves

in the sight of the Lord, and He shall lift you up. (James 4:8-10) Many years ago J. Wilbur Chapman wrote this to a friend: "I have learned some great lessons concerning prayer. At one of our missions in England the audience was exceedingly small, but I received a note saying that an American missionary was going to beseech the Lord on behalf of our work. The man was known as [Praying Hyde](#). Almost immediately the tide changed. Crowds began to pack the hall, and many accepted Christ as their Savior. Meeting Mr. Hyde later, I said, 'Brother, I want you to pray for me personally.' He came to my room, turned the key in the door, and dropped to his knees. He waited 5 minutes without a single syllable coming from his lips. I felt hot tears as they began running down my face. Although he had said nothing, I knew I was in the presence of God. Then with upturned face and with eyes streaming, he said, 'O God!' and was stilt again. When he seemed to sense that he was in full communion with the Lord, there came from the depths of his heart petitions such as I had never heard. I rose from my knees to know what real prayer was!"

Prayer Life Before Missions - The following story was told by a missionary: I remember before going out to India, sitting down with my roommate, now in China, and saying to him: "What are we going to tell them out there on the field? Are we merely going to tell them about Christ! If so, it would be cheaper to send out Bibles and tracts. Can we tell them that we know Jesus Christ saves and satisfies, that He keeps us more than conquerors day by day?" I said: "I am not satisfied. I do not feel that I have a real message such as I need for men out there, nor the experience, nor the power. If we have not, is not the one great thing we need before we leave this country—to know Him?" From that day to the end of our student days we rose every morning at five o'clock, spent an unhurried hour with the Word of God, and from six to seven an unhurried hour for prayer. These two hours each day changed our lives and outlook upon our missionary work.—Alliance Weekly

What will last for eternity? Not your car, house, degrees, trophies, or business. What will last for eternity is every service to the needy, every dollar given to feed the hungry, every cup of cold water given to the thirsty, every investment in missions, every prayer for the needy, every effort invested in evangelism, and every moment spent caring for precious children—including rocking them to sleep and changing their diapers. The Bible says we'll reap in eternity what we've planted in this life (Galatians 6:7-8). - Randy Alcorn - Heaven

The Power of Prayer - A missionary who had spent several years in Japan returned to the United States. I asked her what impressed her most about the churches in the States. Her response was immediate. "The lack of agonizing prayer," she said. She went on to point out that in Japan, where Christians are so greatly outnumbered, where their resources are so limited, and where the bulk of the people are indifferent, if not actually hostile, to the Christian message, Christians know they cannot impress the people with the size and wealth of their churches. They have to depend on God for their victories. **So they fairly besiege God with their prayers.** And often, she said, they feel their prayers are answered in almost miraculous ways. Most churches in the United States need more prayer power—more times when people gather together to pray—more people who pray believing that God hears and answers prayer. As the missionary said, they need more "agonizing prayer," more confessing, more joyous thanksgiving, more earnest seeking for the will of God, more willingness to be filled with, and guided by, the Holy Spirit. **The more successful a church is in terms of this world's standards, the more members it has, the more impressive buildings it can build, the more it is often tempted to neglect its prayer life.** Activities are important and essential, but they must not be allowed to crowd out prayer time. Blessed is the church that has a praying pastor who encourages his or her people to pray. - Clarence Cranford - Cups of Light

Forty Years of Prayer for China - In 1940 Vincent and Margaret Crossett were missionaries in Mainland China. They struggled against poverty and paganism in a remote village in order to tell others about Jesus. The work was very slow and difficult, but after much sacrifice a small church was established. The church was no larger than a small Bible study group. Right on the threshold of this small triumph for the kingdom of God, Satan began his work. The Communist takeover of China during the Cultural Revolution forced all missionaries to leave China. The Crossetts hated to leave. Their fledgling flock of believers hardly seemed ready to withstand the coming onslaught. An atheistic, dictatorial government dedicated to wiping out all Christian influence was beginning its rule with ruthless power. How could the little church survive? From the world's perspective there was nothing anyone could do. The church seemed destined to die. But Vincent and Margaret did not see through the world's eyes. They saw through the eyes of faith that their God was faithful to those who honor him. The Crossetts were like faithful family sedans. They continued to do their duty. Though the missionaries were chased out, their prayers were not. For nearly forty years the Crossetts daily kept their prayer window opened toward China. They dutifully prayed in faith that God would one day triumph over Communism. The Crossetts heard nothing of their Chinese friends for forty years, but still they faithfully prayed for God to be victorious in the church they had left behind. Finally the walls of China came down. As the political climate changed, the nation was opened to western visitors. The Crossetts returned to the village where they had left the tiny, struggling group of believers. There was no small church in the village anymore! Instead, from that Bible study had grown a church of four thousand people! This body of believers had planted dozens of other churches as well, each with a membership of at least a thousand. All the Crossetts did was pray with their prayer window open to the focus of their prayer—China. The God of Daniel is alive and well. —[Rodney Stortz - Preaching the Word: Daniel](#)
