

Praying for Missionaries

Joshua Project estimates that more than 6,900 people groups are still considered unreached. This means that these tribes/nations/ethnic groups have a culture and language where there is little or no expression of the gospel and little or no Christian witness. Many of these groups are to be found in the 10/40 window. More can be found out about this on www.joshuaproject.net

Thus, what Jesus said to his disciples as the Samaritan woman raced back to her village to tell all who would listen to her about a man who had told her everything she ever did and who might be the Messiah, is as relevant today as it was then.

He said, *Don't you have a saying, 'It's still four months until harvest'? I tell you, open your eyes and look at the fields! They are ripe for harvest.* **John 4:35**

And in **Luke 10:2&3** *"The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field. Go! I am sending you out like lambs among wolves.*

We are to ask God to do what only He can do and to do whatever He asks of us. So how and what are we to ask for these workers? Paul, the first missionary to the nations and still one of the greatest, makes several prayer requests of his readers in his letters and these are still helpful for meditation and praying for those who have responded to the call to "GO" today.

Romans 15:31 *Pray that I may be kept safe from the unbelievers in Judea and that the contribution I take to Jerusalem may be favourably received by the Lord's people there,*

Pray for God's protection and favour and ask that the message and help taken may be well received.

Ephesians 6:19 *Pray also for me, that whenever I speak, words may be given me so that I will fearlessly make known the mystery of the gospel,*

Pray for opportunities to speak and share the hope they have in Christ boldly empowered by the Holy Spirit and pray for them as they cope with language and cultural issues. Ask for facility in learning a new language and joy, love and ease in developing friendships with the people.

Colossians 4:3,4 *And pray for us, too, that God may open a door for our message, so that we may proclaim the mystery of Christ...⁴ Pray that I may proclaim it clearly, as I should.*

Ask for an open door into a different culture - for revelation as to how to communicate the gospel in ways that will be clear, relevant and compelling. This can be a real challenge! For example in a culture where many worship ancestors, their concept of "god" may be small and relate only to their own family so it is important to help them to enlarge their concept of GOD to one who created and cares for the whole universe and has sent His son to die for their sins so they no longer have to spend their time and resources worshipping and

appeasing their ancestors. There will be cultural barriers to be overcome and understood in most locations and often revelation and prevailing prayer will be the key to the clear proclamation and receiving of the gospel.

1 Thessalonians 5:17, 25 *pray continually...²⁵ Brothers and sisters, pray for us.*

Let's be faithful in prayer, asking the Holy Spirit to guide us and finding out more about the nations and missionaries He has given us to pray for through the news, books & prayer letters etc. If you are starting to pray for mission, ask God to show you where and who to pray for and wait for His guidance.

2 Thessalonians 3:1,2 *(Request for Prayer)*

As for other matters, brothers and sisters, pray for us that the message of the Lord may spread rapidly and be honoured, just as it was with you. And pray that we may be delivered from wicked and evil people, for not everyone has faith.

Pray for the demolishing of arguments and pretensions that hinder knowing God and pray for the protection, health, safety and wellbeing of missionaries and their families.

In conclusion **Mark 10:29,30** outlines the promises for those who choose to go...

"Truly I tell you," Jesus replied, "no one who has left home or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or fields for me and the gospel will fail to receive a hundred times as much in this present age: homes, brothers, sisters, mothers, children and fields—along with persecutions—and in the age to come eternal life.

Ask God to keep families close in spite of distance. Pray for family relationships as children may need to be home schooled or go to boarding schools far from their parents. Pray for friends, supporters and encouragers and GIVE THANKS for those who have gone as missionaries and for those who will go.