

How to Pray for God's Mission, Part 2

The following are guidelines condensed from Philip M. Bickel's article in the *Mission Education Handbook*.

✠ Let the Bible teach you to pray. Mission prayer is founded on God's promises. As you pray through the Scriptures, keep your eyes open for words in which God promises us His power and success in spreading the Good News to others. When you find such promises, boldly ask the Lord to do what He has proposed.



Holy Spirit, You authored the Word. Author my prayers as well, as I base my petitions on Your Word. Amen.

✠ Pray for national believers and churches, by name if possible. Often we assume that the most important witness in a distant place is the missionary. In reality, a missionary will never be as effective in sharing the faith as national believers are. After all, they speak the language fluently and know the culture intimately. Missionaries are necessary to start the chain-reaction of witnessing, but someday they will return home. National Christians will carry on the mission of God in that place.

Lord of all nations, expand my mission vision beyond missionaries. By praying for nationals by name, may I see them not as a vague crowd, but as individuals who love You as I do; not as children needing my help but as brothers and sisters who are partners in the Gospel (Phil. 1:5), as members together of one body, and sharers together in the promise in Christ Jesus (Eph. 3:6). Amen.



✠ Pray with others – your family, your Bible study group, your ministry team. The Lord will unite your hearts in prayer, love and action on behalf of His lost children.

Almighty God, lead me to others who wish to join in spiritual warfare on behalf of Your mission. By uniting our efforts, we do not expect to succeed by our own strength. Rather, humbly calling upon You, we remind each other that You are the major combatant in this war and the victory belongs to You. Amen.

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✠ Pray for local missions, too. Mission prayer isn't only for "over there." It is also for the ministry opportunities in your own neighborhood. This is why Jesus said, "You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." (Acts 1:8).



Lord of all, help us to see that Your mission is for everyone everywhere, and, therefore, one of the "everywhere" is right here. We live in a mission field surrounded by opportunities to display Christ's love and to proclaim His Good News. May we pass through the doors You open with laughter and joy. Amen.

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✠ Expect God to answer. Mission prayer will change you. It will alter your attitudes and life priorities. Do mission petitions always result in instant and overwhelming answers? Sometimes, yes. But often the Lord answers in quiet, non-dramatic ways that almost escape our attention, but still He causes His kingdom to come.

Transforming God, as I pray for those yet unreached by Your Gospel, may I welcome the changes You work in me. And may I give You all the glory and praise. Amen.

From Beth Heiney, published in the *Lutheran Woman's Quarterly*, Summer 2007: People often ask why we would keep coming back to the mission field after all the hardship. Some are even critical, as if we are putting our children in danger. But we believe that we have been in God's hands all along. Here we have learned the heart of God. Here we have come to better understand who He is. Here – and wherever He calls us to serve – we live daily with His promise: "Trust Me."



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