

3. Remember, they need God's protection

a. Here is Paul's negative request.

- 1) Pray for deliverance from **unreasonable men**. Some people are improper, out of place, or harmful. They hate the Gospel and work to oppose it.
- 2) Pray for deliverance from **wicked men**. Yes, some people are just plain wicked. On several occasions, such men tortured or tried to kill Paul and his companions.
- 3) The deliverance needed was sometimes **physical** deliverance from persecution. Often the deliverance needed was **spiritual**, as the devil and his co-workers were working against them. Other times, the deliverance was **emotional**. Opposition is very emotionally draining.

b. Our missionaries also face negative situations

- 1) The Emmanuel and Victoria face demonic opposition in their demon-infested town.
- 2) Benjamin and Lauren, as well as the Dagens face dangers during travel. Bandits often rob, rape, and even kill travellers.
- 3) The Harringsons face the opposition of the Hindu government. They also face the difficulty of the language barrier.
- 4) Chris, Sarah, and Lauren are all struggling with physical ailments.
- 5) All of our missionaries face the foe of discouragement when they get lonely, frustrated, or down.

Conclusion: Paul gave us three reminders that can help us pray more effectively for our missionaries: **Remember**, they are your spiritual relatives. **Remember**, they need God's power. **Remember**, they need God's protection.

If you have not been praying for our missionaries as specifically and correctly as you ought to, I urge you to take steps this evening to change.

If you have not been the witness that God wants you to be, ask God for the wisdom and courage to begin.

Song: Teach Me to Pray – 346

Praying for Missionaries

21 May 2023 PM – 2 Thessalonians 3:1-2 – Missions – Scott Childs

Introduction: 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. Touch the World Through Prayer, W. Duwel, OMS, p. 85

Transition: How did Paul say that we should pray for missionaries? He gave us three reminders that can help us pray more effectively for our missionaries.

1. Remember, they are your spiritual relatives

a. Paul said, "Brothers, pray for us".

- 1) Frequently, the N.T. identifies Christians as "brethren."
- 2) We who know Christ are born into the same family of God.
- 3) We ought to share a closeness, closer than that of an unbelieving blood relative.

b. Pray for them as for a close relative.

- 1) Our missionaries are our brothers and sisters in Christ.
- 2) We ought to know as much about them as we can so that we can pray for them specifically. Here are some basics about our missionaries that can help us.
- 3) **Benjamin and Lauren Childs** (Miriam, Abigail, Chloe) serve in Tirokave, PNG. Their village is a couple of hour drive on rough dirt roads from the main road that leads to Goroka in the highlands of PNG. Their people live in grass-roofed huts with dirt floors and cook over open fires. They speak PNG Pidgin and their tribal language. Though Benjamin and Lauren are isolated from other white people, many of

their village people are delightful people. Mostly uncluttered by the vanities of our culture, they are more open to the Gospel message. More than 30 have trusted Christ in their 10-year ministry in that village and now faithfully attend the Good News Baptist Church in Tirokave. Besides their weekly church services, they preach in the local market, teach a Bible institute, and have a men's Bible study. Pray for their home school and for their health.

- 4) **Chris and Sarah Dagan** (Jeshua, Micha, Simeon, Reuben) serve in the village of Wau, PNG. Besides preaching ministries, Chris teaches in the local Bible institute. They home school their boys. Presently, they are in Australia recovering from sickness.
- 5) **James and Cindy Herringson** (Joanna, Amy, Jeremy) are missionaries on the island of Mauritius near South Africa. Mauritius enjoys a mild tropical maritime climate throughout the year. About 50% of the population are Hindus. The people speak mainly native Creole, with French being one of the official languages. The Herringsons have taken over a small Baptist church begun by the Serret family. They face opposition from the Hindu government, making it difficult for them to get their own church building.
- 6) **Emmanuel and Victoria Otutei** (Nab, Phinehas, Lois) serve in their native country of Ghana. Being nationals, they speak the local language. Ghana's climate is tropical, with an average temperature of 26 °C. Their city of Anomabo is located along the Atlantic coast. Demonic influence and false religions are very common. God has used the Otutei family to reach many for the Lord already. They are in need of a more suitable building for church, as their present location is near a noisy tavern.

c. These missionaries are your Christian siblings! Pray for them as such!

- 1) (1 Thessalonians 5:25) "**Brethren, pray for us.**"
- 2) We find a similar request in Hebrews 13:3. "**Remember**

them that are in bonds, as bound with them; and them which suffer adversity, as being yourselves also in the body."

2. Remember, they need God's power

a. Paul listed the following positive requests.

- 1) Pray in order that the Word of the Lord might run speedily or spread quickly. In other words, pray that our missionaries will be effective witnesses for the Lord.
 - a) (Ephesians 6:19) "**And for me, that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known the mystery of the gospel,**"
 - b) (Colossians 4:3) "**Withal praying also for us, that God would open unto us a door of utterance, to speak the mystery of Christ, for which I am also in bonds:**"
- 2) Pray in order that the Word of the Lord might be glorified. How can we glorify God's Word? In Luke's account of Christ's crucifixion he wrote, (Luke 23:47) "**Now when the centurion saw what was done, he glorified God, saying, Certainly this was a righteous man.**" By stating that Jesus was a righteous man, he glorified God. Thus, we glorify God's Word when we declare it to be true and when sinners trust it to be true. Both honour the Lord!

b. Paul then makes the requests personal.

- 1) Pray in order that our missionaries might follow our good examples. Paul's words, "**even as it is with you,**" complemented the Thessalonian believers, but they goad us, prodding us to be good examples of witnesses.
- 2) We cannot justly expect our missionaries to do something that we are not attempting to do here at home.
- 3) If you cannot say with the Apostle Paul, (Acts 20:26-27) "**Wherefore I take you to record this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men. For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God,**" then I invite you to join me in asking God, "Lord, make me a better witness!" As important as it is to support missions, that will never excuse us from our responsibility to share the Gospel.