

## 12. Personal Care Maintenance

**Physical** – Stress brought on by living in a different culture, caring for family, maintaining a ministry, and constantly making new transitions, can have serious physical effects on missionary personnel, as can eating an unhealthy diet and neglecting exercise.

**Spiritual** – People often look at missionaries as “super-Christians” because of their calling. They struggle with the same temptations, weaknesses, and shortcomings as everyone else. These are usually intensified on the field, where the spiritual opposition is more intense and positive spiritual support is much less present than in the States.

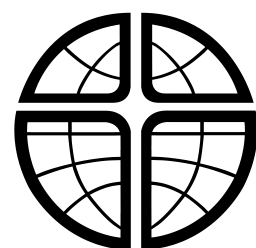
**Emotional** – The stresses of their work can also affect missionaries emotionally. Feelings of sadness, discouragement, depression, and loneliness aren’t uncommon among missionaries.

**Relational** – Maintaining relationships can be challenging, especially when more than one culture is involved.



### **Pray:**

- a) Missionaries will maintain a healthy lifestyle as they serve
- b) Missionaries will be consistent in their personal devotional and prayer time and will experience tremendous spiritual growth during this month
- c) For the Holy Spirit’s comfort upon individuals as they work through difficult emotions
- d) For healing and good emotional health for each missionary
- e) Missionaries will be able to maintain good relationships with their family members, other missionaries, national believers, and non-believers alike
- f) Any broken relationships be mended through the love of God



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# Global *Prayer Initiative*

## PRAYING FOR CREATIVE ACCESS WORKERS

### **Suggestions for the leader:**

This guide provides information for an hour of prayer broken into five-minute segments. Read each item and pray for the specific requests mentioned. Include names of workers assigned to reach the creative access region. Remember our Lord’s command to ask the Lord of the harvest to send forth laborers into His harvest (Matthew 9:38). Your prayers can pave the way for workers yet to be appointed—people God is preparing to hear and answer the call to missionary service. Apply these requests to those future workers as well.

Using this guide will enhance group prayer as well as individual intercession. Read each item, but avoid taking too much time to explain. The evil one is pleased when believers spend more time talking about prayer than actually praying. The power of God flows in response to the united prayer of the body of Christ. Involve everyone in prayer.

*Make as many copies of this guide as needed for your group.*

Begin by asking the Holy Spirit to guide the hour you spend in prayer. Don't be too concerned about the allocation of five minutes per item. Be flexible in response to the moving of the Spirit.

### 1. Candidate Process for Prospective Workers

All candidates must complete a three-phase application process. References, physical and psychological exams, testimonies, strategy documents, and descriptions of previous ministry experiences are all reviewed.



#### **Pray:**

- a) Those currently in this process will stay on-track and focused on their goals
- b) For new candidates to begin the process to take the gospel to the least-reached areas of the world

### 2. IM Board Appointment Process

Applicants meet with the Board personally. This gives those with decision-making authority the opportunity to get to know the candidates, ask questions, and hear their burden for missionary work first-hand before granting final approval. For some short-term and career missionaries, this can be an anxious time. Interviews with the Board can be a time of either affirmation or redirection.



#### **Pray:**

- a) Discernment for IM staff guiding applicants through the candidate process
- b) Wisdom for board members
- c) Confidence for candidates

### 3. Holy Spirit's Guidance in Developing Strategic Ministry Plan

Each missionary candidate must develop a strategic plan for ministry, outlining both short-term and long-term goals. While academic training and personal perspective are essential, candidates need to discern the Holy Spirit's leadership in planning their ministry.



#### **Pray:**

Missionary candidates will be sensitive to the Lord's direction when developing, and later evaluating, their strategy plans

### 4. Sending Families

One of the most difficult mission roles is filled by family members who remain in the U.S. when missionaries go to the field. Parents who give their children to the Lord, siblings who remain close friends, and children who stay behind to attend school sacrifice as loved ones serve overseas.



#### **Pray:**

God's peace and grace will fill the families sending their loved ones to serve overseas

### 5. Family Security and Stability

Living in a different culture and transitioning to and from the States create unique challenges for missionary parents as they seek to maintain a stable, well-adjusted family. Family security is a concern for parents serving in creative access areas.



#### **Pray:**

- a) God will grant parents wisdom and insight into their family's distinctive needs
- b) For them to continually experience the peace that passes understanding
- c) God will protect them to accomplish His purpose and honor His name

### 6. Language Acquisition

Learning a new language is a difficult, often frustrating task. Every new missionary faces this challenge. Learning begins formally in language school, but continues as a life-long process. While a basic grasp of the language can be acquired through formal training, the ability to communicate effectively and accurately comes only with time and practice.



#### **Pray:**

- a) Missionaries will be steadfast in their studies and learn effectively
- b) They'll be able to communicate clearly in the language of their host culture

### 7. Culture Acquisition

The transition to a new culture comes in phases. After the honeymoon stage, when everything is new and exciting, typically comes culture shock: an overwhelming sense of being out-of-place and a strong desire to return home. Culture fatigue can occur after a greater amount of time in the new culture and is characterized by a general weariness of the constant difference in ways of thinking, saying, and doing things.



#### **Pray:**

Missionaries will be able to adapt fully to their new culture, without losing their own identities

### 8. Relationship Building

The heart of missionary work is people: getting to know individuals and developing relationships with them in order to share the gospel. Before effective communication can begin, certain barriers must be torn down and bridges built to cross the gap between cultures.



#### **Pray:**

For strong relationships and trust so missionaries will have credibility when sharing the truth of the gospel

### 9. Ability to Communicate the Gospel Clearly

Sharing the gospel with someone who has had no previous exposure to it, or who has grave misconceptions as to what the Bible teaches, can be a slow, delicate process. Explaining the doctrines of the Bible requires both a thorough understanding of the finer points of doctrine and the ability to express them with simplicity and clarity.



#### **Pray:**

- a) Missionaries will possess these qualities as they study and share with others
- b) For insight to answer the tough questions that arise

### 10. Open Doors of Opportunity

To be effective witnesses, missionaries must have openings to share the gospel in an acceptable manner within the culture. Typically, those opportunities come after much time spent building relationships. While they may initiate opportunities themselves, ultimately missionaries must rely on the Holy Spirit to work in the hearts of those they are trying to reach.



#### **Pray:**

- a) The Lord will open doors of opportunity for personal communication of the gospel
- b) People will be responsive to His moving

### 11. Financial Support

While it is common knowledge missionaries need financial support to be on the field, few realize what a stress it can be to raise support and maintain it over time. Missionaries far and wide agree the most difficult part of mission work is support-raising, and it often takes much-needed time away from ministry on the field.



#### **Pray:**

- a) Missionaries currently on stateside assignment will have their needs met quickly so they can return to the field
- b) Missionaries whose accounts are underfunded will have their needs provided without having to disrupt their term to return and bolster support