

Dec 3 - 78 - P.M. - W.A.S. (R. runway) -

mountain side - feet - Paul -  
"I'll be at the shipyard" - Paul -  
more - for - clothes of - where -  
the - of the 5 - truck - where do you think -  
outside in the - or - Holy Land -

"PRAYING FOR MISSIONS"

2 Thess. 3:1-2

Finally Brethren, pray for us! That the word of the Lord may have free course. And be glorified, even as it is with you. V. 2 - And that we may be delivered from unreasonable and wicked men, for all men have not faith.

Finally Brethren, as I come to the end of this letter, I ask you to pray for us. The first thing Paul wants them to pray for is that the Lord's message will spread rapidly. Whether it goes. Winning converts everywhere as it did when it came to you.

The second thing, pray too that we will be saved out of the clutches of evil men, for not everyone loves the Lord.

There is something deeply moving in the thought of this giant of a man. Who is asking for the prayers of these people. They recognize their own weakness - and so do you. Paul's humility is clear. Cast himself - and requested that these people pray for him. Faith's appeal is not selective. It goes out to every man - but the heart of man can refuse it's response.

Did you know that bound up in the subject of prayer is something that will meet the security in your life and in the consciousness of your life, concerning the unchanging love of God.

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assembly line - foot - Paul  
"I'll be the shipping box" - Paul  
the outside in the truck where do you want them  
or - body level -

"PRAYING FOR MISSIONS"

2 Thess. 3:1-2

Finally Brethren, pray for us! That the word of the Lord may have free course. And be glad we may be delivered from all unbelief. For we are not faithless, but your faith is not faith.

I SMILED AT THIS: A young chaplain, new with the prison system, was sent to console an inmate soon to be electrocuted. As the prisoner was being led to the chair, the flustered chaplain, not wanting to say, "Good-bye," which sounded terribly final; or "see you later," which really wasn't what he wanted, finally said to the condemned man, "More power to you!"

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We live in a world where there are more nervous break-downs, than at anytime in history. It is simply a sign that more and more people have the feeling that they cannot cope with life. We live in a world where men are afraid to look ahead.

We have the answer tonight in this Scripture - with the love of God in your heart, and the strength of Christ in your life -- a man can face anything.

Sarah ~~was~~ was a Christian printer. He said I ought to charge you missionaries double. Standing in the doorway of his print shop with a feeling of embarrassment and frustration, once again he had failed to deliver on time - the tracks that had been ordered by missionaries. He was frustrated with himself, and everything around. He could not explain how so many things could go wrong at one time.

His shop was printing 2 million tracks which was to be used during a crusade. And they were to be distributed systematically to every home. And over one million tracks were to be distributed to Buddhist households. Another half a million to Hindu families. A few hundred thousand in English were set aside for English-speaking students, for Muslim business people, and for the more educated families. Every time I do work for the missionaries, the printer said, either a machine breaks down - one of my workman gets sick, or something else goes wrong in the shop. I can fill all other orders without difficulty but everytime I start to work on a Christian undertaking, something goes wrong. I ought to charge double for this.

Now he had no intention of raising the price. He was a sincere Christian, who loved the Lord and wanted his country to be evangelized. But the problem which he described was real. Accidents and break-downs occurred with unexplainable frequency. Whenever he worked on evangelistic literature - his supplies of paper would fail to arrive. Or the wrong ink would be delivered. There was something about it all. It seemed that the Devil was trying to prevent the Christian tracks from being printed.

Experiences such as this, have taught us to take Paul's words in Eph. 6 seriously. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood - but against the rulers, against the powers, and against the world forces of this darkness. Against the spiritual forces of wickedness, in high places. Missionaries of the Gospel are engaged in a spiritual warfare. And even an humble print shop may be caught up in the struggle. The Devil knew very well what was going on in this man's shop. The forces of darkness were aware that this material would be distributed to millions of people, who at that moment, were numbered in Satan's kingdom. Therefore, it is not surprising that the flaming missiles of the evil one were hurled. Causing workers to fall ill, machines to break down, mistakes to show up, materials late in arrival.

Paul says we need to pray for total spiritual mobilization. Eph. 6:18. Pray at all times in the spirit. With all prayer and supplication. The Devil is always seeking to bring about the defeat and the disgrace of each one who professes faith in Jesus Christ. And who seeks to do the will of the Lord. The Christian must put on the whole armour of God. And that is why prayer is necessary. With supplication, intercession, and thanksgiving. Paul knew that mission work meant conflict. Struggle, opposition from spiritual forces which

resist the advancement of the Gospel.

He urged early Christians to pray earnestly for the missionaries. Of their day, for the work of the Gospel going out in the Roman world, Brothers, he wrote, pray for us that the word of the Lord may spread rapidly and be glorified. Just as it did also with you. And we may deliver - or be delivered from preverse and evil men. For not all have faith.

There is nothing in the world that is more modern, and up-to-date, and vital for Christ's kingdom - than for us to plea for prayer for missions. God speaks to us through these words. He said pray for these who go forth as heralds. And pray that through their witness, the Gospel may speed on its way to the ends of the earth. Pray that obstacles and barriers may be over-come. That multitudes may receive the word of salvation. And in doing so, glorify God's name.

This is God's Word to us.

### I. BRETHREN, PRAY

We pray for missions because we are brethren - sons and daughters of God. Members of Christ. We love the Heavenly Father.

It grieves us that multitudes neither know nor serve him.

Idolatry, false religions, should drive us to our knees because these things dishonor God. They grieve us because they grieve him. Let the people praise thee, Oh God. Let all the people praise thee. The Psalmist said, that there may be an end to idolatry. That people may repent.

We need to span the universe in prayer. Whatever happens anywhere in the world affects Christ's church, in some way.

We read daily in the newspapers and we ask - what is the significance of this news. How will it relate to the work of the Lord. What effect will it have on the on-going missions. How will this war, this drought, or this change of political power affect the brethren in Christ, in the mission of the church. In that part of the world. When we view the world in this way, news time becomes prayer time. And current events become matters for intercession.

Take seriously the privilege and the responsibility to pray. For the work of Christ everywhere in the world. We can pray like this because God is who he is. The character of God determines the nature of prayer.

For the Christians, all things are possible. There is nothing too big for him.

Pagans need a variety of Gods. Each one to satisfy some certain need.

But the Christian needs only (one God) who is sovereign. Ask of me, and I will give Thee the nations for thine inheritance. And the uttermost parts of the earth for my possessions. And he is able to do just that.

Now only is God able he is also willing to hear and answer our prayers. There are searching hearts all around the world for the good news. They need to hear that Christ came. All men were sinned and condemned. And he is willing to hear them and receive their prayers. God, in Christ, has compassion on man.

God, in Christ, can be appealed too in prayer. He is not an unfeeling robot, unmoved by our needs, but he knows, he hears. And redemption was provided.

God does things to answer our prayers if his children pray. This is what makes intercessory prayer so important. God has ordained this as one of the means. And one of the mighty means of intercession. When God's people pray, things happen which would not occur if they did not pray.

## II. PRAY FOR MISSIONARIES

(Pray for us) Paul writes. He is asking the Christians here to pray for him and his fellow missionaries. There is Silas, Timothy, and for the others that are engaged in the work of spreading the Gospel.

Brethren, pray for us. That is a (universal request) for missionaries.

And this is a strong emphasis on prayer.

→ First, it is because missionaries are people who have (needs and weaknesses) just like everybody else. They are exposed to Satan's attack and opposition. Some people conceive that missionaries are spiritual, and moral, and supermen.

Who never makes any mistakes or displays any weakness of character. Unfortunately, this is not the case. There are many who have been missionaries for years. They have known the weaknesses of fellow missionaries. Just as they possess. And they feel the need for the prayers of Christians.

When we look at one another and consider our own short-comings, we may wish that God had assigned the task of evangelizing the world to angels instead of men. For them the job could have been done right. But God in his wisdom did not commission angels to preach. The angels are there to help us perhaps, closely associated with mission work. But we Christians are short-sighted, and imperfect, and we have our weaknesses. Therefore, pray for us.

→ A second thing, why specific prayer for missionaries is so important - missionaries, despite their weakness, are people whom God uses to call sinners unto himself. And there are people that he uses to establish his church. And to advance His kingdom.

ill The story is told of how on the coast of Honduras a missionary was crossing



from the mainland to the island in a dug-out canoe. Powered by an Evinrude motor. Going through a little place (Amapala), a population of 5,000 - and as far as they could see - there was not a single automobile on the island. The people made their living fishing, and loading small freighters with the valuable mahogany wood which Honduras produces. Once they landed, and made their way to the old mission where an old lady missionary had lived since 1933, until she died of cancer in 1962 - she had owned a small boat and had taken the Gospel to some of the smaller, nearby islands. Bats scattered in every direction, when they pushed open the door to that part of the building which had been her house. They stood - and there stood the late missionary's furniture. Her bed, and chair. Her personal belongings. In her desk, they found a record book. In which she had written down the names of the people who had been baptized, married, and buried by the mission, over a 20 year period. There were some brief personal notations about the work - which revealed more than figures could ever tell.

As they examined the yellow pages of the record book, it almost seemed that they were attending the service when the first convert was baptized. We were there as well, as the first protestant Christian wedding on the island. We could almost hear the low soft singing at the funeral of the first believer. In that small record book - the proof of twenty years of diligent activity was brought together in a little more than a dozen pages. The missionary had begun alone with only the spirit and the word of God. As her weapons against the false religion of the islanders. In the course of two decades, God had used her to bring the hope and comfort of salvation, through the life-transforming power of the Gospel to countless individuals and families.

The missionary had died. And many of the strong young Christians whom she

had led to Christ, and who might have given leadership to the little church, had left the island. Today there is no one - either missionary, nor national pastor, to shepherd the little flock of believers. Two faithful Christian ladies conduct a Sunday School each Sunday morning, in the old mission chapel. They pleaded for us to send them a pastor to teach and preach the word. There are many on this island who are interested in the Gospel. They said, but they need someone to teach them what the Bible says. Can't you send someone. They had a brief service before departing, and one of the hymns they used "Lord Of Harvest, Send Forth Reapers". There were tears in the eyes of the island people as they sang. Christ is looking for workers. The Ampalags of the world are many. But trained, committed laborers are few. Despite their wicknesses, God uses missionaries to call sinners to repent, and proclaim the way of salvation. Without missionaries there is no hope for those who are lost and live beyond the Gospel. The prayer of the church must be, Lord, send forth reapers.

*Abayd George: Value of Missionaries "If the Church fails in its Ministry to the world, the the rest of us might as well close up shop."*

A third reason why we should pray for missionaries - Satan bitterly opposes Christ's work. Every step of it. This sets missionaries apart in a special group. They need your prayers. Years ago, missionaries faced physical hardships and dangers. While many were brought to an early grave. In those days, Christians were urged to pray for missionaries. That they would be spared from ship-wreck, disease, and the attacks of savage people.

Today physical hardships may be smaller. But the need for prayer is the same.

There is still mental, emotional tensions, that are as severe as ever. And

whenever Satan controls our lives, he challenges even the souls that we are wrestling for. He will attack in all of his force.

Satan has never signed any truce. With the armies of Christ, the army of evil continues. There has never been any cease-fire, that has been declared. The battle still rages.

X. 2 Paul says, pray. That we may be delivered from preverse and evil men. Not all have faith. That is an inspired under-statement. The vast majority do not have faith. It is not true faith, because their hearts are committed to other Gods. To other religions, or to self.

Therefore, it is a responsibility for all of us to pray without ceasing for Christ's church - it is under attack. Brethren, pray for us!

### III. PRAY FOR THE SPREAD OF THE GOSPEL

The Apostle Paul was praying, and asking the Christians to pray - not only that he and his fellow missionaries would realize their personal ambitions, but as our text says - that the word of God might spread rapidly and be crowned with glory everywhere.

The word of the Lord is the Gospel of salvation through the Lord Jesus Christ.

It is called the word of the Lord because it comes from him and refers to him. Christ stands at the center of Gospel preaching - you cannot talk about the Christian religion and proclaim the Gospel, without proclaiming who Christ is. And what he has done for sinners.

Evangelism takes place when the word of the Lord is heralded and without the intelligence this verbal proclamation of the word - evangelism does not happen. Faith, says Paul, in Rom. 10:17 comes from hearing and hearing about the word of Christ. Mission is heralding the word of salvation through Christ, and it is for this which we must pray.

We are asking God for a blessing that has a purpose. That thy way may be known upon earth, thy saving power among all nations, and that is what we are supposed to be praying for.

*There are many ways - we are to P.*

First the God way - we are to pray that (thy way) will be known upon earth. The God way of doing things - which is something we Christians must increasingly recognize. We are not just another group of people, along side of Buddhists, Muslims, and Jews.

As Christians, we are different. We are here to do things God's way. There is God's way of building a Christian home, of educating children, and even carrying on our work - of singing, getting married, there is a Christian way of dating. And if you are a Christian, you just can't do things as the world. There is God's way and there is a purpose in it.

Second there is the (humanistic way.) The way that a man centers in his life the end of everything - but that is not God's way. In his plan or scheme of things - man is important. He was God's masterpiece - made a little lower than angels.

And it is easy for people today to follow the humanistic idea. After all, look at the accomplishments of man in this age. Since he sets his mind to do something in a few staff meetings - he puts in long hours, he solves problems, and he plants his feet on the moon. What more proof could one ask. Than here is a man with unlimited capacity to achieve his desires.

If an auditorium is too hot - man invents air that is cool. If the place is cold he brings in air that is heated. Man is very clever today. There is something easy for us to believe. That here is a man and he knows how to take care of the problems of war, poverty, and crime. And he keeps on cheating in high places.

In man's effort to reach perfection - he always fails. That is the total picture. While the humanist wants to believe that man is everything and is improving himself, and man hopes to form a perfect society. But he has always failed. He never learns another way. The way of God for this earth. By nature, man does not know that way. It has to be told to him. And that is why we Christians are here to pray.

Third, there is the (Communist's way.) This is another way that begins with some interpretation of history. And leaves no room for God. The strength of

Communism staggered our minds. Over 2/3 of the world's population live under this rule. They have propaganda campaigns and they enlist assistance from the news folks, and from the forum, and from discussions. It is high time that the Christian community wakes up to the fact that Communism is not an economic or political thinking system, or another way of making automobiles. It is an ideology. It intergrates into the human life.

A Communist has a world view of life. They promise happiness and solutions to all of man's problems. They say they are deeply concerned with the past, present, and future. Communism says that the end justifies the means, and that is why they say they do not hesitate to do away with human life. Because they are trying to reach something that is perfect. Today it captures the minds and the masses of people. Young people, intellectuals, in Latin America it is reaching out. They argue, they write books, they express their feelings, and they grow in number, and people who try to answer the question by pointing to the plight of poverty and exploited masses. But that answer does not always work. In fact, it seldom does. There are poor people who have fallen to atheistic materialism. And some wealthy people as well.

They take a hold of men's minds and try to interpret life for them. Without reference to God. The whole doctrine is, they can handle the problems of the present, and they can paint a wonderful picture for the future. They send out propaganda and thousands upon thousands fall for it. Now Christians are going to be in trouble. We have not made known the ways of God upon the earth. And the earth is the stage on which God's mighty axe is going to take place. The Lord has a way of handling the present. His people must be the salt of the earth. And the light of the world. God has a plan for the future. The establishment

of an eternal kingdom, of peace.

It is tragic that we have kept the news about God's way mostly to ourselves. And in our own little group. And the Communists have continued on.

Next, there is the Western way. We think about our Western culture. But we are fooling no one. The Western society is filled with materialistic objectives. It is carnal and it is comercialized. And they say there is toothpaste that has real sex appeal. And it guarantees happiness. Pills that calm you during the day. Pills will put you to sleep at night. And we identify with this - and we say this is a marvelous thing from God. But the best of human forms is vastly different.

The Christian has responsibility - we have no right to ask God's blessing upon our purposes in life. But upon his saving powers among the nations. If there is one thing that God wants his children to do - it is to proclaim that all men - that God alone can save. Men may be able to conquer cancer or solve problems, build highways and bridges, erect buildings, but never forget - there is one thing they will never be able to do - save a man's soul from his sin and consequences. For that, he needs God and God alone.

In front of an old cathedral in Mexico City, the heart of the Christian has to bleed. Humble peasants from all over the country make their pilgrimage there. They bear their knees to crawl on the hard, rough cement, for about

two blocks. Their skin peels and they bleed. Their noble faces are vividly painted, with anguish as they continue their goal. The golden altar of the virgin, without flinching. They do it daily. Men and women, young folks, even children. (They are sinners and they know it. They are seeking salvation) How ~~sad~~ - sad, because useless, no human power can possibly save.

A man had lost his wife of many years. He was extremely poor. A couple of cows was the extent of his capital. For the milk, he bought his clothes, medicine and food - from the milk that he sold. He saved only cents - after a month of wise management, he had saved 10c. He made his way to the huge cathedral - his 10c would buy a ritual, and would supposed to take his wife a bit farther out of purgatory. There is something very great about saving money - and taking it to church. But how tragic really when it is simply wasted. No man can save his wife - not before death nor after.

Even a very wealthy man - he may be called a good man, have helped many people. He may weep with some who sorrow. But when he dies, how our world needs such people who love. But what a pity that he is not a child of God with faith in Christ. He is just a human wreck when he dies.

Christ makes new creatures out of old sinners. The old lost sinner came, and someone prayed with him. Of himself, he had no power. He was seeking - and the change came from above. God's power alone saved his soul.

Salvation is by grace alone. No sinner has the power or the merit to save



himself. From God's judgement. If Christians do not make this known to the ends of the earth, people will continue to crawl on their knees before shrines. They will continue to save a few pennies to give to the departed dead. They will continue to go on and do some good deed without ever being saved.

Pray Paul says, that the word may spread rapidly. The authorized version says, may have free course. The American Standard says, may run The plainest English, Paul is asking us to pray that the Gospel will travel on high speed, super highways, toll roads and not be bogged down on a back country trail. That it will get on the Interstate and really move.

There is urgency in Paul's voice. He urges to see and yearns to see the whole world evangelized, he says - pray to the effect that every man, woman, and child will hear the word of the Lord as soon as possible. Did you know, this is the challenge of Southern Baptists that every individual will hear the Gospel by the year 2,000.

Now the highest purpose of the prayer is the glory of God, and God is glorified when his word of grace is made known and acknowledged. It had happened already among the Thessalonians. Paul urged them to pray. That it would happen over and over - across the world, as sinners heard the message of the cross, and by divine grace repented and believed. That must be our prayer too - as we spread out the whole enterprise of the Lottie Moon Foreign Mission Offering.

A group of students went on a trip to Mexico City. And just before leaving,

a certain student, an older man came by the name of Adam Gumesindo - in the poverty stricken village high up into the mountains. They knelt with him in a grass-roofed house for prayer. Oh Lord, he prayed, I thank you for the Christians in the United States, who have given their tithes and offerings so that I can be here and spend these weeks in this village. Preaching the good news of salvation to your son. Bless them Lord for what they have given, and may they continue to support us.

*A young Sol, wrote from So. Pacific "I had my reservations about the value of foreign missionary work, but I have had those doubts erased. This island inhabited by Head Hunters in New Guineya."*

As you listen to that man pray, if only Christians everywhere could hear this man thanking God, for their gifts. For the privilege of staying and preaching. And there would be something in us, how we could really pray, and how we would really give.

We cannot visit all of the places where God's servants are really working. Nor can we know every burden which they bear. No way can we enter into the special experiences - but we can uphold them in prayer. For this ministry and share with their families through prayer, and participate in the Gospel.

Finally, brethren, pray. Pray for the spread of the Gospel. Pray for the missionaries of the cross. Pray that the Lord of the universe will speed his saving message, to the ends of the earth. Pray that the adversaries of the kingdom of Christ, will be defeated. Pray that every man and woman, and child on this earth will hear this Gospel at least once before he dies.

Pray, brethren, pray for the whole work of Christian missions.

# evangelical newsletter

News, trends, and analysis for Christian leaders

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## Dollar Decline is Hurting American Missions Overseas

The declining value of the U.S. dollar coupled with skyrocketing inflation around the world has put a severe strain on American missionary activity. United Presbyterians report that it now costs an average of \$13,400 to put a missionary on the field for a year, as compared to \$6000 ten years ago. In Switzerland, a missionary family of three requires an \$800 cost-of-living supplement just to keep equal with a year ago. In Nigeria, with an annual inflation rate of 30-60%, a house rents for \$17,000 a year. Chile faces an annual inflation rate of 75%. Meanwhile, the U.S. dollar has declined 54% in value over the last seven years and 20% against the Japanese yen since the beginning of 1977 to a post-World-War-II low.

## Administration Sponsors

Youth camp safety legislation has been proposed in every U.S.

## Youth Camp Safety Bill

Congress except one since 1967--none which made it into