



# CHAPTER 3

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## PRAY

*Asking God for kingdom perspective and worldwide vision, interceding for Christian workers, and unevangelized peoples.*

When God's people pray earnestly for missions and missionaries, they can expect great results. Prayer has a way of opening our eyes to the mission fields around us and around the world, helping us gain a kingdom perspective and worldwide vision of what God wants to do through us. Many mission opportunities go unnoticed and unattended as a result of our failure to see through the eyes of Christ. We must be committed to praying for the workers in each mission field and unevangelized peoples around the world.

Scripture tells us that when Jesus saw the multitudes in Jerusalem, He was moved with compassion. His words to the disciples reflect this kingdom response: "*Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field*" (Matt. 9:38, NIV). Jesus said for us to pray. His mandate is enough, but leading people to pray in response to mission needs is strategically connected to becoming involved in other kingdom responses. As we pray, our hearts are often drawn toward further action.

Responding to the Acts 1:8 Challenge by mobilizing members to pray is one of the best ways to get a large number of people involved. Praying for God's mission advancement is often a first step toward becoming personally involved in the Great Commission. Prayer leads to participation. When we pray, God has a way of touching hearts with the things that touch His heart. People who engage in this kingdom response often catch God's passion for the world to know about Jesus.

The mission leadership team must keep prayer as a primary focus of the church's mission endeavor. This can be accomplished by offering churchwide, year-round opportunities to pray for specific needs and names. There are many prayer resources available for churches to engage in Great Commission prayer. Using the following examples and ideas, design your unique Acts 1:8 Challenge strategy for mobilizing members to pray for missionaries, mission causes, and missions opportunities.

Following are some helpful ideas, resources, Web sites, and contacts to help you facilitate praying for the four fields. As you read and consider each selection, place in the block the symbol that corresponds with your current or potential use of the idea or resource.

- ✓ = Already use idea or resource
- \* = Implement this idea or resource immediately
- ? = Consider future use of this idea or resource

### **Ideas and Resources for Praying for Jerusalem**

- Contact your association office to learn of specific prayer resources it has to facilitate individual and group praying for churches in the association. The association may have a designated prayer coordinator for the association. Your association newsletter will have prayer requests from local churches and pastors. Designate someone in your church to receive specific prayer requests from the association and communicate those with the church on an ongoing basis.
- Incorporate an annual week of prayer for local missions as an element in your church's worship. Contact your association office for ideas on how to engage your congregation in praying for specific needs in the association.
- Lead your church to adopt an unevangelized group in your community. Work with your association staff to identify such groups and discover what types of outreach and ministry are being done with the group. Begin the process of building a relationship with that group of people by praying for them and sharing needs and other information with your church family.

- Schedule a prayerwalk at your local school campus(es) before classes begin in the fall. Some churches schedule this for the day or weekend prior to the national See You At the Pole rally in early September. For information about conducting a prayerwalk in your community, call (770) 410-6333, or visit [www.studentz.com/prayer](http://www.studentz.com/prayer). For more information about See You At the Pole, call (817) 447-7526, or visit [www.syatp.com](http://www.syatp.com).
- Encourage members, especially students, to practice “prayer evangelism” activities such as neighborhood prayer surveys, which involve going door-to-door asking for any special prayer concerns and actually praying for families while on their doorstep. An excellent resource for this is found at [www.namb.net/evangelism/prayer/tps](http://www.namb.net/evangelism/prayer/tps).
- Lead members to participate in “prayer ministry moments” during their regular weekly activities and routine. For example, encourage intentional brief stops by the local fire station, police department, city hall, school, or a particular business and ask to see the chief, mayor, principal, or manager. With their permission, offer to pray for them personally.
- The “Great Commission Prayer Ministry” strategy encourages believers to renew a personal passion for Jesus through praying unceasingly and to reclaim the congregation as a house of prayer with a passion for lost people. For more information or to download a free copy of the “Great Commission Prayer Ministry” booklet, visit [www.namb.net/prayer](http://www.namb.net/prayer).
- Open your church facility to host local prayer groups or prayer events.
- Enlist members to establish “Lighthouses of Prayer” in your community. This ministry involves praying for families living near you—five to the left, five to the right, and 10 across the street. To learn more about becoming a Lighthouse of Prayer, visit [www.namb.net/prayer](http://www.namb.net/prayer). To order the *Lighthouse of Prayer Starter Kit* (ISBN 0840096828), call the NAMB Customer Service Center at 1 866 407-6262, or visit [www.namb.net/catalog](http://www.namb.net/catalog).
- Keep the names of local missionaries, people groups, specific mission needs, mission partnerships, and missions projects before your congregation on a regular, ongoing basis by including prayer requests and needs lists in your church bulletin or newsletter.
- Promote the use of the daily prayer guide at [www.OneInAMillionPrayer.com](http://www.OneInAMillionPrayer.com).

### **Ideas and Resources for Praying for Judea**

- Incorporate the annual week of prayer for state missions as an element in your church’s event calendar. Information and promotional materials for this emphasis are available from your state convention office.
- Contact your state convention office to learn of state-specific prayer resources and to identify the prayer coordinator for the state.
- Lead your church family to adopt missionaries assigned to or living in your state. Contact your state convention office to locate such missionaries, or visit [www.namb.net/missionaries](http://www.namb.net/missionaries). For information about adopting IMB missionaries who are on stateside assignment in your state, e-mail [imb@imb.org](mailto:imb@imb.org).

- Lead your church to adopt an unevangelized group in your state. Begin the process of building a relationship with that group of people by praying for them and sharing needs and other information with your church family.
- Contact your state convention office to determine what prayer resources are available for intentional prayer focus in the state.

### **Ideas and Resources for Praying for Samaria**

- Discover what mission partnerships are in place between your state convention and other states. Pray for the efforts and opportunities this partnership affords.
- Coordinate special churchwide “days of prayer” and other focused times of extended prayer and fasting, such as the annual National Day of Prayer emphasis ([www.nationaldayofprayer.org](http://www.nationaldayofprayer.org)).
- Incorporate the annual Week of Prayer for North American Missions as an element in your church’s worship. Information and promotional materials for this prayer emphasis is mailed annually to each church. For further information, call (770) 410-6321, e-mail [aaeo@namb.net](mailto:aaeo@namb.net), or visit [www.AnnieArmstrong.com](http://www.AnnieArmstrong.com).
- Use information from the booklet *Missionary Moments* as a part of worship services. This publication features two Southern Baptist missionaries and prayer requests each week. To obtain copies of *Missionary Moments*, contact the Southern Baptist Cooperative Program Office at 1 800 722-9407, or visit [www.cpmissions.net](http://www.cpmissions.net).
- Lead your church to be part of a developing prayer movement focused on revival of God’s people and spiritual awakening in North America. Register at [www.OneInAMillionPrayer.com](http://www.OneInAMillionPrayer.com).
- Involve church members in praying for missions by promoting the use of the quarterly “PrayerGram” newsletter, which includes daily prayer requests from North American missionaries. Subscribe by visiting [www.namb.net/evangelism/prayer/prayergram.asp](http://www.namb.net/evangelism/prayer/prayergram.asp), or call (770) 410-6333.
- Obtain recent prayer requests of North American missionaries by contacting the NAMB Prayerline at 1 800 554-PRAY (7729), or visit [www.namb.net/prayer](http://www.namb.net/prayer).
- Sign up to receive the Weekly Window on North America e-mail that contains seven missionary requests and Prayerline requests to share during weekly church prayer meetings. It is also posted on daily prayer at [www.namb.net/prayer](http://www.namb.net/prayer).
- Discover prayerwalk opportunities/projects at [thebridge.namb.net](http://thebridge.namb.net).

### **Ideas and Resources for Praying for the Ends of the Earth**

- Coordinate special churchwide “days of prayer” and other focused times of extended prayer and fasting, such as the “Day of Prayer and Fasting for World Evangelization.” For information visit <http://ime.imb.org/dayofprayer>, or call the IMB Contact Center at 1 800 999-3113.
- Schedule a prayerwalk. For information about conducting an international prayerwalk and for requests from the field for prayerwalking teams, call the IMB, 1 800 999-3113.

- Incorporate the annual Week of Prayer for International Missions as an element in your church's worship. Information and promotional materials for this prayer emphasis are mailed annually to each church. Information is available on the Web at [www.imb.org](http://www.imb.org).
- Lead your church family to connect with an IMB missionary family. For information about connecting with IMB missionaries, e-mail [imb@imb.org](mailto:imb@imb.org).
- Lead your church to adopt an unreached people group. Begin the process of building a relationship with that group of people by praying for them and sharing needs and other information with your church family. For further information, visit [www.imb.org](http://www.imb.org), or e-mail [peoplelink@imb.org](mailto:peoplelink@imb.org). For additional information about specific people groups, visit [www.peoplegroups.org](http://www.peoplegroups.org).
- Keep the names of missionaries, people groups, specific mission needs, mission partnerships, and missions projects before your congregation on a regular, ongoing basis. To obtain recent prayer requests of international missionaries, contact the IMB Prayerline at 1 800 395-PRAY (7729), or visit <http://imb.org/compassionnet>.
- Use information from the booklet *Missionary Moments* as part of worship services. To obtain copies of *Missionary Moments*, contact the Southern Baptist Cooperative Program Office at 1 800 722-9407, or visit [www.cpmisions.net](http://www.cpmisions.net).
- "Today's Prayer" provides strategic prayer items by e-mail every day, Monday through Friday. Subscribe at [http://subscribe.imb.org/subscribe\\_more.asp](http://subscribe.imb.org/subscribe_more.asp).
- Obtain recent prayer requests of international missionaries by contacting the IMB Prayerline at 1 800 395-PRAY (7729), or by visiting [www.imb.org/compassionnet/prayerline.asp](http://www.imb.org/compassionnet/prayerline.asp).
- The Global PrayerGram includes daily prayer requests and answers from the international mission field and is mailed monthly. Subscribe through the IMB Contact Center at [imb@imb.org](mailto:imb@imb.org) or 1 800 999-3113. For an online version, visit <http://imb.org/compassionnet>.
- Wednesday Window on the World is a one-page prayer guide for use in Wednesday night prayer meetings. It includes two prayer requests and one answer. The prayer guide is posted weekly at <http://www.imb.org/CompassionNet>, or you can receive it by e-mail every Tuesday. To subscribe, go to [http://subscribe.imb.org/subscribe\\_more.asp](http://subscribe.imb.org/subscribe_more.asp).
- Prayer items that are critical (generally life or death) and are not ongoing situations often qualify as urgent. They are processed immediately and sent by e-mail. Subscribe at [http://subscribe.imb.org/subscribe\\_more.asp](http://subscribe.imb.org/subscribe_more.asp). They are also on the Web at [www.imb.org/CompassionNet](http://www.imb.org/CompassionNet).
- PRAYERplus links a church or group, such as a Sunday School class or WMU group, with an unengaged people group within the Last Frontier. This commitment is one of prayer that will open work among people groups not typically focused on due to size, location, and so on. Churches and groups may contact the International Prayer Strategy Office to participate. Call 1 888 462-7729, or e-mail [prayeroffice@imb.org](mailto:prayeroffice@imb.org).

### **Ideas and Resources for Praying for All Fields**

- Include a church prayer ministry coordinator, a prayer ministry director, or an international prayer advocate as part of your church's mission leadership team. Consider having a prayer ministry

coordinator for each of the Acts 1:8 Challenge mission fields. These coordinators can assist with creating, planning, and implementing personal opportunities for members to participate in Great Commission praying in each specific area. For more information, job descriptions, and training for church prayer coordinators, call (770) 410-6333. A prayer mobilizer can encourage and enable members to become intercessors for the world by helping them discover prayer as the foundation for missions. For more information on selecting and training an international prayer advocate, call IMB at 1 800 999-3113, or visit [www.imb.org/resources](http://www.imb.org/resources).

- Lead your church's prayer ministry coordinator to assemble a prayer council comprised of people who are responding to God's call to prayer and mobilizing others in the church to pray. The church prayer ministry coordinator, along with the church prayer council, should begin planning a comprehensive prayer plan for the church that is biblically based and Great Commission oriented. A resource for this is [www.namb.net/prayer](http://www.namb.net/prayer).
- Set aside a bulletin board or display area in the church to post missions prayer requests and resources for the four mission fields.
- Obtain copies of *Loving the Lost Prayer Guide*, a free booklet to help Southern Baptists pray for Muslims, Buddhists, Hindus, and Jews. To order, call the IMB Contact Center at 1 800 999-3113, visit <http://resources.imb.org>, or e-mail [imb@imb.org](mailto:imb@imb.org). This booklet will enrich your prayer life and encourage you to respond in Great Commission prayer.
- Ask children, youth, and adults to pray for missionaries in public worship. This encourages participation by all generations and serves to instill the practice of Great Commission praying in the hearts of present and future church leaders.
- Include all mission volunteers in a commissioning service during worship. Use this as a time to promote praying and the results that come from this privilege. Enlist prayer partners for each mission volunteer.
- Consider a prayer room that can contain prayer requests from Southern Baptist missionaries and especially those going on mission trips from your church. This room can contain maps and visual aids to encourage specific, ongoing prayer. Call (770) 410-6333 for resources and information to help establish a prayer room.
- Consult the prayer calendar in *Missions Mosaic* and *Open Windows* to learn missionary names and locations so you can pray for them by name.

# PRAYER EVALUATION WORKSHEET

| Determine how well your church is balancing prayer for the four fields. Place a P in each field you believe receives attention in the item listed below. After you have completed the chart, note areas to focus on for improvement. | JERUSALEM | JUDEA | SAMARIA | ENDS OF THE EARTH | ALL |
|--|-----------|-------|---------|-------------------|-----|
| Prayer coordinator selected for Acts 1:8 Challenge efforts is aware of resources for the field   |           |       |         |                   |     |
| An effective prayer plan is established which identifies prayer concerns in the field  |           |       |         |                   |     |
| Ongoing and urgent prayer needs for the field are known and prayed for daily   |           |       |         |                   |     |
| Field-related prayer resources are received and circulated to church members   |           |       |         |                   |     |
| Focused prayer services for the field are held during special emphases   |           |       |         |                   |     |
| Follow-up on answered prayers from the field are communicated to the church  |           |       |         |                   |     |
| A prayer room or other designated area is provided for pray-ers stocked with information on the field  |           |       |         |                   |     |
| Missionaries and other mission workers know that members are praying for them  |           |       |         |                   |     |
|  |           |       |         |                   |     |
|  |           |       |         |                   |     |