**World Missions**

*III John 1:4-8*

**INTRODUCTION:** In his last epistle, John gave instruction to a church regarding missionaries and preachers that would come through on their journeys. They were to “bring forward on their journey after a godly sort.” This simply means that they were to take care of them very well while they were with the church, and then send them forward with sufficient resources. For us, this means providing both financial, material and spiritual support. Also, it is to be done in a manner worthy of God. This is a high standard for a church, but one which God enables us to meet. In providing financial and material support in this way, we join with our missionaries in worldwide ministry, becoming “fellowhelpers to the truth.” Their ministry becomes our ministry.

1. **FINANCIAL SUPPORT**– 2 Corinthians 8 & 9

**TEACHER’S NOTE**: The big point of this lesson is not about supporting missionaries financially. It would be good to mention thought how we support missionaries financially at Hillcrest (Faith Promise Missions) and that it is never too late to get involved in this. They can always give online and in the offering plate. You also can explain that we get the idea of how to support them financially from 2 Corinthians 8 & 9- there was an offering taken up (above the tithe) to support the needs of another ministry. This offering was motivated by love and their abundance to be able to give.

What kinds of needs does financial support assist the missionary with?

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1. **PHYSICAL/MATERIAL SUPPORT**
2. When missionaries come to our church we need to take care of them – Philemon 1:22
	1. Lodging – clean, comfortable
	2. Food
	3. Laundry
3. The missionary needs to feel welcome, and wanted – we must be careful never to give the impression they are an inconvenience.
4. **SPIRITUAL SUPPORT**
	1. We cannot forget they have spiritual needs. (They are not special spiritual giants.) –Romans 7:19
	2. How do we spiritually support them?
5. Prayer
6. Words of encouragement
7. **PRAYER SUPPORT**
8. Deliverance from hostility – Romans 15:31a; Philippians 1:19; 2 Thessalonians 3:2
9. No one enjoys a hostile work environment, but missionaries deal with this constantly.
10. The truth is that they and we are in a spiritual warfare, and Satan is opposed to all we do.
11. Successful ministry – Romans 15:31b; 2 Thessalonians 3:1
	1. Everyone likes to be successful. We all prefer winning to losing, and the main tool for a successful ministry is prayer.
	2. Therefore, if we desire our missionaries to be successful, we must pray for them.
12. Safe travels – Romans 15:32; Philemon 22; Hebrews 13:18-19

**NOTE**: Missionaries travel hundreds and thousands of miles on deputation, furlough, and going back and forth between the USA and the country they labor in.

1. Boldness in witnessing – Ephesians 6:18-20
	1. Boldness is not rudeness. It is rather a certainty of what you say is true.
	2. If we are not secure in the truth we proclaim, then we will not (want to) speak up. Missionaries face the same insecurities and fears we do.
	3. Assurance comes from the Holy Ghost that we have the truth, and someone needs to hear it.
2. More opportunities to share the Gospel – Colossians 4:2-4
	1. Too often we miss golden opportunities to share Gospel of Jesus Christ.
	2. As we pray for more opportunities, our mind is more aware of each open door the Holy Spirit leads us to.

**NOTE**: See the attached prayer sheet for missionaries.

1. **COMMUNICATION SUPPORT**
2. Missionaries desire relationships like we do.

**NOTE**: Consider the sacrifice that our missionaries make. They might be home for Christmas once every four years. Birthdays, anniversaries, etc. are all celebrated abroad. It may “hurt” a little to put yourselves in their shoes, but it will motivate you to truly care for and communicate with them.

1. Make an effort to communicate with them.

What are some ways we can communicate with a missionary?

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1. Be mindful of them and their time when they are on furlough.

**CONCLUSION**: Paul relied heavily on the support of churches. Needs of missionaries have not decreased, but probably actually increased. Therefore, consider what God would have you do.

* Faith Promise commitment
* Special offerings
* Adopt a missionary family
* Care packages
* Caring environment when they are here
* Prayer- email a missionary and let them know you are praying for them.
* Send an encouraging card

**NOTE**: This is a very practical thought, but a thought with eternal implications. As we support missionaries in these many ways, we are helping them and their ministries. Never forget the difference you can make all over the world is more than just financial. Just as giving financially proves our commitment and care for the spreading of the gospel, so does supporting God’s called servants in these other various ways.

**PRAYING FOR MISSIONARIES**

**The missionary’s own relationship to God – 2 Peter 3:18**

* Pray that he/she will be abiding in Christ and feeding on God’s Word
* Pray for a deep prayer life
* Pray for him/her to be filled with the Holy Spirit; pray that they will not be depending on their own efforts
* Pray for victory over Satan

**The missionary’s physical and emotional life – 2 Thessalonians 2:16-17**

* Pray for good health – they live and work in difficult climates, diseases are prevalent
* Pray for safety – travel is often hazardous, whether by air, car or foot
* Pray for deliverance from depression, discouragement, depression, loneliness
* Pray for the missionary’s financial, physical, spiritual and emotional needs to be met

**The missionary’s family – Ephesians 5:21**

* Pray for a strong marriage
* Pray for children – their educational needs, their safety, health, that they would grow to love the Lord
* Pray for wisdom in parenting
* Pray for the missionary’s family at home, especially needs of elderly parents or children in college or living on their own

**The missionary’s ability to communicate – 2 Timothy 4:2**

* Pray for ability to learn the language and understand the culture; pray they will adapt to the culture
* Pray for effectiveness in communicating the gospel
* Pray for time and discipline to communicate with supporters and others at home

**The missionary’s ministry –2 Thessalonians 3:1-3**

* Pray for open doors, boldness, empowerment by the Holy Spirit
* Pray for discernment and understanding in decisions that are made
* Pray for effective use of time
* Pray for God to show the missionary where the harvest is ripe

**The missionary’s interpersonal relationships – John 17:21**

* Pray for the missionary’s relationship with fellow missionaries; pray for unity, grace, and understanding
* Pray for the missionary’s relationship with national workers

**Communication**

* Pray against Satan sowing the spirit of discord

**The missionary’s country of service - Colossians 4:2-5; Psalm 2:8**

* Pray for political stability and peace
* Pray for its government and leaders
* Pray for freedom to evangelize; pray for a favorable climate for the gospel
* Pray that there will not be difficulty in granting visas, work permits