

## Classic Christian Writings:

How can your family fulfill the Great Commission of Christ, if you don't go anywhere? First, help your family to understand the importance and significance of what Jesus is asking us to do. Discuss the Great Commission together as a family—memorize Matthew 28:18-20, which says, "Then Jesus came to them and said, 'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.'" Clearly, the Lord is commanding us to "Go." Are you willing to go and make disciples of all nations if He calls you? Are you willing to prepare your children to answer God's call to "Go" should He lay this upon their hearts?

I am reminded of a story about a passionate preacher who regularly gave an invitation to the youth of the church to commit their lives to missionary service. He was thrilled at the response, and his church supported the missionary efforts of several young people from their own congregation. Then, one day, his very own daughter came down the aisle in response to his invitation to "Go." She was prepared to do just that; however, he wasn't ready—he hadn't prepared himself to deal with the possibility that his own children would be called as missionaries. I'm hoping that he later recovered and supported her decision—especially since her response was due to his own careful teaching on the importance of "going into all the world"! It is critical that you prepare as a family for the possibility that God might call one or all of you. Mom and Dad—He might even call you to the mission field once your children are grown and on their own—be ready.

The Lord of the universe is asking us to go into all the world! However, as you think realistically about the possibilities of fulfilling this commission with your family at this point in time, there are two distinct possibilities: 1) You could become missionaries and physically go wherever the Lord leads you. 2) If you don't feel that the Lord is calling you away from your home right now, He still wants you to "Go." He wants you to be missionaries right where you are—in your neighborhood, with your family and friends, at school and at work. He wants you to be prayer missionaries, or prayer evangelists—going into all the world through the power of your prayers.

What is a prayer evangelist? He or she is someone who takes very seriously the command in Matthew 9:37-38 to pray for workers: "Then he said to his disciples, 'The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest to send workers into his harvest field.'" A prayer evangelist is also one who prays for the lost. Together, memorize Matthew 9:37-38. Discuss ways that your family can respond to the Great Commission by asking God to intervene in the lives of people all over the world. You can go into all the world in prayer! Lost people live in places like China, Africa, Russia, India, the United States... even right in your own neighborhood or family. The prayers of your family can make a difference in all of those places and in any situation to draw lost people to Christ.

Always be willing to be open to what the Lord wants. As you pray for workers to be sent into the harvest field, be a good listener. Perhaps He will ask you to become the answer to your own prayers for the lost. How would you respond? If you are not sensing a call to be anywhere other than where you are right now at this point in time, probably this is exactly where God wants you. Here are just a few practical, creative ways to involve your whole family (even the smallest child) in reaching the lost as prayer missionaries—right where you are!

#### 1. Make a 10 Most -Wanted list.

Put pictures of family members and friends who need to know Christ on a large poster where only your immediate family will see it. Let every member of the family select at least one person to go on the list. If you have a large family, you may need to increase the number of wanted people. Make a commitment as a family to pray each day for the salvation of each of these people. Watch and see God move in their lives as your family gets serious about praying. Whenever one of your most-wanted comes to Christ, have a celebration and write "FOUNDED" next to his or her picture!

#### 2. Make a missionary prayer notebook.

Gather prayer cards and pictures for the missionaries which your church and /or family support. Put them on colorful paper in a three-ring binder. Our family uses plastic page protectors to keep the pictures from getting worn-out or torn. Put a map of the country near the picture, with a way to mark where the missionaries

are. Their address and e-mail information is included so that we can let them know we are praying. This is also a good way to obtain more specific prayer requests from them. We also keep their newsletters and any other correspondence in the notebook using pockets. Whenever we see articles in the newspapers about an area where these missionaries are, we clip them out and include them in our prayers. This is a wonderful project and is encouraging to missionaries as well as to your family as you watch and see God answer prayers. If you would like a brochure about how to pray specific, scriptural prayers for missionaries, please write to the Herald and ask for Praying Biblical Prayers for Missionaries.

### 3. Pray for those in authority.

Here is another good passage to memorize as a family: “I urge, then, first of all, that requests, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for everyone—for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness. This is good, and pleases God our Savior, who wants all men to come to a knowledge of the truth” (1 Timothy 2:1-4). What is on God’s heart in this passage? He wants us to pray for everyone—and He specifically mentions those in authority. He also “wants all men to come to a knowledge of the truth.” Find out names of government officials in your city, state and nation. Adopt one or more to pray for specifically as the Lord leads. Let them know that you are praying for them. Ask them to let you know if they have anything that they’d like you to pray about. Most of all, pray that their hearts will be turned to Christ and that their leadership will be based upon His guidance.

### 4. Adopt-A-Country or People Group.

Psalm 2:8 says, “Ask of me, and I will make the nations your inheritance, the ends of the earth your possession.” When the Lord tells us to do something, it’s a good idea to take Him up on it! Ask the Lord to lay upon your heart a particular country or group of people to pray for. Find out everything you can about your adopted people so that you can pray more specifically and strategically for them. (A people group is a group of people who have a similar culture and language even though they may not all live close to one another.) Remember to pray that God will send workers to them—missionaries who can present the gospel in a clear, understandable way.

### 5. Become global Christians.

Put maps up in your home—lay hands on and pray for the nations! Try praying for one continent each day! Young children can pray for all of the children in these nations!

### 6. Sponsor a child through World Vision or Compassion International.

Not only can you provide for the financial needs of a child this way, you can pray specifically for his or her physical, emotional, social and spiritual needs. You can also pray for your sponsor child’s family, city, and nation.

### 7. Start Prayerwalking.

Prayerwalking is praying on site with insight. Take a walk together around your neighborhood praying for your neighbors and their needs. Don’t do anything to draw attention to yourselves and by all means keep your eyes open so that the Lord can draw your attention to needs as you walk.

### 8. Become a Lighthouse of Prayer.

Lighthouses of Prayer are sweeping the United States and other nations as well! A lighthouse is a family or small group of people who join together to pray for, care about, and share the gospel with their neighbors. A simple way to start is to choose five neighbors. Pray for them five minutes a day, five days a week for five weeks. Pray the five blessings based on the word BLESS: Body—pray for their physical bodies—their health and safety; Labor—pray for their work and school; Emotions—pray for their emotional needs; Social—pray for their relationships; Spiritual—pray for their spiritual needs and that they will come to know Christ as Savior and Lord! As you do this, you will find that you begin to care about your neighbors more than you ever have before. Eventually, let them know you are praying for them, and ask for prayer requests. Most will be happy to give them to you. Begin to look for ways to care for your neighbors. Take a meal to a family with a new baby, mow the lawn for an elderly couple, etc. As you care for your neighbors, their hearts begin to be more open too. Your prayers will open the way for opportunities to share the gospel. For a free information packet about Lighthouses of Prayer, contact HOPE Ministries, 455 W. Springhill Rd., Terre Haute, IN 47802. Phone:

1-800-217-5200 or e-mail: [info@hopeministries.org](mailto:info@hopeministries.org). The website is: [www.hopeministries.org](http://www.hopeministries.org)

#### 9. Pray the News!

As you read newspapers and watch TV, be aware of people and nations to pray for.

#### 10. Practice On-the-Go prayer.

As you are driving around town or traveling, learn to be aware of the people around you. For example, pray for homeless people you see, or if you come across an accident, pray for those involved, etc.

#### 11. Cover schools in prayer.

Pray for each school attended by one of your family members. Of course, you can pray for other schools too! Pray for administrators, school board members, teachers, classmates, secretaries, janitors, etc. Ask the Lord to draw these people to Himself so that they might come to know Him!

#### 12. Look for prayer assignments.

Prayer assignments are people God puts into your path each day. As a family you can learn to become more in tune about praying for the people God lays upon your heart. It might even be a server at the McDonalds or a checker at the grocery store...

The entire world, as well as everyone around you is your mission field when you are a prayer missionary. You can go places in prayer that you could never physically go! In one prayer time you can be in Sri Lanka or the Dominican Republic, or anywhere! You can even pray for astronauts in the space station—ask God to reveal Himself and His amazing creation to them as they study His universe! The possibilities are endless.

Please consider this one important caution. Don't get overwhelmed by all of the people and nations there are to pray for! Do what you can, not what you can't. Take one step at a time. God doesn't expect you to do ALL of these things. Be sensitive to the people He wants you to pray for. Let the Holy Spirit guide and direct your prayer missionary efforts and GO into ALL the world ASKING the Lord of the Harvest for the hearts of the lost!