



# One Mission: Pray

- Purpose:**
- 1) To introduce group members to the One Mission Celebration in February.
  - 2) To challenge and equip group members to develop the spiritual discipline of daily, intentional prayer, without which prayer for missions will not be accomplished.
  - 3) To gain understanding of what and how to pray for missions.

**Accountability from Last Week:** Next week this section will point back to this lesson to check progress toward the purposes listed above, specifically the spiritual discipline of prayer and securing and contacting a Spiritual Growth Partner (SGP).

**Starting Point:** a) Begin by asking some of these questions: “What characteristics should be in the DNA of a church?”, “What part should missions play in that DNA?”, “What is missions?” (Some answers to that include: a) engaging in activity that end with the evangelism and discipleship of people; b) fulfilling the Great Commission; c) establishing a Christian presence that multiplies itself where it was absent before, i.e. church planting.)

- b) Discuss the reasons prayer is the appropriate starting place in missions.
- c) Share one of the stories found on the back.

**Scripture:** Review the **SCRIPTURE** on the Learner Notes. Share from your insights, research, and these possible comments.

Matt. 9:37-38 **Take away:** We are instructed to pray about missions, from the very start.

**Questions:** Can you name some people or have some of you answered God’s call to the harvest field? Are we praying for God to send people? Are we afraid He’ll send us? What do we fear if so?

James 5:16b **Take away:** If we want our prayer to be effective, we need to be concerned about holiness. It can be a cycle, because prayer will help us become holy.

**Questions:** Why do you think our prayer matters more to God if we’re living righteously?

2 Thess. 3:1 **Take away:** We need to pray that God’s word fall on fertile soil. Prayer tills the ground in advance of seed.

**Focus:** Share anything else from the **FOCUS** section that isn’t already covered.

**Special Feature: Cotabomba Video** – Our church will be adopting an unreached people group. We’ll be praying and sending teams to seek to reach them. Watch the video from our first trip there in September.

**Truths to Remember:** Review the statements from the **TRUTHS** section, adding these or your comments or questions:

1. Everyone – We can’t all go. Some of us are limited in what we can give. But we can certainly all pray!
2. Informed – Q: Is it true that the more we know the better we pray? Anyone have an example?
3. Righteous – Let’s pursue it. (1 Peter 1:15-16)
4. Decreases – Q: Is this true? Why or why not? Should it be true?
5. Mission – Q: Why is it so easy for us to worry more about the comfort of the missionary than about his effectiveness?

**Questions for Discussion:** As time allows, choose some of the questions in this section to review. Circle your “must use” Q’s.

1. Struggle for consistency? Possible: choked out by our busy schedules leaving no margin.
2. Being informed. Here’s how our church is going to help us stay informed:
  - a. Information about an adopted unreached people group about which we’ll hear reports and updates.
  - b. Praying for Westwood members who participate in missions, whether down the street or across the globe
  - c. Each small group will have an adopted missionary. Introduce your missionary now. Have the group write their name on the right side of the “Daily Prayer Requests” section of their prayer list—back page.
3. How to pray for success: <group answers> (Share football story from “Focus Section”)
4. How to pray for missionaries: Possible: effectiveness, children, separation from family, safety, friendships/support
5. Impressions of Cotabomba: <group answers>

- Life Challenges & Homework:**
- 1) Systematic prayer: Show the prayer guide and encourage daily use. Encourage them to write in some additional requests now in the blank spaces.
  2. Secure and maintain weekly contact with a spiritual growth partner for encouragement & accountability (James 5:16a).  
**Q:** Ask if anyone has a spiritual growth partner and let them share how it works.
  3. Pass around a country list for your group and ask people to sign up for every country on the list. (to be supplied)
  4. Encourage prayer as we hear news stories about other countries.

**Close** - Share the “Hold the Rope” story from the opposite side.

# Week 1 Additional Content

## Starting Point Prayer Stories

### 1. **Prayer Testimony of Jay Gordon:**

When we were on a mission trip to Peru a few years ago, my team was sharing with the females of three generations of a family. During the gospel presentation, the grandmother wasn't very attentive, so I ceased the presentation to inquire about that. It so happened that the grandmother had only recently moved to live with her daughter and granddaughter from the jungle and was not yet fluent in Spanish. The daughter had moved into the city with her husband years earlier. The native language of the grandmother was Quechua, an Indian dialect. God so worked that a member of the team spoke Quechua, so translation was provided into Spanish and then Quechua. With the time that involved, the decision was made to break the family up for the remainder of the gospel presentation. All the family received Christ that day, but the grandmother had some special news to share. She reported that she had had a dream just a few days prior in which a man dressed in white spoke to her and said, "Come, follow me." The grandmother said that when we began to speak to her about God, she knew that God had sent us and that we brought special news for her. Our entire team was convinced that God had begun working upstream before our arrival because of the prayers of our church and our prayer partners. It was an event that gave us all goose-bumps.

### 2. **God's Protection:**

A missionary on furlough told this true story while visiting his home church in Michigan.

"While serving at a small field hospital in Africa, every two weeks I traveled by bicycle through the jungle to a nearby city for supplies. This was a journey of two days and required camping overnight at the halfway point. On one of these journeys, I arrived in the city where I planned to collect money from a bank, purchase medicine, and supplies, and then begin my two-day journey back to the field hospital.

Upon arrival in the city, I observed two men fighting, one of whom had been seriously injured. I treated him for his injuries and at the same time talked to him about the Lord. I then traveled two days, camping overnight, and arrived home without incident. Two weeks later I repeated my journey. Upon arriving in the city, I was approached by the young man I had treated. He told me that he had known I carried money and medicines. He said, 'Some friends and I followed you into the jungle, knowing you would camp overnight. We planned to kill you and take your money and drugs. But just as we were about to move into your camp, we saw that you were surrounded by 26 armed guards.

At this, I laughed and said that I was certainly all alone in that jungle campsite. The young man pressed the point, however, and said, 'No, sir, I was not the only person to see the guards, my friends also saw them, and we all counted them. It was because of those guards that we were afraid and left you alone.'

At this point, one of the men in the congregation interrupted the missionary and asked if he could tell him the exact day this happened. The missionary told the congregation the date, and the man who interrupted told him this story:

"On the night of your incident in Africa, it was morning here. That day I felt the urge to pray for you. In fact, the urging of the Lord was so strong, I called men in this church to meet with me here in the sanctuary to pray for you. Would all of those men who met with me on that day stand up?"

The men who had met together to pray that day stood up. The missionary wasn't concerned with who they were, he was too busy counting how many men he saw. There were 26.

## Closing Story: Hold the Rope

The story is told of a crisis in a small town a century ago in which a child fell in a well. Someone was needed to go down in the well to rescue the child. One of the neighbors volunteered to go, but he asked for the guarantee that a number of people would remain at the top and hold the rope on which he would descend. The brave neighbor tied himself to the rope and the child was rescued safely.

The same is true of our missionaries today. They cannot be successful without our support. The first way we support them is to pray. Let's be faithful this week to pray first for the success of the mission, and secondly for our missionaries.

## Weekly Leader Notes

1. We'll provide a list of some of the countries of the world for every group, asking people to sign up to pray for the spread of the gospel in that country. Each class will receive a different list, with all the lists covering every country of the world.
2. A DVD will be provided to show a video of the Cotabomba, an unreached people group in Peru.
3. Provide a copy of the Learner Notes for every member of the group. Provide pens if needed.

## Series Notes

COMMON TO EVERY WEEK, BUT IMPORTANT!

1. **Overview** - See the Learner Notes for an introduction to Westwood's One Mission Celebration coming in February. These lessons are part of that focus.
2. **Key Components** - The Westwood Curriculum Team believes that the series will be most effective with the following elements fully utilized:
  - a. Discussion - A group time that is heavily dependent on discussion and interaction. Our belief is that the lesson is as much (or more) about motivating people to obey God's word as it is about teaching God's Word. Believers already know more than we do.
  - b. Homework – For this series, the homework will vary from week to week.
  - c. Challenge - We want group members to leave the lesson with challenges of things to DO with the lesson each week. It isn't enough just to learn, we want members to do something with each lesson.
  - d. Your Personal Stories – Nothing brings teaching alive like real life stories experienced by the leader. Please ask God for wisdom in sharing from your own life experiences to enhance the lesson.
  - e. Be Creative - For some of you who are creative in your teaching methods, feel free to do your own thing so long as you meet the purposes outlined at the top of the teaching procedures.
  - f. Additional Bible Study - The content is not a deep Bible study. Feel free to add from your own study, being careful to allow time for discussion and meeting the purposes of the lesson.
3. **Leader Notes & Resources**. This Leader Guide and the Learner Notes will be available online at WestwoodGroups.com at least one week in advance.

### ABS Teachers

- a. This lesson series is for ABS December 6, 13 & 20.
- b. A copy of the Leader Guide and Learner Notes will be in your class box and online one week in advance.
- c. Copies of the Learner Notes will be in your box for your class the day the lesson is to be taught.

### Home Group Leaders

- a. Home Groups are asked to do the lessons by February 17.
- b. Copies of the Learner Notes may be picked up at the Home Groups Desk on Sunday mornings.