



Pray BFF Letter #232

Thursday, October 3, 2013

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This Place Rocks!

Dear Prayer Partners,

Tomorrow is the day! I leave Friday at 6:30 pm and arrive in India on Sunday at noon (nine and a half hours ahead of EST).

Praise the Lord! His people have faithfully given so that as of last night, this training trip is now fully funded! It is a good thing, too, with the instability of the US dollar, the currency exchange rate is back and forth

What happens?

Some have asked me what 'STM' stands for, what happens on these trips, and where the money goes. I'd like to answer these good questions. From the beginning of these Short Term Mission trips back in 2004, I have sensed the great need to train God's leaders in places where there is little or no training available: for pastors, church planters and evangelists. Many of these leaders have come to the Lord at an older age and are very poor. Many only have one book: the Bible. The Lord encouraged me, back when I started, to trust Him for funds to provide humble lodging and food as well and teaching for these leaders. Sometimes we help with their local travel expenses too.

Year after year, I have found this to be a good thing. The pastors enjoy 3 days of good meals, happy fellowship with other pastors, mats to sleep on and biblical training. These leaders are very hungry for God's Word. I remember once speaking in Odisha, India and found that one pastor and his wife had traveled 3 days to come to the marriage seminar—he had never before heard of such training.

Our goal

My goal is not only to see God's Word powerfully strengthen these leaders, often suffering from persecution and poverty, but also to gain faith and skills to help others. As I was praying for Pastor J.'s wife, Pampa (keep praying for her health), I

remembered that I again need to seek God for extra faith, not just for myself, but for others. This is what ministry is like—we must know our God can help, heal, guide, rebuke, comfort, provide, etc., for others with needs much greater than our own.

So for the two BFF marriage seminars, I must believe God can heal the broken marriages among the pastors. They need faith and restoration, to seek God for their own marriages. But my goal is higher, even as God's goal is higher than only great marriages. These leaders must have the faith to see God restore other couples as well. I write this so that you know how to pray. We desperately need God to work among us in each of the three 3-day seminars.

Now you also know why Satan so opposes this training. He uses all sorts of things to intimidate God's people (and me) from effectively serving. This morning a big earthquake shook the area where our second seminar will take place. We hope the earth doesn't rock anymore, but we certainly do want God to rock the hearts of His people.

Praise!

- Praise God for full funding for this STM!
- Thank the Lord my cold is healed.
- Most preparations are complete.

Pray!

- Pray that God 'rocks' the hearts of His leaders.
- Some couples do not know how to care for their children during this seminar, since we encourage both husband and wife come. Pray that God would work out the details and bring both of them.
- Special protection on the coordinator families and ministries. (Pastor J.'s daughter still has a fever.)
- Extra grace for my family and ministry while I am away!
- No more earthquakes (though the center was a distance away).
- Smooth traveling. Good health - especially for my back which I injured last week. What is the hardest thing to do? Sit. What do I need to do for the 32 hours of travel? Sit! My back is much better but still very sensitive.

Thanks so much for your prayers!

Paul

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