

If These Walls Could Talk...

about what needs would they remind you to pray?



Description:

Group prayer activity to encourage prayer for missionaries

Aims:

Understand missionaries' needs and pray informed prayers

Audience:

3rd grade through adults, up to 80 participants

Country/Area:

General

Minimum Time Requirements:

30-60 minutes

Scripture to Study:

- 2 Thessalonians 3:1 NIV (*...pray for us that the message of the Lord may spread rapidly and be honored, just as it was with you.*)
- Ecclesiastes 12:1 NLT (*Don't let the excitement of youth cause you to forget your Creator. Honor Him in your youth before you grow old and say, 'life is not pleasant anymore.'*)

Materials:

- Copies of Room Instruction and Prayer Request sheets
- Scissors
- Bible

Leader's Instructions:

1. This prayer session takes place inside your church. Take students to as many of these rooms as time allows: pastor's study, sanctuary, nursery, kitchen, library, gym or playroom, restroom, mailbox or office, Sunday school classroom, parking lot. Choose at least four rooms and plan the route to best fit your church layout and time available. Give a copy of the route to each group leader.
2. Photocopy the appropriate room instructions and prayer requests, cut them apart and give a complete set to each group leader. You may use specific missionaries' needs from recent prayer letters and modify the requests accordingly. Students accustomed to praying aloud may not need written requests. In that case, use the requests for each leader's back-up reference so that at least a few appropriate prayer requests come to mind for each room.
3. After the initial instructions, divide into small groups, each group with a staff leader. For less than 10 students, stay in 1 group. For more than 10, divide them into groups of 5 to 10. Send each group to a different room and rotate through all rooms according to the route plan. Groups should spend no longer than 5 minutes in each location. As groups rotate, a moving group must wait quietly if a previous group continues praying in the room.
4. After the activity, return to one large group for discussion and application. You may discuss how to maintain prayer for missionaries as an on-going activity after this one-time event.

Instructions to audience before dividing into groups:

1. Prayer in various rooms can remind us of different missionary needs that come up because they work in cross-cultural ministry. In 2 Thessalonians 3:1, the Apostle Paul asks Christians to pray for him so that the message of the Lord may spread rapidly. Ecclesiastes 12:1 encourages young people to work for God.
2. We're going to practice this kind of praying right now. Of course, you do not have to pray in different rooms for God to hear you. Rooms simply remind us of different kinds of needs. After we divide into small groups we'll visit some rooms of our church that can help us concentrate on specific areas of missionary need.

Discussion and application:

1. What things make it hard to pray for missionaries and others? (We get too busy. We don't know for which concerns we should pray. We can't imagine what life is like for missionaries. We forget.)
2. Read 2 Thessalonians 3:1. How is this verse relevant to what we did today?
3. After today when you go into these rooms, ask God to remind you of these needs. Make it your lifelong practice to stop to pray again.

Materials:

- Room instructions and Prayer Request sheets (1 complete set for each leader)
- "Route" to take printed off for each group leader.
- Prayer requests for student use (optional)
- Scissors (optional)

Materials:

- Bible

Room Instructions

(Group leaders can read the following or use their own words to explain the significance of the rooms)

Pastor's study:

How does the pastor use this room? *(Get responses from students.)* Yes, the pastor studies the Bible here, prepares sermons and prays. Our missionaries may not have an office, but they must still take time to stay close to God by reading the Bible and prayer. *(Pass out prayer requests or ask volunteers to pray in their own words and insert specific missionaries' names with whom they are familiar.)*

Sanctuary:

How does this room make us think of something missionaries do? *(Get responses from students.)* Some missionaries lead churches, many preach and all of them must know how to point people to God whenever they have a chance. They also need to worship with other believers. They may only be able to worship with their own family when laws prevent Christians from gathering in public. Unmarried missionaries may have no one else with whom to worship. *(Pass out prayer requests or ask volunteers to pray in their own words and insert specific missionaries' names with whom they are familiar.)*

Nursery:

Whom do we usually find in the nursery? *(Get responses from students.)* Yes, babies! Missionaries all work to see baby Christians born into God's kingdom. *(Pass out prayer requests or ask volunteers to pray in their own words and insert specific missionaries' names with whom they are familiar.)*

Kitchen:

Do missionaries need this room? Sure—everyone needs to eat! Missionary families spend time together in kitchens and dining rooms, sharing food with friends and talking about how God provides for their needs. Let's pray about these missionary needs. *(Pass out prayer requests or ask volunteers to pray in their own words and insert specific missionaries' names with whom they are familiar.)*

Library:

What kinds of books do missionaries need? *(Get responses from students.)* Today let's think about missionaries learning foreign languages. Many live in intensive school situations, learning from books and through tutors. However, others learn languages that no one has ever written down. They must learn without organized classes or books. Pray for patience and that God will give them everything they need to make good progress. *(Pass out prayer requests or ask volunteers to pray in their own words and insert specific missionaries' names with whom they are familiar.)*

Gym or playroom:

How does this room help us pray for our missionaries? *(Get responses from students.)*
Yes, missionaries need to relax sometimes. They need regular exercise so they can stay healthy, too.

(Pass out prayer requests or ask for volunteers to pray in their own words and insert specific missionaries' names with whom they are familiar.)

Rest room or bathroom:

(Allow time for students to laugh about being here!) We're in the restroom because sick people usually end up here. Many people store their medicines in the bathroom, too. The bathroom helps us remember that missionaries in other countries face many kinds of diseases we don't have here. They really need our prayers for good health and peace in the midst of illness.

(Pass out prayer requests or ask volunteers to pray in their own words and insert specific missionaries' names with whom they are familiar.)

Mail box or church office:

Do you like to get mail? Missionaries do, too. In fact, they get pretty lonely when they don't hear from their family and friends regularly. Missionaries also need to write to people at home, especially so people can pray about special needs. People often find it hard to take time to write letters. Many missionaries use e-mail now, but sometimes computers break down.

(Pass out prayer requests or ask for volunteers to pray in their own words and insert specific missionaries' names with whom they are familiar.)

Sunday school classroom:

Imagine you now stand in a schoolroom on the mission field instead of a Sunday school room. Imagine missionary kids, or MK's, filling this room. What kinds of needs do you think they have? *(Get responses from students.)* Let's pray about some of those needs.

(Pass out prayer requests or ask volunteers to pray in their own words and insert specific missionaries' names with whom they are familiar.)

Parking lot:

Traveling can take up a lot of time for missionaries. They don't always travel in cars. What kinds of things can you think of to pray for as they travel?

(Pass out prayer requests or ask volunteers to pray in their own words and insert specific missionaries' names with whom they are familiar.)

Suggested Prayer Requests (optional)

(Group leaders can cut these requests into individual strips and give them to volunteers or let children and volunteers pray in their own words.)

Pastor's study (1):

Father, please remind (the missionaries) study their Bibles regularly, no matter how much work they have to do today.

Pastor's study (2):

Please give (the missionaries) joy in talking to you regularly; sharing their problems and listening to You speak to them.

Pastor's study (3):

Please give (our missionaries) eyes to see people's problems and wisdom to know which Bible verses to use to help them.

Sanctuary (1):

I pray (the missionaries) will have many opportunities to share Jesus with unbelievers.

Sanctuary (2):

Please make (the missionaries) able to learn to speak the language well so they have the right words to use when they talk to others about You.

Sanctuary (3):

Please provide a group of Christians with whom (the missionaries) can worship.

Nursery (1):

Dear God, I pray that You will save many new people through the work that (the missionaries) do in Your name.

Nursery (2):

Father, please provide new Christians with at least some part of the Bible in their own language so they can learn how to follow you. When hateful people persecute them, bring Bible verses to their minds to strengthen them through the hard times.

Nursery (3):

I pray that persecution of Christians will stop all around the world. Cause the world's leaders to allow Christians everywhere to worship openly, have Bibles and other helpful books, freely share their faith with others, educate their children about You and have jobs to support their families.

Kitchen (1):

Dear God, please provide enough food for (the missionaries) today. It would be nice if they could have food they like, too. Either way, please satisfy them today with what You provide.

Kitchen (2):

I pray for (the missionaries') children as they gather around the table. Teach them to love each other and enjoy time together. Remind them to live as good examples of a Christian family so new Christians can learn from them.

Kitchen (3):

Father, may everyone who shares food and fellowship with (the missionaries) feel Your love.

Library (1):

Dear God, I pray for all the languages that do not have the Bible yet. They can't read about You for themselves. Please supply the people and money it takes to get the Bible translated and also to teach people to read.

Library(2):

Father, please make (the missionaries) in language school able to learn quickly. Encourage them with their progress even though they make mistakes and it takes a long time before others can understand them.

Library (3):

I pray for Bible translators and others who try to learn languages that no one has ever written. Please give them strength to work extra hard even without books to help them.

Gym or playroom (1):

Father, this room reminds me that (our missionaries) need to have fun sometimes. Please remind them to take time today to relax by playing a game or getting some exercise.

Gym or playroom (2):

Dear God, please make (the missionaries) able to develop good friendships with the people with whom they play, either other missionaries or local people. Shine out through them through their good sportsmanship.

Gym or playroom (3):

(Our missionaries) also need sleep to stay healthy. Please provide time for them to sleep and comfortable beds in which to sleep.

Rest room or bathroom (1):

Dear God, please keep (the missionaries) safe from unclean food or water, especially when refusing the food or water would offend those who offer it as a kindness. When they do get sick, please give them peace in the midst of their suffering.

Rest room or bathroom (2):

Provide (the missionaries) with all the medicines they need. Please remind them to take their vitamins and other medications at the right times.

Rest room or bathroom (3):

I pray that You will provide hospitals and good doctors for checkups and medical help.

Mailbox or church office (1):

Father in heaven, please use (the missionaries) lonely times to draw them close to You. Remind us to write lots of letters to them and give (the missionaries) time to answer all the letters they receive.

Mailbox or church office (2):

Lord, please protect (the missionaries') computer equipment from things that would make them crash. I pray that You would provide people to keep the computers working well because they need them for many different kinds of work besides just writing letters.

Mailbox or church office (3):

I pray that people who read (the missionaries') letters would remember to pray for them.

Sunday school classroom (1):

Please provide missionary kids with a good education wherever they live and also remind them to act kindly toward children who study with them.

Sunday school classroom (2):

Please give courage to children who live in boarding schools. Remind them how much You and their parents love them, so they won't feel lonely.

Sunday school classroom (3):

I pray for missionary children on furlough in their home countries now. Please give them friends who will help them adjust to new places and new ways of doing things.

Parking lot (1):

Please keep (the missionaries) safe as they travel by car, airplane, bus, boat or other ways. Keep their vehicles working well and protect them from peoples' careless mistakes.

Parking lot (2):

When missionaries do get injured, please strengthen them and remind them that You love them even in the hard times.

Parking lot (3):

Some missionaries need money to buy or repair their vehicles. Please inspire people to give generously so (the missionaries) can buy or fix their cars quickly.