



...a prayer letter from John and Jackie



May 8, 2009

Dear friends,
We greet you once again in the wonderful name of Jesus!

The first purpose of this prayer letter is to announce to you the beginning of:

World Harvest Prayer Fellowship

To be honest, it's birth depends on you.

We have learned that God will not do our praying for us! Prayer is the responsibility of His people. Providing the answers to prayer -- that is God's responsibility! If we do our part, God will do His part!

However, we found that prayer is not first of all a task. It is first of all more like a vacation! There is no more pleasurable experience than to get into the presence of the Lord; to lay down all your cares and be refreshed by His great love. The pleasure of His presence is the first step of effective prayer.

Prayer is also a battle, the primary battle for which you need the armor of God. However, a seasoned prayer warrior once told me that "the first lesson of war is rest." You must rest in the Lord's presence before fighting His battles.

We want to assist you in that first step of prayer, to stimulate you to expect the continuous refreshing that comes from being in His presence. That is the first goal of our prayer ministry - to refresh those who pray.

The work of prayer is not for a few, but for all believers. We have called this, "A Prayer Watch for Every Christian". There are eight basic prayer responsibilities for every believer in Christ. These responsibilities are listed on the third sheet of this file.

The prayer fellowship is meant to reflect all the areas of prayer in which we all need to continue to pray, and to help us to pray bigger and farther than we may do on our own.

Here is the key: most of your prayer responsibilities are better carried out in united prayer.

From the first responsibility, which is to keep your eyes fixed on Jesus, to the last one, which is to pray for the nations, it works better to do this corporately. Great power comes through united faith.

Andrew Murray said this about prayer: *"If the church only knew that God rules the world through the prayers of His saints."*

It is amazing how things get better in our lives and our communities when we "pray without ceasing". This means to pray without giving up or quitting. If we don't quit, we win!

John travels to Ukraine
May 28-June 15
Everything is still needed for this travel.
Thank you for praying and giving as the Lord leads.
Jehovah Jireh,
The Lord Our Provider!

Will you join us for the first gathering of the World Harvest Prayer Fellowship?

Tuesday, May 19, 7 p.m. at our house. 63 105th Lane NW, Coon Rapids, MN. We'd like you to RSVP. Call us at 763-755-6612, or e-mail us: JohnandJackieMatthews@gmail.com We plan to meet every week.

The main goal we have is to pray together in the will of God. If we do that, we will get answers! Our foundation will be the great prayer promises, taught by Jesus, and reaffirmed throughout the Bible.

Jesus said, *"If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you."*

I John 5:14: *"This is the confidence which we have before Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, he hears us. And if we know that He hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have the requests which we have asked from Him."*

The promises for answered prayer are doubled in power by praying together in faith: Jesus gave us this explosive promise: *"If two of you agree on earth about anything that they ask, it shall be done for them by My Father who is in heaven."*

By meeting regularly to pray in agreement, we know we will see mountains move.

Come on...if you are not already praying with others, you know you need to join us!

To pray effectively, we need your help, and we think you need our help. This is what Paul wrote in Galatians 6:2: *"Bear one another's burdens, and thus fulfill the law of Christ"*.

Recalling the Ukraine church planting fire...

Approximately six years ago, we had a sudden expansion of the Churches of Praise in Ukraine. At that time we were thirty-three churches. During the summer of that memorable year, a movement like a fire from heaven came on all the existing churches. People in the Churches of Praise later testified, "We just could not stay at home." Men and women, old and young, got out of their houses, and went on foot down the road or over the hills, to nearby or far off villages to bring the good news of Jesus. Within weeks this turned into the opening of churches in dozens and dozens of places -- almost all at once. For several years, we were helping the Ukrainians evangelize in several hundred places all at the same time!

Out of that came the present 200 Churches of Praise in perhaps 12 provinces of Ukraine.

It was the most shocking experience of our lives. It seemed the people were almost demanding to go out all over the countryside of Ukraine to carry the gospel to many of the 23,000 villages of Ukraine that they knew had no church at all.

We were not ready to financially support this movement. Some of you helped the church planters, and helped us. Thank you! Thank you! There were unusual gifts that helped us send thousands of dollars a month for several years to keep the evangelists and church planters on the move.

All along, we were praying that our general financial base would increase, but it did not. In fact, it has decreased. Our ability to support the work financially has been reduced from thousands of dollars a month to hundreds of dollars a month.

In some ways, this is good. God has used this time for the churches in Ukraine to realize they have a financial supply themselves apart from outside funds, and for that we are grateful. Our goal has always been to make sure the work in Ukraine was built on a Ukrainian base, not a foreign base, and that they not be dependent on outside sources in order to survive and prosper. This goal has been met, and they could go on even without our partnership.

But it is not all good.

Church planting waits for new finances...

The outreach and development of new churches has had to be severely curtailed. Thousands of

villages still wait for the gospel in Ukraine, and vision is alive to open churches in several other countries.

It appears that our workers in Afghanistan will move back to their home country which shares a border with Afghanistan, and take a pastor's position, largely due to inadequate finances to raise their family in Afghanistan. That feels like a disappointment to us. They plan to continue their vision in Afghanistan through trips across the border to work with the people whom they led to the Lord, and so financial support is still needed for Afghanistan.

A debt at the home base needs removal...

We also are trusting Him for major financial breakthrough on the home front. We accumulated considerable debt during those years of church planting fire, when we had too little money, and no way (it seemed) to stop going, and helping the Churches of Praise at a crucial time.

All we knew to do was to try to keep the church planters moving. It consumed our attention and energy. Looking back now, we probably made a large mistake in trying to keep going and helping this expansion when the general financial base was so small.

We ended up with debt. This needs to be removed, and we are not sure how to do it. Thank you for agreeing with us for the wisdom and provision of God.

We are part of their family now...so are you.

The Churches of Praise became our spiritual family, and they treat us as spiritual Dad and Mom. Like any family, the season changes, the kids grow up, and yet you are still a family. Please pray with us that we will know God's wisdom in our relationship with this great spiritual family.

From our point of view, you as a friend and supporter of our ministry are also part of the Churches of Praise. Through your prayer and giving (and some of you going there), you shared in building the strong foundation that now exists in the Churches of Praise!

We love you and thank God for you!!!

We are amazed at the faithful friendships God has given us through the years. We pray over you as God leads us, and hope to do that even more in the days ahead.

Thank you for supporting us and the mission that God has given us. We believe the best is yet to come in this ministry, and we believe the best is yet to come in your life!

With love,
John and Jackie

A Prayer Watch for every Christian

Jesus said, "Keep watch with Me." Matthew 26:38

1. The LORD HIMSELF.

"Fixing our eyes on Jesus" Hebrews 12:2

Maintain your resting place in Him.

2. My OWN HEART.

"Watch over your heart with all diligence" Pr. 4:23

Review your priorities and plans with Him.

3. My FAMILY.

"If anyone does not provide for his own..." 1 Tim. 5:8

Defend your home and loved ones.

4. My CHURCH.

"Be on the alert for all the saints." Ephesians 6:18

Cover your spiritual family and leaders.

5. My CITY.

"Seek the welfare of the city " Jeremiah 29:7

Protect the well-being of your community.

6. My NATION.

"If my people humble themselves and pray" 2 Chr. 7:14

Stand in the gap for your country.

7. God's ISRAEL.

"Pray for the peace of Jerusalem" Psalms 122:6

Position yourself for God's blessing.

8. The NATIONS.

"Ask of Me, and I will surely give the nations " Ps. 2:8

Be involved in His world vision.

World Harvest Prayer Fellowship
Tuesdays, 7 pm
John and Jackie's house
63 105th Lane NW, Coon Rapids, MN 55448

Please RSVP to attend:
763-755-6612
JohnandJackieMatthews@gmail.com

