

THE YETZER FAMILY

Missionaries to the People of Italy



May 2016

Grace to Our Brothers and Sisters Through Christ,

A MISSIONARY'S PRAYERS

This is going to be a bit of a different prayer letter. Instead of asking for prayer, I am going to let you in on a prayer of ours.

As missionaries we love the opportunity we have to preach the Word of God and bring the wonderful Gospel of Christ to such needy people. The struggle is not living **here**, but not being **there**. Allow me to explain. Every missionary has loved ones and/or family whom they have willingly set aside for the present need. Thank the Lord for the days we live in where technology permits immediate communication and, in emergency, quick uniting. However, digital hugs still lack a pulse. The main cry from my heart concerning family and friends in America is not that I cannot stand being here, but that I wish at the same time I could be there. Hearing the news of a loved one passing from this world does not tug your heart back to the place where *your fathers sleep*, but hearing the cries of others whom you would like to comfort does. Not being there for your own sake is one thing, but not being there to comfort and support your loved ones is another. Watching from a distance those loved ones struggle to find a friend to help them move out of their house or comfort them during depression and struggles or stand by the casket with them, those are the difficult moments. How many times have missionaries around the world whispered over the lines, "I wish I could be there." That does not mean that we do not wish to be here, but in all honesty we can say, I wish I could be in two places at once. In communication with missionary friends and reading prayer letters from a missionary's perspective, I can sense that this happens more often than we are told.

We are the type of family that likes to take care of our own. I feel the heavy responsibility of I Timothy 5:8. For us this must include the physical needs, as well as the spiritual and emotional. To us this also means more than just "us four and no more." I want to be there to counsel, disciple, and console (In Italian this means "with sun," *con sole*), as well as help elderly family with those physical things they cannot do.

This isn't something new or unexpected. Certainly we were prepared and knew it would come. I remember often in my prayers, asking God if I would go meet the needs of others around the world, would He send others to meet the needs of those whom we "left behind."



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During deputation, questionnaires were a common joy, but it got us thinking that maybe we should have a questionnaire of our own. As much as churches want to be sure of whom they are supporting, we wanted to be sure of who was supporting us. We wanted (and still do) to stay on the field. We didn't want churches that would support us for a month and then once we got to the field find a reason to stop. I even made up a questionnaire, although I never gave it to anyone. One of the questions on our questionnaire asked if they would reach our Jerusalem. We will do our best to reach your uttermost, but we are leaving behind people and a nation who need to be reached. Will you do your best where you are? Missionaries are often seen as fulfilling the Great Commission for church members, but who is fulfilling the missionaries' responsibilities of reaching their Jerusalem?

Please pray for Stephen, a man from Kenya who recently got saved while we were out soul winning. He has a good mind. As we were reading the Bible and looking at examples of baptism, he kept shaking his head in astonishment and saying, "That is not how I was taught." Also pray for us during the month of June. We are planning on having two guest speakers and spending the entire month talking about missions and the commission every Christian has to get the Gospel message to the world.

Our family is doing well. William is eight years old, already done with his school for the season and looking forward to a fun summer. AnnMarie is four and looking forward to starting school next year. We are all currently getting over a bit of a cold. Amy and I are doing great as we look forward to our ten-year anniversary in July. Praise the Lord for such a great wife! Thanks to Brian Johnston in Canada for his love for our family and a special gift. He is a great missionary whom I have always found to be very kind and zealous. We appreciate his friendship.

Recently those words had to be used again, "I wish I could be there." Preparing for this prayer letter, something powerful hit me. This must be what Christ feels like. Before ascending from His disciples, He said, "*Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.*" He calls the church His body, meaning it would do what His feet would do if He were here; it would aid with the same care that Christ's hands would if He were here. He doesn't call the church His mouth; He gives the words, we simply do what the head says.

We had thought about asking those who read this to reach our Jerusalem, but we do not end with any request of our own, but by pointing to the words of Christ, "Feed my sheep."

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Christopher, Amy, William, & AnnMarie Yetzer



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