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## Missionary *Furlough* Home Assignment

Most of us are familiar with the term "missionary furlough". For most mission boards, that term has changed to "home assignment". Furlough gave the wrong impression of a missionary's time back in their home country. Though mission boards know their missionary families need a break from a hectic and sometimes dangerous life on the field, "furlough" does not mean a full year of recuperation and rest.

In more than 20 years caring for missionaries on home assignment, we've seen a plethora of activity needing to be accomplished while in a missionary's home country. Some get the quiet break needed for reviving their body, soul and spirit. Others have much to keep them busy.

You know of the usual endeavors of visiting churches, supporters and prayer partners. They may also be settling children into college or their new life on their own in the US. Most need to raise more support because of rising expenses on the field. (Few churches or supporters give yearly raises in their missionary's support.) Some have to wait on visas and other paperwork before returning to the field. Others are in lengthy processes of transitioning to a different field or back here in the USA.

Often, the parents or children need to deal with medical issues that couldn't be cared for on the foreign field. Right now we have a missionary getting her lung, heart and kidney (she had a kidney transplant over 40 years ago) checked out and treated so she can go back to Turkey. Another family had a baby boy, Elias, while on home assignment who has cerebral palsy. He is still on a feeding tube but is doing well and beginning to use a special baby walker.



In the last few years, we've seen more overseas ministry being done while on home assignment. The internet and video conferencing have opened new opportunities to continue field-side ministry. Soeuth & Syna Lao just left to go back to Cambodia. While at Cedar Lane, they visited dozens of churches across the states. Soeuth also used video conferencing to continue his weekly preaching ministry to numerous rural Cambodian churches under his care.

We had a dear family, the Drews, stay at Cedar Lane a few years ago. They were



## A Joint Venture with God

1Jn 5:14-15 Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. (15) And if we know that He hears us, whatever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we have asked of Him.

I find two things here that need further explanation. First, when my mom would loudly reprimand us kids for not being home by dark, she would add; "Do you hear me?" She wasn't checking to see if our ears were working. She wanted to know if we were ready to comply. It's similar to Christ saying "If anyone has ears to hear, let him hear.". All the people Christ was speaking to had ears but, not all would comply.

So when God says "if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us.", He's saying He will always answer our prayers that are aligned with His will.

Secondly, the question arises; what if we don't ask? What if it's God's desire to do something for us but we never go to Him in prayer? Jas 4:2 "...You do not have because you do not ask." Why did Jesus ask the blind man "What would you have Me do for you"? Does God withhold things He desires for us just because we haven't asked? We know He blesses us with many things we never ask for but are there some things He waits for us to ask for?

Jesus said; "Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. (Mat 7:7) There are two players in this verse with different responsibilities. Player one asks and player two gives. Player one knocks and player two opens. God has given us an active role in accomplishing His objectives in the world.

God's will and our prayers are designed to work together like a surgeon using a scalpel. They are meant to work together to accomplish His purposes in our lives and the lives of others.





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**Praise and Prayer**

- Praise the Lord for His provision of providing such a wonderful place for our missionary families to rest and use while here as a base of ministry both in the US and back in their country of service.
- Praise the Lord that the Nairns, who were not able to get into Japan for the last two years because of Covid, are leaving in August.
- Pray for the Harkins as they transition from translation work in Senegal to ministry in the States.
- Pray for Salih & Joyce Kurtbas as they are waiting on official documents and Joyce's health to stabilize before they can return to Turkey.