



August 12th, 2004

Greetings Prayer Warriors!

Just wanted to send out a quick update to let you know how you can be praying for us. We know that you're busy, and probably don't have time to read a lot of details, so please allow us to jump straight to the prayer points. We'll follow up with some background info which you can read when you get time. But, **please do pray for us**. Your prayers are very important and make a huge difference for us out here in the field.

The Prayer Points

1. Pray for Karen:

Over the past few months Karen has been to visit the doctor (he's a Christian) regarding pains she was having in the lower right side of her chest. During these visits she discussed with him the strains and pressures of moving to Hong Kong and adjusting to living here again. He ran some tests on her, one of which measures stress brought on by life events. A score of 300 or higher is a red flag indicating that the body may begin to "shut down". Karen scored 633. Needless to say the doctor was quite concerned for her. He has placed her on a restricted schedule and told her to rest. Essentially, her body is exhausted (see the "details" below for further explanation).

Now that we know what we are dealing with, we can focus our prayers and defeat this enemy. We will not allow the devil to have any hold over us!

Please stand with us in prayer for the following:

- a quick and complete healing for Karen.
- against the spirits of fear, anxiety and stress (all spiritual root causes for this condition).
- that Karen will be able to receive peace from the Lord, and be able to walk in that peace.
- that she would be able to yield more and more to the Holy Spirit and that His fruits will be manifest in her life.
- that she would get the rest that her body needs as she goes away to a retreat center this next week.
- that she would have good, quality time fellowshiping with Jesus as she is away.

2. Pray for Our Marriage:

Our marriage relationship has been under extreme pressure and strain the past few months. Minor issues became major incidents in a split second. It seemed we were arguing most of the time. The more we prayed and sought the Lord for answers, the worse it became. We knew the enemy was attacking us, but we couldn't figure out how to counter-attack. Every thing we tried seemed to fail.

But, praise God! He is faithful. We are seeing breakthrough. The enemy is on the run and we are beginning to walk in victory. Understanding how the stress of all the changes in our lives affects us, has helped us to know how and where to counter attack. Now we are going after him. He will not prevail. It's amazing...doesn't he realize that his badgering just makes us want to kick his behind even

more? Anyway, enough of that. Please pray for our marriage as follows:

- that we would continue to stand strong in agreement against the enemy.
- that Jesus would continue to bind us together in His love.
- that our Father would continue to work in us and to strengthen our marriage.
- that we would learn more and more how to work together and be a powerful team for the kingdom.
- that we would continue to grow closer together.

3. Pray for Our Finances:

In the first 7 months since arriving in Hong Kong, our monthly support has averaged about US \$775.00 per month. The actual amount varies from month to month (one month we only had US \$50.00 come in). We have ten faithful monthly supporters (churches and individuals), and a few others who help when they can.

At this point, our expenses are far larger than our income. Our rent alone is US \$550.00, which only leaves US \$225.00 per month (on average) to cover utilities, food, transportation, insurance, medicine, ministry expenses, etc.. But, again our Father is faithful to provide. Through different ways - unexpected gifts, money owed to Stephen by clients from prior business coming through, etc. - He has somehow made up the difference that we need each month. He is so awesome.

Please continue to pray with us for our finances as follows:

- that more people (churched and individuals) would partner with us on a monthly basis (both financially and in prayer).
- that finances would be released from the remaining clients to whom Stephen contracted before coming to Hong Kong.
- that we would continue to keep our eyes on the Lord. We know that He is ultimately our provider.

The Background Information

We're in a spiritual battle like we've never experienced before in our lives. We knew it was not going to be easy coming into enemy territory. We knew that the enemy was not going to just sit back and let us take over his turf. But, we never dreamed it would be this intense.

Since arriving back in Hong Kong it seems that the enemy has launched an all out attack against us to get us to back down, tuck our tails between our legs, and run home. The only problem is the he forgot we are "home". We have no house or apartment in the United States or South Africa. In fact, everything we own is with us in Hong Kong. So, we are home.

The bottom line is that we're not giving in to his tactics. We know that our Father has called us here for a plan and a purpose, and that it is a plan to prosper us, not to harm us. However, that does not mean we will never experience trials, tests, or difficulties.

The test that the doctor gave Karen has 43 life events listed on it, each of which is assigned a value called a *life change unit*. The values range from 100 points for the life event "death of spouse" to 11 points for the life event "minor violation of the law". About half of the life events on the list are events which we have experienced in the past three years, and most of those in the past year and a half. As an example, here are some of the life events on the list that we have gone through:

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|---|--------------|
| • Death of a close family member (Karen's mother and grandmother) | 63
points |
| • Change in health of family member (Karen's dad) | 44 |

	points
• Change in financial status (going from earning a salary to "living by faith")	38
	points
• Change to different line of work (going from working a "regular" job to being a missionary)	36
	points
• Change in living conditions (going from 1200 sq ft house to 660 sq ft apartment)	25
	points

These are just a few of the life events (also called stressors) and their "point values" to give you an idea of how the test works. As you can tell, the past few years have been one trial after another for us. Taken by themselves, these stressors would normally have a minimal effect on one's life. But, when added together, or worse yet, compounded upon each other, they can create quite a serious situation.

The enemy of our souls is very devious and sly. He did not throw everything at us at once, but rather sent one attack after another, sometimes with quite a bit of time in between. That way, we did not connect them together and did not realize the effect that they were having on us spiritually, mentally, emotionally and physically. He was wearing us down, a little bit at a time.

But, now he is exposed. We now understand what has been happening and we are able to take action against him. His tactics have been revealed, and now we can counter attack. Thank you for your continued prayers as we walk through this time into a life of victory.

This weekend (Friday August 13 through Sunday August 15) we are getting away for a break. There is a great Christian retreat on an outlying island about 20 minutes by ferry from Hong Kong. We are going to spend the weekend together, and then Karen will stay through until Thursday evening by herself. Our goal is to just get away and have time to pray and work on our relationships with Jesus and each other.

We know that God is faithful and that we can do all things through Christ Jesus who strengthens us. We also know that we "are not an island". We need you. We need your prayers. We need your e-mails and letters of encouragement. Thank you for standing with us. It strengthens us to know that we are not alone out here, but that there is an army of prayer warriors standing with us. Your prayers are making a difference. Thank you!

God bless you all,

Stephen & Karen