The buoyant melody and infectious lyrics of Johnny Nash's 1972 chart-topping song echo through the back of my mind as I reflect on Jesus' healing of a blind man at Bethsaida. Like many of those Jesus encountered, this man met Jesus not through his own initiative, but through friends who cared and saw in the itinerate rabbi a spark of hope for their friend. If only they could lead him to the place of encounter, if only they could get him close enough that Jesus could reach out and touch him, then perhaps there was hope. Just maybe their friend could, and would, see. Jesus, though, was not a public showman. He took the man by the hand and led him out of the village, to a quiet and private place where he could attend more intimately to the man's need. He first spit in the man's eyes and applied his touch, then asked if he saw anything. Indeed, the man could now see people, but his vision was not clear—the people appeared "like trees." In this case, the miracle happened in two stages—it took a second touch from Jesus to transform the man's eyes.

We live in a fast-paced culture that prefers the immediate over the prolonged, the event over the process, the destination to the exclusion of the journey. We visit "fast food" restaurants and prepare "instant" meals at home, expect not only next day but same day delivery, and access libraries of information with the click of a mouse or touch of a link in our smartphones. This story of Jesus healing the man at Bethsaida reminds us that genuine transformation often—probably most often—happens over time rather than in an instant. Just as it took both an initial and then a second touch from Jesus to restore the blind man's sight fully, making disciples of Jesus involves both leading persons to an initial commitment to Christ ("baptizing them") and ongoing formation in the way of following Jesus ("teaching them to observe,"

Mark 8:22-25, NIV

International Ministries' global servants, staff, and volunteers work cross-culturally to invite people to become disciples of Jesus. This involves leading individuals toward making an initial life commitment to Christ, and then supporting the ongoing transformation of individuals and communities by "proclaiming through word and deed God's reign of justice, peace, and abundant life for all creation." IM's ministries touch whole persons and whole communities, engaging body and spirit, toward the wholeness that comes from fullness of life in Christ. Your support of IM in prayer, encouragement, and giving makes possible amazing transformative work around the globe, from ministries of evangelism and discipleship to work in health and wellness, abolition of global slavery, peace and justice, and more. In all of this, we work toward the vision of a time when God's will is done fully "on earth as it is in heaven." That will most assuredly be a "bright, bright sunshiny day!"

Rev. Jim Bell
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PRAYER GUIDE
1 Guide graduate students in Bolivia, Brazil, Mexico, and the U.S. with a heart to share the gospel and care for the marginalized. REV. JENNIFER T. PEDERSON, THAILAND

2 Dear Jesus, open our eyes to see those whom we find morally repugnant as your beloved children—let us be moved by grace and love to live and love as you do. MYLINDA BAITS, IBEROAMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

3 Give me your eyes, Lord, to see with your mind, so that I may see others as they are, and not as I think I might want them to be. REV. SHARON KOH, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR / CEO BEM

4 For the breath to fill our lungs, to the hands that build our homes, to the earth that moves, we give you thanks, oh God! “Now give us your eyes!” (2 Corinthians 3:17) MELANIE BAGGAO, THE MERCY GONZ LEONEL TEAM, THAILAND

5 May Jesus illuminate the eyes of the hearts of children who cling to you as it is in heaven. MADLEY BAGGIO, LIBERIA

6 Thank you, Jesus, for opening eyes, restoring sight, and helping our hearts to see the world more clearly. RICHARD BARRIE, THAILAND

7 Lord, help us to see the world through your eyes, so that images will be true and not fuzzy like an incomplete reflection. While there is faith, hope, and love, help us to embody the fact that, in your mission, the greatest of these is love. (1 Corinthians 13:12) REV. JOSE TRUJILLO, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, GRACE WORKS, MEXICO

8 May Jesus illuminate the eyes of these hill tribe people who are your beloved children. LORD GOD, PLEASING HEARTS MINISTRY, THAILAND

9 Thank you, God, for Spirit-empowered women leaders who serve as the body of Christ in spite of the restrictions placed on them. Lord, just because they are women. GALATIANS 3:28: “There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.” ANNE & BRUNO BURDYK, MEXICO

10 Lord, open the eyes and the hearts of the hill tribe people to see and to accept your love. May they know you more intimately than ever before. REV. SHARON KOH, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR / CEO BEM

11 Give us your eyes, to see with your mind, so that we may be your light of hope to all the nations, and help us to be your hands and feet to those who are lost in the darkness of this world. 1 Peter 2:9-10

12 Give me your eyes, to see everything clearly!” in the waking hours and when I sleep. Help us to see the love of your children by being intercessors. (Matthew 8:19-20) STAN SLADE, GLOBAL

13 Pray for us in your new mission assignment as spiritual caregivers ministering to MI’s global servants in Soul Care, Stewardship, and Community Care. PRAY for global servants to thrive in their ministry contexts. DAN & JEN REED, GLOBAL

14 Let us be your eyes as we envision our next term of service with International Ministries so that we’ll see God’s will for our lives. AMEN. PETER & SARAH OCCUPY, MEXICO

15 Give me your eyes to see your image in those who are lost and those who are in need (mental, physical, and spiritual) of our missionary hearts and spirits that we may be moved to answer your call to live out the stewardship of God’s grace. JESUS, THAILAND

16 Give us your eyes, to see with your mind, so that we may be your light of hope to all the nations, and help us to be your hands and feet to those who are lost in the darkness of this world. 1 Peter 2:9-10

17 Father, help us to see your image in those who suffer, so that we might be agents of peace and transformation in our broken world. ELEBERTO & MOLLY JUAREZ, EL SALVADOR

18 Father, thank you for Jesus who bore our shame on the cross and restores our honor. Let us be your eyes, so I may respond to people and situations with the assurance that I can trust you in all things. ANNE DIESELBERG, MEXICO

19 Lord, give us your eyes, to see everything clearly!” in the waking hours and when I sleep. Help us to see the love of your children by being intercessors. (Matthew 8:19-20) STAN SLADE, GLOBAL

20 Pray for us in your new mission assignment as spiritual caregivers ministering to MI’s global servants in Soul Care, Stewardship, and Community Care. PRAY for global servants to thrive in their ministry contexts. DAN & JEN REED, GLOBAL

21 In your prayer as we envision our next term of service with International Ministries so that we’ll see God’s will for our lives. AMEN. PETER & SARAH OCCUPY, MEXICO

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