

i once was blind but now i see

mark 8:22-26

They came to Bethsaida, and some people brought a blind man and begged Jesus to touch him. He took the blind man by the hand and led him outside the village. When he had spit on the man's eyes and put his hands on him, Jesus asked, "Do you see anything?"

He looked up and said, "I see people; they look like trees walking around." Once more Jesus put his hands on the man's eyes. Then his eyes were opened, his sight was restored, and he saw everything clearly.

MARK 8:22-25, NIV

"I can see clearly now..." 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," Matthew 28:18-20).

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 sunny day!"



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world
mission
offering 2020

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PRAYER GUIDE



2020

PRAYER GUIDE

During this year's World Mission Offering, our global servants and staff invite you to join us in prayer.

Our theme for this year ("I once was blind, but now I see") reflects on the story of Jesus' healing of the blind man in Mark 8:22-25. Jesus spits on the man's eyes and puts his hands on him, asking him, "Do you see anything?" When the man replies that he sees people who look like trees walking around, Jesus touches the man's eyes again, and his sight is fully restored. This story begs the question—why was the healing in two stages?

Perhaps Jesus wants at times to take us on slow journeys of healing, so that we can experience the full journey with him. Like the blind man, we could never see Jesus apart from his touch on our lives, from an encounter that begins a lifelong journey of opening our eyes to know him better.

But our God doesn't stop there. Jesus rescues us out of darkness so we can see him and so he can use us to help open the eyes of others.

Will you journey with us on a month of prayer? Join with our global servants to pray that God would help us follow him with wisdom and courage and help those we serve to know Christ's love.

Your gifts through the World Mission Offering supply the practical support needed by our 125 global servants, 900+ short-term volunteers, 35+ home staff, and 250+ international partners as we help others see Christ more clearly.

You may give through your church or at www.worldmissionoffering.org.

1 Jesus your ministry was humble. You worked for love of the Father, not for personal glory. Help us to model our lives and our ministry after you. Jesus, help us to see you more clearly.
REV. JENNIFER T. PEDZINSKI, THAILAND

2 Dear Jesus, open our eyes to see those whom we find morally repugnant as your beloved children. Give us courage to gracefully love and care for them, as you would. Amen. Matthew 5:44: "I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you."

LAURAN D. BETHELL, GLOBAL

3 Gracious Lord, we pray for those studying in the Latin American Master in Theological Studies program. Open their minds and hearts to your Spirit and empower them to use their training to build your kingdom in their local ministries.

REV. J. D. REED, JR., IBEROAMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

4 For the breath to fill our lungs, the bones to hold us together, and the flesh to make us move, we give you thanks, oh God! "Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom." (2 Corinthians 3:17)

MYLINDA BAITTS, GLOBAL

5 Father, help me to see with your eyes the needs of those around me. I pray for clearer vision of the true need and strength of will to follow you into meeting those needs, through Christ, Amen.
KYLE WITMER, THAILAND

6 Thank you, Jesus, for opening eyes, restoring sight, and helping our world see more clearly the trauma of prostitution and human trafficking. Now, open their wallets and purses accordingly. Amen.

JEFF DIESELBERG, THAILAND

7 Lord, help us to see the world through your eyes, so that images will be true and clear and not fuzzy like in 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. SHARON KOH, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR / CEO



8 May Jesus illuminate the eyes of hardened hearts who cling on to worldly securities. May they see and experience how Jesus' love sustains them in tough times.

MELANIE BAGGAO, LEBANON

9 I pray for our leaders serving in countries in political turmoil, for our students in the Master in Theological Studies program, and for the capacity to see clearly to share the kingdom of God.
MERCY GONZÁLEZ-BARNES, IBEROAMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

10 Thank you, God, for Spirit-empowered women leaders who faithfully serve and strengthen the body of Christ in spite of limitations placed on them 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."

ANN & BRUCE BORQUIST, GLOBAL

11 Lord, open the eyes and the hearts of the hill tribe people to see you and to accept your love. May they know you more intimately than ever before. (Psalm 139)

ALISE & MARK JUANES, THAILAND

12 Lord, please help all those receiving book knowledge through education also come to heart knowledge of and a dependence on you.

RUTH FOX, GLOBAL

13 Father, help us to see the needs (mental, physical, and spiritual) of our missionary children, who go because their parents are called to global ministry. In Jesus' Name.

FAYE YARBROUGH, SOUTH AFRICA

14 Father, thank you for the opportunity to share the good news of Jesus in Hungary. We ask that the door stays open and that all find living hope in Christ.
AMANDA & JON GOOD, HUNGARY

15 Father God, I come to you in the name of our most precious Lord Jesus Christ. Please bless all the Master in Theological Studies students as they go out into their communities to share the gospel and the love of Christ with those who are lost in the darkness of this world. May you be glorified. Amen.

JAE STOCKTON, MEXICO



16 Gracious Father, teach us to see your image in those who suffer, so that we might be agents of peace and transformation in our broken world.

ELIBERTO & MOLLY JUAREZ, EL SALVADOR

17 Heavenly Father, thanks to Jesus who bore our shame on the cross and restores our honor. May we give our allegiance to you alone as we teach your people.

GORDON HWANG, JAPAN

18 God of love and God of grace, we praise you because your ways are righteous, and your path is peaceful. You have the power to bring to pass that which seems impossible for us. In the Middle East we are hemmed in from all sides. But thank you, gracious Father, you *can do all things*. In Jesus' Name we pray, Amen!

DAN & SARAH CHETTI, MIDDLE EAST

19 Lord, give us your eyes, to see "everything clearly" in the wake of COVID-19, and your heart to serve your world, to the glory of Jesus.

STAN SLADE, GLOBAL

20 Pray for us in our new mission assignment as spiritual caregivers ministering to IM's global servants in Soul Care, Self-Care, and Community Care. Pray for global servants to thrive in their ministry contexts.

DAVID & JOYCE REED, GLOBAL

21 Join us in prayer as we envision our next term of service with International Ministries so that God's will is done on earth as it is in heaven. Amen.

PETER & SARAH MCCURDY, MEXICO



22 Lord, open the eyes of our hearts and spirits that we may see our neighbors through your eyes and love them as you do.
CARLOS BONILLA & MAYRA GIOVANETTI, COLOMBIA

23 Lord, make us instruments of your peace. Amid the conflicts around us may we show we are your children by being peacemakers (Matthew 5:9). Begin in our hearts, so we may bring grace to our neighbors and even our enemies.

DANIEL BUTTRY, GLOBAL



24 Loving God, open our eyes to see the world through your eyes. Help us to be bold in faith that we may be your light of hope to children in Bolivia. Amen.

SARAH NASH, BOLIVIA

25 Father God, fill me with your perfect love and drive out all fear so I may respond to people and situations with the assurance that I can trust you in all things.
ANNIE DIESELBERG, THAILAND

26 Lord, how privileged we are to bear witness to your presence among us in the joyful twinkle of an eye and the hopeful dreams of a new generation. (Luke 10:23)
KIT RIPLEY, THAILAND

27 Lord, please give us ears to hear and eyes to see you in the hungry, thirsty, naked, sick, imprisoned, and in the stranger. Give us grace to feel and share your love.

LARRY STANTON, HUNGARY

28 Holy Spirit, save me from my hair, make-up, and popularity contests. Please help me love people like Jesus, remember what's important, and that God is in control.

REBECCA STANTON, HUNGARY

29 Lord Jesus, in a world full of confusion, apathy, anger, and violence, may we—your people, your body—be a healing presence spreading in every place the faith, hope, and love that come through knowing you.

DENISE & JUAN ARAGÓN, MEXICO

30 Lord, teach us to do justice, to love mercy, and, as we seek to walk humbly with you, lead us to walk with those who would otherwise walk alone.

RAY SCHELLINGER, GLOBAL

31 Lord, we pray for Baptist churches in Congo as they seek to reach the lost and disciple them. (Matthew 28:18-20)

JILL & MIKE LOWERY, DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

