



# Engaging in God's Heart for the Nations

30-Day Devotional

A compilation of missions-focused  
devotions written by  
One Mission Society missionaries

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# Finding God in the Waiting

Lydia Gard, OMS Communications

## Isaiah 55:8

*For my thoughts are not your thoughts,  
neither are your ways my ways, declares the LORD.  
For as the heavens are higher than the earth,  
so are my ways higher than your ways  
and my thoughts than your thoughts.*

Waiting is one of the most universal and difficult experiences.

Yet, there is power in the in-between times. A unique surrender comes when we can do nothing but step back in trust and hopefulness that the Lord has the best plan.

We wish away our waiting because it is uncomfortable, dark, sad, angry, and uncertain.

We tend to ask why what we want will not come or why what we do not want will not leave.

All the while, we miss who remains sovereign, faithful, and good. We live as if God is far off and unaware when, in reality, he is the closest thing to us. Not only does he know exactly what we are waiting for, he also intimately knows and orchestrates his grandest timing.

May we allow the aches of our waiting to remind us of what we ultimately wait for: our heavenly home. May we run to the Lord in our every moment of waiting, clinging to him and to the assurance that his ways are perfect. His timing always proves best, for our growth and for his glory!

# When Trouble Comes

Duane Brown, OMS Church Partners

## Paul's testimony from Acts 20:22-24 (NIV)

*And now, compelled by the Spirit, I am going to Jerusalem, not knowing what will happen to me there. I only know that in every city the Holy Spirit warns me that prison and hardships are facing me. However, I consider my life worth nothing to me, if only I can finish the race and complete the task the Lord Jesus has given me; my only aim is to finish the race and complete the task the Lord Jesus has given me—the task of testifying to the good news of God's grace.*

How often has God warned you, like he did Paul, that life-threatening troubles were coming? My answer: rarely. Perhaps because I personally serve God's mission while living in the West, where homeland ministry often proves easier than global ministry.

I hope Paul's words offer perspective that life isn't as bad for Christians in the U.S. as it is for Christ-followers serving God in places that are antagonistic to the Gospel.

The day is coming, however, when Western believers will face hardships like Paul's. As we prepare for those times, let us take heart and remember five necessities:

1. Obey the call to go ("And now, compelled by the Spirit").
2. Step forward in faith ("not knowing what will happen to me there").
3. Listen for the Holy Spirit's voice ("the Holy Spirit warns me").
4. Finish well ("my only aim is to finish the race and complete the task").
5. Commit to being a testimony of the grace of God at work in your life ("the task of testifying to the good news of God's grace").

# Foreword

We hope that as you engage with this devotional, it will inspire a greater connection with God's mission in your local community and across the world. One Mission Society (OMS) Church Partners, on behalf of OMS, is pleased to offer this resource to our partnering churches. Our mission is to form healthy partnerships with local churches to grow missional engagement and advance global disciple-making movements. One way to utilize this digital booklet is by encouraging your church to study and discuss it together, perhaps in your small groups. This content will be especially beneficial in preparing hearts and minds during a time of intentional missions emphasis in your church. Please contact us at [beachurchpartner@onemissionsociety.org](mailto:beachurchpartner@onemissionsociety.org) to learn more about how Church Partners can help your church grow missional movements.

—Duane Brown, Vice President of Church Partners,  
One Mission Society

# One New Humanity

Philip Richardson, OMS Theological Education

## Ephesians 3:8-10 (NRSV)

*... this grace was given to me to bring to the Gentiles the news of the boundless riches of Christ, and to make everyone see what is the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in God who created all things; so that through the church the wisdom of God in its rich variety might now be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places.*

What is the greatest witness to hostile spiritual powers that they have been defeated and, one day, their total demise will occur? Remarkably, the very existence of the church as a multiracial, multicultural, united new humanity (Eph. 3:10) serves as this ultimate witness. Here, it is not so much what the church does but rather who it is (Eph. 2:11–22).

This does not mean the erasure of racial, cultural, or linguistic differences. Paul still speaks of Jews and Gentiles; and, on the day of Pentecost, Jews each heard the apostles' message in their own language (Acts 2:6). But in a world divided by factions, parties, tribes, and interest groups, the surprising, supernatural unity of the church, partnered with its diversity, proclaims to the powers of darkness that their end has come. It remains a testimony of the cosmic unity in Christ, which is God's final purpose for all things (Eph. 1:10). We long to see more people become disciple-makers as a united church of many peoples, cultures, and languages. The church's interracial, intercultural nature testifies to the transforming power of the Gospel.

# The Valley of the Shadow

Jessica Hollopeter, OMS' Every Community for Christ

## Psalm 23:4

**Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.**

Missionaries can have bad days. Sometimes, those bad days stretch into a bad week or even a bad month. We start to doubt our effectiveness, our kids act out, or we feel tired of being away from family. How can we share Jesus and his hope with others when we feel as though we're walking through a valley?

First, we should remember the rod of protection. We didn't go into this ministry alone, and we still aren't alone. The Lord is our Shepherd, and he has assured us of his presence. We are counted among his children. No matter where we go, he has been there before us and will be there with us.

Second, we can lean upon our Shepherd's staff of rest and rescue. We should never hesitate to call upon God in our times of need, even if we feel it is selfish or weak. After all, God feeds the birds of the air; are we not of more value than they (Matthew 6:26)?

# Call and Response

Jessica Theaderman, Global Ministries

## Isaiah 6:8

*Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying,  
"Whom shall I send? And who will go for us?"  
And I said, "Here I am! Send me."*

Your phone rings. You see it's a number you don't recognize. Thinking it's probably a telemarketer, you ignore it. Moments later, your phone rings again. This time, you see it's your boss. Waiting until the third or fourth ring, you answer with a hesitant, "Hello?" Later, you get yet another phone call and see it's your spouse or your best friend. You immediately answer with a cheerful, "Hey!"

Our response to a phone call typically reflects the relationship we have with that person. So ... what if we received a call from God? How would we respond?

In Isaiah 6, we see the call and response of the prophet Isaiah. When God asks, "Who will go?" Isaiah does not hesitate to respond. He wholeheartedly says, "Here I am! Send me."

The Hebrew word used here is *hineni*, which means "Here I am." But it's much more than that. It's a posture of the heart that expresses a total readiness to give of ourselves. It's an offer of complete availability and surrender to whatever God is asking, often before we fully know what will be asked of us.

God's call to partner with him and his work around the world looks different for each of us. Some he may call to serve overseas as missionaries. Some he may call to serve on short-term mission trips or in local cities. Others he may call to give financially toward supporting missions.

Regardless of what God calls us to, what matters most is the posture of our hearts when we answer.

When God calls, how will you respond?

# Here I Am, Lord!

Susan Loobie, OMS Communications

## Isaiah 6:8

*And I heard the voice of the Lord saying,  
“Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?”  
Then I said, “Here I am! Send me.”*

During my sophomore year at university, I began attending Bible study groups regularly. Since I was a brand-new Christian, I had never actually read the Bible. The stories of love and redemption fascinated me but none more so than the ones about people making themselves available to God, despite their inefficiencies. I, too, wanted to say yes to serving God. But how?

I studied journalism. What could I do for the kingdom?

One night, while reading the Word, I felt God’s whisper telling me to consider Isaiah 6:8. Honestly, at that time I didn’t even know where to find Isaiah. So, I used the index and found the verse.

I decided then and there that I would serve in missions somehow, somewhere, and my life mantra would be, “Here I am, send me!” I never looked back.

Hearing God’s still small voice that night marks the start of my journey. Campus fellowship groups, student mission conferences, and a graduate degree in missions helped pave the way.

Since then, I have served on 3 mission fields and visited more than a dozen countries in the past 30 years. I am so glad I had ears to hear.

God.” God’s presence and power seemed to electrify the control room. “Father, is someone’s heart responding?” I prayed. Would we ever know?

On Monday morning, Gaudin asked why the Saturday night newscast was delayed. My heart pounded while I explained. Smiling, he responded, “‘Mary Magdalene,’ our mystery listener for whom we’ve been praying, just called to thank me for my strong words Saturday night. You know she doesn’t listen to the 11:00 news but turns on the radio at 11:15 for the music. She heard the announcement and wanted us to know that she went to church Sunday for the first time in years!”

I stood in awe. A blackout began someone’s quest for God! Two years later, our ‘Mary Magdalene’ came to the Savior!



# When Blackouts Hit ... All Power Is Given Unto Him

Valeene Hayes, OMS Retiree

## **Ephesians 3:20 (KJV)**

*Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh within us...*

Blackouts were part of life in Haiti. They often kept Radio 4VEH off the air, cut communications, interrupted schedules, and even destroyed recordings. One Saturday night, when it was time for the 11:00 news, without warning, a blackout silenced the station. Left in total darkness, I froze physically and emotionally. *"How long will it last? What should I do?"* I prayed.

Suddenly, through the control room window, there was a flicker of light: a firefly, the first I had seen in Haiti. I followed its glow, and my spirit soared. "Father, you always bring light into our dark situations!" As the praises came forth, the power came on! It was about 11:15. While getting the station back on the air, I sensed the prompting: "Put on the news." I hesitated, even arguing, "We don't air the 11:00 news at 11:15." But I obeyed the Spirit's voice.

At the close of the news, 4VEH radio director and newscaster Gaudin Charles added a special announcement. "Remember, tomorrow is Sunday, a day for worshiping our Creator. Attend the church of your choice and worship him. Don't let anything keep you from the most important part of your life, your relationship with

# You Can Do This!

Paul Keller, OMS Mobilization

## **Judges 6:14, 16 (NIV)**

*"Go in the strength you have ... and I will be with you."*

I grew up in a missions-minded church in Ohio, but the thought of being a missionary never occurred to me. I just figured mission work was for other people.

That all changed 30 years ago when I was studying computer science at a small Christian university. I had a professor who used cutting edge information technology to assist missions organizations. He encouraged us students to likewise use our computer skills for mission work. He would often say, "You can do this!"

I had never heard this before. No one had ever asked me personally to step out in faith and use my practical talents to further the kingdom of God, knowing he would be with me. This reminds me of when God asked Gideon to defeat the Midianites. Gideon doubted that he could do this assignment, but God gave him a great promise that he would be with him.

What about you? Have you ever thought about obeying the Great Commission with the unique skills God has given you? You can do this! God is with you! Do you know of someone who needs encouragement to be involved in missions? Tell them, "You can do this! God is with you!"

# What Is Your Left-handedness?

Daniel Buck, OMS Hungary

## Judges 3:15-16 (HCSB)

*Then the Israelites cried out to the Lord, and he raised up Ehud son of Gera, a left-handed Benjaminite, as a deliverer for them. The Israelites sent him with the tribute for King Eglon of Moab. Ehud made himself a double-edged sword eighteen inches long. He strapped it to his right thigh under his clothes...*

Some of the biggest pushbacks to missions I hear include, “Missionaries have skills I just don’t have,” or “I’m not theologically trained, so I can’t serve.” This is where the beauty of Ehud’s story comes in.

His qualification to serve God in his context was his left-handedness ... not his ability to speak, lead, build, or fight. God knew that when the enemy’s guards would check Ehud for a sword, they would check the wrong leg—his left leg, not his right. This advantage proved especially important; in Ehud’s time, being left-handed was not only uncommon but was actually viewed as evil.

Like Ehud, missionaries and ministers are not holier than other people or even set apart like the Levitical priests in the Old Testament. They are simply people God has called who responded with a yes, despite things, such as left-handedness, that culture says could get in their way.

What preconceived notions do you have about missions that stop you from exploring it?

How has God created you that gives you a unique way to serve him?

Where is God calling you to serve him in your context?

# Are Your Feet Beautiful?

Dave Oakley, Billion.Global Coalition

## Ephesians 2:1-2

*And you were dead in the trespasses and sins in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience.*

## Romans 10:15b

*How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news!*

The world population grows daily, which means new sinners are added daily. We are born dead in our trespasses and sins and need a Savior. The Joshua Project states that 3.28 billion people on the earth are without Jesus. How will sinners, in their dead spiritual state, hear about Jesus unless someone tells them?

Billion.Global is a vision to take the Gospel message of Jesus to a billion people within a 10-year time period, in a manner that allows people to understand and respond to the message. We believe this will be accomplished with the “beautiful feet” of many different ministries: ministries that take the Gospel to children and youth, ministries that reach the deaf and share Jesus in one of the more than 200 sign languages of the world, ministries that record the Bible in new languages so people can hear about Jesus, and ministries that operate in remote villages or some of the most crowded cities. The list could go on with the unique gifts God has given each of us.

Pray that we, with these gifts, will be the “beautiful feet” for those God has placed within our sphere of influence. Who will you share the Good News with today?

# Whatever You Say, Jesus!

Lisa Ausley, OMS USA Board of Trustees

## Luke 1:38 (CSB)

*“I am the Lord’s servant,” said Mary.  
“May it happen to me as you have said.”*

While I was wrestling with my sanctification experience, Jesus led me to a verse that has become my statement of faith.

It is my mantra as I cry out in times of pain, confusion, and frustration. It is what Jesus’ mom said to the angel when he told her the shocking best, and worst, news of her life: she, an unmarried girl, was going to have a baby!

“I am the handmaid of the Lord. May it be done to me according to your word.” (NABRE) I struggled to live this statement. I had big plans for my life! I feared giving up my dreams—until my theology of God overcame my hesitations. If he was really who I believed him to be, I was giving up nothing. Instead, I was tying my sail to the God who could take me places and use my life. And when I finally said yes to him, I was at peace ... and have been since. I am humbled to be his servant. Life his way has been much better than life my way.

I love being aligned with a mission organization like OMS that, like Mary, serves by the statement, “Whatever you say, Jesus!” The answer to his call, whatever it is, whenever it comes, is simply, “Yes!”

# Compelled by Christ’s Love

Bob Fetherlin, OMS President

## 2 Corinthians 5:14-15 (NIV)

*For Christ’s love compels us ... he died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him.*

With all the technology, money, human resources, and strategies available to the church today, why are there 2.3 billion people who still have not heard about Jesus?

- **We are selfish.** Most believers spend 20x more money annually on personal entertainment than they spend giving to reach others for Christ.
- **Our personal comfort is of off-the-charts value to us.** Reaching most of the remaining people and places that have not yet heard about Jesus is dangerous and inconvenient, so we run the other direction.
- **Compromising, we bow our knees to the gods of this world.** We accumulate possessions; spend more time on social media than we do in prayer; and make gods of sports, money, and houses. We adore what this world offers, leaving only leftover time and treasures for Christ.

If these assertions are true, where should we find hope?

- In making our lives an eternal investment.
- In experiencing the power that comes when the Holy Spirit fully owns us.
- In humbly caring more about the needs of others than those of ourselves.

Most importantly, hope is rooted in the agape love of Christ, which compels us. Hope is available in Christ himself!

# What's Your Motivation?

Lori McFall, OMS' HOPE61

## Matthew 20:28 (NLT)

*For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve others and to give his life as a ransom for many.*

When we say yes to God, whether to be a good neighbor, to work in full-time ministry, or to volunteer at church, the motivation for our yes matters. God does not want our service because we think a particular job will not get done without us or because a specific group of people needs what only we can offer. We certainly should not say yes to God so that others will see and commend us for our obedience. As we seek God's will and discern his call on our lives, our motivation should be our love for God and our desire to be where he wants us, doing what he wants us to do.

Oswald Chambers said, "If our devotion is to the cause of humanity, we will be quickly defeated and brokenhearted, since we will often be confronted with a great deal of ingratitude from other people. But if we are motivated by our love for God, no amount of ingratitude will be able to hinder us from serving one another." When you say yes to God, check your motivation, and then hang on for an amazing ride!

# What's Your Game Plan for the Second Half?

Larry Freed, OMS' Every Community for Christ

## Joshua 14:10-12 (NLT)

*"Now, as you can see, the LORD has kept me alive and well as he promised for ... forty-five years ... Today, I am eighty-five years old. I am as strong now as I was when Moses sent me on that journey, and I can still travel and fight as well as I could then. So give me the hill country that the LORD promised me."*

Great sports teams enter the locker room at halftime and come out with a plan to win the game in the second half. What's your game plan for the second half of your life? In the first half of our lives, we focus on success. In the second half, our focus shifts to significance, leaving a legacy, doing something meaningful, and accomplishing what we have wanted to do all of our lives. What is your winning plan? What legacy is God calling you to leave to help fulfill his Great Commission: making disciples of all nations? Like Caleb in Joshua 14, what hill is God calling you to take? What desire, drive, or fight has he placed in your heart with the necessary skills in your hands? No matter your age, do not hesitate to follow his call.

# When God Calls, Do Not Be Afraid

Bill Anderson, OMS Global Board Chairman

## Joshua 1:9 (NIV)

*Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the LORD your God will be with you wherever you go.*

God asked Joshua to do what Joshua thought was impossible: to lead the Israelites to the Promised Land. It was impossible for Joshua on his own, but he could do it with God's presence.

Fear and discouragement are part of our nature. When God calls us to serve others, these emotions often come hand in hand.

There will be times when the road ahead seems too steep to climb. There will be challenges in our calling that we know we cannot handle on our own. But we can face them boldly because we trust that God is always with us. He does not leave us.

Doubts or fears can distract us from where God wants us to be. When we feel our courage wavering, we must remember God's promises and faithfulness to us. God's presence comes with his call.

Be assured that God is helping. Be strong no matter the situation. Do not be afraid, and do not be discouraged. We know that God will be with us wherever we go.

# Your Most Christlike Work

Wesley Duewel (post mortem), Author and Former President of One Mission Society

## Hebrews 4:14, 16

*Since then we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God ... Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.*

The most Godlike life you can live is one of prayer. The most Christlike activity you can share is to pray for others. The heavenly seraphim around God's throne never cease praising, adoring, and worshiping God (Rev. 4:8). How wonderful that we can join the heavenly host in praise and worship.

But angels do not intercede. The ministry of intercession is, above all else, the ministry of Christ and those saved by Christ ...

Christ wants your prayer more than he wants any other service or gift. You can do much in addition to prayer, but you can never do anything more Christlike or more spiritually significant. Prayer must accompany all you do and take priority over all else. You mean most to Christ when you join him in prayer.

Christ lives today to intercede (Heb. 7:25). If you want to share his heartbeat, share this, his most important ministry ...

You can never pray for others without him joining you. That is where he waits for you each day. His heart is breaking for the needs of men. He hungers for you to share his burdens and meet him in intercession. Prayer is your most Christlike work.

# What Can Hasten Christ's Return?

Valetta Steel Crumley, OMS Missionary, Speaker, Author, and Mentor

## Matthew 24:14 (NIV)

*This gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.*

As millions of refugees fled Communist China to settle in Taiwan, missionaries found a great opportunity to serve. Even though almost every house contained a shelf of false idols, millions of young people wanted to learn English and embrace new ideas. Prayers for more workers to serve in Taiwan ascended. Those prayers touched my life.

With the support of God's people, I found a huge opportunity in Taiwan. Soon, young people were attending my English/Bible classes, asking questions about God and eternal life. I ministered among people who had never heard of Christ.

God wants to reach millions through your prayers, gifts, and words. Today, some of the most receptive people in the world are millions of immigrants. Will there be missionaries to the unreached immigrants in Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin America, and the U.S. because of our prayers, gifts, and involvement? Will your prayers and gifts help speed the coming of our Lord's wonderful kingdom?

# Sugarcane From the Heart

Jason Campbell, OMS' One Mission Kids

## Luke 21:4

*For they all contributed out of their abundance, but she out of her poverty put in all she had to live on.*

In 2001, I spent my first Christmas overseas in Haiti. While I was away from the familiar sights and sounds of the holiday season, God taught me a lesson I will never forget.

That Christmas, I gave my Haitian/Bahamian friend, Joey, money to buy a calling card so he could speak to his family in the Bahamas.

Joey lived in a cardboard box next to a cement wall. On Christmas Day, Joey visited me, carrying something large and bulky under his arm. It was a stalk of sugarcane. He said, "I don't have much, but I wanted to give you something to show my gratitude and love."

I told him he did not need to give me anything because his friendship was enough.

He responded, "No, I wanted to get you something. So, with what little money I had, I bought you a stalk of sugarcane and this melon."

I didn't know what to say. His gift not only touched my heart, but it also humbled me to my core. I kept my composure and said thank you.

In a small way, I now better understand what Jesus taught his followers when he saw a widow give at the temple. He said the widow gave more than the rich people because she gave everything she had. What a challenge to me and you! May we be more like the widow and Joey, who were willing to give everything.

# God's Pocket

Valetta Steel Crumley, OMS Missionary, Speaker, Author, and Mentor

## Psalm 112:5 (NIV)

*Good will come to those who are generous ...*

When our thoughts turn from fear to faith, wonderful events and provisions happen. Jesus said, "It is more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts 20:35 NIV).

A little boy asked for a mission faith promise card, then wrote, "\$1.00" in the blank. He also scrawled, "My daddy will pay this."

A farmer near Winchester, Indiana, was challenged by a missionary. He dedicated a 10-acre triangle field to the Lord, promising to give all he earned to the work in Brazil. When other farmers struggled with drought that summer, this farmer's field received rain. This gave him an unusually large harvest.

We can become increasingly generous and joyful in giving, not because of what we have but because of what we discover through "God's pocket." We cannot empty God's pocket. The secret to joyful giving is understanding that God's pocket is full of available resources—not to increase our lifestyle, but to send workers who will take the love of Jesus to those for whom he died. We can access God's pocket by faith. As we prayerfully ask for his direction and take increasing steps of faith, our faith grows not only in our financial trust but also in other areas of our lives.

# Ask for Nations

Wesley Duewel (post mortem), Author and Former President of One Mission Society

## Psalm 2:8 (NIV)

*Ask me, and I will make the nations your inheritance, the ends of the earth your possession.*

God's ordained key to world evangelism is your prayer. Psalm 2, which is God's prophetic picture of how Christ will triumph over all human opposition, makes this clear ... Verse 8 gives his promise to Christ...

What is Jesus doing now? He is sitting at the right hand of the Father on heaven's throne (1 Peter 3:21-22) ... Interceding in prayer (Rom. 8:34) ...

Christ wants us to be his co-heirs and to share his throne through prayer ... Psalm 2:8 is not only God's promise to Christ, it is his promise to us. We, with Christ, inherit the nations by prayer ...

For which nations are you asking? How do you pray for a nation? First, pray for the ruler. Next, pray for pastors, missionaries, Christians in that nation. Pray for the church to grow. Ask God to use Christians' testimonies to the salvation of others. Ask God to give you souls through your prayer.

Nations are yours for the asking. People will be saved if you pray. Jesus conquers through your prayer.

You can help Jesus rule today through your prayer. Your prayer can open doors to nations, cities, homes, and hearts. Your prayer can block and restrain Satan's opposition. It can protect God's children. God plans that Jesus and we—his spiritual army—reign, win victories, and extend his kingdom by prayer.

Adopt some nation as your prayer inheritance today. Begin to ask God for that country now. Claim the promise of Psalm 2:8 for your own. Nations and the salvation of their people are yours for the asking.

# Missionary Watchmen

Jacqui Shatto, OMS World Intercessors

## Isaiah 62:6

*On your walls, O Jerusalem, I have appointed watchmen;  
all the day and all the night they shall never be silent.  
You who call on the LORD, take no rest.*

God placed within his watchmen a desire to bring him the needs of others through prayer. He gave them courage to pray in faith even when the enemy's advance seemed daunting. He called them to pray day and night. He commanded them to pray at all times and to give themselves no rest from interceding.

OMS intercessors are among the ranks of God's missionary watchmen. God has placed a desire within our hearts to pray without ceasing (1 Thessalonians 5:17), both for those on the mission field and at home.

In Exodus 17, Joshua led the Israelites to victory in battle. His strength came from the Lord through the prayers of Moses, as well as Aaron and Hur, who faithfully upheld Moses' arms and prayed.

Many are needed to uphold our "Joshua missionaries" in prayer as they go out for the Lord.

Is God calling you to join his missionary watchmen in prayer?

# Continuing God's Blessings

Lydia Gard, OMS Communications

## Psalm 67:1-2

*May God be gracious to us and bless us and make  
his face to shine upon us, that your way may be  
known on earth, your saving power among all nations.*

You may have heard the phrase, "We are blessed to be a blessing." These words hold an important biblical truth: God's blessings are for his glory, so the nations will speak of, know, and enter into a relationship with him. Everything God provides for us—talents, time, finances, connections, personality, salvation—is meant not just for our benefit but also for the ultimate, eternal benefit of others.

God loves to show his favor in intimate, tangible, and wonderful ways. The resulting joy from blessings should not stop at our lives. God purposes each good thing he gives as a means of blessing not only us but also the world.

One simple way to continue spreading God's name to every nation is to tell someone near you a story of God's specific blessing, generosity, or provision in your life. Even seemingly mundane blessings—remembering something else you need while already in the grocery store, a glass not breaking when you drop it, or a friend unexpectedly sending you a note—speak to the nature of our wonderful God. Let God's blessings to you become blessings to others!



# The Least

Peggy Emard, OMS Corporate Secretary

## Matthew 25:40 (NIV)

*The King will reply, “Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.”*

You see him on street corners and curbs throughout your city. He usually holds a cardboard sign asking for money or food. His clothes are often dirty and torn. If you offer him a ride to a shelter, he refuses. Sometimes, his speech is slurred. It’s easy to judge him, fear him, or think he’s a fake.

In Matthew 25:40, Jesus uses the term “the least of these” to describe thousands of people like the man above. Jesus does not mean they are less valuable, less important, or less significant. In fact, Jesus says that whatever we do for one of the least, we do for him.

Missionaries have a specific calling to serve others vocationally. These words in Matthew, however, urge all Christians to be missionaries. Your mission field is your community, your work, and wherever you are. You are the face of Jesus to other people.

*Father God, we thank you for showering us with love. We pray for your prompting to share your love with others. Thank you for guiding us. In your Son’s name, amen.*

# God Leads

A. Thomas, OMS Treasurer

## 1 Peter 5:6-7

*Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God so that at the proper time he may exalt you, casting all your anxieties on him, because he cares for you.*

A few years ago, God asked me to take a significant step in my ministry. I had taken a few small steps before that had plenty of support, but I would have less backup this time and would be going at it alone.

I was a leader for an international Bible study, and the organization was asking leaders to actively bring new study groups into their community. God led me to do this. Other than the material resources that I would receive, I would need to set up the group on my own. I was concerned that I would be an island, missing out on connecting with the main group. I trusted all that to God since he called me to obey.

Opposition, in the form of missed messages and phone calls, first showed up in the challenges of securing a meeting place. This was followed by trials within our family that included a car accident and our cat passing.

God brought healing from the losses. The island I feared was not an island. God brought a friend to serve beside me. He granted me wisdom in supporting the group. I know now that God was using this time as a foundation for serving him as I do now.

What is the big step God wants you to say yes to today?

# Not Needed, But Chosen

Alex Pollock, OMS' Every Community for Christ

## Esther 4:14 (NIV)

*“For if you remain silent at this time, relief and deliverance for the Jews will arise from another place, but you and your father’s family will perish. And who knows but that you have come to your royal position for such a time as this?”*

One of the most valuable lessons I have learned from the story of Esther is that God does not need us. God did not need Esther to bring about the saving of his people then, just as he does not need us to bring about the saving of souls now. God will never be short on resources; yet, he presents us with the opportunity to partner with him in fulfilling the Great Commission. He chose Esther to bring salvation to the Jewish people. He prepared her and guided her. In the same way, God has selected you, prepared you, and led you to help bring lost souls into the kingdom. How beautiful that the ever-powerful, ever-capable Creator has given humanity this opportunity. What a privilege it is to be chosen by God to do one of the most difficult, yet most meaningful, tasks entrusted to his people: to go out and show the love of God and to bring lost souls into the kingdom of heaven. Each one of us was created “for such a time as this.” May you take full advantage of the opportunity God has given you to faithfully complete the work of Christ.

# Try Out This Approach to Sharing the Gospel

Duane Brown, OMS Church Partners

## 1 Peter 3:15-16 (NIV)

*But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect, keeping a clear conscience, so that those who speak maliciously against your good behavior in Christ may be ashamed of their slander.*

“We teach our pastors never to argue with anyone when they share the Gospel.” The man who said this lives in the Middle East and is a key leader in a rapidly-growing movement of house churches. As he shared reasons for the movement’s swift expansion, I was struck by his statement.

How clever and unforgettable. I have repeated that simple strategy countless times.

As we seek to reach family, friends, or even strangers, let’s aim not to argue, even as we desire to defend our faith against a multitude of hostile and questioning people.

“I’m not an evangelist. I can’t remember the last time I shared my faith,” you say. But consider the many times you exhibit Christ by your deeds: you hold the door for a stranger and tell them God loves them; you bite your tongue even though a driver cuts you off in traffic; you bring a meal to a recently-hospitalized neighbor and tell them you’re serving in Jesus’ name. By sharing Christ in these ways, you maintain a clear conscience and leave a wide-open door for more opportunities to tell others about the love of Jesus.

# Overflow

Fiona Richardson, OMS World Intercessors

## Isaiah 12:3-4 (NIV)

*With joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation. In that day you will say: Give praise to the Lord, proclaim his name; make known among the nations what he has done, and proclaim that his name is exalted.*

Jesus came to earth and invited us to “draw water from the wells of salvation.” In John 4:14 (NIV), Jesus promised a Samaritan woman at a well, “Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again, but whoever drinks the water I give them will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give them will become in them a spring of water welling up to eternal life.” This woman was of a despised race and confused religion, living in shame and broken relationships. After Jesus’ invitation, she ran and told her entire Samaritan village to meet Jesus because he could be the Messiah.

This is missions: a beautiful overflow of the well of salvation, living water flowing out through one who receives. Isaiah 12 says those who drink will “proclaim his name,” shout it, and lift it up to others. They “make known among the nations what he has done.” Too often, believers enjoy the drink then keep Jesus to themselves. Instead of overflow, there is stagnation. We do not pray for the lost, give to or participate in sharing the name of Jesus with the nations, or tell others around us what Jesus has done. May we increase in sharing Jesus’ living water with others.

*Lord, forgive us and lead us in your glorious overflow.*

# The Harvest Is Plentiful

Danny Beasley, OMS USA Former Executive Director

## Luke 10:2 (NIV)

*He told them, “The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field.”*

Farming is an amazing vocation. It involves many factors the farmer cannot control; however, its rewards are great. All the laborious work soon results in thousands of sprouting plants. If all goes well, the farmer can expect the harvest to be 10-20 times the original investment of seed.

Mission life holds many parallels to farming. With farming, it is easy to see each stage and the benefits of the harvest. Mission work needs the same care and attention, though experiencing the harvest may take longer. Not everyone can be a farmer. Although all believers are mandated to share the Gospel, not all believers are called to vocational ministry. For this reason, Jesus’ words are as true today as they were more than 2,000 years ago.

Jesus clearly states that a great harvest is ready, but more field workers are needed. The field and the harvest are not ours but the Lord’s. Our responsibility is to ask the Lord to provide the workers for his harvest.

Our desire is for all to hear about salvation through faith in Jesus Christ and live a life transformed by his Holy Spirit. Will you join with OMS and many others by setting an alarm for 10:02 a.m. and/or p.m. to ask the Lord to raise up more workers for his fields who will reap the plentiful harvest?

# Out of Sight, On the Mind

Larson Hicks, OMS Human Resources

## Hebrews 11:1 (KJV)

*Now faith is the substance of things  
hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.*

The common phrase “out of sight, out of mind” refers to how if something is not seen, it can be easily forgotten. However, Hebrews 11:1 offers a different take on the idea of sight and thoughts. Here we read that our faith proves that just because we cannot see something in person does not mean it does not exist. The work being done by our OMS missionaries in countries other than the U.S. ties closely to this idea. Although I work at OMS World Headquarters in Greenwood, Indiana, and cannot see those being brought to Jesus in person or the experiences missionaries have while serving, my faith assures me that those things are still certainly happening around the world. Just as one can have faith that outside of the room, the world is still turning, I continue to have faith that outside of my city, state, country, and continent, people are still doing God’s work and spreading the Good News.

How can you spread the joy of God’s kingdom like the winds spread seeds, in ways nobody else sees?

# The Sycamore Tree

Mykaela Alvey, OMS’ Men for Missions

## Luke 19:1-4

*[Jesus] entered Jericho and was passing through. And behold, there was a man named Zacchaeus. He was a chief tax collector and was rich. And he was seeking to see who Jesus was, but on account of the crowd he could not, because he was small in stature. So he ran on ahead and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see him, for he was about to pass that way.*

Many of us heard about Zacchaeus through a church song we learned as kids. It took me a while after those days of singing about “a wee little man” to recognize how significant Zacchaeus’ experience really is. What I like most about this story is that, at first glance, the tree Zacchaeus climbs looks fairly insignificant. Yet, it plays an important role in his salvation! If Zacchaeus had not climbed it, he wouldn’t have seen Jesus.

In contrast to the sycamore tree’s perceived minor role, the large impact of COVID-19 has permeated our lives for two years now, significantly altering not only how we do life but also how we do missions. Despite these setbacks, missions hasn’t stopped. Why?

Because we Christians are the sycamore trees like that of Zacchaeus’ story. Small moments and little things that seem minor could actually be a branch for someone to climb and see Jesus. These little moments exist every day. We are living, breathing, walking testimonies of God’s grace. Every interaction can be an opportunity for someone to meet Jesus.

Ministry looks different these days, but, as shown by the sycamore tree, seemingly small things can bring the most life-changing moments.