

shine on  
TIM TEBOW FOUNDATION



8 DAY DEVOTIONAL

# In His Image



There are times when God uses other people to profoundly impact our lives and shape our perspective. A few years ago, our team received a letter from a mom who had volunteered at Night to Shine, and her letter did just that. Her daughter was too young to attend at the time, but she so kindly and eloquently shared how she felt in that moment as a parent:



There have been times I've wanted to shout to everyone and no one in particular, "Don't forget my girl. It's not easy, I know. But she's here, sitting in the dark, waiting for you to sit with her, see her, know her. Don't forget my girl."

At Night to Shine, God whispered to me: "I will never ever forget her. She is famous to me, like an A-lister walking the red carpet. I throw a party, serve the best food, and clothe her in love. I pamper her with my goodness and put a crown on her head. She is precious and she is mine."

How extravagant is the love of God for us!

Her letter deeply impacted Tim and all of our team because it was such a powerful reminder of how people with special needs and disabilities often feel around the world - **FORGOTTEN**.

To forget means to fail to remember,  
inadvertently neglect, or cease to think of.

Night to Shine is an annual event organized by the Tim Tebow Foundation. It provides a memorable experience for individuals with special needs, aged 14 and older. Centered around celebrating God's love, this event aims to create an inclusive and joyous experience for participants, offering them the opportunity to enjoy a special evening. The Tim Tebow Foundation collaborates with churches and volunteers worldwide to host Night to Shine events, fostering an uplifting atmosphere for individuals with special needs to feel cherished and valued.

We don't want to forget people whom God created as His image-bearers. We can't forget them. In fact, that is one of the many reasons we felt called to put this devotional together. Our hearts hurt thinking of people feeling not remembered, neglected, and not thought of.



Our motivation to help change the narrative of how people with special needs are often viewed and treated globally drives much of the work we do at the Tim Tebow Foundation. Through our Special Needs Ministry focus, we are incredibly humbled that God allows us to sponsor Night to Shine, provide Shine On resources, and build and help operate International Special Needs Resource Centers around the globe.

Our hope and prayer for this devotional is that God reminds and challenges us not to forget, not to look away, but instead, to recognize and remember how intrinsically **VALUABLE** all people are.

Thank you for being a part of this 8-day devotional journey with us. Through it all, we invite you to remember the words of our Lord Jesus...

"CONSIDER THE RAVENS, FOR THEY NEITHER SOW  
NOR REAP; THEY HAVE NO STOREROOM NOR BARN,  
AND YET GOD FEEDS THEM; HOW MUCH MORE  
VALUABLE YOU ARE THAN THE BIRDS!"

*Luke 12:24*

God bless,

*Brandi Cook*

**DAY 1**



**God's Anointing Brings You Victory**

**DAY 2**



**The God Who Sees Me**

**DAY 3**



**The Works of God in All Our Special Needs**

**DAY 4**



**Created by the God Who Made the Stars**

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**Not All Are Wanted**

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**Buying the Field**

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**DAY 8**



**Open the Eyes of Our Hearts Lord**





**DAY 1**

# God's Anointing Brings You Victory

**Alfredo Salazar**  
**Tebow Down Guatemala, Founder**  
**TTF Ministry: TDG**

But the Lord said to Samuel, "Do not consider his appearance or his height, for I have rejected him. The Lord does not look at the things people look at. People look at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart."

**1 SAMUEL 16:7**

In the first book of Samuel, chapter 16, verses 1 to 13, we find a very beautiful teaching that tells us about the need that we all have to live under the anointing of God.

Samuel was sad because God had told him that Saul would no longer be king of Israel, so God sent him to anoint the new king. Upon entering the house of David's father, Jesse, Samuel sees Eliab's appearance. He was tall and strong but the chosen one was not him, and neither was it Abinadab nor Shamma, nor any of the 7 sons who were there.

The chosen one was David, But the family had not taken him into account during the prophet's visit. He had been working, and they had to send for him. When Samuel saw him, he knew he was the anointed one. He poured oil on his head and the Spirit of the Lord came powerfully upon him.

From this passage, we can learn several very interesting things.

- ✧ When the Lord chooses us for a mission, he does not see our exterior, he sees the availability of our heart.
- ✧ Although others have not taken us into account to do some things, if the Lord calls you to do something, He will bring you from wherever you are to anoint you and fill you with His power.
- ✧ When the Lord pours out His Spirit on your life and anoints you, your life changes. The process begins, just as it did for David that day. David was anointed as king, but he was not crowned king. He went through a process of maturity and had to learn to become king. He had to face Goliath, lions and bears. He was chased, and he even had the opportunity to kill the king, but he did not do it, he waited for his moment to be king.
- ✧ When the Lord calls us, we can't imagine how far He wants to take us, and He allows us to go through training, through situations in which our faith grows, where we mature, and where we learn not to want to rush things, but to let everything happen in God's time.

I am sure that the Lord has called you to do something great. Along the way, you may feel persecuted, battling with bears and lions, even with a Goliath who seems invincible. But remember that you are not working in your strength, but with God's, who is with you always. He protects you and takes you from victory to victory.

Jesus said that in this world, we would have adversities, but He also said, do not be afraid because I will always be with you.

## Prayer:

**Lord, on this day, I want to thank you because I know that you are with me always. Even in my strongest battles, I can feel your love and your presence. Thank you because your anointing on me makes me live from victory to victory.**





DAY 2

# The God Who Sees Me

**Brandon Gaskins**  
**Deaf Millennial Project, Founder**  
**Shine On Contributor**

"You are the God who sees me," for she said,  
"I have now seen the One who sees me."

**GENESIS 16:13**

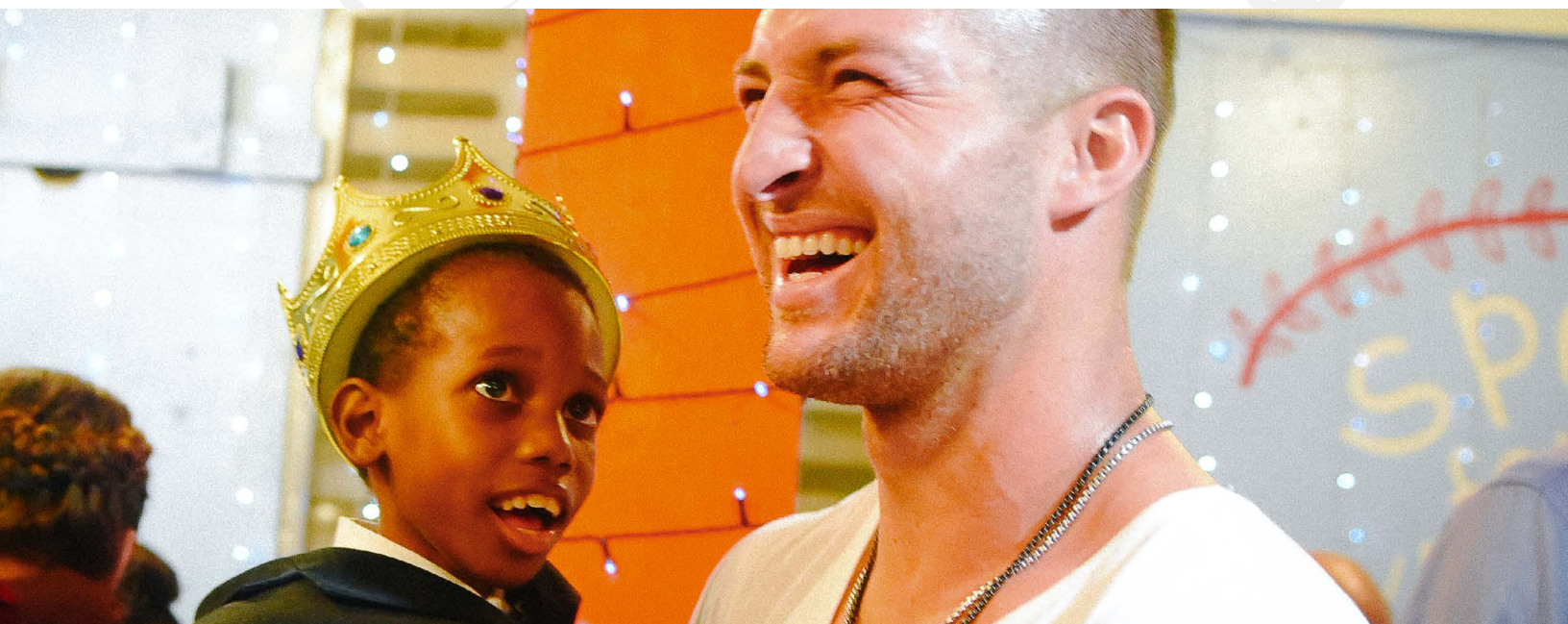
At the age of 19, I went on my first international mission trip with a group. As someone who is Deaf, this was the first time I saw the significant need to reach Deaf people and engage them with the Gospel. Before I left, I was nervous about what I might see and experience. All of that changed when we entered a *Kentucky Fried Chicken* in New Delhi, India.

This location was unique because it employed Deaf people, and was designed to serve their Deaf employees. I remember my friends and I were signing as we approached the counter. I saw the faces of the Deaf employees change - a memory that is seared into my heart and brain. Their faces lit up as they watched us use our hands to communicate. Their faces beamed.

"Where are you from?" they asked. We quickly responded, "from America." They said, "You flew from America to here? Why?" There was no better answer than "To meet you." Their faces were filled with joy. For them, this was special. They felt seen and loved in an often overlooked world. God doesn't just see the "normal hearing people." He sees every single one of us: the young autistic boy, the disability community, the overtired mom, and even the Deaf worker in India. He loves us because we are His creation. He sees and knows each person. His works are fearfully and wonderfully made!

## Prayer:

Dear God, we thank you for being the God who sees us and loves us just as we are. We pray that you continue to open our eyes to the beauty and worth of every individual, regardless of their abilities or differences. Help us to be a source of love, compassion, and encouragement to those who feel unseen or overlooked. We pray that you guide us in our journey to reflect your love and grace in all that we do. Amen.





DAY 3

# The Works of God in All Our Special Needs

Greg Lucas  
Guidelight, Advisor & Retreat Speaker  
Shine On Contributor

"As he passed by, he saw a man blind from birth. And his disciples asked him, 'Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents that he was born blind?'"

**JOHN 9:1-2**

As we open **John Chapter 9**, we are gifted with a scene that speaks volumes to the hearts of those struggling with disability. In the text, Jesus is passing by. But he doesn't just pass by. He stops, keeping a divine appointment scheduled since the beginning of time—an appointment with a man born blind.

Jesus saw the man who could not see. He saw him when no one else took the time to see. The man was blind to the world, and the world was blind to him. This man had no identity except for disability. He is given no name except that of a blind beggar. People looked through him, much like we look through modern-day beggars today. Much like we often look through people with special needs today. But Jesus didn't turn away. Jesus stopped, and Jesus *"saw a man"*. He looked past his disability into the humanity. More importantly, Jesus looked past the *blame* for the blindness, and saw the *purpose* of this man's disability.

*"And his disciples asked him, 'Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?'"* In other words, who is to blame for this? Perhaps a question many of us have asked about people with special needs. But notice Jesus doesn't give an answer to the cause; instead, he gives an answer to the purpose of this man's disability. Jesus answered, *"It was not that this man sinned, or his parents, but that the works of God might be displayed in him."*



The meaning of Jesus in *John 9* is crystal clear. He is saying to the disciples, and he is saying to the blind man, and he is certainly saying to many of us as we walk through the valley of disability: This blindness, this autism, this cerebral palsy, this Down syndrome, this fill in the blank—this disability came about *“in order that the works of God might be displayed.”* God has a plan and a purpose for all our people with special needs.

Perhaps this story isn't about the blind man at all. Perhaps this story is about our own blindness to see what God is doing all around us. And maybe the greatest gift God can give us is not to heal our physical disabilities. Maybe the greatest gift He can give us is to heal our own spiritual blindness and show us more and more of Himself, His purpose, and His works in the lives of people with special needs.

## Prayer:

Father, Open our eyes that we may see. Show us the divine purpose of all our struggles, and the works of God in all our special needs. Jesus, pass by and see us in our sufferings, and all our disabilities. Most of all, help us to see Your gospel, Your life, Your death, and Your resurrection as our greatest gift. In Jesus name, Amen.



DAY 4

# Created by the God Who Made the Stars

**Irene Salazar**  
**Tebow Down Guatemala, Co-founder**  
TTF Ministry: TDG

I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well.

**PSALM 139:14**



When I was told that my son, Alfredo Jr, had Down syndrome, many thoughts came to my mind. And most of them were of anguish, fear, pain, and grief for the future. It was unexpected. At that time, I had negative ideas about Down syndrome and could not imagine a future full of pain and hopelessness for my baby.

It was there, in that moment of darkness, that I was sure that God makes no mistakes. I went to look in my bible to see what I could find about my son. Psalm 139:14 brought me so much hope because it said that all of His creation is perfect and that included people with Down syndrome or any other disabling condition. What joy it brought to my heart to know that the God who created the stars had formed my son!

In time, we understood that we needed to find Alfredo Jr's purpose on this earth. It was then that our family decided to found Tebow Down Guatemala to bring light to people who, like us, were facing



a moment of darkness and be able to share good news and hope with them. People with Down syndrome and special needs are full of love, hope, sincerity, gentleness, and many other qualities that we must learn. Today, I thank the Lord for the beautiful gift He brought to my family 20 years ago and the opportunity to experience the love of thousands of people with special needs and their purity. God is never wrong!

## Prayer:

Dear Father, you know the needs of our lives, and at this time, we cry out to you for the people who are going through pain, darkness, affliction, and despair. And we thank you that we can always turn to you. We also ask for this world to know the beauty of people with special needs. Help us to learn from them. Amen.



DAY 5

# Not All Are Wanted

**Jared Scheppmann**  
**Ekisa Ministries, Executive Director**  
TTF Ministry: Ekisa

Then Laban said to Jacob, "Because you are my kinsman, should you therefore serve me for nothing? Tell me, what shall your wages be?" Now Laban had two daughters. The name of the older was Leah, and the name of the younger was Rachel. Leah's eyes were weak, but Rachel was beautiful in form and appearance. Jacob loved Rachel. And he said, "I will serve you seven years for your younger daughter Rachel."

Laban said, "It is better that I give her to you than that I should give her to any other man; stay with me." So Jacob served seven years for Rachel, and they seemed to him but a few days because of the love he had for her.

Then Jacob said to Laban, "Give me my wife that I may go in to her, for my time is completed." So Laban gathered together all the people of the place and made a feast. But in the evening he took his daughter Leah and brought her to Jacob, and he went in to her. (Laban gave his female servant Zilpah to his daughter Leah to be her servant.) And in the morning, behold, it was Leah! And Jacob said to Laban, "What is this you have done to me? Did I not serve with you for Rachel? Why then have you deceived me?" Laban said, "It is not so done in our country, to give the younger before the firstborn."

### GENESIS 29:15-26

I think that everyone has, at some point in our lives, felt unwanted. On the elementary school playground, someone is always picked last. The boy you wanted to ask you to the dance asks someone else. Unfair promotions are given and rejection emails are sent after job interviews. Not wanted, not loved, not valued. This was the reality for Leah in Genesis 29. She was rejected by Jacob, knowing that she was the eldest and the first to be wed, but passed over for her younger and more attractive sister. She was rejected by her father, who gave her away in a plan of deceit and then gave his blessing for her younger sister to take her place as Jacob's wife a week later. I can only imagine the hurt she felt brought on by her sister Rachel, who maybe was the family member closest to her but thought that she mattered and was worth more because of her looks.

Rejection is an unavoidable part of life, but it is the rejection that is unfair and unjust which makes us feel not wanted, not loved, and not valued. Today, there are millions of children living with disabilities who face that unfair reality every day. Judgment is passed over them, and they are declared less because of what they look like, because of their limitations, or because they are simply seen as a burden to their families and communities. But thankfully, like with Leah, there is hope! Verse 31 tells us that God knew how Leah was viewed and the pain she felt, and He blessed her. God knew that He was the one who created





Leah, that she was His precious creation, and He is the one who determined her value (Ps. 139:13; Gen 1:27). This is the same truth for every person, for every child, and for everyone living with a disability. It is our job to share and teach these truths, to declare their worth and value. We must teach those who are uninformed or led by assumptions where true value comes from, which is from our Creator. Today, this is happening all over the world; darkness is being pushed back with truth!

## Prayer:

God we pray that Your Kingdom would come. That restoration would happen in this world and that we would experience the promises of Heaven today. We pray specifically for those who are unvalued and unwanted by no fault of their own. God, soften the hearts of those passing judgment, provide workers to educate and disciple those who need to hear Your truths and to understand that value You have given to every person whom You've created.



## DAY 6

# Buying the Field

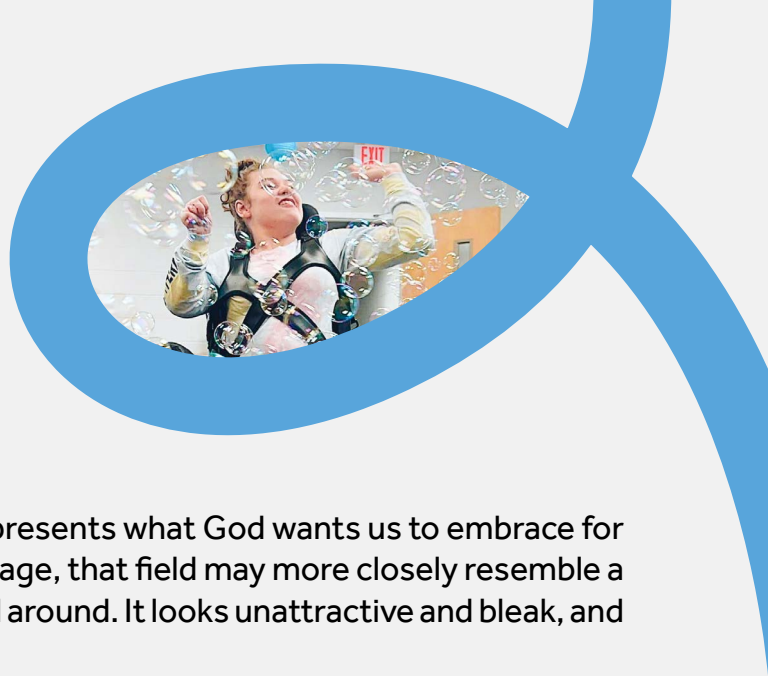
**Joni Eareckson Tada**  
**Joni and Friends, Founder & CEO**  
**Shine On Contributor**

"The Kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and covered up. Then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field."

**MATTHEW 13:44**

As a quadriplegic of more than 56 years, I thank God for the spiritual riches he's given me in this wheelchair, and how my paralysis has led me to the hidden treasure Jesus spoke about in Matthew 13.

Normally, when we hear the parable of the hidden treasure, we assume the field is attractive, something we would love to purchase anyway, a sun-drenched meadow dappled with wildflowers or a garden plot ready for tilling. Surely, that is the kind of field God wants us to buy.



But life is not like that. The field in this parable represents what God wants us to embrace for the sake of the Kingdom. Instead of beautiful acreage, that field may more closely resemble a sandlot with broken bottles and old tires scattered around. It looks unattractive and bleak, and absolutely nothing about it even hints of value.

Until, of course, you discover the scrubby sandlot contains a treasure. With this new insight, that ugly scrap of field suddenly brims with possibilities. Once you know a treasure is hidden there, you're ready to sell everything to buy it.

The field God invited me to buy was my life in a wheelchair. For me, "selling everything" meant giving up self-pity and resentment over a body that didn't work. "Buying the field" meant no more comparing my lot in life with others. As I chose to use my time to dig into God's Word and grow in prayer, those practices became the pick and shovel needed to unearth the hidden treasure. And what a treasure I found!

## Prayer:

Lord, thank you for giving us hidden treasures, riches stored in secret places, like it says in Isaiah 45:3. I want to be like the man in the parable who happily sold everything in order to obtain the lot where the hidden treasure lay. Grant me the faith to see that my lot in life is the perfect place where God has hidden his treasure for me. Amen.



DAY 7

# A Shared Humanity

**Matthew Mooney**  
99 Balloons, Co-founder  
Shine On Contributor

Now, the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God really say, 'You must not eat from any tree in the garden'?"

The woman said to the serpent, "We may eat fruit from the trees in the garden, but God did say, 'You must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden, and you must not touch it, or you will die.'"

"You will not certainly die," the serpent said to the woman. "For God knows that when you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."

When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it. Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they realized they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves.

Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the Lord God as he was walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and they hid from the Lord God among the trees of the garden. But the Lord God called to the man, "Where are you?"

He answered, "I heard you in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid."

And he said, "Who told you that you were naked?"

**GENESIS 3:1-11**



It is within this familiar Biblical text, commonly referred to as “the fall”, that we find the birthplace of so many realities that accompany our common, human experience. Suffering, vulnerability, and shame come onto the scene of humanity- bringing with them the very things we mourn in our own day-to-day lives. Unfortunately, often, these scriptures can be haphazardly wielded by others whose sole use is to portray disability as a product of the fall, but that twisting tends to obscure the beautiful truth of this narrative.

This passage, as well as the entirety of scripture, reminds us that- although we as humans have varied and unique experiences- our ultimate story is one and the same. There can be no division or othering, no us or them in the Christian story. There is shared bad news only rivaled and overcome by shared good news.

In a world bent on division and skilled at creating labels that justify isolation, may we be reminded of our shared humanity and hope in Jesus.

All beautifully crafted in the image of God.

All deeply broken in the depth of our sin.

All in desperate need of a Savior.

## Prayer:

Father, reveal to me where I have fallen prey to creating boundary lines where you have not. Uncover within me any temptation to elevate myself at the expense of someone you have made. Let my own brokenness be a revelation of the immensity of your grace and how much you love me.  
In the name of Jesus your Son.



DAY 8

# Open the Eyes of Our Hearts Lord

**Zakayo Kisozi**  
**Ekisa Ministries, Training & Equipping Consultant**  
**TTF Ministry: Ekisa**

"I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in his holy people."

**EPHESIANS 1:18**

"My people are destroyed from lack of knowledge. 'Because you have rejected knowledge, I also reject you as my priests; because you have ignored the law of your God, I also will ignore your children.'"

**HOSEA 4:6**

Worldwide, people living with disabilities continue to suffer maltreatment at the hands of those in their immediate social environment. Some of these, however, are simply from a lack of understanding of what disability is and possibly how best to be of help. Consequently, we see cases of gross discrimination and stigma in our communities; families, schools, hospitals, even in churches.

Disability has never meant inability, but somehow, because of misconceptions and myths, many are not able to see the potential and abilities that rest in some people. Many have perished before their time simply because of inadequate care, support, and protection. I know for certain that it grieves God's heart to see His children perish simply because those that should be doing something to help lack the knowledge of what and how.





For many, God's image and likeness are limited to what they see, the physical appearance, which is not true. It reminds me of a pastor who once asked me, "Does God look like my child?" referring to his daughter who has hydrocephalus. This reveals how much we are ignorant of God's nature in us. There is a need to help people get out of this darkness to be able to treat each other with love and dignity regardless of their abilities.

Everyone, yes, everyone, has something they can do, something they can contribute if only given opportunity. Even if all that can be offered is a mere smile, there is life and joy in being on the receiving end of that. But it can only be realized when there is care, time, and value given.

## Prayer:

God, let our sight not be limited to what our physical eyes see, but by the help of the Holy Spirit, our eyes will be opened to see the hope to which God has called us all.

