



**MY AUTUMN PRAYER FOR YOU:**

*May the beautiful season of autumn be refreshment to you and a time of joyful harvest. May this year, as it begins winding down, prove to be one of memorable achievements for you and your loved ones!*

October 1, 2018

Dear Ministry Partners!

I hardly know where to begin.

India *overwhelms*.

I've been to India a number of times, and I have just returned again . . . but I can never forget—I will never be able to “unsee”—what I witnessed there on this visit.

If you ever saw the award-winning film *Slumdog Millionaire*, you may think you know the city of Mumbai. The film—not based on a true story—reflects a lot of truth about the slum-dwellers who crowd into the numerous shantytowns in and around the city (and, in fact, most cities in India).

But *Slumdog Millionaire* is tame compared to the horrible realities I saw in Mumbai. To be honest, I almost don't have the words to describe what I experienced.

We went—prayerfully, as always—into a sad village which might best be understood as a “leper colony.” Not that there are lepers there—but there is an isolation of poverty, and there is sickness and disease everywhere. The locals refer to it by a phrase you may have heard before: the “red light district.”

Our base of operations there was a “purse factory,” actually a tiny one-room house in a hilly slum, with 10 or 12 women at work. Half of the room features four sewing machines. In the other half there's a small table, and women sit on the floor cutting pieces for assembly into purses. One man, a tailor, directs the operation.

But these women aren't lifetime seamstresses. They're all former prostitutes. They're here to learn a trade. They're being paid for their work.

As visitors, we brought the workers a fortunate break in their daily routine. We all walked a few houses up to the top of the hill and went into a church to join about 60 people there. Most of them were prostitutes themselves. Every face was marked by sadness; many showed signs of abuse.



The big shock to me was to learn that the majority of these women have husbands and children. Many of them had brought their children to the church. Many of their husbands were out of work, or disabled and unable to work. The wives, illiterate, have no trade. So their husbands see prostitution as a solution: income for the family!

The team and I had an opportunity to pray with each of them after the service, according to their custom. Their stories were all similar. Each woman had a tiny savings program underway, as she tried to raise enough money to leave the red light district.

Their tales of desperation and terrible poverty were heart-wrenching. In every conversation, before we prayed, I could feel the woman's anger—and her feeble hope that maybe we were the answer to her dilemma.

We tried to emphasize as powerfully as we could that God is real. That Jesus is the hope for all that we need. That the Bible's counsel is the lamp and the light, that it can teach us how to get out of slavery, out of sin, and how to move into a full life. But I confess, the few hours we spent there seemed eternal.

I couldn't help but think about a friend of mine who visited India years ago. Afterward, I asked him how he liked it. He was silent for a long, long time. Finally, he gave me a simple but profound answer:

**“There is nothing fun about India.”**

Many times while ministering there in the intervening years, I have remembered his answer. And when people ask me about my own visits there, I often give the same answer. It's still true.

The reality is far more intense than anything in the movies.

But there is also a happy reality: God is at work there. He is moving powerfully in each and every one of India's six massive regions. .

We went into the Maharashtra area to connect with an indigenous group that had asked us to partner with them a couple of years ago. Their obedience to basic Great Commission principles is carrying the work of God into many areas. The regional ministry leader took us to several villages to preach and to observe the work firsthand.

Here, in the heart of India, I was amazed to see what God is doing in churches of Nepali refugees—people who are illiterate and deeply poor. **One might expect a feeble kind of Christianity here.**



**Wrong!** Their spiritual awareness makes up for their lack!

We went into the village to minister door-to-door—we divided our group of six into two teams because the houses are too small for so many visitors. Our group came across a woman notorious for opposing the Christians' evangelistic work. She was definitely not friendly. We shared our backgrounds with her and talked about our concerns for the spiritual life of the village. The woman sat stone-faced.

But the Nepali believers were backing us in prayer, and the Holy Spirit was at work. As we shared the Gospel, I saw this woman begin to change. Finally she conceded that people do indeed have shortcomings . . . and that God is gracious to forgive us.

*Before we left that house, the woman had prayed to receive the Lord! (Several passersby were happy to witness her decision!)*

**An enemy of the Gospel had made a 180-degree turn!**

But God was also at work through the other door-to-door team as they ministered on the opposite side of the village. This team—two Nepalese pastors and a third friend—came across Keisha, a blind man. A severe infection had taken his eyesight three years earlier, and he had grown bitter. He was largely avoided because of his constant hostility.

The two Nepali pastors, however, were unfazed. They determined to pray for Keisha's healing.

The way they prayed was a new lesson in prayer for me! . . .

First, they told him he should ask God to forgive his pride and sin. Then they laid hands on him and prayed—but nothing happened. So they prayed a second time. Still, nothing happened. They prayed a third time and asked him if he saw anything.

Keisha was astonished: "My right eye is clearing up!" he cried.

The pastors weren't satisfied. They prayed one last time, then asked the man if he could see. ***In that moment, he saw clearly! His vision was restored!***

Overwhelmed, Keisha received Jesus as his Savior! Our team actually went back the next day to spend a prolonged time interviewing and shooting video of his testimony.

My mind was reeling. The Lord had clearly led me, personally, to this moment. Earlier in the week, He had led me, in my personal study, to ponder questions about prayer:



- ☐ What makes prayer necessary?
- ☐ If God knows even what the Holy Spirit wants to say, why does the Spirit have to pray at all?
- ☐ If God knows all things, He already knows what Jesus is going to ask for. Why does Jesus constantly intercede for us?
- ☐ If it was God's plan to bring a drought to Israel and to end the drought at Mount Carmel in I Kings 18, why did Elijah have to pray for the rain?
- ☐ And why, when he prayed, did nothing happen until the seventh time?

As I asked God for answers, I was led to this remarkable truth:

**Prayer is God's protocol for spiritual achievement.**

Yes, even the Godhead adheres lawfully to this protocol! Prayer is no idle activity—not if even the Godhead engages in it! Prayer is the same today as it was in ancient times; God does not change the protocol.

If God has all the resources, why does he require human participation? We could develop a long Bible study on the subject . . . but at the end of the study, here is where we would land:

**Gods' protocol requires for His people to turn faith into deeds of obedience.**

It was prayer that guided us in our ministry to the prostitutes. It was prayer that led the angry woman to faith in Christ. It was prayer that caused a blind man to see!

*And it is prayer that will carry our work forward. It is prayer that will thrust us into the fields again and again and lead us to the harvest.*

So today, I bring you this simple but heartfelt request:

Please, join the Father, the Son, and the Spirit in genuine prayer . . . make prayer part of your obedience . . . let prayer join you to the Father and His work. God is fully at work throughout the world, and He calls us to fully engage in His protocol in order to be intimately involved in His work.



And as you pray, please give. Turn your faith into this deed of obedience. Our workers around the world need you. They must have support. They cannot support themselves. They are willing to do the work on the front lines, but they must have you and me behind them—praying, and yes, giving.

Please, let me hear from you soon with your generous support, as your part in His beautifully effective work. Thank you! God bless you!

Yours in prayer,

Dr. Manny Fernandez

P.S. India, Cuba, and Spain, the list is long. The work is wide. The burden is great. But the joy is unspeakable! Please pray as fervently as you can, and give as generously as you can, that souls will be saved and workers sent into the whitened harvest fields of the Master! Thank you again!