



Bible anchor

The Viva World Weekend of Prayer is all about children, especially getting children to pray for children. The theme for 2024 is **'Light of the World,'** from verse 5 in John 9 when Jesus says, "While I am in the world, I am the light of the world." The Bible anchor is the whole of **John 9**, in which the healing of the blind man is recorded.

How Viva began

Patrick McDonald, founder of Viva, tells of a vision he had while working with a local mission for street-connected children in South America. Patrick saw a picture of a globe at night, majestically spinning in its expanse but somehow

"dark". . . Then suddenly, a few pinpricks of light sprang forth: small, frail, and insignificant. Then

there were more, and more, and they started connecting in hubs of light covering an area.



The atmosphere somehow changed with each step and got incrementally stronger and brighter. Patrick knew the vision was God's response to his question, "What is the plan? How, Lord, do you hope to meet the needs of all these children?" The vision represented a mass mobilisation of congregations catalysed into action, connected into networks, and equipped to a common standard.¹



World Weekend of Prayer Cambodia 2023

LIGHT!

¹ Extract from the chapter, "Hubs of Light" of the book 'God's Heart for Children' 2022, Langham Literature.

World Weekend of Prayer 2024

Resources

This resource document offers four themes from the story of John 9 with activities, a memory verse and application questions to open up a time for children to lead others in prayer. Included are testimonies from the 2023 weekend. Animations, songs, PowerPoint presentations and a 28-daily preparation can be found on the website, www.worldweekendofprayer.com.

The four themes

- i) Works of God** - for primary-aged children
- ii) Miracles of God** - for older children and pre-teens
- iii) Jesus, the Son of God** - for teenagers
- iv) Faith in God** - for older teenagers and adults



World Weekend of Prayer Latin America 2023

Children can pray in multiple ways: create prayer triplets; make a prayer tree; write prayers on balloons; put prayers on post-it notes on maps; or use videos, with live international exchange.

Some suggested prayer points for children

- i) Peace and love in my home and family.
- ii) Enough food to eat, clean water to drink, clothes to wear, and health care when we get ill or injured.
- iii) Peace and an end to violence in my streets.
- iv) For education, that I can go to school and be taught by kind, loving teachers.
- v) Protection and safety from bullies and tricksters.
- vi) Changed attitudes towards children so adults would no longer look down, ignore or even despise children.
- vii) More churches to work together in our city with a passion for improving the lives of children.

I: Works of God



Story anchor – John 9:1-12

One day, Jesus was walking along with His disciples when they saw a man begging. He had been blind from birth. The disciples asked, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" Jesus told them they were asking the wrong question. Rather, this happened so that the power of God might be displayed. Jesus said, "While I am in the world, I am the light of the world." Jesus spat on the ground, made a paste with the soil and put it on the man's eyes. He told him to go and wash in the pool of Siloam, a special place. The man went. He washed. A miracle! He could now see. When his neighbours met him, some doubted that this miracle had happened. They said it was just a man that looked like the blind beggar.

Activities

- i) **Clay statue**—make a clay statue of a man (i.e. Jesus). This represents Jesus, whom the blind man met. Now, add a light or a mirror on his head to show that Jesus is the light of the world. Make a clay statue of another man to represent the blind man.
- ii) **Blind art**—while blindfolded, draw a picture of a person by a house. Observe how difficult it is!

Memory verse

John 9:5: "While I am in the world, I am the light of the world."

Application

Discuss these questions to lead into prayer about seeing the **works of God**.

- i) When bad things happen, how can God step in and change the situation? What is our part?
- ii) Have you seen a change in your family, friend's family, school or locality? Can we pray for more of these changes?
- iii) It was hard for the man to trust Jesus and wash at the pool. (He could have used water close by.) What about our trust in God? Maybe the change we are asking for will take a long time? Maybe we have to do our bit, too?

Testimony from Patna, India: The World Weekend of Prayer 2023 brought a powerful realisation to children about our responsibility to protect the beautiful creation God has given us. Anjali, a girl from the learning centre, now turns off unnecessary lights and fans, conserves water by closing taps, plants saplings, and keeps her surroundings clean. She is now a nature warrior, a proud caretaker of God's creation, and always encourages her siblings and friends to join her.

2: Miracles of God



Story anchor – John 9:13–23

Having told his neighbours that it was Jesus who healed him, the neighbours took the man who had been blind to the Pharisees. The blind man explained what had happened. Some of these leaders said that the mixing of mud for the healing took place on the Sabbath. No work was allowed on the Sabbath; therefore, the man Jesus could not be from God as he was a sinner. Full of doubt, the Pharisees sent for the man's parents to confirm that the man was their son and was born blind. They were afraid and asked how their son could now see. They said, "He is of age; ask him."

Activities

- i) Role play**– Let the children act out the story in their own words. Do it twice with children taking different parts.
- ii) Hubs of light**–Have teams of children draw a stylised map of their city on a big piece of cardboard. Mark locations of churches and schools. Attach a string of LED lights to each school and church. Switch lights to flash. Display to represent a network of hubs of light working for and celebrating children.

Memory verse

John 9:15b: "He put mud on my eyes," the man replied, "and I washed, and now I see."

Application

Discuss these questions to lead into prayer about seeing the **miracles of God**.

- i)** What does it mean to doubt when we have asked somebody to do something for us?
- ii)** What is a miracle?
- iii)** Where do we need a miracle now?
(family, school, community)

Testimony from children in Zambia:

"I have learned that God created the world and everything in it, and he gave people the responsibility to love and care for the animals."

"Pray for one another and trust in God. You can put anything in God's hands; even if you are in trouble, God can help you and guide you."

"We need to take care of God's creation. All children need to go to school and be educated."

3: Jesus, the Son of God



Story anchor - John 9:24-34

After interviewing the man's parents, the Pharisees summoned the blind man again and said, "Give glory to God by telling the truth. We know this man (Jesus) is a sinner." He replied, "Whether He is a sinner or not, I don't know. One thing I do know. I was blind, but now I see!" The Pharisees asked him again how he was healed. The man wondered why they wanted to hear it again: "Do you want to become His disciples, too?" At this, the Pharisees hurled insults at him. After more testimony about Jesus from the man, the Pharisees threw him out of the synagogue, declaring, "You were steeped in sin at birth; how dare you lecture us!"

Activities

- i) **Who said?** - Gather the children in a circle, then blindfold them. Choose one child to go into the centre and say, "Go, wash in the Pool of Siloam." This child then rejoins the circle. The children take off their blindfolds and guess who took the part of Jesus, just from the sound of their voice.
- ii) **Edible mud** - Put chocolate mousse in cupcake holders. One child feeds another with a spoon. They are not putting it on their eyes but in their mouth!

Memory verse

John 9:32-33: "Nobody has ever heard of opening the eyes of a man born blind. If this man were not from God, he could do nothing."

Application

Discuss these questions to lead into prayer about **listening to Jesus, the Son of God.**

- i) Why do some children know that Jesus is God's Son and others do not?
- ii) What other things are important to know about Jesus?
- iii) If prayer is talking to Jesus, how can we also listen? Can you listen to Jesus now?

Testimony from Asnath, Tanzania: Asnath is 15 and has lived with her mother since her parents' marriage broke up. During WWP in 2022, she prayed her family would come together again. This year, she told us, "I thank God very much because of how he always cares for his people. For a long time, my father and my mother were separated to such an extent that they would not even communicate with each other through their phones. At the end of the last year, they started calling each other. This gave me confidence to believe that soon they are going to reunite once again. Glory be to God, who is always answering our prayer."

4: Faith in God



Story anchor - John 9:35-41

Jesus heard that the Pharisees had thrown the (previously blind) man out of the synagogue, and when He found him, he said, "Do you believe in the Son of Man?" "Who is he, sir?" the man asked. "Tell me so that I may believe in him." Jesus said, "You have now seen Him; in fact, He is the one speaking with you." Then the man said, "Lord, I believe," and he worshipped Him. Jesus then spoke about spiritual blindness and that some people, like the Pharisees, cannot see and accept that He is the Son of God. Those who do not believe will be judged and held guilty.

Activities

- i) Song** - Get the young people or children to create a simple song.
- ii) Collage** - Make a giant collage with bits of cloth, coloured paper, or paint of things Jesus did that show He is the Son of God. Fix this to a wall. Cover it with a black cloth. Children shine a light on it using phones or torches and say, as the Pharisees did, "What? Are we blind, too?" Remove the cloth, and now, as the lights shine on things Jesus did, say, "Jesus said, 'I am the light of the world.'"

Memory verse

John 9:38: Then the man said, "Lord, I believe," and he worshipped Him.

Application

Discuss these questions to lead into prayer about **faith in God**.

- i)** What is faith?
- ii)** How is the first time that somebody discovers a faith about Jesus being the Son of God and understanding what He can do like a blind man who couldn't see and then was able to see?
- iii)** Do you think that Jesus is able to change the situation in our homes, in our streets, in our schools and colleges? Do you need more faith to believe He can answer your prayers and the prayers of others? Why not ask Him to do so?

Testimony from children in

Cambodia: Children said that praying together was more powerful than praying alone. They said that they felt like they were like a king or queen as they led a big group to pray. Church leaders acknowledged that they should train children, the next generation, to be ready for their responsibility in mission.



Closing prayer

Jesus, you are the light of the world. You healed a blind man who had never been able to see since he was born: a true miracle. He had to do his part and go to wash at Siloam. He had to trust you. Help me trust you too, Jesus. Help me to not be blind in my thinking like the Pharisees but to expect you to change the way things are in the poorest parts of our city. Shine your light of miracles into my home, my streets and my school. May I be as sure as the blind man when he declared: "Lord I believe." I love you, Jesus.

The World Weekend of Prayer campaign is a global initiative held every year over the first weekend of June, uniting hundreds of thousands of adults and children globally. It is organised by Viva, a charity dedicated to changing more children's lives to fulfil their God-given potential in 38 community networks worldwide. Find out more at www.viva.org.