

IJM Regional President Followed God Into the Darkest Places and Experienced the Miraculous

International Justice Mission believes the world can see the end of modern-day slavery by 2030.

It may seem impossible, but IJM is familiar with making the impossible a reality, and much of that is through spiritual disciplines.

“The cornerstone of what IJM does is actually built on prayer,” says Melissa Russell, IJM’s president for the North American Region.

Every morning at 11 a.m., each office around the world gathers together to pray for 30 minutes.

“We lift up things that are hard, hard things in the field, money we’re trying to raise, political officials we’re trying to move,” Russell says. “Everything gets put up on the prayer board, and we pray for it as an organization. Prayer is an important reminder that we are called to do this good work and God is in it, that set discipline of prayer is a reminder of that.”

Russell says she’s seen prayer work miracles no one thought possible, like in Ghana seven years ago.

Russell traveled with the IJM vice president of Africa to scout a field office near Lake Ghana, the world’s largest manmade lake. Children are forced into slavery on the lake and often die from drowning.

When IJM tried to rescue the children, they met with strong

opposition. People in power used violence to get their way.

IJM's best and only option was prayer. So for a year and a half, they took it to the Lord.

"It was very difficult, but eventually what we saw was God was on the move," Russell said. "[God] replaced all the government officials who were not for children. It happened in such a way that where we were, we couldn't see all the pieces that God was moving at the time. We were crying out to the Lord on behalf of the children. At the end of it, it was just this miraculous [occurrence]. Not only were we able to go back out on the lake, but He was going to replace the [corrupt officials] with good, righteous men and women who were there on behalf of the children."

These miraculous stories make Russell believe that the organization's goal to end slavery by 2030 could indeed be reality.

Listen to the podcast to hear how.