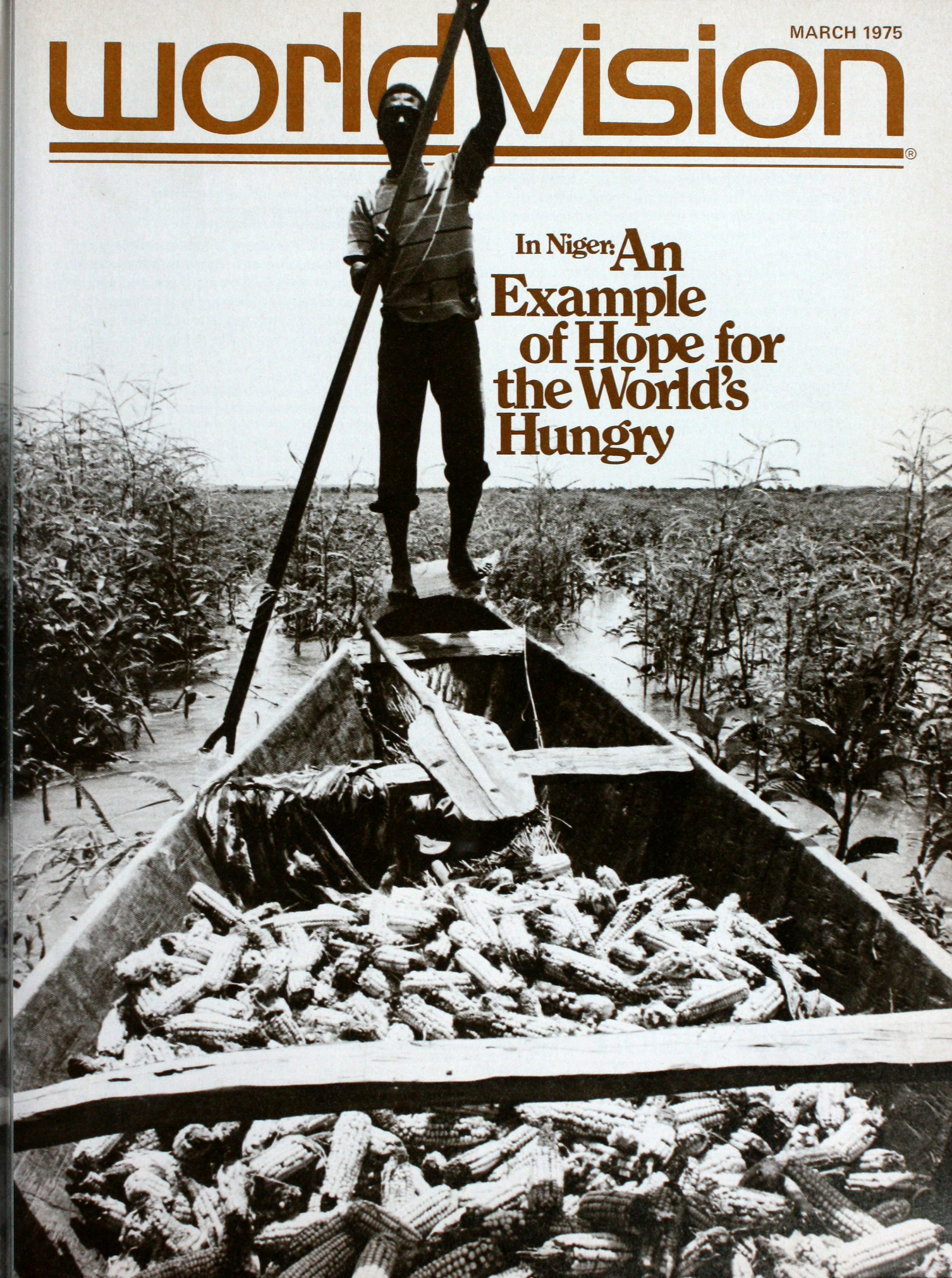


MARCH 1975

World Division

In Niger: **An
Example
of Hope for
the World's
Hungry**



Solomon and a Greater...

The king's name is a tower of strength. —William Shakespeare

*O fall'n at length that tower of strength
Which stood four-square to all the winds that blew!*

—Alfred, Lord Tennyson

How are the mighty fallen...!

—King David

King Solomon's encounter with the Queen of Sheba forms the basis for an article on prayer in this issue (p. 12), the emphasis being on the great and generous Giver that God is. There are other lessons from Solomon's life, and a review of it carries today a surprising ring of contemporaneity. One is pressed to reflect upon the fall in recent years of various political leaders around the globe who have been toppled by corruption either of their own or of those serving them. These lives encompass both dizzying heights and unspeakable depths. Solomon's beginnings were almost celestial in terms of promise and form a dazzling backdrop to his later shipwreck. His high early performance is perhaps best epitomized in his choosing from God the gift of wisdom over long life or riches (I Kings 3:5-15).

The exact point of Solomon's betrayal of his divinely-given wisdom is not known, but the telltale signs of spiritual deterioration are there in the account—the mushrooming wealth, luxury and ostentation, the use of forced labor to build his palaces, a marriage to Pharaoh's daughter to cement an alliance with Egypt. Indeed, his 700 wives and 300 concubines, many of them of other nations and religions, proved his final undoing, for "his wives turned away his heart after other gods."

Even sadder than Solomon's fall is the lack of any evidence that he ever repented. For where there is no repentance, there is no healing. English philosopher and statesman Francis Bacon was accused of accepting bribes while lord chancellor. He pleaded guilty and was sentenced to the Tower of London. After being released, he spent his remaining years writing in retirement. In his desk after his death his executors found a profoundly moving prayer of confession which spoke of his "thousands" of sins and his "ten thousand" transgressions, and acknowledged his misuse of God's "gifts and graces." Solomon's father, David, sinned abhorrently, but he soaked his bed with his penitent tears (Ps. 6:6) and remained known even in the New Testament as a man after God's own heart (Acts 13:22). But in all of the Old Testament writings attributed to Solomon there is something missing: repentance.

Matthew Henry is sure that Solomon explained the

temple services to the Queen of Sheba. The king knew about atonement and the paschal lamb. But his written wisdom faltered at the point where the wiser and "greater than Solomon" fulfilled the temple service in the temple of His body, being both Sacrificer and Sacrifice in those precincts known so well by Solomon (and described by Shakespeare)—

...those holy fields

*Over whose acres walk'd those blessed feet
Which fourteen hundred years ago were nail'd
For our advantage on the bitter cross.*

During this Easter season it is well to reflect upon those days of abandonment suffered by the disciples when the Light of their lives was extinguished and they were alone. Something of their mood is pictured in *The Passing of Arthur* as Tennyson tells of Sir Bedivere watching the barge on which lies the dying king as it pulls away from the shore:

Long stood Sir Bedivere

*Revolving many memories, till the hull
Look'd one black dot against the verge of dawn,
And on the mere the wailing died away.*

*But when that moan had passed for evermore,
The stillness of the dead world's winter dawn
Amazed him, and he groaned, "The king is gone.*

But for the disciples, Easter came, light sprang from the empty tomb, they were rejoined by their Master, now their risen Redeemer—His deathless love enveloping them afresh.

What a contrast to the deepening darkness of Solomon's decline and fall—a "greater than Solomon" in every way! But what a reminder is Solomon to us, in our day of shaky governments round the world, to pray for our leaders whatever our country (I Tim. 2:1,2). Could the fall of some of them be traced in part to our carelessness in prayer? Before his barge pulled away, King Arthur asked Sir Bedivere whether men were better than sheep or goats if, knowing God, they pray not for their friends and themselves. He said:

*Pray for my soul. More things are wrought by prayer
Than this world dreams of. Wherefore, let thy voice
Rise like a fountain for me night and day. . . .
For so the whole round earth is every way
Bound by gold chains about the feet of God.*

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Carl F. H. Henry, special correspondent

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globe at a glance

NEWS BRIEFS FROM THE INTERNATIONAL CHRISTIAN SCENE FOR YOUR INFORMATION AND INTERCESSION

NEED FOR RENEWED WITNESS IN VENEZUELA

A report published here by the Eastern Mennonite Board of Missions and Charities claims that the people of Venezuela are the least responsive to Protestant missions in Latin America. "Unprecedented wealth"—based on oil—is causing cultural changes and urbanization, states the report. But the threats to a stable community that often encourage faith as a society changes do not seem to have arisen in Venezuela.

The Mennonite report, which characterized the Roman Catholic efforts in the country as "weak" and "not aggressive," notes also that Pentecostalism has limited appeal except in the southern region. The success of Protestant missions has not been "striking," in spite of a steady evangelical witness. "Percentage-wise, there are probably fewer practicing evangelical Christians in Venezuela than in Yugoslavia," says the report.

Since Venezuelans as a rule are especially friendly to Americans, the report suggests that Spanish-speaking American missionaries might be effective if new outreach programs were developed. It concludes with a warning to U.S. evangelicals not to think of Venezuela as a "deprived nation needing our material aid"; the emphasis must be on a more spiritual witness.

Africa

LAGOS, Nigeria — The meaning of evangelism, salvation, mission and conversion will be "examined afresh" here in August when 10,000 Christians from this country's 12 states gather for a national congress on evangelization. The congress will take place at the University of Ife, which is in Western State where missionaries—especially Seventh-day Adventists—have recently been commended by the military governor for promoting health and education. In East Central State, however, a branch of the Medical and Health Department Workers' Union of Nigeria has called on their governor to take over all mission hospitals to guarantee employment security. The union action was a reaction to the recent announcement that the Methodist-owned Wesley Guild Hospital was in financial trouble and in danger of closing.

KOUMRA, Chad — Although President Ngarta Tombalbaye professed a strong Christian faith last year, his

government continues to pursue a "cultural revolution" that includes the revival of pagan initiation rites. Sources in Africa and the United States say that severe reprisals are being inflicted on clergy and laity, particularly evangelical Protestants, who oppose the initiation, called "Yondo." Five percent of Chad's 4 million people are Christian.

LUSAKA, Zambia — This country, which was literally in the front line of Africa's independence struggles, has recently celebrated its 10th anniversary. Most observers are quick to credit this first decade of relative stability to the efforts of President Kenneth Kaunda, whose authority

remains undisputed. The son of a minister, Kaunda is described as a Christian, a humanist and a nationalist. While his country has prospered and his leadership has won him honorary degrees from universities in England and the U.S., Kaunda admits there are still battles ahead. One of the most serious, he feels, is getting Zambians to cut down on "excessive" beer drinking. "If there is no change in five years," he said a year ago, "then I will quit because I refuse to lead a drunken nation."



President Kaunda reading the Scripture lesson in Lusaka's Holy Cross Cathedral

The Minister of Education in Bolivia has approved a program of the World Home Bible League to give a Spanish Living New Testament to each of his nation's 1 million schoolchildren.

Sudan Interior Mission officials report that the Sudanese government, which expelled the mission some 10 years ago, now has asked it to build, equip and staff eight clinics in the southern province.

The Environmental Quality Board of Puerto Rico has declared a "war against noise." If successful, it will regulate "noise" from loudspeakers and singing during religious services. Many Protestant churches in Latin America broadcast their services into their neighborhoods over loudspeakers.

While talk of "moratoriums" is still heard in Africa, the Presbyterian Church in East Africa has itself become a missionary church. It recently commissioned its first missionary couple, the Rev. and Mrs. Jacob Mugo, to work in the Hudson River Presbytery of New York.

The Rev. and Mrs. Jacob Mugo



In California a prominent scientist said recently, "It doesn't make sense to save starving children."

In Ottawa last month a top foreign-aid official wondered aloud about whether or not Canada should shut off aid to Bangladesh if that country's government doesn't come to grips with its problems.

Neither the California scientist, nor the Ottawa aid official were making irresponsible statements. Both reveal a real concern about the growing problem of world hunger. Both statements should be taken seriously.

Recently I was in Bangladesh when the floods were at their worst in destroying crops and making hundreds of thousands homeless. I saw thousands of starving refugees. In one refugee camp I picked my way among dying men and women, children and babies and wondered, how in the world do you help all the millions of starving people in Bangladesh alone?

At that very moment I knew what the scientist, Professor Garrett Hardin of California, and the Ottawa bureaucrat meant by their public outbursts. Many of the children I saw were only hours away from death, brain damage already present. If it would have been possible to get food into their mouths and if their stomachs could have digested the food—which was doubtful—it would have merely postponed death a little while. It was unlikely to save them.

When you ponder the utter hopelessness of Bangladesh, with its five-babies-a-minute birthrate, the yearly floods, the crop failures, the inefficiency, the

deliberate and open corruption, you can understand why an Ottawa official asks hard questions about foreign aid.

But in 1974 World Vision gave and administered several hundred thousand dollars for famine relief and for development in the Sahel countries of Upper Volta and Niger, in Ethiopia, in India and in Bangladesh. Earlier this fiscal year a DC-8 mercy flight of special food and milk powder was flown to Bangladesh. Funds have been poured into India, a country whose problems defy the imagination.

There is a group of U.S. academicians whose leading spokesman is a UCLA professor of biology. He believes that food aid "does more harm than good." In a world that already has too many people, it doesn't make sense to save people in countries "which are already sinking," he said recently.

There are others who argue that assistance should be tied to population control, with aid going to countries that have helped themselves by reducing population growth.

Professor Hardin believes that we should view the world as a lifeboat in which there are only so many spaces—only so much food and only so many resources. Those in the lifeboat—mainly people in the economically advanced nations—have to decide whom they can admit without swamping the boat. They must let the rest drown.

These appalling proposals and terrible choices

In Niger:

An Example of Hope

by **Bernard Barron**

Director of Relief and Development,
World Vision of Canada



W. V. President Stan Mooneyham and article author Bernard Barron. They examine crops in vicinity of the Niger River (far right), key to future food self sufficiency hopes for Niger.

Lifeboat Ethics

Professor Garrett Hardin wrote an article, "Lifeboat Ethics: The Case against Helping the Poor," which appeared in last September's issue of *Psychology Today*. Senator Mark O. Hatfield, a board member of World Vision, took issue with Hardin on the floor of the Senate. Here is part of his rejoinder, excerpted from the *Congressional Record*.

"The concept of 'lifeboat ethics' is simply not applicable to the world food situation. It is not a matter of all or nothing, nor do those who urge world food assistance demand an 'equal share for all.' If the rich of the world are living in a lifeboat, it is in fine style. In America, for example, we eat 117 pounds of meat per capita per year, a total of 12 million tons. . . .

"The lifeboat image also suggests that our capacity has already been reached, that there is no way of expanding it or altering survival styles to better utilize what is available, and so any population growth beyond present levels means inevitable starvation for the new additions. But there are many ways of changing consumption patterns to better utilize available resources and reduce wasteful consumption as well. Each of us eating the equivalent of one less quarter-pound hamburger a week could release 11 million tons of cereal grain for human consumption rather than for animal feed. That alone would be sufficient to feed 55 million poor people on their regular diet."

oversimplify the situation and conceal the real issue.

There is real reason for concern, yes. Population growth has already exceeded food supply in a number of places in the world. The long-term projection shows conclusively that somewhere in the near future there will be a global shortage, famine without solution, if things go on as they are now.

Consider that the world population growth is 2.5 percent every year in the poorest two-thirds of the world. This means that every 30 years we must double our food supply.

World Vision has moved very quickly in the past few years to help wage one of mankind's oldest battles—the struggle to harness nature to human needs. How can we ask men to pause and listen to the message of eternal love unless we clothe it with practical concern? So on a long stride of pragmatic concern we run with those whose goal is more food for the world's hungry and growing population.

Our task is not merely the filling of empty bellies. For us there is a qualitative, a spiritual dimension. Nevertheless, it begins with showing love and concern for the growing demands of hungry people needing immediate aid.

It is trite but still necessary that we remind ourselves that to give a hungry man a fish is merely to fill him for today. He needs a fishing rod to catch his food for tomorrow. What form should that fishing rod take? Here

for the World's Hungry





This manmade channel and others like it, fed by the Niger River, could help provide up to 50 percent of Niger's grain requirements.

is one World Vision example—in Niger, in West Africa.

Niger is one of the six Sahelian countries that was devastated by terrible drought for six years. The Sahel is the fringe of the Sahara Desert, relentlessly advancing south at the rate of 30 miles a year. It already reaches down into northern Nigeria.

Niger is about 490,000 square miles, with 4.2 million people who live precariously close to famine at the best of times. Two-thirds of the country is pure Sahara Desert; the other third is Sahel.

Rain, when it comes, will total from four to twenty inches per year—with summer heat of 120 degrees F. for months on end. The heat together with the lack of rain forces most rural people to be idle for seven months of the year. But the biggest problem that faces the people of Niger is water and its conservation.

It is ironic that one of the best rivers in Africa, the Niger, flows through the country of Niger for about 500 to 600 miles, yet little use is made of it. At its peak season after the rains, the volume of the Niger can be compared to the rush of water over Niagara Falls.

But last year the unexpected happened. The partially government-controlled peanut marketing corporation, SONARA, recruited a Christian agriculturist to supervise a peanut-seed producing scheme in a fertile valley. To irrigate the valley, European engineers designed a plan to pump water from the Niger River over a range of hills to a dam. From there powerful diesel pumps would irrigate the crop with portable sprinklers.

The agriculturist surveyed the valley by Land-Rover and on foot. After two weeks of detailed examination of the area, he reported that he could manage the project—but that wasn't all he concluded. Although traditionally a food-deficient country, Niger had, in truth, the potential resources to feed all of its hungry! The solution to a reduced-cost method of growing peanuts was gravity-feed irrigation. By the same method, the Niger River could be harnessed for grain production.

The proposal was delightfully simple and formed the basis for a pilot project managed by World Vision. Why not use the abundant Niger River flatlands, enriched



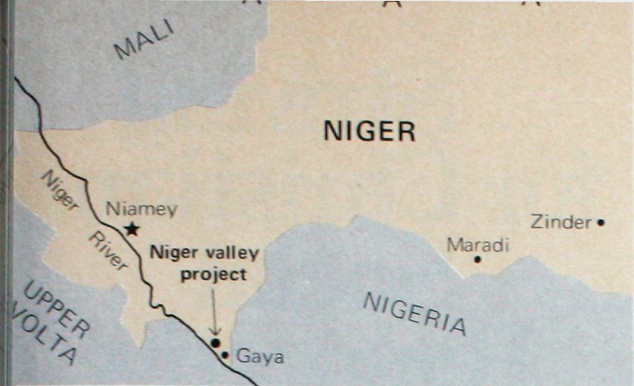
Oumarou Youssoufou

with centuries of alluvial soil, for a gravity-flow-irrigated cropland? Between Niamey, the capital, and Gaya near the southern border, there are over 60,000 acres of treeless land awaiting cultivation.

After an encouraging grant from the Lilly Foundation, we started the project with the blessing of the Niger government and the personal interest of the Vice-President. New roads were made and graded into the river lowlands; an up-river canal for irrigation was gouged out, and over 1100 acres of maize was planted.

Then rains came and disaster struck. For the first time in years, the drought was broken, and the river rose and flooded the land—only days before harvest-time. Men went out from nearby villages in boats to harvest the crop, desperately anxious not to lose the precious food. The fact that the water was fermenting the maize meant nothing—recent hungry days were still vivid memories that spurred them on.

The first attempt at new crop production has shown positive potential—floods notwithstanding. First, at least three crops a year, possibly four, can be grown on this fertile river lowland, in place of one crop per year. Second, the problem of future floods can be controlled by simple diking along the river front. The lands are remarkably flat and need no stumping or rock clearing. Third, as the land is brought into production, it will be turned over to farmers for continued cultivation. Fourth, the recent crop, which has proved the feasibility of the whole scheme, indicates that if all the Niger River lowland within Niger's borders was brought into



Western and southern Niger

production, it could provide up to 50 percent of the grain requirements of the nation. Niger would no longer be dependent on food aid from developed countries.

There are still more important spin-offs to be considered. It is possible that new villages will need to be created in order to have enough farmers to work the land. Village resettlement, while recognizing the rights and traditions of tribes who own land along the river, could bring better health, decrease infant mortality and bring an era of development to the lives of thousands of Niger's rural families.

New villages will open up the possibility of what is known as "total development." Without destroying tribal customs, new villages could be planned incorporating safe water supplies and community centers with health clinics properly established.

New industries would be generated. To manage his land, each farmer would probably step up to "animal traction"—using animals to help him plow in place of the short-handled hoe he presently uses. This in turn would require local blacksmiths, leatherworkers, woodworkers, builders, masons, well-diggers, new schools and other community services for each village.

Where could the artisans needed in the burgeoning area be found? Oumarou Youssoufou, statesman and Christian patriot, whom you readers met on the pages of this magazine in October 1974, has long dreamed of a Christian School of 17 Trades. Here young men and women would be taught useful trades and the gospel of Jesus Christ. Imagine the impact that hundreds of Christian craftsmen could have in each household they visit to build or repair objects: a witness in every new home! To plan for this institution, Youssoufou brought John and Dorothy Luke, Christian missionaries, to Maradi. Curriculum plans are being drawn up and some equipment has been bought; but buildings, machinery and furniture are not yet a reality.

New communities will need new churches. The Christian church in Niger is a small body of believers in an ocean of Moslems; less than one percent of the 4.2 million people are Christians. Nevertheless, the congregations are enthusiastic and the clergy devoted. Youssoufou's uncle, Mallam Garba Youssoufou, a pastor in Maradi, says, "We are growing up." In some cases, there is wide geographical separation between churches. M. Abba Moussa Moustoupha, a pastor from Zinder, explained much of the difficulty when he said to me, "You must come and see me, we're so out of touch." To achieve growth, communication must be improved,

horizons broadened and basic evangelical materials provided.

In the southern part of Niger lies the hope of the nation for food and modernization, but the ghost of the past still roams the north where the land is truly "the edge of the Sahara." Formerly prosperous tribesmen have been deprived of their nomadic livelihood. For them, reestablishing the ground cover so livestock can graze again in the future is too long-range to mean much. Theirs is the task of surviving from one day to the next—but how? For the immediate short-range period, they need help. Food, medicine and the basics of life must somehow be provided.

World Vision is vitally concerned and committed to being an agent of change for a better future and a helping hand for the present. "Let the starving die?" In World Vision, we think there's a better way; we're bringing new life to the hungry.

As I stood on the bank of the Niger River looking at the fertile flats that wind all the way to the northern border, I felt a thrill at the thought, "This river can bring life to a nation." But it was quickly replaced by the grim vision of those who would have to struggle to make it through this day. Would they have to die waiting for a long-range plan? Isn't there some way to start building for the future, yet meet the needs of the present? Surely it can be done if we all join together to feed the hungry now and prepare the lands for the future simultaneously. Some experts want to write Niger off and look elsewhere to undertake their battle against the desert. Won't you stand fast and help to make this country a strong, viable bastion against creeping starvation? Please join us.



Please use my gift of \$_____ to support World Vision's vital ministries in Niger. 4400 H53-002

Please use my gift of \$_____ to meet hunger needs around the world through World Vision's ministries. 5425 H53-003

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Striving for Christian Social Perspective

All over the world Christians are probing questions of public involvement, often in highly difficult national settings, and sometimes with great hesitancy and uncertainty.

Sri Lanka, formerly Ceylon, is a largely Buddhist land of 13.5 million inhabitants, where one in 10 persons is Christian. Interest is growing in the evangelical message both as bright news of personal salvation and as a vision of hope for society.

Recently the Evangelical Alliance of Sri Lanka sponsored a public address by Dr. Carl F. H. Henry, lecturer-at-large for World Vision International, on the theme of evangelical social concern, and then conducted a question-and-answer period involving also a panel of national evangelical leaders. The discussion, excerpted here, reflects areas of broad interest and debate.

Through the widening activity of Christian churches, Ceylon has benefitted since the beginning of the 19th century from hospital centers, leprosy patient colonies, maternity care, literacy training, schools for the blind and deaf, orphanages, community development and other social work. Government grants increasingly enabled the churches to maintain and extend such efforts. With the growing Asian revolt against colonialism, Ceylon gained full independence from Britain in 1947. In 1960 the government took over schools belonging to religious bodies, since most had a distinctly Western slant. In 1971 a bloody socialist-type revolution changed the political and economic face of the island. Today the government conducts about 90 percent of the social projects once carried on by the churches and maintains a special ministry to develop social work.

Moderating the discussion period was the Rev. Ananda Perera, chairman of the Evangelical Alliance and director of Campus Crusade of Sri Lanka. Other participants, besides Dr. Henry, were B. E. Fernando, former Collector of Revenue for Ceylon and current director of World Vision in Bangladesh; the Rev. Celestine Fernando, secretary of the Bible Society, and Neville Jayaweera, past Director General of Broadcasting and now identified with the Marga Institute. Mr. Jayaweera was a prominent Buddhist before his conversion to Christ.

Moderator: In the 1974 context, who is a Christian? Let me put that question to Dr. Henry.

Henry: The Apostle Paul in his epistle to the Corinthians indicated that Christian commitment centers in the fact that "Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures: and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures and that he was seen." The Christian believes in the forgiveness of sins on the ground of that death and resurrection, and he is committed to the Living God. Scripture is his authority, defining God's will in respect to personal relationships and one's life in the world.

Moderator: There are two dimensions in Christian work—a vertical relationship between God and man

and a horizontal one between man and man. Are these of equal importance?

Henry: What God commands stipulates what the Christian must do. The first and great commandment is that we love God with our whole being; the second is that we should love our neighbor as ourselves. The two must not be divorced. A man who says that he loves God and doesn't love his neighbor, doesn't love God either—so wrote John the beloved. But horizontal relationships find their proper orientation as Christian duty only in and through one's prior relationship to God, who is Lord of the individual and of society.

B. E. Fernando: Only when you take the two dimensions together do you get the Cross—the horizontal and

vertical. We easily get the impression that God's primary concern is the welfare of the individual. I don't think that is God's primary concern. He is not only interested in us ourselves, but in the world.

Henry: The two must be held together. The moment we insist on a priority of one over the other we are in trouble. God is Himself the priority, and both the individual and society are subordinate to Him.

Moderator: Do you mean that many people attempt to love man not the way God wants them to love but through their own efforts and their own wisdom?

C. Fernando: In the Bible our Lord requests us to "seek first the Kingdom of God," and throughout

the teaching of the New Testament great stress is placed on the Kingdom. When our Lord spoke of the Kingdom, he wanted people to enter it; the means of that entry is the new birth. When we think of the Kingdom the great danger is that some people will think of the Kingdom without reference to the King. Because of that all kinds of heretical movements have arisen within the Christian church and outside it, where the stress is on social or political reform. This is why it is very necessary to restore the Christian doctrine of the Kingdom to the life of the Church. As we try to understand the truth that God is sovereign over all and is concerned with the whole world, we have a norm for judgment, the Kingdom with the King. You have to remember that the Kingdom is the Kingdom of God.

Jayaweera: This question is very vital. Without the vertical dimension the horizontal tends to lose content—it becomes blind. But once you have the vertical dimension—your personal relationship to God—it completes itself only in the horizontal. One cannot exist without the other, but in some fundamental sense, the horizontal is there because of the vertical.

Moderator: The modernist spoke about Utopia, but Jesus spoke of the Kingdom of God. Is there a parallel between these two concepts? Are they merely saying the same thing in different words?

Henry: In the ancient world the golden age was thought of as not in the future but in the distant past. But in the Bible one finds the vision



“There are two dimensions in Christian work—a vertical relationship between God and man and a horizontal one between man and man.

Only when you take the two dimensions together do you get the Cross—the horizontal and vertical.”

of a future millennial Kingdom of peace and justice; it is a coming Kingdom. Moreover, the kingdom is centered in Messiah. Modernism retained the idea of a future Kingdom, as have many modern social ideologies which have borrowed parts of the Bible and developed them in new directions. The modernist movements broke with miraculous redemption and tended to view the Kingdom as automatically evolving within history; it appealed to the theory of evolution to undergird this. It also rejected the messianic character of the Kingdom; it dropped out the virgin-born, crucified and risen Logos of God, whose personal return would consummate the Kingdom. In brief, modernism lost the transcendent aspects of the Kingdom, and it was therefore very vulnerable to a secular, socio-political ideology in giving content to its notion of the Kingdom.

Jayaweera: Concerning the difference between the Kingdom and Utopia, I would add also that the Kingdom is not only a future possibility, but it has already come, on the authority of a man called Jesus. Utopia remains Utopia; at the most it will “probably come.” It is a concept in the minds of men; it is a reaching out towards what people consider should be the case, but it does not carry within itself the guarantee that it can come and much less that it will come. The Christian need not be in Utopia, but a Christian must accept the Kingdom as a fact that has already arrived, is unfolding itself and is defining itself with every age sharply, more concretely. What strikes me as the basic difference between the Kingdom and Utopia is that the Kingdom is something that has come down from above to us. Utopia is man’s groping upwards towards something we do not know.

Moderator: Does the New Testament teach that wealth should be reapportioned equally?

Henry: Nowhere does the New Testament impose community of goods upon Christian believers as a moral requirement. It does appear in connection with the Jerusalem church, which voluntarily shared possessions as needs arose and as a matter of voluntary stewardship on their part. The Jerusalem church was at the same time a church which subsequently ran into considerable financial difficulty. Paul seems repeatedly to be soliciting offerings for the poor saints at Jerusalem, so there is an indication that community of goods did not solve all the financial problems. I am not saying that

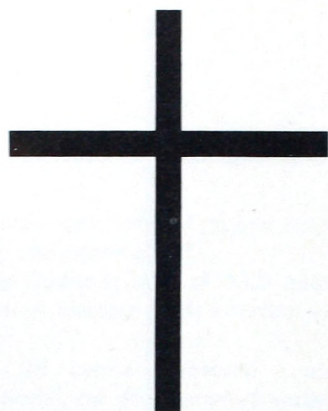
Christians should hesitate to do voluntarily whatever God wills in respect to their possessions. But redistribution of wealth cannot be imposed on them as a New Testament requirement. The test of an obedient Christian is faithful stewardship of what God has entrusted to him for the purpose of an extension of the gospel and a sacrificial ministry to those who have less than we have, beginning with the household of faith. The New Testament warns that possessions not used as a stewardship have a vast capacity of destroying character.

Moderator: It is not possible to compress this into the mold that is commonly understood as socialism today?

C. Fernando: To use the term socialism to describe what happened and what is described in Acts 2 and 4 would be a mistake. Socialism today has many meanings which are politically based, but the operation described in Acts was not politically based at all. It was part of the operation of God's Kingdom and it was a voluntary act.

Moderator: How should Christians express their social concern?

Henry: Leave it to the Marxists to say that it is wicked for human beings to starve, leave it to the Marxists to say that it is wicked for people not to have clothing or to have shelter from storms and cold, and Marxism or any other ideology that says this will have "going for it" a great momentum that will carry over to support whatever solutions are proposed. The Christian community today has a great opportunity



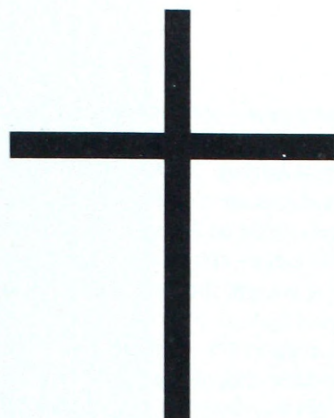
“ . . . the basic difference between the Kingdom [of God] and Utopia is that the Kingdom is something that has come down from above to us. Utopia is man's groping upwards towards something we do not know. ”

worldwide in respect to the plight of the masses. We ought to be emphasizing these same concerns—and along with these, adding that it is wicked also for human beings in these circumstances not to have work whereby they can make some headway against their predicament. Is it not a matter of indifference on the part of Christians—and on the part of all human beings—that we do not reach out voluntarily to help these people in need?

Moderator: In every church and denomination and various evangelical groups, small efforts are being made in this area. We ought to get together and, instead of a little backyard farming, we ought rather as a body of evangelical Christians to think in terms of large-scale activity so that there is no duplication and wasting of resources—such things as the Israeli community farms.

Jayaweera: I venture to raise a dissident voice on this matter on the ground that the commitment is not wide enough. I have often seen attempts at social action on a limited scale motivated by undoubtedly genuine Christian concern. Well meaning people, totally committed, set up farms and communal groups or perhaps hospitals. But over the ages, while these groups might have been able to eliminate specific instances of pain or deprivation, they have basically left untouched the larger grounds which give rise to these instances of poverty. And it is in that area that the Marxists have been able to steal a march on the Christians. Now this happens, I believe, because for some curious reason the Christian feels that politics is not connected with his Christian concern. So this area is usurped by Marxists or by Communists who bring about the structural change using their own methods which in some instances are totally non-Christian, and they bring around more followers to their courts than isolated pockets of Christians are able to win for Christ. I have come round more and more to the realization that the logical conclusion or logical extension of Christian concern in its social dimension is involvement in political action. Unless Christian action penetrates those areas which are now the reserve of self-proclaimed materialists, our Christian enterprise is not complete.

Moderator: I can illustrate this by the personal concern of clergymen and church people for getting people married and having happy homes. This is a very wonderful personal concern in which we must be deeply and responsibly interested because



we cannot overstate the importance of the home and the family. It is expressed in the Bible; throughout the history of the Church, Christianity has stressed the importance of the home. Now, one of the biggest problems of the integrity of the home depends on housing. Housing is an economic problem and a political problem. Why aren't most Christians also interested in the problem of the economics and the politics of housing? To tell a person to have a happy home when all he can do is have a garage in his mother-in-law's house is not good enough. A whole complex of problems will arise from that particular problem. A second point should, however, be made. There have in fact been many Christian bodies over the past 25 years which have expressed their minds on political problems and have not gotten adequate support from members of the constituent churches. I have here a document that lists at least 10 such problems including Ceylon citizenship, intercommunal relations, educational problems, civil rights—all matters over which the National Christian Council or some other Christian body has been concerned. One of them in 1953 was concerned with the urgency of land reform. But the support that Christian people gave to those responsible assertions was so meager that very little came out of it.

B. E. Fernando: In recent years quite a number of our nations in this part of the world and in Africa have become independent. But I have seldom heard a reference to the liberation in the Old Testament which was the founding event in the life of the nation of Israel. Put forth as God's will for people of other

“Unless Christian action penetrates those areas which are now the reserve of self-proclaimed materialists, our Christian enterprise is not complete.”

nations also, I think the Old Testament comes alive in a way that it isn't in evangelical circles. Quite a few evangelicals, in spite of their claims that they believe the whole Bible, seem to believe only in the New Testament—and some of them only in a few verses in the New Testament. I don't think that is going to help the evangelical cause, especially at a time like this in the history of our country.

Henry: I do not believe that the biblical message for social involvement rests on either a theology of revolution or a theology of liberation, both of which are currently popular in Latin America. Both tolerate a resort to violence as the means of bringing in “the kingdom.” They appeal to the apocalyptic passages in the New Testament as well as to what God has done for Old Testament Israel in the Exodus, but

this is nowhere in the New Testament made the methodology by which the Church is to fulfill her task in the world. The charge is repeatedly echoed by the Marxists that the Church is engaged only in distributing aspirins and Band-Aids, and not attacking the underlying cause; words, words, words are said to be all that the Church has to offer. I want to comment, first, that it slanders Christianity to dismiss all the social reforms that Christianity has brought in its long history simply as aspirins and Band-Aids. All responsible historians who survey the history of the West admit that it was the theology of the Cross that evoked the tides of compassion that lifted the West above its pagan past. Yet I heartily agree with what has been said, that it is not enough simply to remedy existing problems without addressing the causes of these problems. Here again it is sad that Christians have not channeled young people as fully as they ought into the universities and have not trained teachers particularly in the areas of social criticism, sociology and political science. Today in many universities it is the Marxists alone who are doing social criticism and who give Marxist answers unchallenged. I think that the Christian ought to be involved politically to the limit of his competence and opportunity. In many totalitarian lands they have little freedom to become involved, and they envy Christians in other countries who still have freedom to shape their political future. If we Christians are unconcerned, secular ideologists will deplore injustice and define justice in their own way. Our neglect becomes an unwitting invitation to a Marxist or some other revolution.



And king Solomon gave unto the queen of Sheba all her desire, whatsoever she asked, besides that which Solomon gave her of his royal bounty" (1 Kings 10:13).

Can't you see this proud queen coming with all her camels loaded with the best of her country, expecting to impress the Jewish King Solomon about whom she had heard so much and toward whom she no doubt felt a racial superiority.

But as she began to go around the great city and see the glories of his palace and the marvelous inventions he had set up—Ecclesiastes 2 gives a list—her eyes began to grow wide with amazement. Finally she had to swallow her pride and admit, "I had heard much about you, but the half of it was never told me!"

Something else may well have begun to happen to her eyes. As she looked at this beautiful thing and that, I can see them beginning to glisten with a hungry, green light. Solomon must have laughed inwardly and said of a certain object, "You like it, my dear? Would you like to have it for yourself? Ask for anything you want!"

"Please, may I have it? It's the *only* thing I've seen that I really like," she would lie coyly.

"Anything, anything! Just ask and you shall have it!"

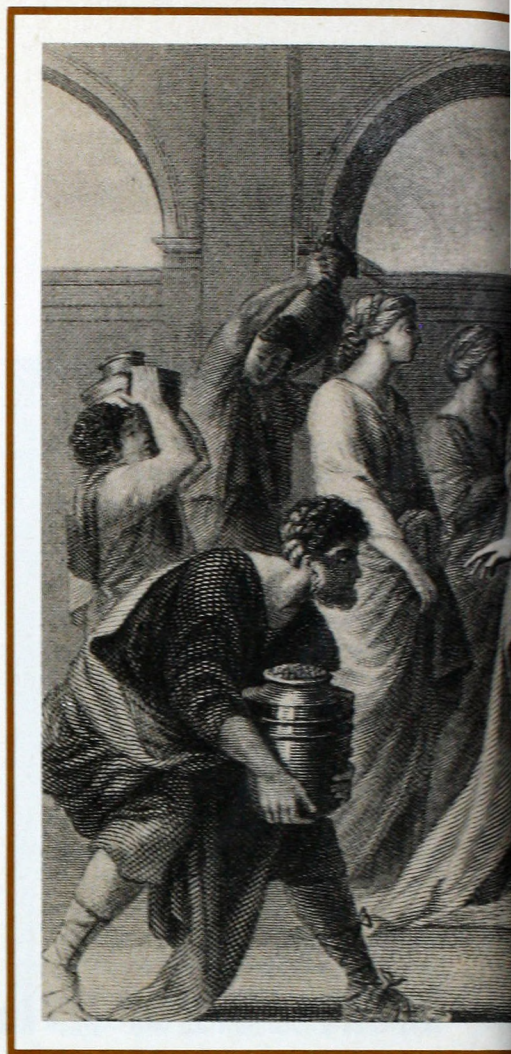
So as her eyes lighted on this object and that, she'd say, "How about this?"

"Of course. It would be just the thing! If I should ever miss it, my craftsmen could make me a dozen more."

But soon her camels were loaded far more than when she had come. When the beautiful Sheba saw this, she no doubt was chagrined. How could she ask for anything more? But Solomon, watching her closely, took her into even more marvelous halls and passageways, and again her eyes grew wide with wonder. Again that wistful hunger crept into her face. Oh, if she just hadn't taken those first silly baubles! What were they in comparison to these marvels? Why hadn't she waited?

Again Solomon grinned to himself. He knew what she was thinking; so he picked up a jeweled vase and a beautiful carved ivory box and handed them to her. "Take these as a gift from me," he would say. He was giving her not only all she asked, but also "all her desire."

Eileen Lageer, a Canadian, has been a missionary to Nigeria for the United Missionary Society since 1950. In July she will begin a special, year-long assignment in the United States researching the history of her denomination, after which she plans to return to Nigeria.



Out of His Royal Bounty

by Eileen Lageer



But was that all? No, there was more yet to come. He also gave her "of his royal bounty"—things she hadn't even seen and, therefore, hadn't had an opportunity to covet.

How much like the giving of our heavenly King this is! In fact, there is a verse in Ephesians that is almost a parallel. In 3:20 Paul says that God is able to do all that we ask. But he doesn't stop there. He says that he "is able to do...all that we think." Even this isn't all. The "royal bounty" is yet to come. He "is able to do *above* what we ask or think." Only *above*? No, "*abundantly above*." And still there is more: Paul says God is able to do "*exceeding abundantly above*" anything we could ask or even imagine.

Does our heavenly Father do this for you? He wants to. Jesus told us that if human parents know how to give good gifts to their children, "how much more shall your heavenly Father give good things to them that ask him?"

Perhaps we haven't received many of those good things because we haven't asked Him. Or is it because we don't need to ask? We can provide them all very well for ourselves. Oh, how much we are robbed of the wonder of living when we cease to be needy!

Perhaps missionaries have more opportunity to prove this than most, for it seems He is always providing

"exceeding abundantly" for us—a visa officials say is unobtainable, a Honda when "no more are being imported," rain in the midst of a drought, a turn-about-face in the attitude of some who violently oppose the Christian way.

During this past vacation, one of our students at the Teachers' College went home to tell his Moslem family he had become a Christian. His brother was furious.

"You will never go back to that place!" he shouted, and took all the student's possessions away. We prayed. In fact, many, many earnest, believing prayers went up on his behalf.

Just as the brother was about to send him to another part of Nigeria, a relative came to him.

"Be careful what you do to this boy," he said. "You do not know God's will for his life."

Upon receiving this advice, the brother relented and said, "All right, I will let him go back to school if he promises to be a Moslem when he gets out."

"Never!" the boy replied. "I will never turn back from my faith in Christ."

"Then I'll not pay your school fees," the older man said angrily. But just before it was time to leave, the brother came to him and said, "If you can wait till I make one more trip with my lorry I'll send you your next term's fees."

The Bible says that the king "gave her all that she asked." We asked, and with a glad wonder we received. Does He not promise to give good things to those that ask Him?

And have you ever noticed that God almost always gives us His gifts in a way we ourselves could never dream up? For instance, a week ago Nigeria was suffering from shortage of bread. "The flour mills at Lagos are closed because of lack of processed water," we heard.

One day the thought came to me during my devotions that we should pray the prayer Jesus told us to pray: Give us this day our daily bread. I felt impressed by His voice to call our cook and have family worship with him that morning since we had missed it the night before. But I also felt rather reluctant to do so. Who ever stops the Friday morning cleaning in order to sit down and have family devotions?

"You need bread, don't you?" the voice insisted.

So I called Timo, and since my partner was away in

another town, the two of us had worship together. We prayed for bread.

He went out of the room muttering to himself, no doubt on the subject of insanity. But I had done what I felt God asked me to do, and I was assured that that night or perhaps the next day we would find bread in the town.

An hour later my partner came home from her trip, and in her hand—a loaf of bread! Before we even greeted her, the cook and I looked at each other and burst out laughing. Who would have thought it! All the way from another town. Yes, our God is never stuck for methods. He has a thousand ways to do what we think impossible.

Like Solomon, God gives us our desires as well. Never let people tell you, "He gives us what we need, not what we want." Our heavenly Father isn't a stingy giver. If we are walking close to Him He gives us what we can't even imagine, Paul says.

*Tottering on a knife-edged ridge—
The sea foam and the sand,
The jagged rocks below
Hidden in the mists of our intentions—*

*We are given a task
And a gift above all gifts;
The clear humility of perspective,
Philosopher's stone of our soul.*

*And the task? Who can bear the task?
Step by step, from stone to stone
To ascend the dizzying heights
Up the narrow ridge above the two cliff faces
To the mountain of deep darkness and light,
To the mountain of God.*

*Distracted by values of light and dark,
The way clouded by our intentions,
We find no time for the gift,
No strength for the task.*

*Raise our perspectives,
Master of the gift and task.
Teach us to trust;
And, trusting, to run.*

—Timothy Udd

Ever since I was a child, one of my ambitions has been to go to the Holy Land. No, I can't even say it was an ambition; it was one of those silent longings that one resignedly accepts as hopeless. After being in Nigeria and hearing of other missionaries who took such a trip on their way home, this futile wishing grew stronger, but for me—? Well, I knew it was impossible. So I didn't even ask.

But "Solomon gave her all her desire." My heavenly Father could see the longing in this child of His and moved a kind friend at home to send a check one Christmas. The enclosed letter said, "I would like you to visit Palestine some day. This is to start you on your way." Imagine! Well, I still couldn't make it financially, but each year another check came along, and last furlough on my way home I actually visited the Holy Land. It was the thrill of my life, I do believe. "He is able to do all that we think," said Paul.

But King Solomon's giving didn't stop with just what she desired. He gave the queen riches from his royal bounty that she hadn't seen, so didn't even know she wanted. Our heavenly Father who is the giver of every good and perfect gift gives exceeding abundantly *above* what we ask or even imagine. He knows better than we do what would delight us. And more wonderful than that, He delights in giving us things that make us happy.

Have you discovered this yet? You say, "It may happen to you, but it doesn't happen to me." Or, "Is there some catch to it?"

Not a catch, but there is a secret, I believe. And that secret is really no secret either, for Paul keeps telling it to us in every letter he writes: "In everything give thanks." In other words, cultivate a grateful heart—a heart that sees its heavenly Father's hand in everything that happens, in the hard things as well as in the good. A heart that will thank Him for the difficult places as well as for the pleasant. It is there we have the best chance to see Him at work.

This is the way to "delight yourself in the Lord." And the results surely follow: "...and He will give you the desires of your heart."

Solomon gave the queen all she asked (do we ask?), all she desired and even more than that—camel load after camel load of all the immeasurable riches of his royal bounty.

It was a celebration of love,

a warm and affectionate evening in honor of Dr. Bob Pierce, founding president of World Vision International. Just a few miles from Monrovia, hundreds of his friends and associates over the years gathered to pay tribute to "Dr. Bob" in the first month of the 25th anniversary year of World Vision. Master of Ceremonies Dr. Richard C. Halverson set the tone at the beginning of the banquet when he observed that "Bob loves everybody and everybody loves Bob." Dr. Han Kyung Chik, pastor emeritus of the huge Young Nak Presbyterian Church of Seoul, flew in from Korea to honor his old friend's pioneering evangelistic and social work in that country. Dr. Ted W. Engstrom, World Vision's executive vice-president, described World Vision as "the ever-lengthening shadow of the love and compassion of Bob Pierce." Dr. Larry Ward, executive director of Food for the Hungry, thanked Pierce for his "reckless heart" which asked God to "break it with the things that break the heart of God." County Supervisor Kenneth Hahn presented him with an official citation from the citizens of Los Angeles County. World Vision's President W. Stanley Mooneyham read telegrams and letters from some of those who could not be present and presented a bound volume of messages as the two World Vision presidents warmly embraced.

President Gerald R. Ford wired his wholehearted applause to the two men and to World Vision: "By caring for many people in third-world countries and giving them the spiritual and moral value necessary to cope successfully with the problems of an increasingly challenging world, you display the finest commitment to mankind." Evangelist Billy Graham wrote: "Words are inadequate to express what you have meant to the advancement of the Kingdom of God during this past

generation. Just what your life and ministry have meant to me alone, can never be fully expressed this side of eternity." Senator Mark O. Hatfield named Pierce "a pioneer awakening evangelicals to the interwoven needs of the total person," while President Harold J. Ockenga of Gordon-Conwell Seminary said that "World Vision has set a standard of humanitarian, compassionate action for all other organizations who name the name of Christ."

Dr. Pierce's warm response to the praise was self-effacing. He paid high tribute to his wife, seated beside him, for her great sacrifices for this ministry. Voice breaking, he spoke of his defeats, which with his victories, he placed in the lap of a sovereign God. He recounted his two years of treatment for the illness which led him to resign from World Vision and then spoke of his healing which had enabled him to push ahead vigorously with his new work, Samaritan's Purse, of which he is founder and president. He urged his listeners to allow in their planning for "God-room," where miracles leap the gap between the "possible" and "God's goals for us."

In response, Dr. Mooneyham called the gathering "a love feast," and pledged that the compass setting Dr. Pierce had established for World Vision 25 years ago—fixed on the love of Jesus Christ—would not be changed.

Also present in spirit, wrote Lillian R. Dickson, president of The Mustard Seed, were tens of thousands of unseen guests, among them hosts of orphans, widows and leprosy patients, who received new life and hope because of Dr. Pierce.

Many of the tributes pointed to great years ahead for him; but of the service that had gone before, this evening had the sound of a Grand Amen.



Dr. Han Kyung Chik brings Korean tribute



Dr. Bob Pierce receives citation from Los Angeles County Supervisor Kenneth Hahn as Dr. Richard Halverson applauds



Past and present World Vision presidents Pierce (left) and Mooneyham embrace in show of organization's historical continuity

piece of mind

A forum
for expression of personal opinion,
criticism and dissent

Americans become terribly squeamish at the mere mention of the primitive practice of cannibalism. Who likes to think of human flesh being consumed by other human beings? But could we ourselves be practicing cannibalism and not know it? Could we be guilty of indirect violence against the helpless of the world? A look at our current national profile may reveal some features we have not noticed.

Walk with me up and down the aisles of any American supermarket. The choices that confront us are overwhelming. We must select not only from multiple choices in the variety of food, but decisions must be made on brand names and on whether we want the food fresh, canned or frozen. When we reach the check-out stand, we have no problem paying the checker, for we are citizens of a nation where the average personal income each year is over \$5000, and less than 20 percent of our income goes to feed us.

But what about those countries we patronizingly label as "less developed?" What is the condition of their people? The average income per person in Africa, Asia and Latin America is about \$180 per year. The average caloric consumption rate is about half that of the U.S.

Sketched against such a backdrop, it is not difficult to see the drama being enacted on the world's stage, a tragic drama overshadowing those of the Greek tragedians by its epic proportions. For today, both the "haves" and the "have-nots" are well aware that there is a world food crisis. This awareness stretches from the relatively minor inconvenience of shortage or inflated price of food items in this country, to the grim



by Joseph A. Ryan
Director, Pacific/North Area Office
World Vision International

America's Eating Habits— Diet for Cannibals ?

reality of food riots in India and Bangladesh or the 100,000 already dead from starvation in Ethiopia.

What is it like to have a stomach that gnaws and aches all the time? Hunger ages people rapidly. Thus, life expectancy in many countries is only 40 years. Hunger helps to topple governments. Thus, those in Ethiopia, Niger and Thailand have fallen. It enervates bodies, dulls minds and limits mental and emotional horizons to survival today. That is the way it is across much of our world.

Some Americans manage to assume a thick-skinned profile that says, "Let the hungry starve. If we feed them they will just produce more hungry mouths. Wait until they implement birth control." Others, however, recognize that in a less developed country a large family is the social security system for the parents' old age, as well as the free work force for each family's plot of ground. Another significant force may be religious convictions about having children.

Even if all these factors are discounted, who but the heavily calloused can deny food to a hungry child who was not one of the decision makers regarding his own entry into this world? What Christian believer, unless he is strangely inconsistent and insensitive, can ignore Jesus' dramatic words in Matthew 25:31-46, which include "...for I

was hungry and you gave me food...?"

But let's look at the consumer role of U.S. citizens. Most of us are not aware that our own affluence, as well as the world population problem, eats into the global food supply. We have reached the place in our use of food that allows us to feed millions of tons of it to our pets. Even the fertilizer that could produce enough extra grain to feed 65 million people in less developed countries is spread with abandonment over our lawns, golf courses and cemeteries.

We increasingly eat food in forms that enormously burden the earth's agricultural system. The richer we have grown, the more inefficient we have become in our use of protein. Nutritionists have noted that the same amount of food that is feeding 210 million Americans, would feed nutritiously 1.5 billion people in Africa and Asia. Put another way, it takes five times the resources of land, water and fertilizer to support our diet than to support theirs.

What does all this mean to a girl in Ghana, a boy in Bangladesh or many like them in the world?

Recently, Dr. Norman Borlaug, the "father of the Green Revolution," stated that up to 20 million people may die because of crop shortages in the next year. But how will they die? What really happens in that lingering limbo which non-med-

ical people call starvation?

Without adequate calories, the body literally begins to cannibalize itself. The victim burns up his own body fats, muscles and tissues for fuel. Once his weight loss exceeds 40 percent of his normal weight, death is almost inevitable.


But people can have full stomachs and still die. Lack of protein can bring on kwashiorkor, a wasting disease that easily attacks children. The victims usually have body tissues swollen with fluid, typified by swollen bellies. Lack of niacin, found in meat, brown rice and fish, can result in pellagra characterized by dermatitis, diarrhea, dementia and death. Jeremiah described it all so sadly in Lamentations 4:9, "Happier

were the victims of the sword than the victims of hunger, who pined away, stricken by want of the fruits of the field."

Adults can walk the edge of starvation and return to productivity, though with life expectancy shortened. But because 80 percent of brain development takes place before two years of age, malnourished children may be condemned to the twilight zone of mental retardation for life. Bowed legs and a host of side effects await when starvation occurs during the years of growth.

Senator Mark Hatfield says: "The world produces enough food to feed all its inhabitants. But when one-third of the world's population—all those who are comparatively the 'rich'—consume two-thirds of the

world's protein resources, then millions of the other two-thirds of the world suffer, starve and die."

Could it be that even Christian Americans, by our over-consumption of protein and our demands that humanly edible grain be fed to our animals, have become indirect cannibals? Is our rich diet at the cost of hollow eyes, bent legs, bloated bellies and 10,000 dead a day from starvation and malnutrition? Will history refer to those who lived in the United States in the final quarter of the twentieth century as "The American Cannibals"? Will God's recording angel identify us who profess to know Him with those who "passed by" on the other side of the Jericho road, with those who "did it not to one of the least of these?" 

monthly memo



Month by month in *World Vision* magazine, through other materials we send out and through the media, you will be reminded of our special emphasis in World Vision's Twenty-fifth Anniversary Year—our "Year for a Hungry World." Project FAST (Fight Against Starvation Today) is not simply an acronym, but a staggering burden which we will constantly be asking our World Vision partners to share.

Each month the world's population increases by approximately 6 million people. A million of these are added monthly to India's masses; a million and a half are added to China's population.

This fact poses for the thinking Christian a staggering question: How are we going to begin to equalize access to our wealth and resources in

the West, particularly food?

Two billion people who presently live in developing nations are living in abject poverty. Of these, 300 million are children suffering from malnutrition. Twenty-five percent of these children will die before their fifth year.

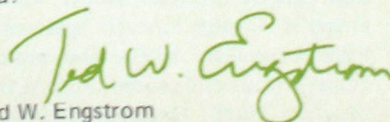
Every half minute 100 babies are born in these developing countries. Twenty of them will die within the year. Most of the rest will suffer malnutrition and the possibility of irreversible mental and physical damage. We don't say this to make anyone feel guilty, but rather that we will be grateful for all that we enjoy from God's hand and be aware of and responsive to the needs of people in our hurting world.

The fact that we cannot help everybody does not excuse us for not helping anybody!

Each year we in World Vision select a Scripture verse for the year. For 1975 we have selected I John 3:17,18: ". . .if anyone has the world's goods and sees his brother in need, yet closes his heart against him, how does God's love abide in him? Little children, let us not love in word or speech but in deed and in truth."

"Let us love. . .in deed and in truth." Here is the "marriage" in World Vision of social action/responsibility and evangelism.

Your partnership has never been more needed—or appreciated—in behalf of those who hurt so sorely and whose hurts are alleviated because you care and share. Thank you!

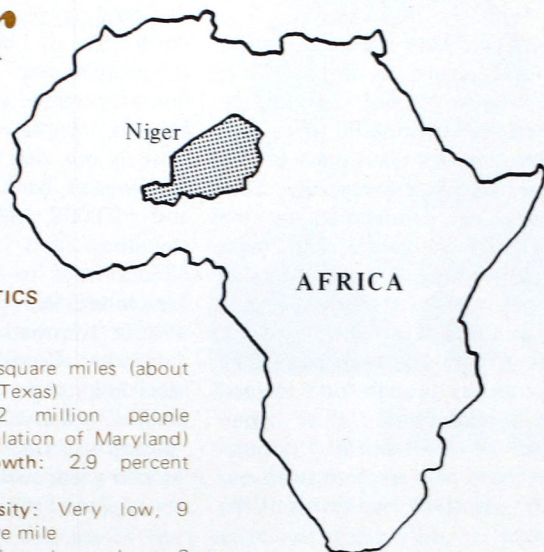


Ted W. Engstrom
Executive Vice-President

facts of a field

Compiled by MARC, a division of World Vision International
Information on some other countries available

Niger



VITAL STATISTICS

Capital: Niamey
Area: 490,000 square miles (about twice the size of Texas)
Population: 4.2 million people (about the population of Maryland)
Population Growth: 2.9 percent annually
Population Density: Very low, 9 persons per square mile
Urbanization: Very low, about 3 percent
Languages: French is the official language. Hausa is the trade language.
Literacy: About 5-10 percent
Economy: Primary occupations are farming and nomadic cattle raising. One of the world's poorest nations, Niger has a per person gross national product of about \$90 (1973).
Geography: Landlocked Niger is the largest country in West Africa. Most of the country is desert; the southern regions contain the majority of its agriculture.

History: Niger was under Arab influence from the 11th and 12th centuries and under French control from 1890 to 1960, when independence was achieved.


Government: Nominally, it is a republic with a President and national assembly. But it has been under military government since 1974.

Religion: The population is about 85 percent Moslem, 14.5 percent animist and less than 1 percent Christian (largely Roman Catholic).

camel caravans crossing the desert. SIM's headquarters, in Maradi, was opened in 1940. SIM operates the only mission hospital in the country, at Galmi, and the country's only leprosarium, near Maradi. SIM also operates a Bible institute and two schools.

Evangelical Baptist Missions, which concentrates on French-speaking countries, has its headquarters in Niamey. It has missionaries in seven areas of Niger and operates elementary schools, a Bible school and a bookstore.

Other Christian agencies with ministries in Niger include Southern Baptist Convention, Baptist International Missions, Fellowship of Independent Missions, Southern Methodist General Conference, World Vision International, Church World Service and Caritas.

Bible Translation: Wycliffe Bible Translators identifies 14 languages spoken in Niger. The majority of people who speak five of these languages live in Niger. Two of the languages definitely need translators, while the translation needs of five others must be determined. (It is not yet known whether or not Scripture portions have been translated into these five languages or whether perhaps the people using them might speak other languages which possess translated Scriptures.) Two languages have the Bible, three have the New Testament and two have Scripture portions available. Actual Scripture distribution within the country is limited by copies available, lack of outlets and widespread illiteracy. 

Current Status of Christianity: Christians in the Republic of Niger form a very small minority in the midst of a predominantly Moslem people. The Christian community is estimated at less than one percent of the population. Christian worship is permitted, and foreign missions are present, although the current President is a devout Moslem. The recent drought and famine have brought increased church-mission activity in relief programs, and some of the Moslem peoples are reportedly more responsive to Christianity now.

National Churches: The largest Christian church in Niger is the Roman Catholic Church, which was established there in 1831. The present Roman Catholic community totals about 12,500. National Protestant churches were established as a result

of foreign missionary ministries, beginning with the work of the Sudan Interior Mission (SIM) in 1923 and of Evangelical Baptist Missions in 1929.

Missions: Sudan Interior Mission began its ministry in Niger in the town of Zinder, ancient hub of the slave trade and a departure point for



dateline Northern Ireland

by J. D. Douglas

"Well, can we agree that this is Tuesday?" asked Britain's William Whitelaw on opening a meeting that brought together bitter opponents in Northern Ireland. His approach was admirable; there are not many undisputed statements in the province. Here are some that will help our background knowledge of the present situation: 1) In 1920, Ireland was divided. The larger part, now the independent republic of Eire (Ireland), is more than 90 percent Roman Catholic. The smaller part, which belongs to the United Kingdom and is known as Northern Ireland or Ulster, has a majority of Protestants over Catholics of nearly two to one. 2) Many Catholics on both sides of the border have never accepted the partition of the island as permanent or acceptable. The more extreme wing, calling itself the Irish Republican Army (IRA), believes in the use of force to achieve reunification and has recently extended its bombing activities to England, in the hope that British public opinion would urge the Westminster government to wash its hands of Ulster. 3) The Protestants of Ulster are just as determined to remain British. They too have their extremists prepared to take ruthless measures in defense of their position, convinced that a united Ireland would be a betrayal of their religious heritage. Unlike their opponents, Protestants do not normally operate against the army, but their more peaceful tactics include the calling of strikes that have brought the province's business to a virtual halt. 4) Since 1969 the British army has concentrated thousands of troops in the area which is about the size of Connecticut. Many soldiers have fallen casualty to IRA bullets, bombs and land mines. In 1972 the province came under direct control from London after the Belfast legislature was made unworkable by Protestants who objected to proposed reforms that would allegedly have eroded their supremacy.

One might add also the sad fact that Northern Ireland has the best record of church attendance in the British Isles. Let no one imagine, however, that this is a holy war in which "people hate each other in the name of Jesus Christ" (Bernadette Devlin's words). Yet this is a line eagerly espoused by atheistic propaganda, which adds that all would be well if they could only get the violence off the streets and back into the churches where it belongs.

While discounting this cynical view, we find frightful things done in Ulster on ostensibly religious grounds, notably by those who profess a biblical faith. As Irish

Baptist minister Herbert Carson points out, Catholics have all too often identified the Protestant gospel with an upraised club. Perhaps it would be more accurate to label the Ulster protagonists as anti-Catholics and anti-Protestants, because their religious duty is seen in terms of demonstrating *against* something.

The Protestant majority have been accused of discriminatory practices against Catholics in housing, jobs and local government representation, and of savage attacks on civil rights marches. Catholics have been charged with encouraging IRA atrocities, giving their prime loyalty to the tricolor of Eire and perpetuating segregation by hardline Catholic attitudes which owe nothing at all to Vatican Council II.

Though Ireland has a history of violence down through the centuries, the bitterness between the two communities in recent years has been almost unbelievable. Families have been forced to move out of Belfast districts where the other community was in the majority and where neutrality was not an acceptable option. Whole areas have been ravaged by fire and explosion, and having revisited the city after an interval, I was reminded of my native Clydeside in wartime after an unusually devastating air raid.

Perhaps most pathetic of all is the plight of the children. In their growing-up, hatred is a way of life. In one district of Belfast, mothers are reported to be alarmed at the increased incidence of nervous disease among their children. The cumulative influence on the young for whom stone-throwing at the soldiers provides a welcome diversion in their drab existence, has ensured a deadly legacy from which Ulster will not recover this century. Chalked on one battle-scarred wall was the poignant question, "Is there life before death?"

But all is not gloom. We rejoice that many people in both communities are sick of the strife and are prepared to do something to bring it to an end. A group of Protestant churchmen are currently participating in discussions with the IRA (itself divided on future policy).

Nowhere is there a greater work for Jesus Christ to be done today than in this unquiet land among the bereaved, the incorrigible, the mutilated, the vicious, the terrified, the lonely, the misguided. Desperately needed is a purged memory so that peace can be understood not just as the absence of conflict but as the presence of God. Edward Irving once prayed: "Give us, O Lord, a true spiritual understanding of the guilt of many generations, and show us the way by which we may approach Thee in confession of this great common guilt." It is an expression of penitence which not only Irishmen need to make.

Urgent Request for Prayer

As you know, war activity has increased in Phnom Penh, Cambodia. The number of refugees coming into the city is rising, and the number of people being treated at World Vision's clinics and nutrition centers has jumped some 30 percent. Carl Harris, WV director in Cambodia, reports that the gap between the number of children requiring hospitalization and the number actually receiving it is widening daily. In one recent week, 137 children who should have been hospitalized had to be sent home, because there was no room for them. The Phnom Penh Christian Hospital, which was built by World Vision and is now being equipped, will be a great help in this problem. It is scheduled to open on April 7th. Please join us in prayer that the war activity will not delay its opening. The World Vision staff throughout this tragically torn country, the Cambodian church and the entire nation desperately need your prayers. Thank you.



The Phnom Penh Christian Hospital

Illumination

Overseas staff members for World Vision come from all types of backgrounds and situations in life. Many of them have beautiful Christian testimonies which are never publicized. But we are able to pass on a few of them. The following are excerpts from a brief autobiography written by Mr. Prayat Punongong, who plans to begin teaching the many blind children sponsored by World Vision in Thailand as soon as he completes his education:

"Prayat Punongong is my name,

and I was born on May 16, 1949 in the northern part of Thailand in a small village. I am one of four children; my father was a teacher until his death when I was only five. My mother worked hard. I started school and only three weeks later was in a car accident which caused total and permanent blindness. I was unable to do anything for myself. I was a liability to my family and society. My mother, though she cried and had sorrow for me, did not understand me, nor my needs. I became very sad and wanted to die. Sometimes I cried from daylight until after dark. (But God heard that cry and sent a man with good news for me which would set me free.) I could not go anywhere alone. I had no hope. I tried many times to kill myself.

"In 1958 a missionary came to our village. I can't remember his name; I only know he brought hope to me. He said to me, 'Your life is valuable. It's not hopeless.' He read to me of a blind man in a book he called the Bible. The story did bring hope and gave new life to my dying spirit. This book, the Bible, became very precious to me. The man told me to remember these words taken from the Bible: 'So don't be anxious about tomorrow, God will take care of your tomorrow, too. Live one day at a time' (Matthew 6:34). I did memorize this quickly, and I ceased my crying because I had some hope for the future. I accepted Jesus that day, and Jesus changed me inside and outside.

"I regret that at that time my family had to move, and I never saw that missionary again though I have tried desperately to find him and thank him for bringing me new life. The missionary did leave a book with me, and I had my neighbor read it to me. It was about Jesus being taken to the cross and the friends around him crying. I loved that book. But my stepfather took the book and burned it.

"The missionary had urged me to go to Bangkok to study at the School

for the Blind. But mother said it was impossible. What sadness I encountered then!

"From this time on I did not sit at home and cry all day. I decided to try to help myself. I started walking and finding my way alone. I asked neighbors to teach me to make baskets of bamboo. I finally was taught and in a year had successfully made a basket. The neighbor saw my skill and suggested I make and sell these baskets—which I did for two years. Suddenly my parents forbade me to work anymore. Why? I don't know. My stepfather beat me for disobeying him. I still had in my heart and head the desire to go and study so I could read the Bible for myself. I begged my mother to send me to school. Finally my very angry mother set me free, but she has refused to help me or even come to see me to this day.

"I had saved 460 Bhts. (\$23.00) from my basket selling, and so I left with my uncle for Bangkok to the School for the Blind only to be greatly disappointed, as this school took children up to age 15 only. I was past the age limit. I then decided to go to vocational school and learn a trade. Here I also learned braille and learned to type.

"During this time I had opportunity to attend church on Sunday, too. When I finished my two years of studies I was invited to teach at the Vocational Training Center for the Blind in Nondaburi. Here I found that one in 1000 Thai are blind. Most of them are not free to study but are kept at home with no freedom, as I was. And many have problems and heartaches to face.

"I as teacher now felt the burden they carried, having experienced the same unhappy, discouraging life. But I took the challenge and the responsibility to help them. I felt the importance of having more knowledge so I would be able to teach effectively. I therefore applied for adult education. The textbooks are not available in braille so therefore I had to tape all my lessons and study

from the recordings.

"I was the first blind person to finish adult education (equivalent to U.S. high school). I am in my first year of Teacher's College now and I am the first blind student to attend this college. During my adult education years it cost so much that I had used my weekends to teach English to 'seeing' students. This helped me so much. However, now I am a part-time teacher at the Vocational Training Center for the Blind. Though my schooling has been very expensive I have received much help and kindness from so many professors at Chulalongkorn University and Mahidol University.

"Mother Carlsen and the Rev. Carlsen of the Christian & Missionary Alliance were most faithful friends. This American missionary couple helped and encouraged me from the very beginning. I thank God for the World Vision fund, too, that I have been receiving through these college years. Praise God.

"Though I have encountered many difficulties in attempting to get an education even with the help of those mentioned above and many others, I have one aim and desire: to use this knowledge I've acquired to encourage and teach other blind folk like myself. Above all else I want to give praise and thanks to God for hearing my cry as a boy and sending hope to me in the person of Jesus Christ."

'They Search for Survival'

World Vision's latest television special, describing the lives of refugees in Bangladesh, Cambodia and the Sahel, drew such tremendous response that it will be re-released in 150 cities from mid-March through



mid-April. Watch for "They Search for Survival" in your local television listings.

A Chance to Meet Your Sponsored Child

There is still room for a few more to join the Orient Sponsor Tour, scheduled for September 2-24. The tour will take you to seven fascinating Asian cities: Tokyo, Seoul, Taipei, Singapore, Denpasar on Bali in Indonesia, Bangkok and Hong Kong, as well as Honolulu. Write today for a travel brochure describing the complete itinerary and giving the tour cost, to George Hahn, Tour Director, P.O. Box O, Pasadena, CA 91109.

Important Contest

In January of this year *World Vision* announced its 25th anniversary essay/sermon contest on the relationship between mission and social action. The judges have already begun receiving entries, but they encourage many more to enter. WV has taken on the endeavor because it has come to realize that the Church is in great need of clear teaching on the relationship of social action to missions. We feel as an organization that they are intrinsically linked in Scripture, and we are calling on members of the body for clear answers to this issue. Please consider participating in this contest and sharing your insights on this crucial question. Excerpts from the essays judged to be most significant for our readership will be printed in *World Vision*.

For a complete listing of the rules and an entry form, please refer to page 9 of our January issue or write to the editor, *World Vision* magazine, 919 West Huntington Dr., Monrovia, CA 91016.



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World Vision's sponsorship program tries to help children who have lived in abject poverty to have full lives. This means more than just providing food, clothing and shelter. It involves providing the children with a good education, Christian training and opportunities to be creative and to develop their abilities. It also means providing time to play in security—perhaps one of the most important activities of children.

The following report was sent from Thailand to describe the first camp for sponsored Thai children.

Now, imagine a group of children, many from the slums of Bangkok, seeing the Pacific Ocean for the first time.

The first World Vision camp for sponsored children in Thailand concluded with tearful farewells after five days of wonderful fellowship at the YMCA camp at Pattaya (120 kilometers southeast of Bangkok).

Seventy children from the north-east of Thailand and 30 children from the Bangkok slums of Klong Toey had been transported by bus to the camp. Both boys and girls from 11 to 15 years old were thrilled by their first opportunity to attend a camp by the seaside.

The venture was organized in cooperation with the YMCA and Youth with a Mission (YWAM). World Vision staff members attended and participated in all the activities. The main aims of the camp were to provide Christian teaching for the children, an opportunity for physical activities, fellowship with each other and the World Vision staff, instruction in health and hygiene, information about the countries where their sponsors live, instruction in the art of letter writing and a good time.

Each morning the children enjoyed the Bible lessons and participated in a very complete and enthusiastic manner. Bible verses were learned and prizes given to those who memorized the best; singing was joyous and loud.

It was a real joy to witness five children commit their lives to Jesus Christ for the first time. These children received counseling from dedicated Christian people at the camp. And the project leaders will continue working with them as they grow in their Christian faith.

time to be children



The daily program commenced at 6:00 a.m. with the leaders of YWAM, YMCA and World Vision sharing in prayer. Then came the Bible study time. During the late morning, swimming, games and other activities were enjoyed by all the children.

One day the children enjoyed a boat trip to an island about two hours' journey from the mainland.

This trip is a favorite of many tourists coming to Pattaya, and it was a real joy for the children to participate in this new experience. When they returned to camp many were exhausted, but exhausted in a pleasant way. The next afternoon witnessed the World Vision "World Olympics"; six teams were organized representing different Asian countries, and Olympics were held on the grounds of the YMCA camp. I am sure there have not been Olympics like this before. The children competed in such games as walking races, running races, shot put (using coconuts) and backward racing. Each child participating received a cardboard medallion of the World Vision Olympics.

The closing night was the occasion of a very moving service. A fire was lit in the center of the large dining hall. (Unfortunately, rain prevented an outside meeting.) A leader invited the children to place a small piece of paper on the fire. This paper contained some aspect of the child's life that he hoped to change, some aspect that was not very pleasant. Many children participated in this very moving ceremony, and many of the leaders joined with them.

All too soon, the children boarded the two buses which would take them home. Many cried as they said farewell to new friends, and as it was realized that, for the present, camp was over.

The children behaved in a magnificent way. They enthusiastically joined in all the activities and thoroughly appreciated this opportunity given to them by the concern and interest of their sponsors. It is hoped that this is the beginning of many camps at which children who would not otherwise be able to, can enjoy a holiday by the seaside.

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On Being a Both/And Person

One of the exciting and exacting things about life is that in most of its aspects it is less precise and tidy than we should like to have it. It has multiple edges and they bleed into each other. Life is linkage. We want to make it breakage—tearing one thing from another. Our Lord pushed the both/and button when he said to the Pharisees: "These you ought to have done" ("justice and mercy and faith"), "without neglecting the others" (tithing "mint and dill and cummin").

Let's try an exercise in what it means to be in fact a both/and Christian. Its credo might well include the following:

1. *I believe in both common grace and conditional grace.* It was of common grace that Jesus spoke when he said, ". . . your Father who is in heaven. . . makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust" (Matthew 5:45). Immanuel Kant's "stars above" and "moral law within" are wondrous bounty of common grace, as are "the gorgeous canvas of the morn," and the "leaping, lovely ways of children," of which Orrick Johns wrote so beautifully. "These," he said, are the "unimpoverished spoil poured from the bursting stores of God."

But if these boons descend lavishly on saint and sinner alike, the same cannot be said of the greater grace that pardons guilt and recreates the twisted human person to feel at home in the Kingdom of God, whose rule is that of "righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit." This greater grace is not promiscuous. It is conditional. While not purchasable, it is forever seeking a receiver repentant enough to know he doesn't deserve it and trusting enough to rest gratefully in the reality of it.

2. *I believe in both total commitment and continuous growth.* Most of the best-selling books addressed to contemporary Christians are at least mildly antinomian, that is, they are permissive about sin in the Christian life. They rarely wrestle with the radical phrasings of the New Testament: "dead unto sin," "sin shall not have dominion over you," "the pure in heart," "sanctify you wholly," "that ye sin not." To explain them is important; to explain them away is impertinent. Yet equally important is a grasping of the New Testament emphasis

upon acquiring Christlikeness. Here the processes of discipline and development are unending—"from one degree of glory to another." Neither crisis nor process is excluded; both are embraced.

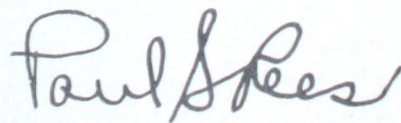
3. *I believe in both conformity and nonconformity.* ". . . be subject to the governing authorities" (Romans 13:1) puts me under bonds to be a conformist. But ". . . be it known to you, O king, that we will not serve your gods or worship the golden image which you have set up" (Daniel 3:18) gives me my warrant for turning nonconformist when rulers demand that I pawn my conscience.

4. *I believe in both order and ardor in the life of the Church.* Christian communities that are meaningfully cohesive and communicative must have a degree of organization. The alternative to order is something messy—chaos. The mischief sets in when order preoccupies us. Structure without spirit stifles. Some rules are necessary, but when rules rule us, they ruin us. Order without ardor is tyranny. Ardor without order is anarchy. We need both. We should exclude neither.

5. *I believe in both the personal and the social dimensions of the life in Christ.* Though it is beginning to yield to clearer thinking, the evangelical bias against the word "social" has been excessive and eccentric. We are creatures whose sociality is as profoundly real as our personality. Setting the one against the other is without reason or necessity. Furthermore, we need to demythologize the notion that desirable social consequences flow *automatically* from regenerative personal changes. Professor Bernard Ramm is right:

The assurances so frequently given from the pulpit that if we can change enough hearts we will change society cannot be entirely believed. . . . More is needed in our present situation than changed hearts. There must be just programs and righteous policies.

Being a both/and person is recommended. It gets you closer to reality.





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