

world vision APRIL 1981

*broken
apart
by war*

EL SALVADOR



**PERSISTENT
CARING
AMID THE
CHAOS**

**SHORT-TERM
SHELTER
IN HONDURAS**

**JOSH McDOWELL
ON JESUS'
RESURRECTION**



Children at the outskirts of El Salvador's capital city, San Salvador, view the bodies of recent victims of their country's violence.

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Yes, He did arise!

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Si!

Political cartoonist Interlandi stirred some pathos into his ink before he drew the one for the *Los Angeles Times'* March 5 editorial page. He showed two gaunt civilian Salvadorans standing near a wall on which someone had scrawled:

Communist no!

Fascist no!

Yanqui no!

Beneath that graffiti one of the two was saying to the other: “El Salvador—si!”

World Vision workers in that embattled Central American country can identify with that spirit. They labor on, despite increasing peril from extremists at both ends and even from the U.S.-supported government, simply because they love the people of all political persuasions and non-persuasions who are caught in the wild crossfire.

They're motivated by the One for whom the country is named.

We cannot predict how Salvadoran Christians will celebrate Good Friday and Easter this year. But whether they worship in a church or in some bullet-shattered shack, their hope is in the slain-yet-living Savior. And in those He sends to counter hatred with His love and peace.

David Olson

EL SALVADOR IN TURMOIL

“The Savior”— broken apart by war

by Kenny Waters

In Spanish, “El Salvador” means “The Savior.” But when you talk about the Central American nation of El Salvador, you might talk about *political power*. It’s a densely populated country of five million people ruled for decades by a small group of landowners. These families, in concert with the military, wield tremendous power over the political and economic life of the people. But that is changing.

You might talk about *violence*. Elements of the general population, desiring a broader distribution of wealth and political power, began demanding reform. Often violently. A military-civilian junta was installed in 1979, too late, some say, to stop the polarization of political forces. So the fighting continues. During the past year more than 12,000 people were killed, including three children

A Salvadoran keeps his pistol ready as the funeral for Archbishop Oscar Romero erupts in violence.



sponsored through World Vision. Another 150,000 people are homeless within the country; more than 100,000 are reported to be refugees in countries from Panama to the United States.

You might talk about *the church*. In this predominantly Roman Catholic country, Catholics are split politically; some have spoken out against the government while others support the current regime. Among those who have spoken against the government were four American nuns and San Salvador's Archbishop Oscar Romero. They were all assassinated by unknown killers. Protestants, too, have been killed.

Or you might talk about the *larger issues* that seem so important to politicians and the media. Although El Salvador is considered in the United States' "sphere of influence,"

governments from around the world are supplying money, guns and other aid to one side or another. Charges and countercharges flit across the news as rhetoricians trade point and counterpoint.

The eight grandchildren of Don Jose Romero (ranging in age from four to thirteen) couldn't care less about power and international intrigue.

They would like more food.

Maybe a bath to wash some of the dust off their bodies.

After a bath, maybe some hand-me-down clothes, if they're not too baggy.

"There will be more than 10,000 orphans in El Salvador by the time this conflict ends."

Some medicine to take away the worms and the hacking cough that could turn into tuberculosis.

And some peace.

The Romero grandchildren are refugees. They are among 30,000 Salvadorans now living in Honduras. They live in an open-air market in the small village of Colomoncagua, about three miles from the El Salvador border. Approximately 5000 refugees are staying in this area among a population of 800 Hondurans who eke out a living as subsistence farmers.

Don Jose Romero tells a story similar to those of many other Salvadoran refugees.

"I was a farmer in Canton Guacayma, growing corn and other vegetables," he recalls. "One day there was noise and bullets and fire all around. My house was burned down and the soldiers threatened to kill me. My wife and I took our grandchildren and ran."



For eight days the Romero family wandered the Salvadoran countryside, scavenging and begging food and water. When they reached the River Tarola, they crossed into Honduras, eventually reaching Colomoncagua.

Many of the refugees who arrive in Colomoncagua are in great need (see article on page 8). Gradually, those needs are being met. And in meeting them, World Vision and other agencies are introducing a new word into the Salvadoran conversational vocabulary—hope.

For even in the midst of this heart-breaking and frustrating documentary of human suffering, a light is shining. "El Salvador"—Jesus Christ—is attempting to meet the physical and spiritual needs of Salvadorans through His people, the church.

World Vision, with help from the United Nations High Commissioner for

"My house was burned down and the soldiers threatened to kill me. My wife and I took our grandchildren and ran."

Refugees (UNHCR) and the government of Alberta, Canada, has earmarked more than \$400,000 to help the Salvadoran people.

Inside the country, Field Director Julio Contreras estimates that nearly 100 tons of food (beans, corn, milk powder), mattresses, cooking utensils and medicines have been distributed to people rendered homeless by the fighting. Often these people huddle at schools assisted by World Vision.

Project workers, often braving death by ambush, travel to World Vision's national office in San Salvador to pick up relief supplies for their people.

World Vision is active on several fronts in Honduras.

In Colomoncagua, World Vision loaned one of its project workers, Edgardo Flores, to the UNHCR. Flores is helping to organize the refugee camp construction. He is also making sure that emergency medical needs are met and food arrives on time. When he first came to Colomoncagua, he brought with him \$2000 worth of World Vision-supplied baby formula and bottles.

Flores met recently with World Vision's Latin America relief and rehabilitation coordinator, Stu Willcuts. Willcuts promised to rush plastic sheeting to cover the market area; he began a search for more protein supplement for the children; and he, along with Honduran Field Director Benjamin Esparza, formulated plans to supply several World Vision project workers to assist Flores.

"We will probably be asked to oversee a number of refugee camps to be built in this area," Willcuts said at Colomoncagua. Already World Vision food is reaching the small village. Also, a French medical team is meeting emergency health needs. The Red Cross has supplied 300 tents for use in the refugee camps.

Salvadoran refugee children are hungry, poorly clothed, sick, and bewildered by the conflict that has forced them to leave home.



Don Jose Romero, 55, escaped with his wife and eight grandchildren from their besieged farm in El Salvador.

The local residents of Colomoncagua have not welcomed the influx of refugees. Elsewhere in Honduras, however, the refugees have been openly accepted. In the village of Guarita, one Honduran family provided shelter for nearly a hundred people.

Out of these first acts of kindness has evolved a World Vision-assisted "help for help" program. Salvadoran refugees receive food and other emergency care. In exchange, they help Hondurans with renovations of public buildings such as schools and churches. The helpers program has also rebuilt 48 kilometers of roads in the area.

The Salvadorans have been making pottery that World Vision purchases and passes on to newly arrived refugees. The Salvadorans have also taught hammock-making to the Hondurans. This sense of community sharing has had many positive benefits, according to Flores, who worked earlier in Guarita.

He noted that many of the Salvadorans, often with help from Hondurans, have constructed small houses of bamboo and mud. More than 400 homes have been built in the Guarita area.

"But our biggest accomplishment around Guarita has been in providing





This six-year-old girl (left) was temporarily separated from her family when soldiers stormed into their village. She then witnessed the violent death of her father.

spiritual help to the people," Flores said. Many of the children, he explained, have been traumatized by the conflict. Their parents aren't in much better shape.

He told the story of a six-year-old girl who arrived in Honduras with her mother and three-month-old sister. Government soldiers had stormed their little village in El Salvador, shooting men, women and children indiscriminately. During the hours of tension, the family was separated. Later the girl was reunited with her mother and sister.

"Where's Daddy?" the mother asked.

"He was on the floor with blood all over his face," the little daughter responded. Then she burst into tears.

To help people like this, World Vision began supporting local church outreach.

"When I first came with Rupert Gregorio (our evangelism coord-

inator), there were only three Protestants," Flores recalled. "The Catholics weren't very active, either. We decided to hold a meeting. We met on September 30 with 12 people. Gradually the word spread, and by the first of November we had 70 members.

"At Christmas we put on a play about the three wise men. We fixed about 300 tamales, a traditional part of

our Christmas dinner. We invited everyone to come. About 600 people showed up. Few brought food; but everyone ate. And, you know . . . we had tamales left over which we shared with some people down at the Catholic church. It reminded me of the story of the loaves and the fishes."

By New Year's, when a full-time Friends Church pastor arrived, the

World Vision is making plans for further aid in a situation that is expected to get worse before it gets better.



Julio Contreras directs World Vision's work in El Salvador.

congregation had 109 members, 60 of whom were refugees.

"It blessed us to see such growth in an area with 2500 refugees and maybe 1400 local villagers," Flores said.

"When the minister arrived, Rupert began going door to door to share Jesus and see if people had any needs. Many people along the border, especially the Salvadorans, are spiritually starved. They're scared and feel like there is no one to trust. The love of Christ is a big comfort."

Edgardo's observations are borne out by Julio Contreras, who says the churches inside El Salvador are more crowded than ever.

"People are really searching for help," he notes.

Among many traumatized people, talk of the future has little meaning. The present, all-consuming goal is to survive *today*. Tomorrow will come soon enough. That sentiment is shared by many Salvadorans both inside and outside the country.

But World Vision's staff is thinking of the future. They are already making plans for further aid in a situation that

"Many people along the border, especially the Salvadorans, are spiritually starved."

is expected to get worse before it gets better.

In Honduras, World Vision will continue meeting refugees' emergency needs in cooperation with the UNHCR and the Honduran evangelical relief agency, CEDEN. In Belize, a plan is being readied to help 5000 Salvadorans. In Guatemala, disaster preparedness is being taught to local pastors so they can help an expected influx of Salvadoran refugees.

And Julio Contreras and Stu Willcuts



are working on a relief, rehabilitation and development plan for the people of El Salvador. The magnitude of the World Vision program will depend on the generosity of World Vision donors. Willcuts notes, however, that his initial estimate calls for at least a half-million-dollar expenditure over the next few months. More than 50 villages will be aided.

The saddest victims of this war, of course, are the children—especially those orphaned by the fighting.

"There will be more than 10,000 orphans in El Salvador by the time this conflict ends," Dr. Contreras predicts. "We will challenge churches to take care of orphans in their village, not by establishing orphanages, but by taking the parentless children into homes and integrating them into new families. That is the least traumatic thing that can be done."

Throughout Central America now are hundreds of thousands of scared, lonely and bewildered children. Many have watched a parent die; many are hungry, poorly clothed, sick. Uprooted, often living in a strange land, they may be permanently damaged in spirit, jolted into a life of cynicism and despair. Certainly when they talk about their homeland and utter the words "El Salvador," they won't be thinking much about the person their country was named for. And that's why Christians, through World Vision and other agencies, are taking "The Savior" to the Salvadoran people. He is their only hope. □

Kenny Waters is a journalist for World Vision International.

Help the Salvadorans

World Vision has 59 ongoing projects in El Salvador—including child assistance, relief, community improvement and evangelism.

In addition, World Vision donors have already helped at least 60,000 Salvadorans both inside and outside the war-torn country, with vital emergency food, household supplies and medical care. In a situation that is likely to get worse before it gets better, much more needs to be done. If you would like to join in helping Salvadorans at their time of greatest need, please use the envelope in the center of this magazine.

Colomoncagua: an uncertain sanctuary

by Dina Perez de Scott

Fireballs hurtled from the sky. The village was devastated. Anything that moved was wiped out.

Mirna Diaz gathered her four children—Candelaria, 8; Luis, 5; Rosa Amanda, 3; and Sesibel, 2. They cried hysterically as they watched their small adobe hut burn down. No one could understand what was happening. All they knew was they had to flee, quickly.

Meanwhile Mirna's husband stopped working in the cornfield and ran to his family. "Let's get out of here," he yelled.

Together they fled through the bushes. As they ran they heard soldiers telling them to return or they would be torched. They did not care. They continued to run, frightened and bewildered.

For 15 days, the Diaz family wandered through the scrub brush and pine-covered slopes of eastern El Salvador, scavenging or stealing whatever food they could find. Then they decided to seek refuge in Honduras.

They crossed the River Tarola without incident, only to be told by other refugees that the Honduran army was suspicious of refugees and might send them back to El Salvador. So the Diaz family wandered in the woods for a few more days until they finally sought refuge in the small Honduran village of Colomoncagua. When they arrived, 2500 other refugees had already crammed into every available public space in the village normally populated by 800 residents.

But for the moment, at least, they were safe.





Salvadorans try to make home out of a Honduran village's marketplace.

Two weeks later I came to Honduras with World Vision staffers Stu Willcuts and Kenny Waters. Stu had been coordinating relief efforts for Salvadoran refugees from our Latin America regional office in Costa Rica. Kenny, from the International Communications office, had come to Latin America to teach communication skills to some of the staff.

We came to Colomoncagua at the request of Edgardo Flores, a World Vision worker on loan to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). Edgardo was in Colomoncagua to coordinate the refugee situation there, to set up food distribution and to check into the feasibility of establishing a refugee camp.

While touring the crammed public marketplace, I met Mirna Diaz. She was sitting against a stone wall in the little area that was "home" for her family. Their "roof" was a few eucalyptus branches. Children wailed from hunger nearby, and there was a stench of urine and sweat in the air.

Mirna told me about her escape from El Salvador. Her story, I was to learn, is similar to many told here in Colomoncagua.

As we talked, I noticed that her right leg was heavily bandaged.

"What happened?" I asked.

"About ten days ago I was walking here in the marketplace and I fell down. I broke my leg," she said. "There are some French doctors here right now and they helped me. But they don't have a cast, so I have to sit here until one arrives. . . ."

I asked her if her leg hurt and she said no, she had been given some pills to help her.

"What do you hope will happen—now that you are momentarily safe in Colomoncagua?"

"Only God knows what will happen to us," she answered. "For my part, I

Mirna Diaz



“This whole thing is a nightmare, something we cannot believe is happening to us.”

tell my children that one day we will be out of this nightmare. I try to give myself some hope, too. In fact, this whole thing is a nightmare, something we cannot believe is happening to us. We have the hope that any minute we will wake up and it will be over.”

I wandered away, saddened by Mirna’s words. My reverie didn’t last long, though. Immediately I was accosted by a group of refugee women who wanted to know if it was true that the Salvadoran soldiers would soon come to shoot them up. I said I didn’t think so, that the people here were trying to help them. They felt better; they wanted to hear something good, to be told they were safe for the moment.

I caught up with Edgardo Flores, the UNHCR coordinator. “The everyday life of the village has been upset by the presence of the refugees who are unwanted here,” he said. “The Catholic and the Protestant churches are taken, as well as the marketplace and the medical dispensary. The villagers cannot celebrate properly

inside the church because the refugees are here. The market days are over while the refugees are still around.”

I asked Edgardo about the villagers’ attitude toward the agencies, like World Vision, that are helping the refugees. “They are rather hostile toward any person who may look like help to the refugees. *If they are helped, the villagers think, they will never leave.*” The local store would not even sell a soda pop to us when we asked.

Edgardo then took us to visit what he hopes will be a provisional refugee camp. We walked for about 20 minutes away from Colomoncagua, onto the property of Don Miguel. Don

Miguel is renting part of his land to the UNHCR, a very brave gesture.

The Red Cross has donated 300 tents—still not enough. The tents had been pitched on Don Miguel’s property, lined up in “streets.” The families are being transferred one by one after being given a clean bill of health. “The refugees themselves are building the latrines,” Edgardo said. “The materials are rather difficult to obtain, but we are doing our best. Our goal is to build one latrine for every ten people.”

Edgardo went on to explain that the Honduran army wanted to build the refugee camp less than a mile from the Salvadoran border. That was why the refugees were afraid. They feared that if they lived in a camp close to the border, the Salvadoran army might come to harm them.

“Why this fear?” I queried.

Edgardo said he didn’t know for sure, but he gathered from the Honduran villagers and army personnel that some of the refugees were suspected guerrilla sympathizers. He said that about 80 percent of the refugees in Colomoncagua were women and children. When asked where the men were, they all replied with a stock answer: “I don’t know.”

The sameness of the answer, Edgardo said, had made the Hondurans suspect that some of the men were fighting against the Salvadoran army—hence the refugees’ fear of army retaliation.

Edgardo and Stu Willcuts noted that the condition of the people—regardless of their politics—was

Some honeymoon!

Edgardo Flores and his fiancée, Carmen, were scheduled to be married on three different occasions. Each time, the wedding was delayed.

“A few days before each date, someone from World Vision would come to Guarita, Honduras, needing to see some of the refugees,” Edgardo recalls. “So we had to postpone.”

Finally, after Edgardo’s concern for a large influx of refugees prompted him to postpone the wedding for the third time, Carmen said, “That’s it.”

Edgardo knew he’d better act fast.

So the day he returned from his fact-finding tour he went to her and said, “Let’s get married right now. Today. We’ll go find the justice of the peace.”

They were married that day.

Where did they honeymoon?

“We trampled the bush in the frontier area of Honduras, looking for Salvadoran refugees,” Edgardo said. “My wife, World Vision’s Stu Willcuts and I—it was a unique honeymoon.”

Edgardo and Carmen now work together among the refugees in Colomoncagua. □

Red Cross tents make a provisional camp for unwanted refugees near Colomoncagua.



desperate. One child a day was dying from dysentery, meningitis or lung disease. Children were being born daily in a makeshift maternity ward in the Catholic church.

As we prepared to leave that day, Stu promised Edgardo he would begin working to bring in plastic roofing material for the marketplace, get high-protein mix for supplemental baby feeding, and bring a World Vision project worker to Colomoncagua immediately. Edgardo thanked him and noted that already food from

The condition of the people—regardless of their politics—was desperate. One child a day was dying. . . .

World Vision was arriving, along with aid from other organizations. Also, a team of Honduran medical students were arriving soon to inoculate the refugee children.

The time came for us to leave Colomoncagua and return to the Honduran capital. It was burning hot. I was thinking how nice it would be to get back to our missionary airplane, lift off from the rock-strewn soccer field, get back to “civilization” and a cold drink.

But then I thought about Mirna and her future. I was leaving her behind.

How would she fare? Would her leg be okay? And what sort of future would she and her family have now?

As I asked myself these questions, I thought about what Edgardo had said earlier in the day about World Vision’s evangelism program among the refugees. Before coming to Colomoncagua to work with the UNHCR, he had been ministering Jesus to refugees

in the Guarita area of Honduras. He said that about 100 of the people had accepted Christ during the past few months.

That gave me peace. I knew that when the World Vision project worker arrived in Colomoncagua, he too would continue sharing Jesus with Mirna and the others. They would know that someone cared not only about their need for food and shelter, but about their need for the love of God’s Son.

I prayed that Mirna would be healed, not only to walk again, but to walk anew with Jesus Christ. □

Dina Perez de Scott is director of communications for World Vision in Guatemala.

Yes, He arise

by Josh McDowell

Few people were ever more sincere than I in trying—without success—to find meaning, truth and purpose to life.

But at the university I noticed a small group of people—eight students and two faculty members—with something different about their lives. They seemed to know what they believed and why.

I wanted what I saw. So I decided to make friends with these intriguing people.

Two weeks later, while I was sitting with some of them at a table in the student union, the conversation began to

center on God. That bothered me, because I thought it was not intellectual. And yet I was curious.

Leaning back in my chair (I didn't want anyone to think I was too interested), I said to one of the students, "Tell me, what has made you so different from others?"

She looked me in the eye and with a little smile said two words I never thought I'd hear in a university as part of a solution. She simply said: "Jesus Christ."

My response revealed my bias and my ignorance. "Oh, for heaven's sake," I said, "Don't give me that garbage about religion."

To which she replied: "I didn't say religion. I said Jesus Christ."

e adid

My new friends challenged me to examine the claims that Jesus Christ is God's Son and that He, taking on human flesh, lived among real men and women and died on the cross for the sins of mankind; that He was buried and arose three days later, and that He could change a person's life in the twentieth century.

I thought it was a farce. I thought most Christians were walking idiots. But these people were persistent. Finally, I accepted their challenge—out of pride, to refute them. I didn't know there was evidence that a person could evaluate intellectually.

After much study and research I concluded that, yes, Jesus Christ was indeed who he claimed to be. I ended up becoming a Christian. And since then I have spent 14 years documenting why I believe that faith in Jesus Christ makes sense.

One of the crucial areas of my research to refute Christianity centered around His resurrection. More than 1000 hours of studying this subject showed me that the resurrection of Jesus Christ was either one of the most wicked, heartless, vicious hoaxes ever foisted upon human minds,

or it was the most fantastic fact of history.

Jesus of Nazareth, a Jewish prophet, claimed to be the Christ prophesied in the Jewish Scriptures. He was arrested, judged a political criminal, and crucified. Three days after His death and burial, some women went to His tomb and found the body gone. His disciples claimed that God had raised Him from the dead and that He had appeared to them and to many others at various times before ascending into heaven. From this foundation, Christianity spread throughout the Roman Empire and has continued to exert great influence down through the centuries.

In my attempt to refute Christianity, I made some startling observations about the resurrection—things of which I had previously been unaware.

The testimony of history, for example. Until I did that research, I had no idea there was so much positive historical, literary and legal testimony supporting the factuality of Christ's resurrection. But the more I investigated, the more

evidence I found from scholars in all three fields.

Among the books I read was one by Frank Morrison, a lawyer who had been brought up in a rationalistic environment and who had held the opinion that the resurrection was only a fairy-tale happy ending that spoiled the biographies of Jesus. I read how Morrison had set out to write a book to dispel the myth. But I read also how his findings compelled him to conclude that Jesus surely did rise from the dead.

My own research led me to the same conclusion. And I came to see why the Apostle Paul had said, "If Christ has not been raised, your faith is worthless."

Jesus' foretelling of His resurrection was another of my startling observations. Prior to Jesus' death, He took His disciples aside and told them, "Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem. And the Son of Man will be delivered to the death. They will deliver Him to the Gentiles to mock, and to scourge, and to crucify Him. And on the third day He will be raised up."

Intelligent faith—this observation was quite an eye-opener. I'd been like the scoffer who said faith is "an illogical belief in the occurrence of the improbable." But the more I studied the historical-biblical Christian faith the more I realized it is a thinking person's faith. As Jesus said, "You shall know the truth [not ignore it] and the truth shall make you free."

The great commandment tells me to love the Lord our God not only with my heart but with my mind. Never is any person called upon to commit intellectual suicide in trusting Christ as Savior and

Lord. Instead, we are told to be ready always to give an answer as to why we believe.

That does not rule out the possibility of miracles. John Warwick Montgomery, dean of Simon Greenleaf School of Law, arguing against the notion that all events must have a natural explanation, says:

"Since Einstein, no modern has had the right to rule out the possibility of events because of prior knowledge of 'natural law.' The only way we can know whether an event can occur is to see whether in fact it has occurred. The problem of miracles, then, must be solved in the realm of historical investigation, not in the realm of philosophical speculation."

But alongside the scholarly evidence for the resurrection, there is *circumstantial* evidence—*what's happened to me.*

Having set out to refute the resurrection and Christianity, and then having been compelled by the evidence that Jesus Christ was indeed exactly who He claimed to be—and that He indeed rose from the dead, I faced a new problem. My mind was telling me, "Christianity is true," but my will was saying, "Don't admit it."

Every time I was around those enthusiastic Christians, my inner conflict would start again. It came to the point where I'd go to bed at ten and wouldn't fall asleep until four in the morning. I knew I had to get Jesus off my mind or go out of my mind.

On December 19, 1959, at 8:30 P.M., I became a Christian.

I prayed four things that night, to establish a relationship with the resurrected,



Josh McDowell has spoken in at least 580 universities in 58 countries. Now a traveling speaker for Campus Crusade for Christ, he is the author of Evidence that Demands a Verdict and Daniel in the Critics' Den, plus several other books showing that the Christian faith is based not on myth or legend but on historical fact.

This article is excerpted, with permission, from portions of a forthcoming book, The Resurrection Factor, in which he relates highlights of his research on Jesus' death and resurrection. (Here's Life Publishers, San Bernardino, 1981, \$4.95.)

My mind was telling me, "Christianity is true," but my will was saying, "Don't admit it."

living Christ who has since transformed my life. First, I said, "Lord Jesus, thank you for dying on the cross for me." Second, I said, "I confess those things in my life that are not pleasing to you. I ask you to forgive and cleanse me." (The Bible says, "Though your sins are as scarlet they will be white as snow.") Third, I said, "Right now, in the best way I know how, I open the door of my heart and life, and I trust you as my Savior and Lord. Take control of my life. Change me from the inside out. Make me the kind of person you created me to be."

The last thing I prayed was, "Thank you for coming into my life by faith." It was a faith based not on ignorance but on evidence of the facts of history and God's Word.

After I prayed, nothing happened. There was no bolt of lightning. I even said to myself, "Oh, no! What'd I get sucked into now?" I felt I'd gone off the deep end. And some of my friends agreed. But I can tell you now that in six months to a year-and-a-half I found that I definitely had not gone off the deep end.

Later, in a debate with the head of the history department of a midwestern university, I said that my life had been changed. My opponent interrupted me to say, "McDowell, are you trying to tell us that God really changed your life in the twentieth century? In what areas?"

After 45 minutes of my describing changes, he said, "Okay, that's enough."

One area I told him about was the mental peace I had finally found. Another was control of my previously uncontrollable temper. And old hatreds gradually turning to love.

I remember the day my alcoholic father—whom I had hated for years—recognized the change in me. "Son," he said, "how can you love a father like me?"

"Dad," I replied, "Six months ago I despised you. But I've let Christ come into my life. I can't explain it completely,

but as a result of my relationship with Him I've found the capacity to love and accept not only you, but other people, just the way they are."

That day, I had one of the greatest thrills of my life. Dad told me, "Son, if God can do in my life what I've seen Him do in yours, I want to give Him the opportunity." Right there, he prayed with me and trusted Christ. And *his* life changed—before my eyes. He touched whiskey only once after that. He got it as far as his lips and that was it.

You can laugh at Christianity; you can mock and ridicule it. But it works. It changes lives.

Christianity is not something that can be forced on anyone. All I can do is tell what I've learned. Beyond that, it's your own decision.

Christ was raised from the dead. He lives. He has the infinite capacity to enter your life, forgive you, and change you from the inside out. □

If you . . .

"If you confess with your mouth, 'Jesus is Lord,' and believe in your heart that God has raised him from the dead, you will be saved." So wrote the Apostle Paul in Romans 10:9.

To honestly acknowledge Jesus' lordship is no small thing. It implies letting Him be *your* Lord.

To believe in your heart that God raised Him—that's no small thing either. It implies trusting Him with your eternal destiny.

But it's the path to peace with God, to a new life, eternal life.

If you have not yet made that acknowledgment and that heart response, we at World Vision urge you to open your mind and heart to the Bible's four crucifixion/resurrection accounts (Matthew 26-28, Mark 14-16, Luke 22-24, John 18-20), plus Paul's resurrection chapter (1 Corinthians 15)—and then simply to yield to the truth that God reveals through those passages.

Seek spiritual counsel, too, from the pastor or other member of a Christ-centered church near you. And please feel free to write us at WORLD VISION magazine if you'd like other helpful literature on knowing the risen Christ as Savior and Lord.

David Olson

Samaritan sampler

Here are some ways people are helping others in the name of Christ. And some ideas for your own possible involvement.



Tom Claus brings help to a Navajo family.

Native American Christian leaders will gather May 26-30 at the University of Oklahoma for "SONrise '81." The congress will focus on evangelization and ministry among the 1200 tribes (about 20 million people) in North and South America. Seven hundred of the tribes have an indigenous Christian church; fewer than 2 percent of the native people are practicing Christians.

Workshops will deal with evangelism, church growth, urban outreach, alcoholism, social needs and family relations. Indian speakers will include Tom Claus (Mohawk), Tommy Francis (Cree), Tito Paredes (Quechua) and Peter MacDonald (Navajo). The congress, sponsored by the Christian Hope Indian Eskimo Fellowship, will aim to foster unity among all Christian native people.

Jews for Jesus has a program of sending personalized letters of witness to unbelieving Jewish people anywhere in the United

States. These letters share the gospel in a Jewish context and are signed by Moishe Rosen, leader of the organization. If you would like one of your Jewish friends or co-workers to receive such a letter, please send the name and address to Jews for Jesus, 60 Haight Street, San Francisco, CA 94102. On request you can get a sample copy of the letter.

Sponsors of Indochinese refugees will be interested to know that they can obtain paks consisting of cassette tapes, a New Testament and Christian literature, all in the refugee's language. Produced by the Far East Broadcasting Company (FEBC), the cassettes give a clear presentation of the gospel, as well as practical advice on adjusting to life in the United States. The media-paks are available in Vietnamese, Cambodian, Lao and Hmong. Paks cost \$8 to put together, but are offered on a donation basis. Write Project SHARE, FEBC, Box 1, La Mirada, CA 90637.

The Shoulder offers a residential rehabilitation program to men aged 18 or older who have drug or alcohol problems. Executive Director Don DeVos has designed the center's program to deal with the needs of the whole person—physical, mental, emotional and spiritual. The one to two year program offers food, clothing, housing, counseling, medical care, vocational training, physical fitness training and spiritual guidance. Staff members include a medical doctor, a psychologist, a dentist and two nutritionists. For more information write The Shoulder, P.O. Box 4300, Houston, TX 77210, or call (713) 741-8300.

Jubilee 1981 convened in early March in Pittsburgh, where more than 2000 college students focused on the application of Christian principles to the marketplace. Featured speakers were William Diehl, manager of sales for Bethlehem Steel Corporation, and John Perkins, president of Voice of Calvary Ministries in Jackson, Mississippi. Seminars examined the application of Christian faith to such areas as law, education, medicine, the arts and sciences.

African Enterprise has established an inter-racial center in South Africa to serve as a model of reconciliation. Groups of Christians from white, black, coloured and Asian communities of South Africa will mingle at the center, interact, and receive training in Christian missions.

A prayer calendar has been developed jointly by leaders of Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship, International Students, Inc., The Navigators, and Campus Crusade for Christ. It is designed to "unite thousands of students in prayer for the fulfillment of the Great Commission." The international calendar contains introductory statements by the presidents of the cooperating groups calling for an extensive prayer effort on behalf of the people of the world.

Agape Social Services, formerly known as Los Milagros (Spanish for "The Miracles"), helps American couples adopt orphaned and abandoned children from Central America. The Texas-based group has placed 115 children so far, and is seeking to be licensed as an adoption agency. Once licensed, it will accept adoption applications nationwide. Agape's address is 2006 Reagan Blvd., Carrollton, TX 75006.

Overseas Counseling Service, an agency that helps missions-motivated Christians find secular employment/study/service opportunities in other countries, has expanded to where its California office needs two more employees: an administrative assistant and a counselor with some overseas experience. If you are interested in either position, you can learn about the qualifications and other particulars by phoning (213) 794-4714 or (213) 794-1972, or by writing Ruth Siemens, 1060 N. Allen, #206, Pasadena, CA 91104.

With love, from Gilly

by Marjorie Phillips

Take a sun-drenched crescent of jagged, green mountains; surround it with transparent seas. Populate it thickly with French-speaking descendants of African slaves. Add the deepest poverty in all of Latin America. Infuse it with voodoo sorcery and fear. There you have the nation of Haiti.

Haiti constitutes the western one-third of a lobster-shaped island in the Caribbean. If the adjacent Dominican Republic can be thought of as the body of the lobster, Haiti is the claws. Its sharp mandibles reach hungrily northwestward for Cuba and Miami, Florida.

Hunger is no stranger in Haiti. Most Haitians scrape out a bare existence on minute plots of land. Most city dwellers cling together in makeshift houses that cluster along the ravines and steep hillsides of Port au Prince or Cap Haitien. A few of the more fortunate enter trades and professions—or immigrate to other places. For the majority, the need for food is an urgent, daily concern.

Children there suffer the most—and for reasons that a casual visitor to the island could easily overlook. One important cause, says Christian nurse Brenda Gilfillen, is parental neglect.

Gilly (that's her nickname), a slender, dark-haired young woman from New Richmond, Ohio, works with severely malnourished children in Port au Prince. When I recently visited her there, she

explained, "It's the mothers—so many are unconcerned. They don't take care of their children. It has to be Satan's power to blind a mother to where she neglects her own child."

Knowing something about Haiti's complicated poverty problem, I wondered whether Gilly's assessment might be a bit too simplistic. The vivid light of a Haitian morning had touched the top of the ravine above her home. A passing truck threw dust into the air, causing her parrots to set up a shrill squawking. Laughing at the confusion, she waited for it to quiet down, and continued, "Mothers who come to Christ are not like that, though. For one thing, the power of the voodoo religion is broken in their lives. For another, they start to have compassion. In Christian homes, even severely malnourished children are being cured."

"Gilly," I asked, "what brought you here?" I knew something of her

background already. She had trained as a registered nurse at Deaconess Hospital in Cincinnati. She went on for a degree in Bible at San Jose Bible College in California. Graduating in 1974, she went to help out for three months in Haiti—where she has been ever since.

"Why am I here?" she laughed. "That's what I asked myself the first two years! I drove a truck hauling

"I don't feel that I've done without anything. God provides for me completely."



Gilly and a Haitian child are mutually amused.

Vivid lessons in Latin life

From the Other's Point of View by J. Daniel Hess, Herald Press, Scottsdale, PA 15683, 1980. 272 pages, \$7.95. Reviewed by Paul M. Schrock.

"This book shows not only how grossly we Americans fail to understand Latins, but also how hard it is for Latins to understand us." So said Eugene A. Nida, translations secretary for the American Bible Society, in a pre-publication review. "And it reveals what communication is all about."

Although the book includes a section of shocking photographs with startling captions, its realism is primarily in word pictures which depict Latin life more effectively than sociological statistics or government survey reports ever could.

Daniel Hess, professor of communication at Goshen (Indiana) College, has directed the school's international program in Costa Rica. ("Not until I left the United States did I realize that I was a yankee, a gringo, an Anglo-Saxon, an imperialist, or a rich man.")

Hess grew up on a Pennsylvania farm. ("Not until I entered the town's consolidated school did I realize that I was a country boy.") He earned his doctorate from Syracuse University. ("Not until I enrolled in graduate school did I realize that I was a Mennonite.")

The seven chapters in *From the Other's Point of View* grow from documented accounts of real persons. The book deals with the toughest problems which separate and alienate North America from Latin America: poverty, economic imperialism, Americans' often callous disregard for other values, and our insensitivity to our continental neighbors' sufferings and joys.

"My intention," Hess says, "is to remind the reader that if we all knew a bit more about the nature of communication across cultures, we might not be so cavalier about our role in world community." □

have the love of Jesus in them, they're beautiful! Christian Haitians aren't living for themselves anymore. They start to have a sharing spirit, a giving spirit."

I thought back to the year the Lord brought Gilly into my life in California. I remembered what a sharing, giving spirit I had seen in her. She worked nights on a Christian "hotline." She was also friend/counselor/sister to a houseful of teenage girls who, for various reasons, had left home. She did all this while completing her degree at San Jose.

About those days, she remarked: "I drove my VW bug for five days to get to California. Life in San Jose was full of change and growth for me. During this time, I allowed God to heal my rebelliousness. God is so great! He moves us around when He wants, where He wants—if we are willing. I keep praying for that willingness—even to leave Haiti if He asks me to.

"Sometimes I get too much into thinking I like it here, I'm at home here. I don't feel that I've done without anything. God provides for me completely. I wouldn't want to live any other way. Even if I were in the States, I would live in the same old way. I want to be helping people. It's within me; it's a gift God has given. I praise Him for it."

I knew that Gilly had given away her little symbol of independence before she left for Haiti: the Volkswagen bug she had driven from Ohio to California. Yet now she could say, "I don't feel I've done without anything." What was the secret of Gilly's wonderful contentment?

I found at least part of the answer in the closing words of a recent letter from her. "The Lord is my strength. It is the power of the Holy Spirit that enables any part of what I do to glorify His name." The letter's concluding words characterize her life and ministry: "With love, from Gilly." □

Marjorie Phillips lives in Redmond, Washington.

materials for a church building. I kept books and did nursing in a T.B. hospital. But never during that time did I have any real chance to minister Jesus. God used it all, though. I would never have heard of a malnutrition clinic if I hadn't done the other things first."

Malnutrition clinic? This was new to me, too. I listened eagerly as she went on. "We have three clinics for nutrition here in Port au Prince, plus a general clinic. World Vision and Evangelical World Outreach helped us open our newest one in 1977. We feed children there who are moderately and severely undernourished. We also have classes to teach a balanced diet."

My mind skipped back to her earlier statement: "It has to be Satan's power to blind a mother. . . ." Was *he* really responsible for the unkempt, pot-bellied children I saw in Haiti?

Voodoo, I learned, is an animistic religious cult brought from Africa. It is heathenism near its worst—full of sorcery, fetishes and spine-chilling rituals. Christianity has, however, made a powerful impact on whole groups of animistic people, changing them from drunkenness, brutality, fear and degeneracy to wholesomeness and joy.

Eugene A. Nida, one of the foremost linguists in the United States, and a specialist in the languages and dialects of primitive peoples, said in his book *Introducing Animism*, "The impact of Christianity on the animistic culture has been both striking and profound. Fundamental . . . changes have occurred in the lives of hundreds of thousands of animistic peoples."

Gilly went on. "Rarely does a Christian here have a malnourished child. It's mostly the people in the voodoo. It's incredible, for instance, what they do to newborns. They express the first breast milk containing colostrum that a new baby needs, and give them oil instead. They tie a cord around the baby's neck, blessed by the voodoo priest, to insure that the teeth will come in right. They feed the demons in little house shrines, but don't feed their own children.

"Jesus really does remake these destructive lifestyles. Once people



MONTHLY MEMO

World Vision owes a great deal of gratitude to its keenly involved board of directors—14 highly qualified persons who are the final authority in all policy matters. Their commitment of time, talent and energy is deeply appreciated by our staff and by our supporters. This month I want to bring to your attention one key member, Mr. William Bone.

Bill Bone is founder and chairman of Sunrise Development Company in Rancho Mirage, California. Over the past several years he has made significant contributions to our thinking and strategy in long-range planning. Also he has helped us clarify key objectives of our evangelical enterprise.

Most recently Mr. Bone has played a key role as chairman of our finance committee, spending an average of one full day each month at our headquarters office to carry out these responsibilities. He has given valuable and wise counsel to many of our staff, and his special consulting with Stan Mooneyham and me has always been welcomed.

Early this year Mr. Bone traveled with Dr. Mooneyham to visit World Vision ministry projects in Africa and Asia, at his own expense. In this way he has enhanced his ability to help guide the direction of World Vision's activities.

We are so grateful for the kind of dedication demonstrated by Mr. Bone, and it is not untypical of our other board members. Rather, we are happy to say that each board member evidences this kind of serious involvement in the direction that together they give to World Vision.

For this I thank the Lord.

Ted W. Engstrom

Ted W. Engstrom
Executive Director

QUESTIONS PEOPLE ASK

More about child sponsorship

I've read that each sponsored child will receive an appropriate education. What do you mean?

A sponsored child receives a formal or informal education, depending upon the child's setting. That education can vary from literacy classes under the shade of a large tree, to the opportunity for a high-school education at a boarding school. It may include vocational training. A sponsored child is not required to attend school, although most parents are glad to see their children have the chance for an education.

In many developing countries, even a basic education is considered a luxury. When public education is provided, learning conditions are often far from ideal. In the cities, classrooms may be overcrowded. In the country, schools may offer only a few primary grades, and students must walk miles to reach them. Even when education is offered free, many parents cannot afford books or required uniforms. Others reluctantly ask their children to drop out of school to help support the family. In some areas, the only education available is at a private school.

We don't operate the school your sponsored child attends. In each location it is administered either by the government or by a church or other mission agency. Often World Vision's sponsors do supply most of the educational needs of the child, including tuition (where needed), books, uniforms and even shoes, if necessary, so he or she can walk to school. In many projects, literacy classes are offered to parents as well.

What about the child's spiritual growth?

Like education, Christian nurture varies from project to project. Where government regulations or local customs allow public teaching of the Christian faith, evangelism and Christian education are stressed. In a small number of countries, however, the Christian message cannot be presented openly. There, God's love is demonstrated through loving service and the personal witness of the project staff. Christian songs and Bible stories are also used to share Christ's message.

What type of food and health care is provided?

Hunger is a problem in many developing countries. Whenever the situation requires it, World Vision offers sponsored children one or several meals a day. In some projects, parents and others in the community are taught job skills so they can increase their income and then provide a better diet for their children. Training in animal husbandry and gardening is offered to help the parents provide food and earn some extra money. World Vision has helped villages form cooperatives to sell handicrafts and other products.

Health care is important, too. In addition to routine medical checkups, emergency medical treatment is given to sponsored children when necessary. World Vision strives to see that all sponsored children receive vaccinations. We also endeavor to teach parents the basics of nutrition, good hygiene, family planning and preventive health care. □

For answers to more of the questions people ask about child sponsorship, see the next two issues of this magazine—or last month's issue. If you don't find what you are wondering about, write us anytime.

The KIMA dams of Kenya

If you are one of the more than 60,000 members of World Vision's *Lifesharing Partners* program, you have been following the progress of a specific development project somewhere in the world. Perhaps in Kenya, or in Colombia, the Philippines, India, Upper Volta or one of several other countries.

You may even be one of the 1780 partners assigned to the KIMA dams project. If so, you are up-to-date on exciting things happening in southern Kenya. We hope you won't mind if we share "your" project's news with others.

Water is scarce in the region surrounding Kitui and Machakos, the two communities for which the KIMA project is named. Before the project started, women would often walk as many as 12 hours a day for water. The lack of water meant there was none to aid in farming. Malnutrition and resulting disease were common among the Wakamba tribespeople who live there.

World Vision began helping the people build dams in 1976, to provide water for drinking and vegetable farming. An

*Father and son
pick tomatoes
grown in the
community garden.*



ambitious goal of 20 dams was set at that time. So far, 17 have been completed.

Land that originally grew meager crops, if any at all, is now producing vegetables and fruit. This has resulted in more food and better health. The people are now concentrating on the best ways to use the newly available water for larger agricultural projects. Water from the dams has also helped bring people together, a fact that the local churches have not overlooked in their efforts to share the news of Jesus Christ.

The KIMA dams project is just one of 363 World Vision development projects.

In southern Kenya, dams were the key to healthier and more stable communities. In other places the people are getting help with farming methods, well digging, vocational training, education, literacy training, and a number of other tasks. In all these efforts, the goal is to help the people reach a point of stability after which they will no longer need outside help. It is a long process at times, but success brings great encouragement. Ask the people of Kitui and Machakos. Their lives will never be the same. □

*Project leaders survey the water
captured by one of the dams.*



Chad refugees in Sudan

Refugees from Chad's civil war have fled to remote areas of western Sudan. World Vision has already sent food, blankets, pharmaceuticals and tents to refugees in the Geneina area. A three-member relief team is being recruited to provide health care, food, medicine and other relief supplies. The work is being done in cooperation with the Sudan Council of Churches. About 9000 refugees will be helped.

Holistic help in India

World Vision recently approved four new development projects that will help villagers in rural India improve their lives. One such group of villagers is the Bhil tribal people near Pai village in

the state of Rajasthan. Their main occupation is dry-land agriculture. Most families do not have their own land, but must work as coolies for others. They are predominantly Hindus, illiterate and uneducated. Adequate water supplies and sanitation are not available. World Vision will address their basic needs by providing education, agricultural and cottage industry assistance, drinking water, nutritional supplements, and health care for children under five. The Rajasthan Pentecostal Church of Udaipur is conducting a thorough program of evangelistic witness at Pai. Nearly 2000 families will benefit.

Indonesian earthquake

Several hundred villagers in Irian Jaya,

Indonesia, were reported killed or missing after a recent earthquake. The Indonesian government responded with needed food and supplies, but asked for assistance in transporting the goods to the remote affected area. Missionary Aviation Fellowship, aided by a World Vision grant, took the supplies in by helicopter.

Ethiopia drought report

Ethiopians suffering from prolonged drought continue to receive emergency food, medical treatment, blankets and clothing through World Vision. The multimillion-dollar relief program is being aided considerably by the purchase of an airplane suited to flight and landing conditions in isolated areas of

MANAGING YOUR TIME

A two-day seminar for
pastors and Christian leaders



Ted Engstrom
Executive Director
World Vision



Ed Dayton
Vice-President
Mission and Evangelism
World Vision Int'l.

Mall to:

Norval Hadley/MYT, World Vision, 919
West Huntington Drive, Monrovia, CA 91016

(Check one. \$125 covers all costs. Make
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 Sept. 24-25, Dallas, TX
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Before and after. Seven-year-old Engor weighed less than 24 pounds when she was photographed last October in the famished Karamoja region of Uganda. She was unable to walk or speak. When World Vision's David Ward met Engor again in mid-January, he was gratified by what he saw. She had gained 13 pounds in response to regular feedings and treatment for tuberculosis. World Vision is involved in a large relief program in Karamoja, which includes giving seeds to farmers and administering measles vaccines to 11,000 children.



Grateful Ethiopian mother and child receive emergency food.

Ethiopia; several of the famine areas are accessible only by air. Missionary Aviation Fellowship will maintain the airplane in Addis Ababa.

The drought in Ethiopia is so prolonged that many are beginning to view it as a semi-permanent change in climate. According to Graeme Irvine, vice-president/field ministries for World Vision International, "A national commitment to population resettlement, integrated with a program of agricultural and rural water development, represents the only basis for a durable solution." World Vision is exploring the possibility of helping with such a program.

Flood victims aided

Victims of flooding in Costa Rica have received emergency supplies paid for by World Vision donors. The food, clothing and other items were purchased and distributed by Goodwill Caravans, an indigenous Christian service agency.

Work among Australian aborigines

World Vision supporters in Australia are making possible the establishment of a ministry among aboriginal people in their nation. The aborigines are an underdeveloped, underprivileged people struggling to find socio-cultural and economic identity in white-dominated Australia. World Vision's ministry will reach out to aboriginal Christian leaders and to youth. It will include community development through a model project.

Engstrom in China

World Vision's executive director, Ted W. Engstrom, traveled to China in March. Before leaving he commented, "Our Chinese brothers and sisters in Christ have a thriving 'house church' movement. While in China I hope to meet with some leaders of these congregations." Engstrom's itinerary included Shanghai, Nanking, Peking, Hangchow and Souchow. Watch for a report on his experiences in an upcoming issue of WORLD VISION magazine.

Day of prayer

World Vision is planning a special day of prayer on October 1, the beginning of a new fiscal year. Friends of World Vision will be encouraged to pray for World Vision's ministries on that day, and also to send in their prayer requests. Further announcements will be made as the time approaches.

Gave up corsages

Students at Bryan College in Dayton, Tennessee, raised \$918 to help relieve world hunger. They did it by agreeing to forego corsages normally worn at their college banquet. The money saved was sent to World Vision.

Injured receive aid

A train crash in Koforidua, Ghana, killed 20 to 30 persons and injured more than 200. Hospitals lacked the necessary drugs and supplies to treat the injured. World Vision responded with an immediate grant for emergency supplies.

Animals threatened in Kampuchea

A hoof-and-mouth epidemic has broken out in the Phnom Penh area of

Kampuchea, severely threatening the pig population. World Vision is helping with vaccines, veterinary services and food supplements to combat the disease. Last year, World Vision played a major role in reviving Kampuchea's small animal industry.

Moving? Please notify us in advance.

If possible, kindly send your new address (complete with new zip code) to World Vision six weeks before you move, along with the mailing label from the back page of the magazine.

Thank you!

Please pray for:

- **the Salvadoran people**—that peace might come to their nation and that many will find Christ in their present suffering.
- **the poor in America** who face more difficult times. Pray that the church—your congregation—will come to the aid of those who need it.
- **your neighbors** and relatives who don't have a personal relationship with Christ, that the significance of His death and resurrection will be revealed to them this Easter season.

SPONSOR TOUR OF THE ORIENT

August 3-21, 1981

A chance to see your sponsored child—and the Orient. The tour will visit Tokyo and Osaka, Japan; Seoul, Korea; Hong Kong; the Philippines and Hawaii.

An experienced tour director, Mr. George Hahn, will guide you in your travels. For more information and a travel brochure, write: Tour Director, Box O, Pasadena, California 91109.

Employment Opportunity

Personnel Manager needed to manage World Vision's complete personnel function, including employment, wage and salary, and benefits planning. Prefer five years experience minimum, with a background in benefits planning.

Send resume to John Minor, World Vision Personnel Office, 919 W. Huntington Dr., Monrovia, CA 91016.

Globe at a glance

NEWS BRIEFS FOR YOUR INFORMATION AND INTERSESSION

"If public welfare should be reduced by government," postulated D. James Kennedy at a convention of religious broadcasters, "... the Christian church surely would feel impelled to step into the gap." The Fort Lauderdale pastor said that when government began years ago to dispense charity in America, Christians lost the motivation to do so themselves.

Every minute 234 babies are born, says the U.S. Presidential Commission on World Hunger. Asia accounts for 136 of the births; Africa, 41; Latin America, 23; and other parts of the world for the rest. Of the 234 babies, 23 die before age 1, and another 34 die before age 15. Most of these deaths are attributable to malnutrition-related disease.

Haitians in Miami number about 27,000. At least 12,000 are crammed into a ten-square-block ghetto. The Haitians live in fear of U.S. immigration officials and Haitian secret police. Rev. Gerard Jean-Juste, a Roman Catholic priest who runs the Haitian Refugee Center, told Associated Press: "We suffer. We lack. Emotionally, we miss our country. Politically, we are at the very bottom. Our dignity has been taken away. . . . We are very, very frustrated."

The advance of Islam in Europe has evoked concern and even hatred, says Patrick Sookhdeo, director of a World Evangelical Fellowship study. Christians, he says, should pro-

Central London
Mosque (in
Regent's Park)
opened in 1977.



claim Christ through their lives and give a real home to Muslim converts. He estimates that 80 percent of the converts return to Islam because the churches do not help them enough at a time when they have been rejected by their families.

Protestants in Mexico constitute 3.5 percent of the population, according to a census taken last year. In 1970, Protestants accounted for 1.8 percent. The recent census shows 88 percent of all Mexicans to be Roman Catholic, compared with 96 percent in 1970.

U.S. Senator Mark Hatfield recently told a Los Angeles audience that "the cost effectiveness we all want out of everything—food stamps, welfare programs that are so necessary—must apply as well to military spending." The

Senator, a World Vision board member, summed up his role in the Senate by saying, "My pledge, as chairman of appropriations, is to keep the people orientation—the impact on people in their daily lives."

Critical food shortages in northern Vietnam are draining that entire country. Many Western nations have let it be known that they would ignore any plea, if it came, for emergency food relief. Inflation is also out of control in Vietnam, while the military receives nearly half of the national budget.

Dr. Everett Koop, chief surgeon at Children's Hospital in Philadelphia, will be the next Surgeon General of the United States. Koop is a pioneer of surgical techniques to aid physically deformed persons. He has also volunteered his services to the poor in the Dominican Republic through MAP International. One of his first acts in office will be to give official recognition to the United Nations' "International Year of Disabled Persons."

A 44-year decline in church and synagogue membership in the United States reached a plateau in 1980, says a Gallup survey. In 1936, 77 out of 100 American adults were members of a church or synagogue. The 1980 figure was 69 percent, slightly higher than in 1979.

Israel has passed a new law allowing an Israeli to be deprived of citizenship for violating his or her allegiance to the state. Converting to Christianity from Judaism is commonly seen by Israelis as such a violation of allegiance. Another new Israeli law prohibits the sale of land to "foreign" churches or missions.

The complete Bible is now available in 275 languages, according to the Bible Society of London. Portions have been published in 1710 languages. Bishop K.H. Ting, president of the Chinese Christian Council, says that at least 100,000 copies of the Chinese Bible will be printed in China during 1981.

Race law changes are being hotly debated in South Africa's current six-month session of Parliament. Prime Minister Pieter Botha wants to move the nation away from discrimination against the black majority, but he faces stiff opposition from Afrikaners—descendants of the original Dutch, French and German settlers. Blacks have no voice in national government and are restricted in jobs, housing and movement.

A "no ransom" policy for kidnappers was made official by the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board in February. The policy was adopted while guerrillas held, and later killed, a worker for Wycliffe Bible Translators in Colombia. No Southern Baptist missionaries (currently numbering 3,057) have ever been kidnapped, but the statement serves as a warning to those who would try such tactics.

Faithfulness and the present tense

In this country's so-called morality movement, commendable as it is, I find a disturbing degree of ambivalence and not a few contradictions. For one thing, I observe that it selects moral issues on a highly individualistic and subjective basis.

Issues picked for a demonstration of moral concern do not cover the full biblical spectrum. Rather they seem to reflect a preoccupation with middle-class values oriented to our more limited Western mindset. In other words, evangelicals can be remarkably sanguine about issues which seriously affect the rest of the world but do not directly touch us.

Consider this excerpt from a letter I received: "I think it is well established among Bible-believing Christians that children are eternally secure until the age of accountability (whatever age at which conscience strikes). If this is true, and if our humanitarian concern for man motivates us to raise money to feed the starving children of the impoverished countries of the world so that they can grow up and cross the age of accountability and then die and go to hell, have we really helped them?"

The letter writer, a pastor, was serious. He was asking: Is it better to keep a hungry child alive so that he may grow up possibly to reject Christ and be doomed, or to let him die in childhood and be assured of salvation?

Let's not even stop to wonder whether the writer would raise the same question if they were American children. Especially if they were his own children. But let's do ask one question: Where is it guaranteed that all well-fed children growing up in so-called Christian countries will accept Jesus Christ?

Without getting into a theological analysis of assumptions and implications inherent in the question, let's do some supposing.

First, we will have to suppose there is some validity to the man's question. Try to leap that gap with me so we can go on.

Suppose some of those fed and healed do later on accept the Savior. Should all be allowed to die simply because we cannot determine which ones to feed? Jesus instructed His disciples, "Let the little ones come to me" (Luke 18:16, NEB). It is not a restrictive invitation. Jesus set no limitations, imposed no tests of future orthodoxy, called for no ideological triage.

Suppose one of those starving children could have become a great evangelist to his people and suppose tens of thousands might have been converted through his ministry—but we decided not to take the risk and feed him. Now suppose it's not tens of thousands, but only hundreds converted. Or tens. Or one. Or none. At what point does the investment "pay off"? And who does the measuring?

I think of the human genealogy of Jesus—those "begats"

in Matthew 1. Some of those links did little more than keep the chain intact. But that was enough. In what chains of eternal destiny may some of today's children prove to be a link? For that matter, what and who were the imponderables in the chains that gave us our own life and ministries?

Of course, many of these unfed children will not simply die; they will experience a long, living death because of mental retardation due to malnutrition. By withholding food from a child, you have not "killed it and thereby assured it of heaven" (that sounds terribly crude, but that's what the letter implied). Rather, you may have created for that child a living hell of mental and physical deficiency.

I find it hard to be philosophical or theoretical or hypothetical when, in a refugee camp on the edge of Kampuchea, I stand in front of a swollen little eight-year-old girl who is suffering from *kuashiorkor*.

She is gasping for breath. The doctor tells me it takes all her strength simply to breathe. Her protein level is so low that her body is now feeding on her blood. I see the anguish in her mother's face. The doctor tells me the child can be saved. Just a little extra food and some simple vitamins.

Suppose you were standing there. What would you do?

I know what I did not do. I did not get into a debate with myself over theological implications of feeding her. Instead I responded immediately out of Christian compassion—and not simply humanitarian concern—and told the doctor we would pay for the nutritional program that keeps not only that girl, but hundreds of other children, alive!

Suppose you had been that child's mother, standing by. What would have constituted the more effective and convincing Christian witness to you? Hearing "I'm really doing your child a favor by letting her die"? Or hearing "I will do my best to give your child life"?

To ask is to answer.

I believe there is plenty of scriptural motivation for doing good. I also believe something is wrong with a Christian who must wait for chapter and verse validation before responding to human need. We may at times need the prodding of Scripture to overcome our reluctance to do good; but we should never need assurance that doing good is permissible. Some actions are self-validating. It's not a matter of not knowing what God wants us to do, but of knowing only too well.

Faithfulness operates in the present tense. The future belongs to God. He does not expect me to do His work. He does, I think, expect me to do mine.

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