

# WORLD VISION<sup>®</sup>

October/November 1989

*Blighting  
the  
land  
that  
feeds  
US*

*How to Create  
a Ghetto*

*Thailand's  
Biggest Pimp*



4 **Blighting the Land that Feeds Us**

Those noisy, hand-wringing environmentalists are at it again, telling us we've got to stop cutting down trees and spraying our hair or we're really going to foul up the earth. Trouble is, they're right. And if we don't take heed soon, we're going to have to move. And good planets are hard to find these days.

8 **A Keeper of the Earth**

Ask Wesley Granberg-Michaelson why he's so concerned for the environment and he's likely to quote from 2 Corinthians. The Bible, he claims, is his primary environmental textbook. And he would like to see more Christians understand that caring for the earth is every bit as much a part of the gospel as saving souls.

12 **Thailand's Biggest Pimp**

World-wise and wary, Daeng can tell you a thing or two about Thailand's back-alley brothels and the customers who frequent them. But she'd rather not. She's only 14, and the memories aren't pleasant. She's out of the business now, but thousands like her are still holed up in small, dingy rooms or on display behind huge glass panels, driven or lured into the business by the biggest pimp in Asia: poverty.

20 **Cultural Christians: Stand Up!**

If you own a BMW, you might want to skip this article. Of course, it's not just you Beemer drivers that Tom Sine and Tony Campolo want to reach. Most of us middle-class American Christians could stand a little tune-up when it comes to our materialistic tendencies. Even lowly Honda drivers.

*Natural disasters, together with man-induced destruction of the resources we depend on, are creating a world-scale environmental catastrophe.*

This NASA photograph of the Ganges River in Bangladesh reveals extensive sediment in the Bay of Bengal. Much of it results from intensive, human-caused soil erosion.

NASA

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Until the Lord ushers in a new heaven and earth, the planet on which we live—blighted as it is by our greed and indifference—is all we've got.

A growing awareness of our world's plight gives Christians an opportunity to provide leadership in reviving and renewing the earth, until God ultimately makes all things new.

*Terry Madison*

# WORLD VISION

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# A WORLD BEYOND THE BARRICADES

**O**n a recent vacation I was relaxing to the music of Victor Hugo's "Les Miserables" while reflecting on the terrible turmoil going on in China. The comparison between the youthful protest in France in the early 19th century, captured so poignantly in this musical, and the painful end of the student-led pro-democracy movement in China was unavoidable.

The student idealism of 19th-century France came to an end at the barricades. The rhetoric of revolution yielded to the reality of armed confrontation. Unfortunately, the youthful cause was no match for the heavy artillery of the central government forces. Virtually all of the students at the barricades died. The only sustaining hope was captured in the lyrics of one of the songs, "Is there a world beyond the barricades?"

In Tiananmen Square, the similarities were striking and painful. The justness and the rightness of a cause were deeply felt. Once again, rhetoric exceeded reality and, with the crushing weight of tanks and overwhelming numbers, idealistic hopes for a better way of life came to a bitter end. The "empty chairs and empty tables" of "Les Miserables" were brought up-to-date by the events of Tiananmen Square.

In Tiananmen Square idealism was replaced by fear. Future hopes gave way to a despairing present. The exercise of student arrests, imprisonments and executions was reported publicly. Behind the scenes, the work of the church was severely jolted.

World Vision's budding work in China has been placed on hold. Christian language teachers, about to leave this country for ministry in China, have seen their visas revoked. The Lausanne Conference on World Evangelization took place without any representation from mainland China. Clearly much was at stake. Just as clearly, much was lost.

But is there "a world beyond the barricades?" Certainly we learned some pragmatic lessons. In a highly centralized form of government, one with a long history of communist domination, neither economic nor democratic reforms can ever be taken for granted. The models for a transition from communism to democracy are few indeed. It just might happen in Poland. If so, this will be the first the world has ever seen. We need to be realistic.

It is also appropriate and timely to remember that *glasnost*, the new "openness" of another world power, cannot be taken for granted. *Glasnost* exists as a pragmatic expedient and, by

definition, will continue to exist only until something better comes along. It does not contain a moral imperative, and we need to be realistic about its enduring quality without such a dimension.

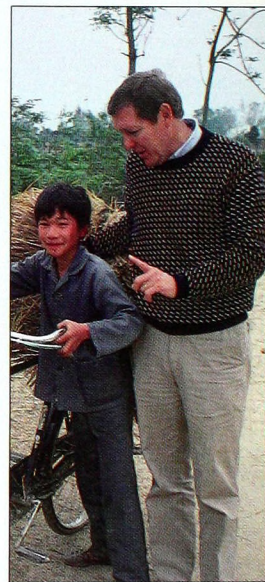
Most importantly, we need to remember that opportunities for the church won't last forever. It is not always a helpful exercise to try to ascertain the motives for *glasnost* in Russia, economic reform in China, the new openness in Vietnam—or any of the winds of change that exist throughout our world today. Whatever the motive, if we have an opportunity to place a Christian foot in the door, in such a way that the door will forever remain open, we are obliged to do it.

We do what we can do. It is possible today to satisfy the hunger for Bibles and other printed biblical materials. It is still possible to work with the church in a way that will affirm and lift up the church that has been made strong through persecution. It is certainly possible to be a living witness for the worth of the gospel, for things such as integrity, ethical standards and high moral conduct. It is possible to explain our motivation for being in these countries, an explanation that will invariably lead us to a discussion of kingdom values and the kingdom itself.

We do what we can do. But then we need to allow God to have the last word. The missionaries left China in 1949, but God certainly wasn't through with that part of the world. When China reopened in the late 1970s, missionaries from abroad were no longer needed. God continued to build his kingdom, and today there are somewhere between 40 and 50 million Christians throughout China. Tanks, soldiers and barricades mean nothing to our Lord. He alone can shut down the work of the kingdom. Gratefully he has never chosen to do so, but continues to do all those things that we can't do ourselves.

We rest in the assurance that, "He that hath begun a good work ... will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." Yes, there is "a world beyond the barricades." It is God's world and he is still not finished with it. □

Bob Seiple talks with the son of a Chinese farmer whose future will be affected by recent events in Tiananmen Square.



TEBBY MADISON / WORLD VISION



BY LARRY B. STAMMER

# BLIGHTING THE LAND THAT FEEDS US



*People want a better life, so they overuse their resources. There must be a better way.*

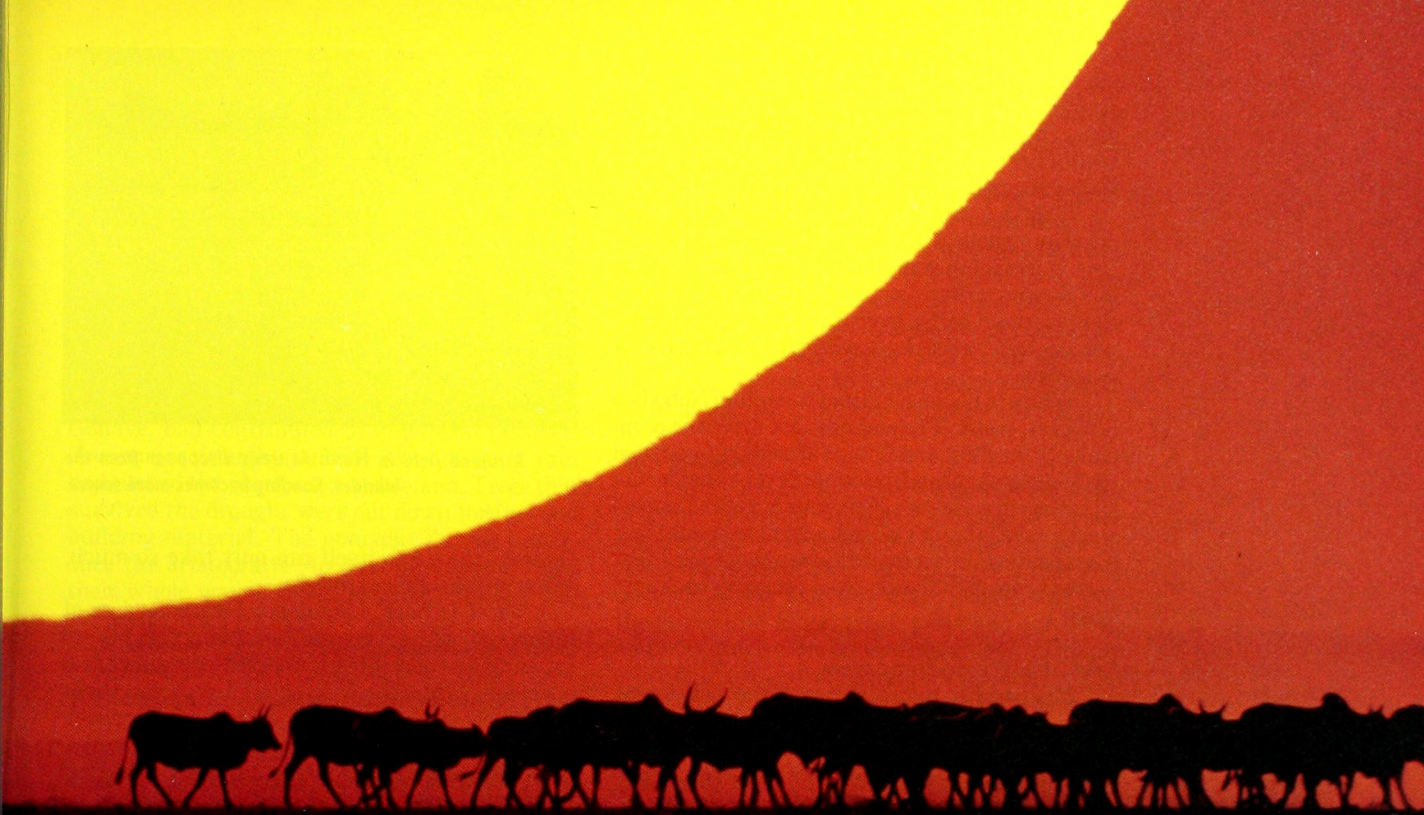
**T**he muddy torrent raged down the hillside, sweeping aside everything in its path—including part of Anse-a-Galets, a small town on the Haitian island of La Gonave.

Three years earlier the waters claimed 33 lives. This time the people were ready. The thunder kept them alert. By midnight, the people in the worst danger had abandoned their homes. There were no casualties, but the flood took its toll: two churches, four homes and a drinking-water system.

“It was devastating,” says Father Bill Quigley, a Roman Catholic missionary. “The people have very little. If they have a little extra money they buy a comb. On another occasion they might buy a pot or pan. Then they lose everything in one night.”

For the 3,000 people of Anse-a-Galets and for the families who lost their homes, the remedy was obvious: rebuild. The worst was over. But the disaster will probably recur when the rains return. The homes have been rebuilt, but nothing has really changed.

Anse-a-Galets’ floods are part of a pattern. It’s true: natural disasters are getting worse, or at least more frequent, in poor countries. There are more floods, more mudslides, more droughts. That’s because people want a better life, and the



only way they see to get it is to overuse their resources. But what they're really doing is pushing that better life further and further out of reach.

The people of Anse-a-Galets strip their land of forests, destroying the very resources upon which they depend. They cut down Bahyonde trees to make charcoal, which they use for cooking or sell for a few pennies in Port-au-Prince, the capital city.

That's why the floods are getting worse. There is less and less growth in the highlands above the village to prevent soil erosion and flooding. The soil disappears so fast that some farmers believe stones grow in their fields. Meanwhile, Port-au-Prince needs bulldozers to clear its streets of the topsoil that flows down the mountains in the rainy season.

### Scratching heaven

Haiti's forests were once so lush that Christopher Columbus wrote of "thousands of kinds of trees so tall that they seem to be scratching heaven." Earlier in this century a U.S. administrator called La Gonave a "tropical paradise home for 10,000 people."

"Now it's no paradise, and it's home to 70,000 people. Another 20,000 are either in Miami or in the slums of Port-au-Prince," says Julian Pitchford, a water engineering consultant who has worked in Haiti and Africa for World Vision.

Pitchford says the island is critically short of water and can't sustain its too-large population. It's been severely deforested, resulting in soil erosion and a drop in food production. "All this has made quite a significant change to its climate," he explains. "There is much less rainfall."

La Gonave's growing population depends on ever scarcer wood for fuel and income. Little or no high-grade timber remains standing, but the demand has increased. So the island exports low-grade wood in the form of charcoal. Attempts to encourage tree-planting have been marginally successful at best.

What's wrong with the people of La Gonave? Can't they see what they're doing to themselves? Sure they can. But the simple truth is, they can't see any alternative.

### Change by degrees

Until recently we tended to view the cycle of poverty and environmental harm in local or, at best, regional terms. We lamented the flood in Bangladesh, the famine in Ethiopia, the mudslides in Brazil. We knew these calamities were rooted in environmental abuse. But they seemed remote, as remote as the ancient warning that we would reap what we sowed.

Now many of the world's leading scientists warn of world-scale environmental catastrophe—brought on by rich and poor nations alike.

For example: global warming—the "greenhouse effect"—could drastically shift crop-growing regions all around the world. Rising sea levels, caused by melting polar ice caps, could flood coastal cities and entire low-lying countries like Bangladesh. Many plant and animal species could vanish before they adapt to temperature changes.

Indeed, the 3- to 8-degree Fahrenheit increase predicted over the next 40 years, given current trends, is greater than the temperature changes during all of recorded human history.

While it's too early to say whether the 1988 drought was the first clear sign of global warm-

**W**e knew these calamities were rooted in environmental abuse. But they seemed remote.

ing, the drought was typical of global warming scenarios. It reduced China's grain crop by 3 percent, the Soviet Union's by 9 percent and the United States' by 30 percent. It left us with only a 60-day supply of surplus grain in the world.

That's a frightening figure, especially for developing countries that couldn't hope to compete in a bidding war. In that event, "millions of low-income, urban consumers would be forced to tighten their belts, even though they have no notches left," wrote Lester Brown in *World Watch* magazine.

Who's to blame for global warming? Nobody's innocent, really. The engines that drive the economies of the First and Second Worlds run on fossil fuels like coal, oil and gasoline. Seventy percent of all carbon dioxide emissions pour out of the smokestacks and tailpipes of industrialized countries. (Carbon dioxide is a major "greenhouse gas" that prevents solar radiation from escaping back into space.)

**Like there's no tomorrow**

Meanwhile, many parts of the developing world burn off tropical forests like there's no tomorrow, clearing land for agriculture, ranching and housing. This accounts for the other 30 percent of human-caused carbon dioxide emissions. That's expected to rise to 50 percent by the year 2025, chiefly because of increased energy use and deforestation. Forests covering an area about the size of Austria are destroyed every year.

It seems so obvious. Stop cutting down the trees. Think of the next generation.

Julian Pitchford, like others familiar with developing countries, is quick to understand what compels poor people to take a short view. He deplores it, but he understands it.

"It's easy to be critical of the poor who are tearing their island apart. But if you don't know how you'll feed your children tomorrow, planting trees for your grandchildren isn't a high priority," he observes.

It is against this backdrop of poverty, one found again and again in the developing world, that any discussion of global solutions must take place. When you have so little, development wins over environment without a fight.

Clearly we cannot go on this way. Like La



**A ruined field in Haiti: As trees disappear from the hillsides, flooding becomes more severe.**

Gonave, the earth itself can only take so much. What are the alternatives?

There is hope. Like never before, leaders of industrialized nations and developing nations are focusing on their inter-connected environmental problems. While the West opens discussion about fossil fuels and ozone-destroying chemicals, developing countries acknowledge that their deforestation, desertification and other problems go beyond their own borders.

Last February, for example, a conference on global warming convened in New Delhi, India. Representatives of developing countries, while still pointing to poverty as an underlying cause, admitted to careless and short-sighted abuse of the environment.

**Who will pay?**

They added pointedly: "Having caused the major share of the problem and possessing the resources to do something about it, the industrial countries have a special responsibility to assist the developing countries in finding and financing appropriate responses."

For India and China, cutting back on ozone-destroying CFCs could mean denying their people refrigeration, unless an inexpensive substitute is made available. In Thailand or Brazil, saving the rain forest will exact a high short-term cost from a family's livelihood or a nation's ability to make debt payments. Who will pay to preserve the trees?

**Who's to blame for global warming? Nobody's innocent, really.**

**VITAL SIGNS**

- About half the forests in poor countries have disappeared in this century.
- Destruction of forests and disruption of ecosystems will cause up to a million plant and animal species to disappear by the year 2000.
- Five of the past 12 years have been the warmest since 1900.
- Although CFCs were banned from aerosol cans in 1978, other uses of CFCs have increased, seriously depleting the ozone layer. More ultraviolet rays reach the earth, posing a threat to human health and retarding crop production.

- Of the toxic wastes produced in the United States, about one percent are actually destroyed.
- Ten thousand people die each year from pesticide poisoning; another 40,000 fall ill.
- One-third of the pesticides exported by the United States are banned for use at home.
- Food packaging makes up about a third of household garbage in the United States.
- In 1960, the average American produced 2.9 pounds of trash a day. Today's figure: 5 pounds per person.

*Statistics from Ecology and Life (Word, 1988) by Wesley Granberg-Michaelson.*

And there is an essential human element. Governments and banks can't solve the problems. Sustainable development—development that cares for the earth as well as the people—has to come through the people themselves, Pitchford notes.

"It's not something you do to them," he says. "It's something you do with them."

Perhaps the greatest hope of all comes from people who are doing just that, people like Barry and Janine Rands in Mali, West Africa.

When the Rands arrived in the easternmost region of Mali three years ago, they took a good look around them. Too much tree-cutting, as in La Gonave, had contributed to unnatural disaster. Two major droughts and 15 years of scant rain had turned the place into a wasteland. Trees that survived the drought were cut down for fuel and building material. The nomadic Tuareg people, once the aristocratic "lords of the desert," saw their whole way of life in jeopardy. Disease and suicide claimed many lives.

"We saw that if we were going to help, we had to address the ecological problems," Barry says. The Rands have designed innovative projects that help reclaim the devastated environment. They've focused on two things: using up less of the scarce wood supply, and making the most of the rain that does fall on the desert.

Janine started by playing with mud. She kneaded clay, sand and water until she found a mix that would stand intense heat. Then she

designed a cookstove. The mud stove uses about half as much wood as the traditional three-rock fire, gives better heat and is safer for children who play in cooking areas.

And—the crucial test for a development project—the stoves have caught on by word of mouth. More than 3,000 men and women have learned how to make them; more than 17,000 have been built. Since the stoves need to be replaced periodically, the crafters have a steady source of extra income. And unlike many short-lived development projects, the mud stoves require absolutely nothing that isn't locally and cheaply available.

### Ten glasses

Barry, meanwhile, concentrates on the water problem. Recently he asked a group of former nomads who were interested in conservation: "If these 10 glasses of water are all the rain that falls on our land this year, how many glasses soak into the ground for crops, trees, grass and our wells, and how much runs off or evaporates?"

Some guessed half. Everyone underestimated the waste. Barry poured nine and a half glasses of water onto the ground. "That's how much we lose," he said. "The high winds, hot climate and hard rains we can't change. The trees and plants that used to catch water are gone. The good news is, we can do something to help the water soak in."

His audience learned to build rock and earth dikes along the contours of the land, and to construct water catchments for planting trees. "In the Sahel," Barry explains, "the simpler things usually work the best." The low contour dikes break the force of run-off water so the silt stays behind the dikes instead of being carried off to some distant lake or swamp.

The people Barry spoke to that day went back to their homes and went to work. Before long they marveled at the results—green grass on a barren plain, soil wet enough after the first rain to plant trees and crops, and water already rising in the wells.

True, the amount of land that has been reclaimed is small. The desert is still growing. The Rands, however, measure achievement in the human spirit. "The people are realists," says Barry. "They understand that nothing's going to bring back the 'good old days.'

"But they are realizing that they aren't helpless victims. They can fight back. They're prepared to adapt. That spirit of realistic optimism is the best thing that's happened so far." □

Larry Stammer is an environmental writer for the Los Angeles Times.

Earthen canals nourish rice fields in the Mali desert: "In the Sahel, simple things work best," says Barry Rands.



***If you don't know how you'll feed your children tomorrow, planting trees for your grandchildren isn't a high priority.***

*Wesley Granberg-Michaelson calls the Bible his primary ecological textbook.*

# A KEEPER OF THE EARTH

**I**t was near closing time at the New Creation Institute in Missoula, Mont., when the phone rang. The caller didn't waste any time. She attacked the organization's name, based on 2 Corinthians 5:17.

"You're misusing the Scripture," she said. "I don't see anything in that verse about the creation being made new. That verse applies only to the individual."

"Well, you see..." Wesley Granberg-Michaelson tried to marshal his thoughts.

"God only made man in his image," she continued, "not the flowers, the mountains, the land. And it was man who sinned. So man needs to be redeemed, not creation."

Wes tried to say something about the connection between sin and the mistreatment of creation.

"No, sir," the caller said. "There isn't anything in my Bible about the environment. I bet you people are one of those New Age outfits."



PETER WILLIAMS / WCC

Wes assured her his organization was rooted in Christ and had nothing to do with the New Age. He offered to send her some information. But her mission was complete, and the conversation was over. Wes went home frustrated and late for dinner.

That was years ago. Wes isn't at New Creation Institute any more, and he lives far from Montana. But the concerns raised by that caller are still very much with him.

Wes might even go so far as to say that she was missing part of the gospel. That there is more to being "saved" than she—and a lot of other Christians—realize. That the average evangelical Christian defines salvation too narrowly, more narrowly than the Bible does.

Wesley Granberg-Michaelson is a key figure

in the "earthkeeping" movement, a Christian view of the earth and ecology. The term comes from the book *Earthkeeping*, written about 10 years ago by Loren Wilkinson.

Simply put, earthkeeping is the view that abuse of the earth is part of the sin problem. Being redeemed by Christ restores our relationship with creation just as it restores relationships with God and other people.

"That's a second dimension of brokenness that we've forgotten about, but it's very clear in the Bible," Wes says.

For a major spokesman, Wes is not an electric personality. He's a reflective, suit-and-tie type, a sensitive man who thinks things through deeply and thoroughly.

It was the move from Washington, D.C., to



Missoula, Mont., that prompted Wes to think about earthkeeping. Leaving a politicized, bureaucratic inner-city neighborhood, he found a place where "the relationship between people and nature was much more transparent."

Wes found a brand of commitment to the land unlike anything he'd ever seen. He remembers a crusty Montana rancher who was paid a call by a mining executive interested in strip-mining the coal from the rancher's property.

The rancher politely listened as his visitor outlined the small fortune he was prepared to pay and emphasized how close to the surface and accessible the coal was. Then the rancher smiled and replied, "Mister, you have absolutely no idea how *inaccessible* the coal on my land is." End of interview.

Wes hardly knew how to approach environmental issues from a Christian point of view. Exploring them became a prime focus of his thinking and writing. He found so much in the Bible that he calls it his primary ecological textbook.

And he is very tired of hearing the Bible, or Christianity, blamed for the way we abuse our planet. This idea became popular about 20 years

**G**od writes  
the gospel not  
in the Bible  
alone, but on  
trees and  
flowers and  
clouds and  
stars.

Martin Luther

## WHAT YOU CAN DO...

### WITH YOUR CHURCH

1. Start a study group to discuss a book on earthkeeping. Or study the Bible. "The theology is often so badly misunderstood," Wes Granberg-Michaelson says.
2. Explore projects for your local church. Sponsor a recycling project. Use the church as a recycling center for aluminum cans, bottles, newspapers and plastics. This helps the earth in a practical way, raises awareness and may even raise funds.
3. Offer a community service. Help people properly dispose of household waste such as paint, thinner and oils.
4. Tie in to local and national groups concerned about environmental issues. This can be a great aid to your thoughts and actions.

### ON YOUR OWN

1. Examine your eating habits: what you eat, where it came from, how it was produced. Organic foods are becoming more available, and are usually grown in ways that are kinder to the land.
2. When you shop, be aware of packaging. Avoid unnecessary bulk; look for recyclable or biodegradable materials.
3. Make recycling a habit. Find out what kinds of recycling are available in your area.
4. Check your water use and transportation habits. You may discover ways to cut back on excess use.



ago, especially through the writing of Lynn White, Jr. Pointing to verses such as Genesis 1:28 ("Fill the earth and subdue it"), White said the Bible and its followers paved the way for the exploitation of the earth.

Admitting that this verse has been used to justify much abuse, Wes refuses to place the blame there. "The issue is whether the Bible or Christian belief caused that mentality. I am convinced that cultural forces caused it, and then Christians were simply absorbed by what was happening in the larger culture. To blame a few isolated verses for this whole attitude is just plain silly."

He believes the true culprits were the combined forces of the Industrial Revolution, the Enlightenment and the technological revolution. These translated our relationship to the earth into one of acquiring raw materials for consumption and profit.

Prominent philosopher Francis Bacon declared that the purpose of science was to gain control over nature. The environment became a separate, even alien entity.

It is still this mentality, Wes says, that sets the Christian concept of earthkeeping apart from

Wes believes it was the move of technology from servant to master. "Technology has become an idol, an object of faith and an oppressive power. People look for a technological fix.

"Some people say the greenhouse effect or world poverty or hunger will be solved by technology. Even when we realize that technology caused many of these problems, we still somehow expect technology to make them right."

Why do we believe this way? Because it absolves us from questions about our lifestyles, our values and our compassion. "It's more painful to realize that problems will not be solved unless we rethink what we mean by success, progress and development."

Interesting concepts. But earthkeeping is not about concepts. "It's not a matter of biblical study and theology," Wes says. "It's a way of living." The call to tend the creation is ultimately a call to action. It's also a challenge to our habits and lifestyles. (For practical suggestions, see "What You Can Do.")

For example: In Winona County, Minn., Redeemer Lutheran Church donated two acres of land to The Land Stewardship Project. Developmentally disabled adults and other volunteers

## FOR MORE INFORMATION

### **AuSable Institute**

#### **of Environmental Studies**

7526 Sunset Trail N.E., Mancelona, MI 49659  
(616) 587-8686

Maintains a resource base and holds conferences.

### **Sierra Treks**

730 Polk St., San Francisco, CA 94109

Provides wilderness experiences for Christians.

### **Ecumenical Task Force of the Niagara Frontier**

259 4th St., Niagara Falls, NY 14303  
(716) 284-9961

Educates the religious community about toxic waste.

### **Eco-Justice Working Group**

475 Riverside Dr., New York, NY 10115  
(212) 870-2511

Publishes resources for churches; lobbies for environmental legislation.

### **North American Conference on Christianity and Ecology**

P.O. Box 14305, San Francisco, CA 94114  
(415) 626-6064

Publishes a quarterly magazine; sponsors conferences.

### **Christian Farmers Federation**

115 Woolwich St., Guelph, Ontario N1H 3V1  
Canada (519) 837-1620

Provides resources for farmers about land stewardship.

**G**od expects  
us to keep the  
earth with as  
much tender-  
ness as he  
keeps us.

Clifford E. Bajema in  
*The Banner*

garden-variety ecology.

"An atheist ecologist starts with the notion that nature is a self-contained entity. You don't think of God or even of people as being included in the word 'nature,'" he explains. "But this kind of separation is totally alien to the biblical perspective. Christian faith can never understand the created order as something detached or unrelated."

Wes and his kind may seem to be a new phenomenon in Christian circles, but they're not. They're actually part of a long tradition that has been silent only in the past few centuries.

It wasn't called earthkeeping, but early church fathers and mothers stressed creation as a mark of God's great sovereignty. Wes points out that all of the early church creeds begin by affirming God as Creator and Sustainer of all that is. He notes that many strands of Christianity, such as the Franciscan monks, "had a very deep sense of being connected to the world of creation."

What silenced that strand in recent history?

tend the plot using organic farming techniques. In two years the garden yielded 7,500 pounds of organic produce, sold in local markets.

The Christian church in general remained largely uninvolved in the early part of the environmental movement. This began to change in the early 1980s.

"The church is realizing the urgency," Wes comments. "I think earthkeeping will become a strong issue in the 1990s. The environmental crisis is the greatest threat to life, apart from nuclear war, that we and the next generation will face."

But the activism begins within for Christians. "The kind of commitment it takes to preserve the earth must be a spiritual commitment, deeply rooted in our faith," Wes says.

And he firmly asserts the foundation of that commitment: "This world belongs to God." □

*Judith Hougen is a free-lance writer and poet living in Edina, Minn.*

BY BOB LUPTON

*Greenview was a nice place to live until the good neighbors started moving out.*

**G**reenview\* is one of Atlanta's earliest black communities. Whites who had lost their right to own slaves after the Civil War called it "niggertown," but those who lived in Greenview seemed undaunted. They built a proud, vigorous community despite the lines of demarcation that separated them from the rest of the city. Modest Victorian bungalows lined the cobblestone streets. There were parks and churches and schools. And a thriving business district.

There were, of course, some rough areas with rough people. But overall Greenview enjoyed a wholesome vitality. Many of the civic, professional and religious leaders who helped rebuild Atlanta after the war lived in Greenview. It was a good place to raise a family. The comfort of owning a permanent home in one's own community helped ease the pain of the prejudice most experienced outside Greenview.

Then in the 1950s and '60s, Martin Luther King, Jr. confronted the racism of Atlanta and the world, giving birth to a new era of reconciliation between whites and blacks. "White only" signs came down. Public schools were opened to all children. Fair economic and housing legislation was enacted.

The people of Greenview were excited and optimistic. They dreamed of new opportunities spreading out before them. Today, however, their once-thriving community is one of the most decimated areas in Atlanta.

It happened so subtly, the changes were almost imperceptible. Greenview's merchants gradually moved their businesses to Atlanta's greener pastures. Professionals and tradespeople found better jobs in higher-paying areas. Many started moving to suburban communities.

But many others in Greenview were unable to capitalize on these new opportunities. The elderly, those in broken families, the poor, whose energies were consumed with just trying to survive—these were the ones left behind.

*\*The community's name has been changed.*

Homes became rental properties and started to deteriorate. Families started to fragment. The general store closed, reopened as a thrift store and eventually was boarded up.

As the leadership withdrew, evil forces filled the void. Churches closed. Desperate people preyed on the vulnerable. The fabric of the community grew weaker as the stronger strands were removed. And in the end Greenview came apart, desolate and ruined.

It's not hard to create a ghetto. Just remove the capable neighbors. To produce a sub-standard school system, withdraw the students of achieving parents. To create a culture of chronically dependent people, merely extract the upwardly mobile role models from the community.

That's what happened in Greenview—and in thousands of other communities across the United States. That's what happens

when we pursue our own personal and family dreams, and abandon our neighbors to the agencies.

Those left in Greenview do not need more arms-length social services—government or religious. After 30 years of social programs and costly government investment, the people are still poor. The programs could never replace the neighbors who had abandoned the community.

Programs cannot restore communities. Only neighbors can do that. The people who remain in Greenview need educated neighbors to raise the school standards. They need political neighbors who will help organize against crime and drugs. They need spiritual neighbors to reopen churches, and entrepreneurial-minded neighbors to stimulate business. They need handy neighbors to restore their street-scapes,

# HOW TO CREATE A



DOUG DUDLEY / WORLD VISION

# GHETTO

and neighbors with moral and ethical values to reweave the tattered fabric of their community.

Too many people support laws eliminating segregation while they move to protected neighborhoods of personal privilege. Too many believe in loving their neighbor, but withdraw from those neighbors most in need. In order to love your neighbor you first have to *become* a neighbor.

The richest treasure of all remains to be rediscovered—the Christ who has never left Greenview.

*Bob Lupton is director of Atlanta-based FCS Ministries.*

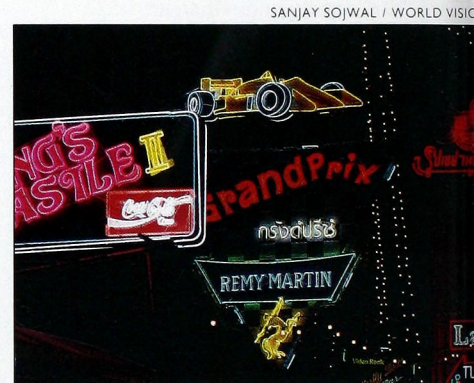
# POVERTY: THAILAND'S BIGGEST PIMP

Looking for all the world like a fifth-grader about to get her wrists slapped by the principal, Daeng (not her real name) sits trembling in a small chair, clutching a stuffed koala bear under one arm. Small-boned and slender in jeans and a blue cotton blouse, the 14-year-old glances furtively at the others in the room. Her arrow-straight anthracite hair brush-

es her shoulders as she shoots quick looks from one strange face to another.

But this isn't school, and what she fears isn't a simple wrist-slapping. Her former pimp has vowed to kill her and her family if he ever finds her. Even now, among friends in the safety of Bangkok's Emergency Home for Women and Children in Distress, Daeng still is reluctant to trust anyone. Especially a journalist. If her pimp reads about her in the paper, she's sure he'll come after her. A letter from her older brother strongly advised her not to return home. Her pimp had already ransacked the house.

Tricked by a "loan agent" who promised he'd take her to her older sister who was working in a restaurant south of Bangkok, she quickly found herself imprisoned in a dingy brothel with 50 other girls, where she was forced to spend the next three months. Working each night from 7 p.m. to 4 a.m., and sometimes even days, she would service as many as 12 men in a row. The thought of escape



SANJAY SOJWAL / WORLD VISION

tantalized her until she saw what happened to girls who tried. Those beaten to unconsciousness were the lucky ones. She had heard of others who didn't survive.

A police raid on the place put Daeng in jail. The next day she ended up at the emergency home. But she can't stay there forever. Nor can she go back home. And an angry pimp is still out to reclaim his stolen property and put her back to work—or worse.

## Morally bankrupt teenagers?

Prostitution is not unique to Thailand. Every major city in the world boasts (or tries to hide) its own sleazy district. But two things set developing countries like Thailand apart: the sheer number of prostitutes and the economic conditions driving them to the business. Most authorities say the figure is between 250,000 and 500,000 in Bangkok. Others say it's even higher.

Their average age cannot be overlooked either. While countries world-

*Two things characterize prostitution in countries like Thailand: the sheer numbers and the conditions that drive them into the business.*



wide, especially Asian ones, have sizable pedophile problems, this article deals with prostitutes who, if they lived in this country, would be of an age where their major concern would be picking out prom dresses.

Where are all these girls coming from? (And guys, too. There are more than 40 gay bars in Bangkok.) Are there *that* many broken homes and dysfunctional families? Is the lure of the big city *that* strong? Are there *that* many morally bankrupt teenagers? No. According to recent studies by the International Labor Organisation, the bottom line is economics.

"These girls were not fleeing from a family background or rural society which oppressed women in conventional ways," says Professor Pasuk Phongpaichit in his book, *From Peasant Girls to Bangkok Masseuses*. They left to help their families survive, he explains. In their rural society, they

**T**he average age of the recruits is 12 to 15. They're just girls."

large, choose to work there. Their options are: one, work in Patpong in order to live in a modest apartment, attend school and save to start a small business; or two, work as a seamstress, live in a hovel and forget about school or a business. But they *choose* prostitution, and no one threatens to beat them if they want to quit.

Second, there are the girls working in massage parlors—more than 200 of them in Bangkok—who generally earn less than their counterparts in the bars of Patpong, but who still make about 20 times what they could as a waitress. Most of them would rather be

trying to feed his family on not enough rice grown on a few measly acres of tired soil he's been turning with the same rusty plow and slow ox for years.

His teenage daughters have had their four to six years of school (if that much) and, after a couple years or so of working off the loan in that "restaurant" in Bangkok, his kids can come home and things will be better. Or so he reasons. He doesn't know, or doesn't want to know, or knows but looks the other way, that his daughters could be sleeping with up to a dozen men per night, up to 14 hours at a stretch. But he sees no alternative.

Most of the girls in these three groups see themselves as playing key roles in supporting the family. For brothel girls, how much of their salary goes home is not up to them. Girls in massage parlors and the bars of Patpong are freer to choose.

Travel-weary teenagers hoping to land good jobs in the big city are often easy prey for pimps at Bangkok's Hua Lampong Railway Station. Social workers from the Emergency Center try to provide an alternative for them.



SANIAY SOIWAJ / WORLD VISION

During the day, Patpong looks much like any other big-city thoroughfare. By nightfall it takes on a carnival atmosphere. Lots of festivity. Lots of shoppers. Lots of Thais sitting at small curbside tables eating noodles or fried squid or oyster omelets or chunks of fish-head with the eye still gleaming up at them. In one deep breath you can catch wafts of roast pork sizzling on sidewalk hibachis, exhaust fumes from pingy little Yamaha scooters worming their way through the throngs, and eye-watering hits of raw sewage stench rising through steel grates in the sidewalks.

### Nightlife in Patpong

Patpong starts cranking up its engines at about 6 p.m. Girls in street clothes begin filing into not-yet-open bars and making their way up nondescript stairways. Vendors set up their wares on sidewalks and on cloth-covered tables throughout the district's two blocks.

By 10 o'clock the pace is frenetic. Bootleg-cassette sellers boost their speakers to compete with each other and with thudding rock music spilling out open bar doors. Girls who earlier

were expected to contribute to the family income. Compared to other unskilled jobs, prostitution offered the best return.

"The girls felt they were making a perfectly rational decision within the context of their particular social and economic situation. The girls did not make the economic structure; and they could not escape from it."

Prostitution in Thailand takes many forms, from the girl on the street corner to organized sex tours that fly in Europeans, Japanese and others for weekend binges. But there seem to be three general groups of prostitutes.

There are the girls in Patpong and other nightclub districts who, by and

doing other work, but because they can make so much money for their families, they endure it for the short time they plan to be there.

Then there are the girls, often in their mid-teens, who come from poor families and are forced to work in brothels entertaining working-class Thai men. Escape is virtually out of the question for them unless they're willing to risk a beating. But economics, not abusive family situations, is the driving force propelling these girls into the trade. By and large they, or their parents, or both, see no other way.

A "loan agent" with a fistful of *bah*t (Thai currency) offers an attractive solution to an up-country farmer

were leaning slinkily against doorways to entice customers into bars, now reach out and grab them by the arm.

Even more aggressive are the teenage boys—hawkers for the more daring, less-clothed girls in upstairs bars—who shove descriptive flashcards in front of your face and shout juicy phrases into your ear that describe the not-to-be-believed things taking place in their bars. Trying to walk past these guys is like trying to scuba dive through a bed of kelp.

And dancing their hearts out in this garish armpit of the city are the girls—hundreds of them, without whom the neon wouldn't flash, the rock 'n roll wouldn't scream and the customers wouldn't come.

### The tip of the iceberg

Goy, a dancer at Patpong's Grand Prix bar, looks like a 15-year-old—out of place in a late-night bar. She's actually 19, divorced and mother of a 7-month-old boy. She started working at the bar three months ago to support herself and her baby. For the time being, her mother is caring for the infant. Goy sends most of what she makes at the Grand Prix home each month. And there are countless others just like her. But this lively portion of Bangkok is only one part of the picture.

"Patpong is the tip of the iceberg," says Denis Gray, Thailand's Associated Press bureau chief. "Ninety percent of the prostitution scene is scattered around other parts of the city."

Daeng, the 14-year-old at the emergency center, is more the rule than the exception when it comes to typical prostitution cases. She's just one of thousands the center has helped in its eight-year history—and hundreds of thousands more it hasn't reached.

"The average age of the recruits is 12 to 15. They're just girls," says Khunying Kanitha Wichiencharoen, founder and director of the center. "Some of the ones we treat are only 10 or 11. Most kids lie about their age when they come here, saying they're 18, while they clutch their favorite teddy bear."

Her compassion for kids like these led Khunying Kanitha to do something to help. In 1981, with her prodding and guidance, the Association for Promotion of the Status of Women and the Women Lawyers Association of Thailand joined forces to form the center. Until recently, it consisted of a single shelter and halfway house in a quiet section of Bangkok where abused, abducted or otherwise distressed women and children could find refuge and assistance in recovering their health

and dignity.

Recently, Emergency Home 2: The Women's Education and Training Center, got underway with help from Jimmy and Rosalynn Carter, among others. The idea is to not only rescue women and children from crisis situations, but to help them redirect their lives by learning trades, from dress-making to car repair.

Khunying Kanitha's workers also have positioned themselves on the front lines, trying to intercept kids as they stream into town from rural areas. At Bangkok's Hua Lampong Railway Station and at two bus terminals, Kanitha's troops are lined up behind long tables located beneath huge signs bearing the center's name. More than 50 trains arrive and depart daily, transporting some 30,000 passengers.

One girl from a poor family in the north came to Bangkok by train on the promise of a waitressing job. Passing through the terminal, she noticed the center's sign, but didn't think much about it. Two days later, after being locked in a brothel and forced to tend to a virtually continuous string of customers, she escaped out a back window and fled—straight back to the train station. She found the booth, sat down next to a sympathetic social worker and sobbed out her ordeal. She was taken to the center, where she got help finding a waitressing job.

It would be bad enough if all that these girls had to go through was the physical and emotional abuse inherent

**M**ost of these girls see themselves as playing key roles in supporting the family.

in the business. But what about disease? What about AIDS?

Within the past year, officials have begun to admit that AIDS has dropped anchor in Thailand. "The number of AIDS cases is increasing, whether people like it or not," says Dr. Dephanom Muangman, dean of the Faculty of Public Health at Bangkok's Mahidol University.



"There are very few little girls left in the north," says Emergency Center director Khunying Kanitha Wichiencharoen. "They have all been brought down here."

"Asia has smaller figures because we started later," he says. "But we're catching up. The best thing we can do is educate the public, because they don't know how dangerous it is. And the sex establishments are jam-packed, not just with Western tourists, but Thais too."

### No simple solutions

What can be done to help these girls? Is there any way to prevent more kids from being hauled into the business? Can't they pass some laws or something?

Actually, they did. According to the 1960 Prostitution Act, prostitution is illegal in Thailand. Enforcing that law is another story. "The police are paid off to close their eyes to it," Khunying Kanitha says. "If they ever do raid a place, they usually warn the owners first to hide their best girls."

More laws aren't going to end the problem. In fact, there are no simple, easy solutions. "No amount of agitation is likely to change things while the cost incentives remain the same, and while opportunities for alternative employment are so limited," Phongpachit says. "The only real solution is a long-term one, and it lies in a massive change in the distribution of income between city and country, and in a fundamental shift in Thailand's orientation to the international economy."

Until then, girls like Goy will keep working at the Grand Prix and sending money home to their mothers and babies. Girls like Daeng will do their best to reconstruct their ravaged lives. And girls like the 12-year-olds at one Thai dance bar, clustered in little clumps like nervous sixth-graders on confirmation Sunday, with plastic number badges pinned to their pink satin dresses, will fret through hours of sweaty-palmed anxiety, wondering how many customers they'll have to take care of before the night is over. □

# SAMARITAN SAMPLER

RESOURCES FOR  
HELPING OTHERS  
IN THE NAME  
OF CHRIST

Compiled and written  
by Ginger Hope



## WHEELS ON WHEELS

A Chicago-area man's retirement hobby is a real pick-me-up for nearby nursing-home residents. Melvin Van Denend and 10 volunteers provide outings for about five people a day. Museum trips, lakeside drives and ball games are a rare treat for most of them.

"It's the first time I've been out

of this place in years," said one resident, typical of those who have no family ties. When residents ask why the volunteers do such a nice thing for free, they have a chance to talk about their Christian faith.

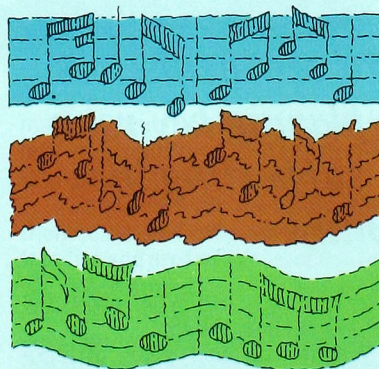
Life on Wheels, as Van Denend named his driving force, relies on private donations. The two-van fleet gets free upkeep from local mechanics, car washes, body shops, etc.

Life on Wheels, 2211 South Highland, 4-B, Lombard, IL 60148.

## FOR A SONG

They've got music coming out of their ears at Campus Crusade. Dig '50s rock 'n roll? Check out the Convertibles; '60s classics? Call Flashback. For a cappella vocals, see Vanguard. Or would a classical chamber ensemble give you more intense aural gratification? They've got you covered with Counterpoint.

These and a few other class acts make up Campus Crusade's music-ministry branch. The groups give audiences across the country a real earful—and, for those who have ears to hear it, a clear message with some Good News.

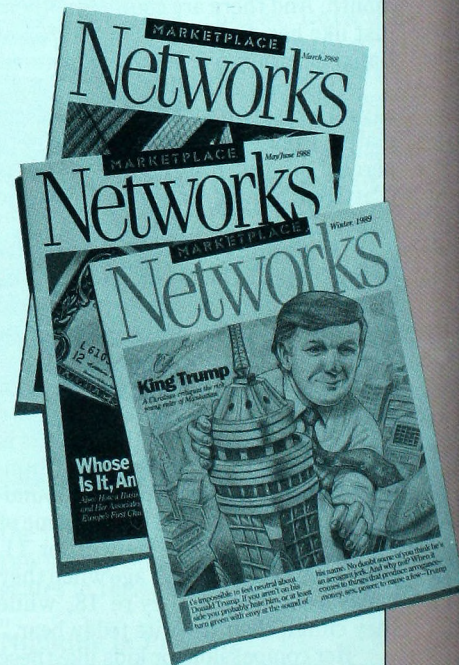


For information about Campus Crusade's music ministry, contact Pete Johnson, (714) 832-9862. To schedule a concert call (800) 962-SONG.

## THANK GOD IT'S WHAT?

"It's time for an overthrow of the TGIF (Thank God It's Friday) mentality among Christians," declares Pete Hammond in *Marketplace Networks*. "Thank God It's Monday. I will serve God and celebrate his kingdom in my job."

Hammond publishes *Marketplace Networks*, a sharp, upbeat newsletter for Christians in the



workaday world. On its pages you might find a critique of Donald Trump; advice about dealing with office politics; stories about biblical and modern "marketplace Christians"; or a digest of Christian thinking on money.

Order *Marketplace Networks* (donation requested) from InterVarsity Christian Fellowship, P.O. Box 7895, Madison, WI 53707.



## THE BIBLE AND THE COOKBOOK

“When Christianity tells you to feed the hungry it does not give you lessons in cookery. ... [It does not] supercede the ordinary human arts and sciences: it is rather a director which will set them all to the right jobs, and a source of energy which will give them all new life. *C. S. Lewis*”



## BORN IN EAST L.A.

In the late 1960s, Sunny Arguinzoni founded Victory Outreach to help Latinos in East Los Angeles who were caught up in drug abuse, gangs and all the turmoil of that time and place. Both a church and a rehabilitation center, Victory Outreach now ministers to people of all ethnic backgrounds at more than 100 sites in the United States and overseas. All its community programs focus on church involvement and re-entry into mainstream life.

For information contact Victory Outreach, 13181 Crossroads Parkway North, Suite 250, City of Industry, CA 91746: (213) 695-5211.

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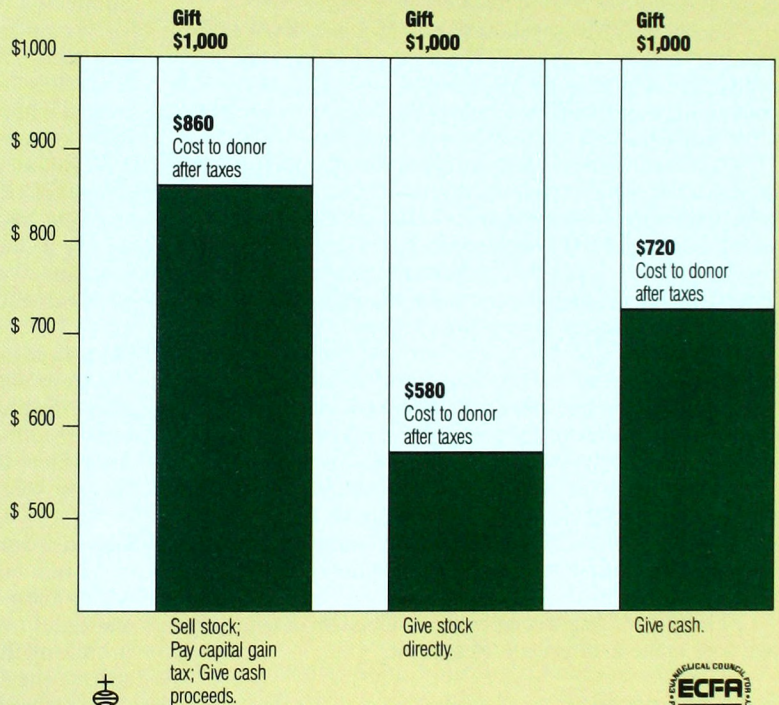
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# DARE TO FAIL, AND OTHER ADVICE

BY TED W. ENGSTROM AND EDWARD R. DAYTON

**B**oth of us are at the point in our lives where we are comfortable looking back down the roads we have traveled. It's been exciting. Would we do it all again? Gladly! We might do a few things differently, of course. For those of you just beginning the journey, or those who counsel young leaders, here are some things that strike us as important.

## School days

Probably many of you have had 16 years of education, possibly more. We in the Western world are the most schooled of all people. Isn't it true that our society believes in postponing adulthood? A person is considered an adult only after leaving school and taking a full-time job.

The result is expected: students usually don't act like adults. That is, they live out rituals of dress, horseplay and college humor—just weeks before they graduate to become pastors or leaders. Three months later, they wonder how they could have ever thought school was a heavy grind. They don't have much experience at managing themselves, much less managing others.

## Ages and stages

In her book *Passages*, Gail Sheehy points out that just like children, adults pass through normal phases. People respond differently, see things differently, at different ages.

When we're young we refuse to compromise. Perhaps in our thirties we start learning to compromise. Eventually we learn that compromise is what life's all about. We see that our ideals are less than ideal to others. "Our" goals are more desirable than "my" goals.

There's nothing wrong with the idealism of youth. But age does make a difference. Respect it.

## Faith and paradox

Technological advances have given us the illusion that we have much more control of our destinies than we actually have. Too often young Christians fail to grasp the paradoxes of life so clearly stated in the Bible. The ultimate paradox is God's sovereignty and human freedom. Logic says those two cannot coexist. With maturity, however, we discover that we can live and work as though both are true. Learn early to live in that faith.

## Dare to fail

To take on leadership often means isolation. There comes a time when you must choose an unpopular position. It doesn't take much courage to move ahead on something in which you have complete confidence. True courage moves ahead fully knowing that failure is possible.

## Love with purpose

Jesus said that the basic test of our commitment to him is our love for one another. Don't be so consumed with tasks and accomplishments that you have little time for relationships and love. But without focus, without shared purpose, love can become ingrown. Love with abandon, but love with purpose.

## Surprises on the job

You may have just graduated, but your education has just begun. Almost everyone is surprised by their first job. No matter how good the job description is, the position is seldom what we expected. Many recent graduates complain, "I'm not using 10 percent of what I learned." Be patient. You will. Not all of it, but a great deal. At the same time, build continued training into your goals.

Another paradox: the more we learn, the more humbled we are at our own ignorance. And yet with the feeling of ignorance comes a sense that it's all right not to know everything. Count on it.

## Be a reader

Read widely in as many subjects as you can. If you don't enjoy reading, learn to enjoy it. Read contemporary literature; read management and leadership books and articles. Build more bookshelves if you need to. But read! It's one of the best ways to grow.

## Learn from failure

From failure we often learn the most. There's nothing wrong with making a mistake. (Just don't make the same one again.) When you fail, pick yourself up and move ahead to build on the experience. Don't moan over it, but ask God to redeem the experience.

Leadership that is Christian is never without a purpose. Doubts will come. In a world where the chance of things going wrong far exceeds the chance of things going right, it's easy to feel like a failure. That's why you must reaffirm your purpose again and again.

## Someone is there for you

We have direct access to the Maker of the universe. He has gone before and goes ahead. Call on him. Counsel with him. God continually invites you into his presence. His way of working is by answering prayer.

Ours is a God who is for us. He isn't playing games. Entrust your life to him daily. In Psalm 32:8 God said, "I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will counsel you and watch over you." Looking back down the road of our lives, we can say it's true!

# PUTTING HIS BEST FOOT FORWARD

For several nights in June 1982, the night sky over Beirut looked like the Fourth of July. Francis Scott Key's description of "the rockets' red glare, the bombs bursting in air" seemed to fit the chaos taking place. But even those words could not begin to describe the fury unleashed by Israel's bombing of that ravaged port city. Yet in the midst of that rain of bombs, a miracle was taking place.

That miracle had its roots in a discussion two University of Oregon students had had three years earlier about how they could tell the school's 17,000-member student body about Christ.

"What about trusting God to work it out that

every student hears the gospel this year?" Dick Cole suggested to Joe Lang (not their real names). There were only 65 believers on campus at that time. They wanted to come up with an evangelistic approach that would be innovative, effective and scripturally sound.

Finally they designed a strategy. On a map, they portioned off the university into seven sections. During the next several days they walked around each section, asking God to do what he had promised Joshua: "I will give you every place where you set your foot." (Joshua 1:3)

After two months of trudging around campus, stopping to pray in each dormitory and academic department, Dick began to wonder whether he would ever see results from the daily strolls. "This is ludicrous," he complained. "If God does not answer prayer, this has sure been a waste of time." But the students continued their treks.

Two months later, their prayers were answered when Christian author Josh McDowell spoke on campus. (A few years later, the University of Oregon became the most fruitful ministry of The Navigators in the Pacific Northwest.)

Later that year, Dick transferred to Wheaton College, near Chicago. He resumed his campus walks—but for a different reason. The Wheaton students

**A**nthing large enough for a wish to light upon, is large enough to hang a prayer upon.

George Macdonald

already knew the gospel, but the number of graduates who were becoming missionaries had slacked off somewhat since 1950.

By the time Dick graduated, after several years of prayer walks and campus organizing, student interest in missions had increased dramatically, with one-fifth of the student body attending weekly mission meetings he had helped create.

By this time a firm believer in the power of the foot as a means of spreading the gospel, Dick decided to continue his walks when he was sent to the mission field of Beirut. Although a stroll around Beirut is not quite the same as a stroll around the University of Oregon, Dick decided to follow the call of God in his heart. He outlined four sections on a map of Muslim West Beirut and put his best foot forward.

After six months, Dick had to abandon the walks due to increased violence. Then in June 1982, the Israelis bombed West Beirut. Never had the city endured a more severe pummeling. When it was finally safe for him to venture out again, something along his prayer route seemed odd, but he couldn't figure out what it was. Then it hit him. The buildings just within the routes outlined for his walks remained standing. Buildings just outside those routes had been demolished.

"If this is what happened in the physical realm," Dick said afterward, "just imagine what must have happened in the spiritual realm."

*Adapted from Branches, a publication of REACH Ministries International.*

## Matters for Prayer

- ◆ **Beirut:** Pray for a peaceful resolution to the battle raging in Lebanon. Ask God for spiritual renewal among the believers there, and reconciliation between the warring groups.
- ◆ **Thailand:** Pray that God's people will seek long-term solutions for the problems leading to prostitution in Third-World countries.
- ◆ **Environment:** Thank God for Christians who are helping poor people in developing countries to replenish their land with vegetation and water.



JOHN McMILLIN / WORLD VISION

BY TOM SINE

*Nothing is more controversial than to be a follower of Jesus Christ. Nothing is more dangerous than to live out the will of God in today's world. It changes your whole monetary lifestyle. Am I suggesting that if you follow Jesus you won't be able to go out and buy a BMW? You got it!*

—Tony Campolo in *WORLD VISION* magazine. ("Will the Real Jesus Please Stand Up," Oct.-Nov. 1988)

# WILL THE REAL CULTURAL CHRISTIANS

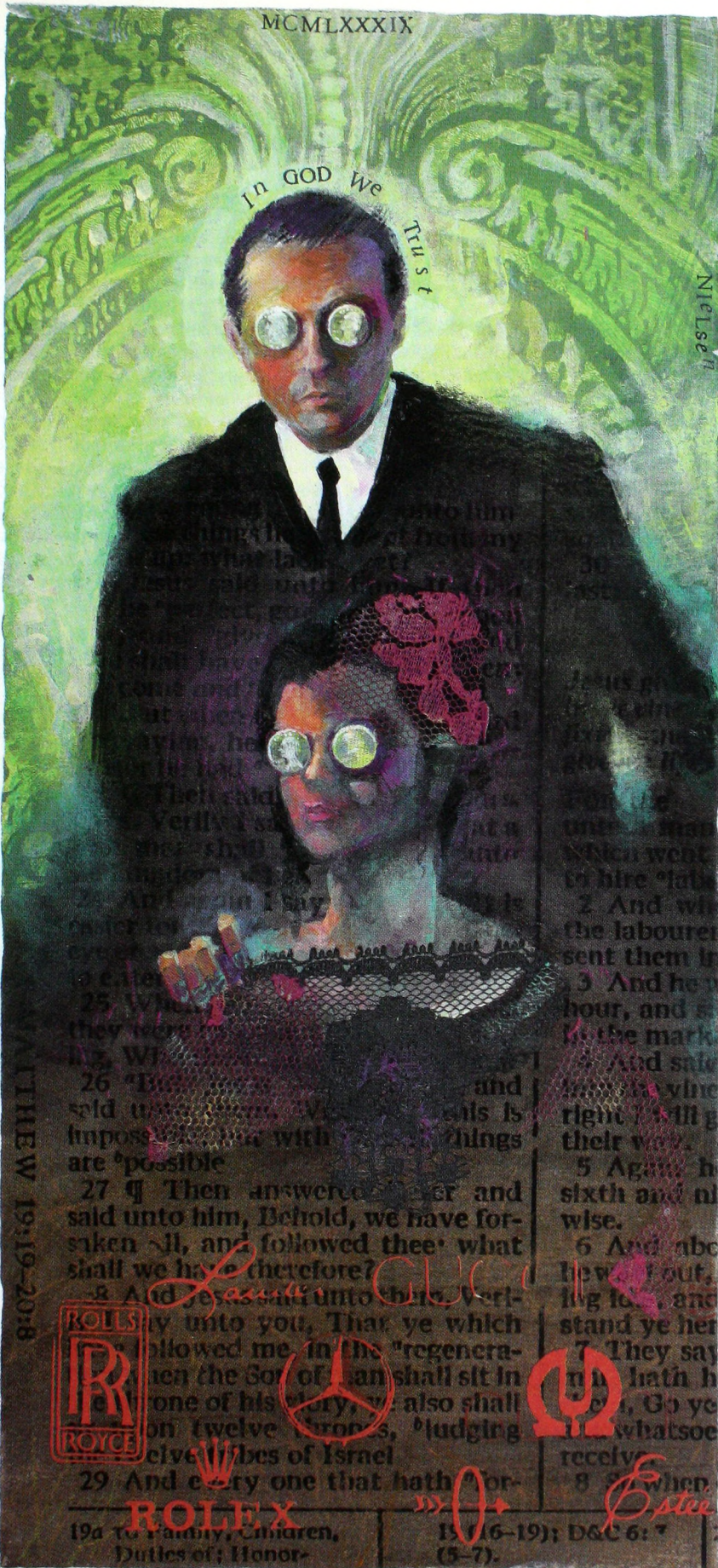
# PLEASE STAND UP

*Biblical  
Christianity  
does not mean  
living the  
American Dream  
with a little  
Jesus overlay.*

“**W**ill the real Tony Campolo please stand up,” wrote one angry reader about Tony’s article in *WORLD VISION* magazine last year. Readers questioned Tony’s lifestyle, disputed his politics and rejected his theology. One person wrote, “Would he be kind enough to send me a list of approved cars? I own a Honda, it’s fairly nice and I might be living in sin.”

World Vision has never received so many letters responding to a single article, and many of those letters were pretty hostile. As I read Tony’s article again, I kept asking, “Why were people so upset?”

Two things impressed me about their letters: one, the intensity of their feelings, and two, that they completely missed the central issue. That is, to what extent has our secular culture shaped Christian faith in the United States? I suspect that many readers reacted so strongly because they were



unwilling to deal with the cultural captivity of the American church.

So will the real cultural Christians please stand up? Until we recognize our captivity we cannot be free. To the extent that our secular culture's values captivate us, we are unavailable to advance God's kingdom. That's a serious problem.

We all seem to be trying to live the American Dream with a little Jesus overlay. We talk about the lordship of Jesus, but our career comes first. Our house in the 'burbs comes first. Upscaling our lives comes first. Then, with whatever we have left, we try to follow Jesus.

The problem is, once we try to do it all and have it all we don't have much time, energy or money left for anything else. And it's only going to get worse. Many of us who are older were able to buy homes and pursue our dreams on a single income. Today most families need two incomes to do the same thing. We

*Today we're taught that we can have anything we want as long as we aren't materialistic.*

have sold Christian young people the wrong dream, and they will have little left over to advance the gospel. The kingdom is in danger of losing a whole generation of workers.

Whatever commands our time, energy and resources, commands us. And most of us are living lives that aren't that different from our secular counterparts. One of the reasons we are so ineffective in evangelism is that we are so much like the people around us. What do we have to call them to? Oh, we hang around church buildings a little more. We abstain from a few things. And we aren't quite as hedonistic—though we sure keep trying.

So we aren't that different. We have reduced Christianity to a crutch to help us through the minefield of the upwardly mobile life. Our books, broadcasts and sermons encourage us to understand what God can do for us—help us get ahead in our jobs, color us beautiful and find us parking places when we go downtown.

Tony said in his article, "God created us in his image, but we have decided to return the favor and create a God who is in our image." This God

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satisfies our every longing and spares us every inconvenience.

Recently a young pastor named Tim Dearborn had to share a cab with four other people in Bangkok, Thailand. One of the passengers was a Marxist revolutionary on his way to India.

The Marxist quizzed Tim at length about his faith. Finally, he said, "How can you be a Christian? Don't you realize there's no way your cause can win?"

"What do you mean there's no way my cause can win?" Tim asked.

The Marxist explained: "I am on my way to India to organize fishermen to overthrow their oppressors. And I am quite willing to lay down my life for the revolution. Your American Christianity is preoccupied with what your God can do for you. And dying for self-interest is a contradiction in terms!"

He's right. And biblical Christianity is not a self-interested Christianity. When Jesus stood up in his hometown at the beginning of his ministry, he read from Isaiah: "The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor."

Later John sent his disciples to ask Jesus if he was really the Messiah. Jesus said, "Go back and report to John what you have seen and heard: The blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cured, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the good news is preached to the poor. Blessed is the man who does not fall away on account of me."

Clearly Jesus wasn't concerned with his own needs. He didn't even have a place to lay his head. Following God meant focusing on the needs of others, extending God's love to the poor, the disabled and the forgotten.

Following Jesus meant exactly the same thing for the first disciples. They were not preoccupied with their own needs but totally committed themselves to Jesus Christ and his mission—sight to the blind, release to captives and good news to the poor. To do that, they quit jobs, left homes and put Christ's mission at the center of their lives, trusting God to meet their needs. Read Matthew 6:24-33.

Biblical Christianity does not mean living the American Dream with a little Jesus overlay. It means committing our whole lives—not just our time, but our money—to God's purposes. Peter and Andrew walked away from their fishing business; Zacchaeus gave half

his money to the poor and four times to anyone he had cheated; and the rich young ruler was told to give all his wealth away.

First-century Christians understood that following Jesus was a whole-life commitment. They committed everything to Christ. Today we're taught we can have anything we want, including lavish homes and expensive cars, as long as we have a right attitude, as long as we aren't materialistic. Today we can be a spiritual leader in the church and never leave the church building. Seventy-five percent of the people I meet in churches have no time to minister to anyone else.

But God has entrusted us with only a certain amount of money, time and education. The more of those resources I spend on my own life and local church, the less is available to advance God's kingdom. And we live in a world where millions of Christians can't keep their kids fed and a world

*The more I spend on myself, the less is available to advance God's kingdom.*

where more and more people are unevangelized.

Thankfully that's starting to change. Many Christians are finding one evening a week to evangelize international students or work with abused kids. A doctor in Denver sold half of his practice. He used the 20 hours a week to start an inner-city health clinic. And he supports his family comfortably on half-time income.

I know many Christians who have changed their lifestyles so they can invest 20 to 30 percent of their income to advance the gospel around the world. A young couple in Seattle discovered a way to escape the mortgage trap. Instead of paying a half-million dollars for a \$100,000 house over 30 years, they built their own. Total cost: \$25,000. And they are investing the money they freed up in the work of God's kingdom.

So I invite the real cultural Christians to please stand up with me. Let's acknowledge that we have been co-opted by our culture. Then let's join that growing company of Christians who are choosing to seek first the advancement of God's kingdom. □

*Tom Sine is a consultant and free-lance writer living in Seattle, Wash.*

# OUT OF MALIBU, INTO AFRICA

**P**robably by accident, *My Vanished Africa* stands next to *Entrepreneur* on Brandon Williams' bookshelf. The two seem strange bedfellows, unless you know Brandon Williams.

*Entrepreneur* is natural enough. Brandon is a child of corporate culture. He plans to go into business just like his father.

*My Vanished Africa* is another story. In 1986, when Brandon was a sophomore at Pepperdine University in Malibu, Calif., he developed a fascination with Africa. He loved the movie "Out of Africa." His older brother had just returned from Africa with some amazing stories. Then Brandon saw another movie—he doesn't even remember the name of it—that showed the needs of Africans. He was determined to go.

He called Sam Jackson at World Vision. "I told him that I wanted to see what was there. I wanted to be touched. I don't think many Americans really understand the issues of the Third World. I wanted to understand what was going on."

Jackson doesn't receive many calls like that from college sophomores. Frankly, he didn't know if it would be worth it. "It's a big job to work out a trip like that. Then I met him. The kid blew me away. He was so serious about the trip and so determined."

The trip didn't disappoint Brandon. Of all the things he saw in Africa, it's easy for him to identify the turning point. The place was Louga, a parched piece of Senegal desert dotted with tiny villages. The person was Loc Le-Chau.

"I've shaken the hand of a U.S. president, but Loc Le-Chau is the most amazing man I've ever met," Brandon says. The director of World Vision's work in Louga held top positions in the Vietnamese government before fleeing in 1975, and advised a U.S. vice president as well.

But that's not what impressed Brandon. It was Loc's respect for the people he was trying to help. It was his rapport with village folk and bureaucrats alike. It was the number of babies in Louga named Loc.

"He's a professional, doing God's work professionally," Brandon says. "He's got all these charts and diagrams, like he's planning a major offensive—which he is). He doesn't just talk about how terrible things are. He talks about solutions and hope."

Brandon watched Loc talk to a village chief

about digging a well. Unless the village took responsibility to maintain the well, drilling would be pointless. "When you die," Loc said, "you can look down on your village and see strong children, happy children, a clean and green village."

"Yes," the chief said, "that is what I want."

"Before I went," Brandon says, "I thought I had a lot to offer the people of Africa. I thought in terms of answers and miracles. I had a lot to learn about pragmatism and reality."

And about how *not* to give. Brandon joined a neighborhood soccer game one afternoon in Louga. In a gesture of friendship, he left them the soccer ball. "How ignorant," he says now.

"It's like giving away \$50 bills in the U.S. We had to fight our way out of the mob we created.

"You realize that people are the same everywhere. Everyone will stretch out a hand for a freebie." Later, Brandon gave some soccer balls in exchange for planting trees.

Before the trip, Brandon already cared about the problems facing the people of Africa. Afterwards he wanted to do more than care. Because of his family's connections, Brandon knew some wealthy people. He decided to ask them to invest in Loc's work in Senegal.

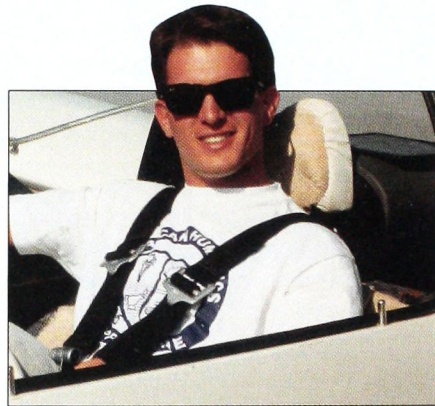
That wasn't as easy as it sounds. These were people Brandon would turn to in the future for recommendations or even employment. "You don't want them thinking, 'Here comes Brandon, he's going to ask for money again,' every time you call." Besides, Brandon had never been very good at receiving. "I hate asking for things. It's easier to give, to feel generous.

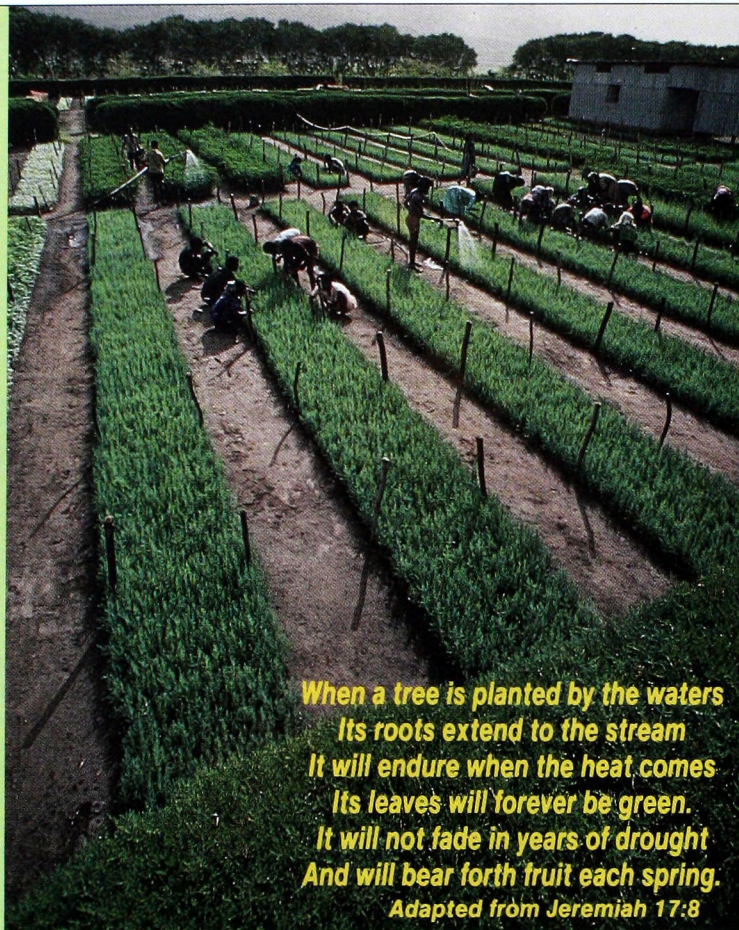
"But I underestimated them. They not only agreed to see me, they agreed to give. And they did so willingly, even joyfully." Brandon raised \$135,000 for projects in Senegal and Mali.

"Sometimes I think of what Christ said: 'Blessed are they who have not seen, and yet believe.' The people who gave just because of what they heard—that's a great leap of faith. That's more admirable than anything I've done." □

Ginger Hope

**I wanted  
to see  
what was  
there.  
I wanted  
to be  
touched.**






**When a tree is planted by the waters  
Its roots extend to the stream  
It will endure when the heat comes  
Its leaves will forever be green.  
It will not fade in years of drought  
And will bear forth fruit each spring.  
Adapted from Jeremiah 17:8**

Trees are God's gift of life, our source of oxygen, food, warmth and shelter. Their grace and majesty are a delight. Yet some Third-World children have never seen a tree. They see only endless stretches of parched, dry earth. Their eyes burn with dust in the unrelenting heat.

There is some good news, however. It is possible to bring life to a parched land. World Vision is currently planting tree nurseries throughout the developing world, particularly in Africa. One nursery produces a million trees each year, with the local community eagerly helping.

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# WORLD VISION®

October/November 1989

*Blighting  
the  
land  
that  
feeds  
US*

*How to Create  
a Ghetto*

*Thailand's  
Biggest Pimp*



**4** **Blighting the Land that Feeds Us**

Those noisy, hand-wringing environmentalists are at it again, telling us we've got to stop cutting down trees and spraying our hair or we're really going to foul up the earth. Trouble is, they're right. And if we don't take heed soon, we're going to have to move. And good planets are hard to find these days.

**8** **A Keeper of the Earth**

Ask Wesley Granberg-Michaelson why he's so concerned for the environment and he's likely to quote from 2 Corinthians. The Bible, he claims, is his primary environmental textbook. And he would like to see more Christians understand that caring for the earth is every bit as much a part of the gospel as saving souls.

**12** **Thailand's Biggest Pimp**

World-wise and wary, Daeng can tell you a thing or two about Thailand's back-alley brothels and the customers who frequent them. But she'd rather not. She's only 14, and the memories aren't pleasant. She's out of the business now, but thousands like her are still holed up in small, dingy rooms or on display behind huge glass panels, driven or lured into the business by the biggest pimp in Asia: poverty.

**20** **Cultural Christians: Stand Up!**

If you own a BMW, you might want to skip this article. Of course, it's not just you Beemer drivers that Tom Sine and Tony Campolo want to reach. Most of us middle-class American Christians could stand a little tune-up when it comes to our materialistic tendencies. Even lowly Honda drivers.

***N**atural disasters, together with man-induced destruction of the resources we depend on, are creating a world-scale environmental catastrophe.*

*This NASA photograph of the Ganges River in Bangladesh reveals extensive sediment in the Bay of Bengal. Much of it results from intensive, human-caused soil erosion.*

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**U**ntil the Lord ushers in a new heaven and earth, the planet on which we live—blighted as it is by our greed and indifference—is all we've got.

A growing awareness of our world's plight gives Christians an opportunity to provide leadership in reviving and renewing the earth, until God ultimately makes all things new.

*Terry Madison*

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# A WORLD BEYOND THE BARRICADES

**O**n a recent vacation I was relaxing to the music of Victor Hugo's "Les Miserables" while reflecting on the terrible turmoil going on in China. The comparison between the youthful protest in France in the early 19th century, captured so poignantly in this musical, and the painful end of the student-led pro-democracy movement in China was unavoidable.

The student idealism of 19th-century France came to an end at the barricades. The rhetoric of revolution yielded to the reality of armed confrontation. Unfortunately, the youthful cause was no match for the heavy artillery of the central government forces. Virtually all of the students at the barricades died. The only sustaining hope was captured in the lyrics of one of the songs, "Is there a world beyond the barricades?"

In Tiananmen Square, the similarities were striking and painful. The justness and the rightness of a cause were deeply felt. Once again, rhetoric exceeded reality and, with the crushing weight of tanks and overwhelming numbers, idealistic hopes for a better way of life came to a bitter end. The "empty chairs and empty tables" of "Les Miserables" were brought up-to-date by the events of Tiananmen Square.

In Tiananmen Square idealism was replaced by fear. Future hopes gave way to a despairing present. The exercise of student arrests, imprisonments and executions was reported publicly. Behind the scenes, the work of the church was severely jolted.

World Vision's budding work in China has been placed on hold. Christian language teachers, about to leave this country for ministry in China, have seen their visas revoked. The Lausanne Conference on World Evangelization took place without any representation from mainland China. Clearly much was at stake. Just as clearly, much was lost.

But is there "a world beyond the barricades?" Certainly we learned some pragmatic lessons. In a highly centralized form of government, one with a long history of communist domination, neither economic nor democratic reforms can ever be taken for granted. The models for a transition from communism to democracy are few indeed. It just might happen in Poland. If so, this will be the first the world has ever seen. We need to be realistic.

It is also appropriate and timely to remember that *glasnost*, the new "openness" of another world power, cannot be taken for granted. *Glasnost* exists as a pragmatic expedient and, by

definition, will continue to exist only until something better comes along. It does not contain a moral imperative, and we need to be realistic about its enduring quality without such a dimension.

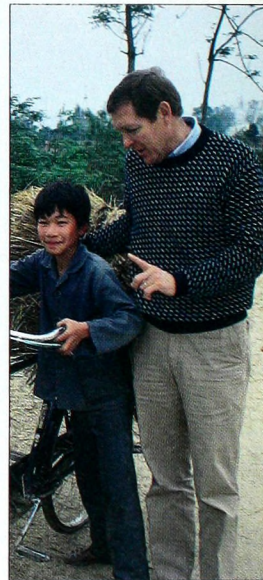
Most importantly, we need to remember that opportunities for the church won't last forever. It is not always a helpful exercise to try to ascertain the motives for *glasnost* in Russia, economic reform in China, the new openness in Vietnam—or any of the winds of change that exist throughout our world today. Whatever the motive, if we have an opportunity to place a Christian foot in the door, in such a way that the door will forever remain open, we are obliged to do it.

We do what we can do. It is possible today to satisfy the hunger for Bibles and other printed biblical materials. It is still possible to work with the church in a way that will affirm and lift up the church that has been made strong through persecution. It is certainly possible to be a living witness for the worth of the gospel, for things such as integrity, ethical standards and high moral conduct. It is possible to explain our motivation for being in these countries, an explanation that will invariably lead us to a discussion of kingdom values and the kingdom itself.

We do what we can do. But then we need to allow God to have the last word. The missionaries left China in 1949, but God certainly wasn't through with that part of the world. When China reopened in the late 1970s, missionaries from abroad were no longer needed. God continued to build his kingdom, and today there are somewhere between 40 and 50 million Christians throughout China. Tanks, soldiers and barricades mean nothing to our Lord. He alone can shut down the work of the kingdom. Gratefully he has never chosen to do so, but continues to do all those things that we can't do ourselves.

We rest in the assurance that, "He that hath begun a good work ... will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." Yes, there is "a world beyond the barricades." It is God's world and he is still not finished with it. □

**Bob Seiple talks with the son of a Chinese farmer whose future will be affected by recent events in Tiananmen Square.**





BY LARRY B. STAMMER

# BLIGHTING THE LAND THAT FEEDS US



*People want a  
better life, so they  
overuse their resources.  
There must be  
a better way.*

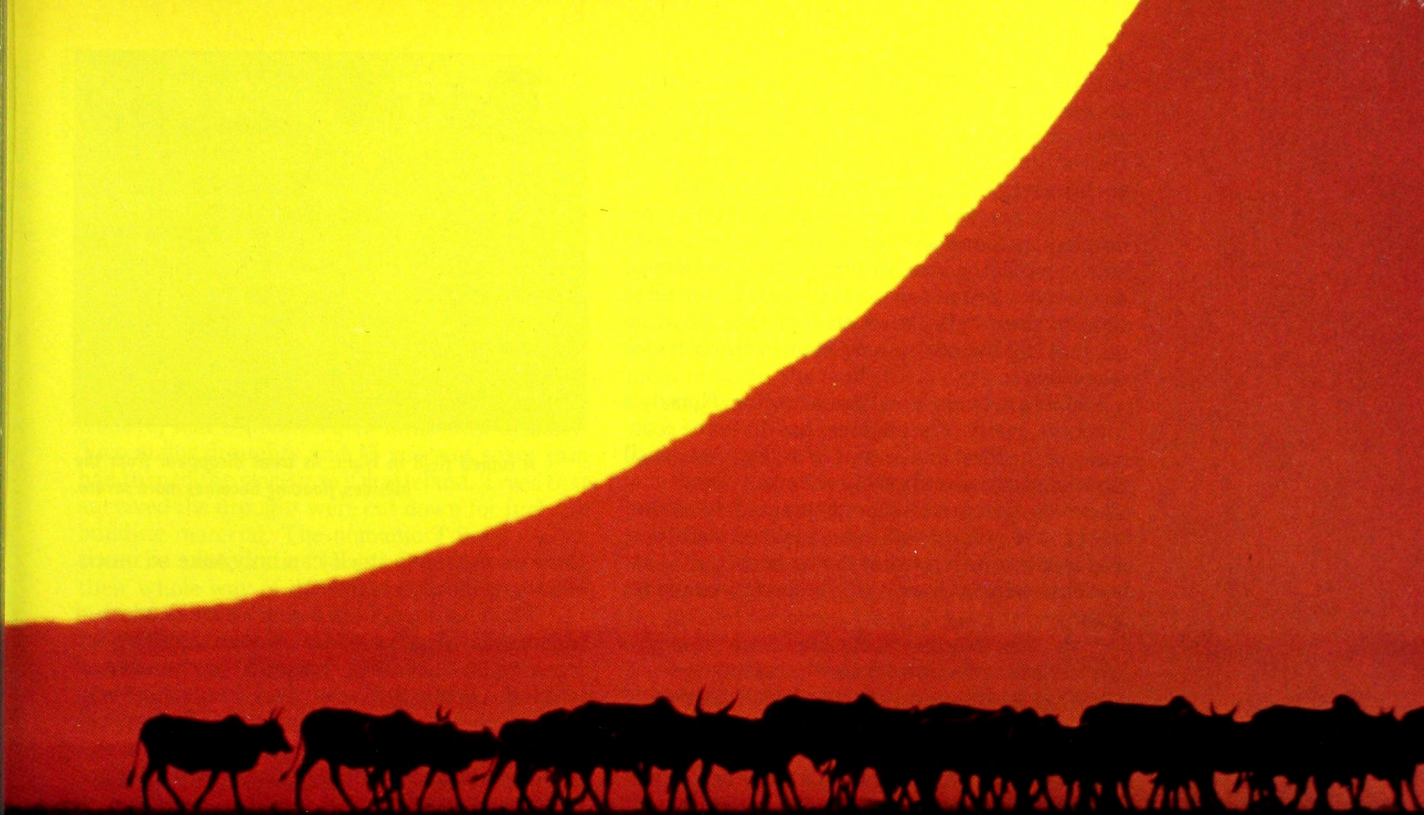
**T**he muddy torrent raged down the hillside, sweeping aside everything in its path—including part of Anse-a-Galets, a small town on the Haitian island of La Gonave.

Three years earlier the waters claimed 33 lives. This time the people were ready. The thunder kept them alert. By midnight, the people in the worst danger had abandoned their homes. There were no casualties, but the flood took its toll: two churches, four homes and a drinking-water system.

“It was devastating,” says Father Bill Quigley, a Roman Catholic missionary. “The people have very little. If they have a little extra money they buy a comb. On another occasion they might buy a pot or pan. Then they lose everything in one night.”

For the 3,000 people of Anse-a-Galets and for the families who lost their homes, the remedy was obvious: rebuild. The worst was over. But the disaster will probably recur when the rains return. The homes have been rebuilt, but nothing has really changed.

Anse-a-Galets’ floods are part of a pattern. It’s true: natural disasters are getting worse, or at least more frequent, in poor countries. There are more floods, more mudslides, more droughts. That’s because people want a better life, and the



only way they see to get it is to overuse their resources. But what they're really doing is pushing that better life further and further out of reach.

The people of Anse-a-Galets strip their land of forests, destroying the very resources upon which they depend. They cut down Bahyonde trees to make charcoal, which they use for cooking or sell for a few pennies in Port-au-Prince, the capital city.

That's why the floods are getting worse. There is less and less growth in the highlands above the village to prevent soil erosion and flooding. The soil disappears so fast that some farmers believe stones grow in their fields. Meanwhile, Port-au-Prince needs bulldozers to clear its streets of the topsoil that flows down the mountains in the rainy season.

### Scratching heaven

Haiti's forests were once so lush that Christopher Columbus wrote of "thousands of kinds of trees so tall that they seem to be scratching heaven." Earlier in this century a U.S. administrator called La Gonave a "tropical paradise home for 10,000 people."

"Now it's no paradise, and it's home to 70,000 people. Another 20,000 are either in Miami or in the slums of Port-au-Prince," says Julian Pitchford, a water engineering consultant who has worked in Haiti and Africa for World Vision.

Pitchford says the island is critically short of water and can't sustain its too-large population. It's been severely deforested, resulting in soil erosion and a drop in food production. "All this has made quite a significant change to its climate," he explains. "There is much less rainfall."

La Gonave's growing population depends on ever scarcer wood for fuel and income. Little or no high-grade timber remains standing, but the demand has increased. So the island exports low-grade wood in the form of charcoal. Attempts to encourage tree-planting have been marginally successful at best.

What's wrong with the people of La Gonave? Can't they see what they're doing to themselves? Sure they can. But the simple truth is, they can't see any alternative.

### Change by degrees

Until recently we tended to view the cycle of poverty and environmental harm in local or, at best, regional terms. We lamented the flood in Bangladesh, the famine in Ethiopia, the mudslides in Brazil. We knew these calamities were rooted in environmental abuse. But they seemed remote, as remote as the ancient warning that we would reap what we sowed.

Now many of the world's leading scientists warn of world-scale environmental catastrophe—brought on by rich and poor nations alike.

For example: global warming—the "greenhouse effect"—could drastically shift crop-growing regions all around the world. Rising sea levels, caused by melting polar ice caps, could flood coastal cities and entire low-lying countries like Bangladesh. Many plant and animal species could vanish before they adapt to temperature changes.

Indeed, the 3- to 8-degree Fahrenheit increase predicted over the next 40 years, given current trends, is greater than the temperature changes during all of recorded human history.

While it's too early to say whether the 1988 drought was the first clear sign of global warm-

**W**e knew these calamities were rooted in environmental abuse. But they seemed remote.

**Who's to blame for global warming? Nobody's innocent, really.**

ing, the drought was typical of global warming scenarios. It reduced China's grain crop by 3 percent, the Soviet Union's by 9 percent and the United States' by 30 percent. It left us with only a 60-day supply of surplus grain in the world.

That's a frightening figure, especially for developing countries that couldn't hope to compete in a bidding war. In that event, "millions of low-income, urban consumers would be forced to tighten their belts, even though they have no notches left," wrote Lester Brown in *World Watch* magazine.

Who's to blame for global warming? Nobody's innocent, really. The engines that drive the economies of the First and Second Worlds run on fossil fuels like coal, oil and gasoline. Seventy percent of all carbon dioxide emissions pour out of the smokestacks and tailpipes of industrialized countries. (Carbon dioxide is a major "greenhouse gas" that prevents solar radiation from escaping back into space.)

### Like there's no tomorrow

Meanwhile, many parts of the developing world burn off tropical forests like there's no tomorrow, clearing land for agriculture, ranching and housing. This accounts for the other 30 percent of human-caused carbon dioxide emissions. That's expected to rise to 50 percent by the year 2025, chiefly because of increased energy use and deforestation. Forests covering an area about the size of Austria are destroyed every year.

It seems so obvious. Stop cutting down the trees. Think of the next generation.

Julian Pitchford, like others familiar with developing countries, is quick to understand what compels poor people to take a short view. He deplores it, but he understands it.

"It's easy to be critical of the poor who are tearing their island apart. But if you don't know how you'll feed your children tomorrow, planting trees for your grandchildren isn't a high priority," he observes.

It is against this backdrop of poverty, one found again and again in the developing world, that any discussion of global solutions must take place. When you have so little, development wins over environment without a fight.

Clearly we cannot go on this way. Like La



**A ruined field in Haiti: As trees disappear from the hillsides, flooding becomes more severe.**

Gonave, the earth itself can only take so much. What are the alternatives?

There is hope. Like never before, leaders of industrialized nations and developing nations are focusing on their inter-connected environmental problems. While the West opens discussion about fossil fuels and ozone-destroying chemicals, developing countries acknowledge that their deforestation, desertification and other problems go beyond their own borders.

Last February, for example, a conference on global warming convened in New Delhi, India. Representatives of developing countries, while still pointing to poverty as an underlying cause, admitted to careless and short-sighted abuse of the environment.

### Who will pay?

They added pointedly: "Having caused the major share of the problem and possessing the resources to do something about it, the industrial countries have a special responsibility to assist the developing countries in finding and financing appropriate responses."

For India and China, cutting back on ozone-destroying CFCs could mean denying their people refrigeration, unless an inexpensive substitute is made available. In Thailand or Brazil, saving the rain forest will exact a high short-term cost from a family's livelihood or a nation's ability to make debt payments. Who will pay to preserve the trees?

## VITAL SIGNS

- About half the forests in poor countries have disappeared in this century.
- Destruction of forests and disruption of ecosystems will cause up to a million plant and animal species to disappear by the year 2000.
- Five of the past 12 years have been the warmest since 1900.
- Although CFCs were banned from aerosol cans in 1978, other uses of CFCs have increased, seriously depleting the ozone layer. More ultraviolet rays reach the earth, posing a threat to human health and retarding crop production.

- Of the toxic wastes produced in the United States, about one percent are actually destroyed.
- Ten thousand people die each year from pesticide poisoning; another 40,000 fall ill.
- One-third of the pesticides exported by the United States are banned for use at home.
- Food packaging makes up about a third of household garbage in the United States.
- In 1960, the average American produced 2.9 pounds of trash a day. Today's figure: 5 pounds per person.

*Statistics from Ecology and Life (Word, 1988) by Wesley Granberg-Michaelson.*

And there is an essential human element. Governments and banks can't solve the problems. Sustainable development—development that cares for the earth as well as the people—has to come through the people themselves, Pitchford notes.

"It's not something you do to them," he says. "It's something you do with them."

Perhaps the greatest hope of all comes from people who are doing just that, people like Barry and Janine Rands in Mali, West Africa.

When the Rands arrived in the easternmost region of Mali three years ago, they took a good look around them. Too much tree-cutting, as in La Gonave, had contributed to unnatural disaster. Two major droughts and 15 years of scant rain had turned the place into a wasteland. Trees that survived the drought were cut down for fuel and building material. The nomadic Tuareg people, once the aristocratic "lords of the desert," saw their whole way of life in jeopardy. Disease and suicide claimed many lives.

"We saw that if we were going to help, we had to address the ecological problems," Barry says. The Rands have designed innovative projects that help reclaim the devastated environment. They've focused on two things: using up less of the scarce wood supply, and making the most of the rain that does fall on the desert.

Janine started by playing with mud. She kneaded clay, sand and water until she found a mix that would stand intense heat. Then she

designed a cookstove. The mud stove uses about half as much wood as the traditional three-rock fire, gives better heat and is safer for children who play in cooking areas.

And—the crucial test for a development project—the stoves have caught on by word of mouth. More than 3,000 men and women have learned how to make them; more than 17,000 have been built. Since the stoves need to be replaced periodically, the crafters have a steady source of extra income. And unlike many short-lived development projects, the mud stoves require absolutely nothing that isn't locally and cheaply available.

### Ten glasses

Barry, meanwhile, concentrates on the water problem. Recently he asked a group of former nomads who were interested in conservation: "If these 10 glasses of water are all the rain that falls on our land this year, how many glasses soak into the ground for crops, trees, grass and our wells, and how much runs off or evaporates?"

Some guessed half. Everyone underestimated the waste. Barry poured nine and a half glasses of water onto the ground. "That's how much we lose," he said. "The high winds, hot climate and hard rains we can't change. The trees and plants that used to catch water are gone. The good news is, we can do something to help the water soak in."

His audience learned to build rock and earth dikes along the contours of the land, and to construct water catchments for planting trees. "In the Sahel," Barry explains, "the simpler things usually work the best." The low contour dikes break the force of run-off water so the silt stays behind the dikes instead of being carried off to some distant lake or swamp.

The people Barry spoke to that day went back to their homes and went to work. Before long they marveled at the results—green grass on a barren plain, soil wet enough after the first rain to plant trees and crops, and water already rising in the wells.

True, the amount of land that has been reclaimed is small. The desert is still growing. The Rands, however, measure achievement in the human spirit. "The people are realists," says Barry. "They understand that nothing's going to bring back the 'good old days.'

"But they are realizing that they aren't helpless victims. They can fight back. They're prepared to adapt. That spirit of realistic optimism is the best thing that's happened so far." □

*Larry Stammer is an environmental writer for the Los Angeles Times.*

*Earthen canals nourish rice fields in the Mali desert: "In the Sahel, simple things work best," says Barry Rands.*



***"If you don't know how you'll feed your children tomorrow, planting trees for your grandchildren isn't a high priority."***

*Wesley Granberg-Michaelson calls the Bible his primary ecological textbook.*

# A KEEPER OF THE EARTH

Wes assured her his organization was rooted in Christ and had nothing to do with the New Age. He offered to send her some information. But her mission was complete, and the conversation was over. Wes went home frustrated and late for dinner.

That was years ago. Wes isn't at New Creation Institute any more, and he lives far from Montana. But the concerns raised by that caller are still very much with him.

Wes might even go so far as to say that she was missing part of the gospel. That there is more to being "saved" than she—and a lot of other Christians—realize. That the average evangelical Christian defines salvation too narrowly, more narrowly than the Bible does.

Wesley Granberg-Michaelson is a key figure

**I**t was near closing time at the New Creation Institute in Missoula, Mont., when the phone rang. The caller didn't waste any time. She attacked the organization's name, based on 2 Corinthians 5:17.

"You're misusing the Scripture," she said. "I don't see anything in that verse about the creation being made new. That verse applies only to the individual."

"Well, you see..." Wesley Granberg-Michaelson tried to marshal his thoughts.

"God only made man in his image," she continued, "not the flowers, the mountains, the land. And it was man who sinned. So man needs to be redeemed, not creation."

Wes tried to say something about the connection between sin and the mistreatment of creation.

"No, sir," the caller said. "There isn't anything in my Bible about the environment. I bet you people are one of those New Age outfits."



PETER WILLIAMS / WCC

in the "earthkeeping" movement, a Christian view of the earth and ecology. The term comes from the book *Earthkeeping*, written about 10 years ago by Loren Wilkinson.

Simply put, earthkeeping is the view that abuse of the earth is part of the sin problem. Being redeemed by Christ restores our relationship with creation just as it restores relationships with God and other people.

"That's a second dimension of brokenness that we've forgotten about, but it's very clear in the Bible," Wes says.

For a major spokesman, Wes is not an electric personality. He's a reflective, suit-and-tie type, a sensitive man who thinks things through deeply and thoroughly.

It was the move from Washington, D.C., to





Missoula, Mont., that prompted Wes to think about earthkeeping. Leaving a politicized, bureaucratic inner-city neighborhood, he found a place where "the relationship between people and nature was much more transparent."

Wes found a brand of commitment to the land unlike anything he'd ever seen. He remembers a crusty Montana rancher who was paid a call by a mining executive interested in strip-mining the coal from the rancher's property.

The rancher politely listened as his visitor outlined the small fortune he was prepared to pay and emphasized how close to the surface and accessible the coal was. Then the rancher smiled and replied, "Mister, you have absolutely no idea how *inaccessible* the coal on my land is." End of interview.

Wes hardly knew how to approach environmental issues from a Christian point of view. Exploring them became a prime focus of his thinking and writing. He found so much in the Bible that he calls it his primary ecological textbook.

And he is very tired of hearing the Bible, or Christianity, blamed for the way we abuse our planet. This idea became popular about 20 years

**G**od writes  
the gospel not  
in the Bible  
alone, but on  
trees and  
flowers and  
clouds and  
stars.

Martin Luther

## WHAT YOU CAN DO...

### WITH YOUR CHURCH

1. Start a study group to discuss a book on earthkeeping. Or study the Bible. "The theology is often so badly misunderstood," Wes Granberg-Michaelson says.
2. Explore projects for your local church. Sponsor a recycling project. Use the church as a recycling center for aluminum cans, bottles, newspapers and plastics. This helps the earth in a practical way, raises awareness and may even raise funds.
3. Offer a community service. Help people properly dispose of household waste such as paint, thinner and oils.
4. Tie in to local and national groups concerned about environmental issues. This can be a great aid to your thoughts and actions.

### ON YOUR OWN

1. Examine your eating habits: what you eat, where it came from, how it was produced. Organic foods are becoming more available, and are usually grown in ways that are kinder to the land.
2. When you shop, be aware of packaging. Avoid unnecessary bulk; look for recyclable or biodegradable materials.
3. Make recycling a habit. Find out what kinds of recycling are available in your area.
4. Check your water use and transportation habits. You may discover ways to cut back on excess use.

ago, especially through the writing of Lynn White, Jr. Pointing to verses such as Genesis 1:28 ("Fill the earth and subdue it"), White said the Bible and its followers paved the way for the exploitation of the earth.

Admitting that this verse has been used to justify much abuse, Wes refuses to place the blame there. "The issue is whether the Bible or Christian belief caused that mentality. I am convinced that cultural forces caused it, and then Christians were simply absorbed by what was happening in the larger culture. To blame a few isolated verses for this whole attitude is just plain silly."

He believes the true culprits were the combined forces of the Industrial Revolution, the Enlightenment and the technological revolution. These translated our relationship to the earth into one of acquiring raw materials for consumption and profit.

Prominent philosopher Francis Bacon declared that the purpose of science was to gain control over nature. The environment became a separate, even alien entity.

It is still this mentality, Wes says, that sets the Christian concept of earthkeeping apart from

Wes believes it was the move of technology from servant to master. "Technology has become an idol, an object of faith and an oppressive power. People look for a technological fix.

"Some people say the greenhouse effect or world poverty or hunger will be solved by technology. Even when we realize that technology caused many of these problems, we still somehow expect technology to make them right."

Why do we believe this way? Because it absolves us from questions about our lifestyles, our values and our compassion. "It's more painful to realize that problems will not be solved unless we rethink what we mean by success, progress and development."

Interesting concepts. But earthkeeping is not about concepts. "It's not a matter of biblical study and theology," Wes says. "It's a way of living." The call to tend the creation is ultimately a call to action. It's also a challenge to our habits and lifestyles. (For practical suggestions, see "What You Can Do.")

For example: In Winona County, Minn., Redeemer Lutheran Church donated two acres of land to The Land Stewardship Project. Developmentally disabled adults and other volunteers

## FOR MORE INFORMATION

### **AuSable Institute of Environmental Studies**

7526 Sunset Trail N.E., Mancelona, MI 49659  
(616) 587-8686

Maintains a resource base and holds conferences.

### **Sierra Treks**

730 Polk St., San Francisco, CA 94109

Provides wilderness experiences for Christians.

### **Ecumenical Task Force of the Niagara Frontier**

259 4th St., Niagara Falls, NY 14303

(716) 284-9961

Educates the religious community about toxic waste.

### **Eco-Justice Working Group**

475 Riverside Dr., New York, NY 10115

(212) 870-2511

Publishes resources for churches; lobbies for environmental legislation.

### **North American Conference on Christianity and Ecology**

P.O. Box 14305, San Francisco, CA 94114

(415) 626-6064

Publishes a quarterly magazine; sponsors conferences.

### **Christian Farmers Federation**

115 Woolwich St., Guelph, Ontario N1H 3V1

Canada (519) 837-1620

Provides resources for farmers about land stewardship.

**G**od expects  
us to keep the  
earth with as  
much tender-  
ness as he  
keeps us.

Clifford E. Bajema in  
*The Banner*

garden-variety ecology.

"An atheist ecologist starts with the notion that nature is a self-contained entity. You don't think of God or even of people as being included in the word 'nature,'" he explains. "But this kind of separation is totally alien to the biblical perspective. Christian faith can never understand the created order as something detached or unrelated."

Wes and his kind may seem to be a new phenomenon in Christian circles, but they're not. They're actually part of a long tradition that has been silent only in the past few centuries.

It wasn't called earthkeeping, but early church fathers and mothers stressed creation as a mark of God's great sovereignty. Wes points out that all of the early church creeds begin by affirming God as Creator and Sustainer of all that is. He notes that many strands of Christianity, such as the Franciscan monks, "had a very deep sense of being connected to the world of creation."

What silenced that strand in recent history?

tend the plot using organic farming techniques. In two years the garden yielded 7,500 pounds of organic produce, sold in local markets.

The Christian church in general remained largely uninvolved in the early part of the environmental movement. This began to change in the early 1980s.

"The church is realizing the urgency," Wes comments. "I think earthkeeping will become a strong issue in the 1990s. The environmental crisis is the greatest threat to life, apart from nuclear war, that we and the next generation will face."

But the activism begins within for Christians. "The kind of commitment it takes to preserve the earth must be a spiritual commitment, deeply rooted in our faith," Wes says.

And he firmly asserts the foundation of that commitment: "This world belongs to God." □

*Judith Hougen is a free-lance writer and poet living in Edina, Minn.*

BY BOB LUPTON

*Greenview was a nice place to live until the good neighbors started moving out.*

**G**reenview\* is one of Atlanta's earliest black communities. Whites who had lost their right to own slaves after the Civil War called it "niggertown," but those who lived in Greenview seemed undaunted. They built a proud, vigorous community despite the lines of demarcation that separated them from the rest of the city. Modest Victorian bungalows lined the cobblestone streets. There were parks and churches and schools. And a thriving business district.

There were, of course, some rough areas with rough people. But overall Greenview enjoyed a wholesome vitality. Many of the civic, professional and religious leaders who helped rebuild Atlanta after the war lived in Greenview. It was a good place to raise a family. The comfort of owning a permanent home in one's own community helped ease the pain of the prejudice most experienced outside Greenview.

Then in the 1950s and '60s, Martin Luther King, Jr. confronted the racism of Atlanta and the world, giving birth to a new era of reconciliation between whites and blacks. "White only" signs came down. Public schools were opened to all children. Fair economic and housing legislation was enacted.

The people of Greenview were excited and optimistic. They dreamed of new opportunities spreading out before them. Today, however, their once-thriving community is one of the most decimated areas in Atlanta.

It happened so subtly, the changes were almost imperceptible. Greenview's merchants gradually moved their businesses to Atlanta's greener pastures. Professionals and tradespeople found better jobs in higher-paying areas. Many started moving to suburban communities.

But many others in Greenview were unable to capitalize on these new opportunities. The elderly, those in broken families, the poor, whose energies were consumed with just trying to survive—these were the ones left behind.

\*The community's name has been changed.

Homes became rental properties and started to deteriorate. Families started to fragment. The general store closed, reopened as a thrift store and eventually was boarded up.

As the leadership withdrew, evil forces filled the void. Churches closed. Desperate people preyed on the vulnerable. The fabric of the community grew weaker as the stronger strands were removed. And in the end Greenview came apart, desolate and ruined.

It's not hard to create a ghetto. Just remove the capable neighbors. To produce a sub-standard school system, withdraw the students of achieving parents. To create a culture of chronically dependent people, merely extract the upwardly mobile role models from the community.

That's what happened in Greenview—and in thousands of other communities across the United States. That's what happens when we pursue our own personal and family dreams, and abandon our neighbors to the agencies.

Those left in Greenview do not need more arms-length social services—government or religious. After 30 years of social programs and costly government investment, the people are still poor. The programs could never replace the neighbors who had abandoned the community.

Programs cannot restore communities. Only neighbors can do that. The people who remain in Greenview need educated neighbors to raise the school standards. They need political neighbors who will help organize against crime and drugs. They need spiritual neighbors to reopen churches, and entrepreneurial-minded neighbors to stimulate business. They need handy neighbors to restore their street-scapes,

# HOW TO CREATE A



DOUG DUDLEY / WORLD VISION

# GHETTO

and neighbors with moral and ethical values to reweave the tattered fabric of their community.

Too many people support laws eliminating segregation while they move to protected neighborhoods of personal privilege. Too many believe in loving their neighbor, but withdraw from those neighbors most in need. In order to love your neighbor you first have to *become* a neighbor.

The richest treasure of all remains to be rediscovered—the Christ who has never left Greenview.

Bob Lupton is director of Atlanta-based FCS Ministries.

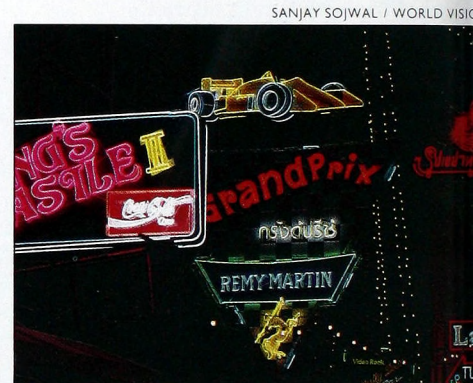
# POVERTY: THAILAND'S BIGGEST PIMP

Looking for all the world like a fifth-grader about to get her wrists slapped by the principal, Daeng (not her real name) sits trembling in a small chair, clutching a stuffed koala bear under one arm. Small-boned and slender in jeans and a blue cotton blouse, the 14-year-old glances furtively at the others in the room. Her arrow-straight anthracite hair brush-

es her shoulders as she shoots quick looks from one strange face to another.

But this isn't school, and what she fears isn't a simple wrist-slapping. Her former pimp has vowed to kill her and her family if he ever finds her. Even now, among friends in the safety of Bangkok's Emergency Home for Women and Children in Distress, Daeng still is reluctant to trust anyone. Especially a journalist. If her pimp reads about her in the paper, she's sure he'll come after her. A letter from her older brother strongly advised her not to return home. Her pimp had already ransacked the house.

Tricked by a "loan agent" who promised he'd take her to her older sister who was working in a restaurant south of Bangkok, she quickly found herself imprisoned in a dingy brothel with 50 other girls, where she was forced to spend the next three months. Working each night from 7 p.m. to 4 a.m., and sometimes even days, she would service as many as 12 men in a row. The thought of escape



SANJAY SOJWAL / WORLD VISION

tantalized her until she saw what happened to girls who tried. Those beaten to unconsciousness were the lucky ones. She had heard of others who didn't survive.

A police raid on the place put Daeng in jail. The next day she ended up at the emergency home. But she can't stay there forever. Nor can she go back home. And an angry pimp is still out to reclaim his stolen property and put her back to work—or worse.

## Morally bankrupt teenagers?

Prostitution is not unique to Thailand. Every major city in the world boasts (or tries to hide) its own sleazy district. But two things set developing countries like Thailand apart: the sheer number of prostitutes and the economic conditions driving them to the business. Most authorities say the figure is between 250,000 and 500,000 in Bangkok. Others say it's even higher.

Their average age cannot be overlooked either. While countries world-

*Two things characterize prostitution in countries like Thailand: the sheer numbers and the conditions that drive them into the business.*



wide, especially Asian ones, have sizable pedophile problems, this article deals with prostitutes who, if they lived in this country, would be of an age where their major concern would be picking out prom dresses.

Where are all these girls coming from? (And guys, too. There are more than 40 gay bars in Bangkok.) Are there *that* many broken homes and dysfunctional families? Is the lure of the big city *that* strong? Are there *that* many morally bankrupt teenagers? No. According to recent studies by the International Labor Organisation, the bottom line is economics.

"These girls were not fleeing from a family background or rural society which oppressed women in conventional ways," says Professor Pasuk Phongpaichit in his book, *From Peasant Girls to Bangkok Masseuses*. They left to help their families survive, he explains. In their rural society, they

**T**he average age of the recruits is 12 to 15. They're just girls."

large, choose to work there. Their options are: one, work in Patpong in order to live in a modest apartment, attend school and save to start a small business; or two, work as a seamstress, live in a hovel and forget about school or a business. But they *choose* prostitution, and no one threatens to beat them if they want to quit.

Second, there are the girls working in massage parlors—more than 200 of them in Bangkok—who generally earn less than their counterparts in the bars of Patpong, but who still make about 20 times what they could as a waitress. Most of them would rather be

trying to feed his family on not enough rice grown on a few measly acres of tired soil he's been turning with the same rusty plow and slow ox for years.

His teenage daughters have had their four to six years of school (if that much) and, after a couple years or so of working off the loan in that "restaurant" in Bangkok, his kids can come home and things will be better. Or so he reasons. He doesn't know, or doesn't want to know, or knows but looks the other way, that his daughters could be sleeping with up to a dozen men per night, up to 14 hours at a stretch. But he sees no alternative.

Most of the girls in these three groups see themselves as playing key roles in supporting the family. For brothel girls, how much of their salary goes home is not up to them. Girls in massage parlors and the bars of Patpong are freer to choose.

During the day, Patpong looks

**Travel-weary teenagers hoping to land good jobs in the big city are often easy prey for pimps at Bangkok's Hua Lampong Railway Station. Social workers from the Emergency Center try to provide an alternative for them.**



SANJAY SOIWAJ / WORLD VISION

much like any other big-city thoroughfare. By nightfall it takes on a carnival atmosphere. Lots of festivity. Lots of shoppers. Lots of Thais sitting at small curbside tables eating noodles or fried squid or oyster omelets or chunks of fish-head with the eye still gleaming up at them. In one deep breath you can catch wafts of roast pork sizzling on sidewalk hibachis, exhaust fumes from pingy little Yamaha scooters worming their way through

the throngs, and eye-watering hits of raw sewage stench rising through steel grates in the sidewalks.

### Nightlife in Patpong

Patpong starts cranking up its engines at about 6 p.m. Girls in street clothes begin filing into not-yet-open bars and making their way up nondescript stairways. Vendors set up their wares on sidewalks and on cloth-covered tables throughout the district's two blocks.

By 10 o'clock the pace is frenetic. Bootleg-cassette sellers boost their speakers to compete with each other and with thudding rock music spilling out open bar doors. Girls who earlier

were expected to contribute to the family income. Compared to other unskilled jobs, prostitution offered the best return.

"The girls felt they were making a perfectly rational decision within the context of their particular social and economic situation. The girls did not make the economic structure; and they could not escape from it."

Prostitution in Thailand takes many forms, from the girl on the street corner to organized sex tours that fly in Europeans, Japanese and others for weekend binges. But there seem to be three general groups of prostitutes.

There are the girls in Patpong and other nightclub districts who, by and

doing other work, but because they can make so much money for their families, they endure it for the short time they plan to be there.

Then there are the girls, often in their mid-teens, who come from poor families and are forced to work in brothels entertaining working-class Thai men. Escape is virtually out of the question for them unless they're willing to risk a beating. But economics, not abusive family situations, is the driving force propelling these girls into the trade. By and large they, or their parents, or both, see no other way.

A "loan agent" with a fistful of *baht* (Thai currency) offers an attractive solution to an up-country farmer

were leaning slinkily against doorways to entice customers into bars, now reach out and grab them by the arm.

Even more aggressive are the teenage boys—hawkers for the more daring, less-clothed girls in upstairs bars—who shove descriptive flashcards in front of your face and shout juicy phrases into your ear that describe the not-to-be-believed things taking place in their bars. Trying to walk past these guys is like trying to scuba dive through a bed of kelp.

And dancing their hearts out in this garish armpit of the city are the girls—hundreds of them, without whom the neon wouldn't flash, the rock 'n roll wouldn't scream and the customers wouldn't come.

### The tip of the iceberg

Goy, a dancer at Patpong's Grand Prix bar, looks like a 15-year-old—out of place in a late-night bar. She's actually 19, divorced and mother of a 7-month-old boy. She started working at the bar three months ago to support herself and her baby. For the time being, her mother is caring for the infant. Goy sends most of what she makes at the Grand Prix home each month. And there are countless others just like her. But this lively portion of Bangkok is only one part of the picture.

"Patpong is the tip of the iceberg," says Denis Gray, Thailand's Associated Press bureau chief. "Ninety percent of the prostitution scene is scattered around other parts of the city."

Daeng, the 14-year-old at the emergency center, is more the rule than the exception when it comes to typical prostitution cases. She's just one of thousands the center has helped in its eight-year history—and hundreds of thousands more it hasn't reached.

"The average age of the recruits is 12 to 15. They're just girls," says Khunying Kanitha Wichiencharoen, founder and director of the center. "Some of the ones we treat are only 10 or 11. Most kids lie about their age when they come here, saying they're 18, while they clutch their favorite teddy bear."

Her compassion for kids like these led Khunying Kanitha to do something to help. In 1981, with her prodding and guidance, the Association for Promotion of the Status of Women and the Women Lawyers Association of Thailand joined forces to form the center. Until recently, it consisted of a single shelter and halfway house in a quiet section of Bangkok where abused, abducted or otherwise distressed women and children could find refuge and assistance in recovering their health

and dignity.

Recently, Emergency Home 2: The Women's Education and Training Center, got underway with help from Jimmy and Rosalynn Carter, among others. The idea is to not only rescue women and children from crisis situations, but to help them redirect their lives by learning trades, from dressmaking to car repair.

Khunying Kanitha's workers also have positioned themselves on the front lines, trying to intercept kids as they stream into town from rural areas. At Bangkok's Hua Lampong Railway Station and at two bus terminals, Kanitha's troops are lined up behind long tables located beneath huge signs bearing the center's name. More than 50 trains arrive and depart daily, transporting some 30,000 passengers.

One girl from a poor family in the north came to Bangkok by train on the promise of a waitressing job. Passing through the terminal, she noticed the center's sign, but didn't think much about it. Two days later, after being locked in a brothel and forced to tend to a virtually continuous string of customers, she escaped out a back window and fled—straight back to the train station. She found the booth, sat down next to a sympathetic social worker and sobbed out her ordeal. She was taken to the center, where she got help finding a waitressing job.

It would be bad enough if all that these girls had to go through was the physical and emotional abuse inherent

**M**ost of these girls see themselves as playing key roles in supporting the family.

in the business. But what about disease? What about AIDS?

Within the past year, officials have begun to admit that AIDS has dropped anchor in Thailand. "The number of AIDS cases is increasing, whether people like it or not," says Dr. Debhanom Muangman, dean of the Faculty of Public Health at Bangkok's Mahidol University.



"There are very few little girls left in the north," says Emergency Center director Khunying Kanitha Wichiencharoen. "They have all been brought down here."

"Asia has smaller figures because we started later," he says. "But we're catching up. The best thing we can do is educate the public, because they don't know how dangerous it is. And the sex establishments are jam-packed, not just with Western tourists, but Thais too."

### No simple solutions

What can be done to help these girls? Is there any way to prevent more kids from being hauled into the business? Can't they pass some laws or something?

Actually, they did. According to the 1960 Prostitution Act, prostitution is illegal in Thailand. Enforcing that law is another story. "The police are paid off to close their eyes to it," Khunying Kanitha says. "If they ever do raid a place, they usually warn the owners first to hide their best girls."

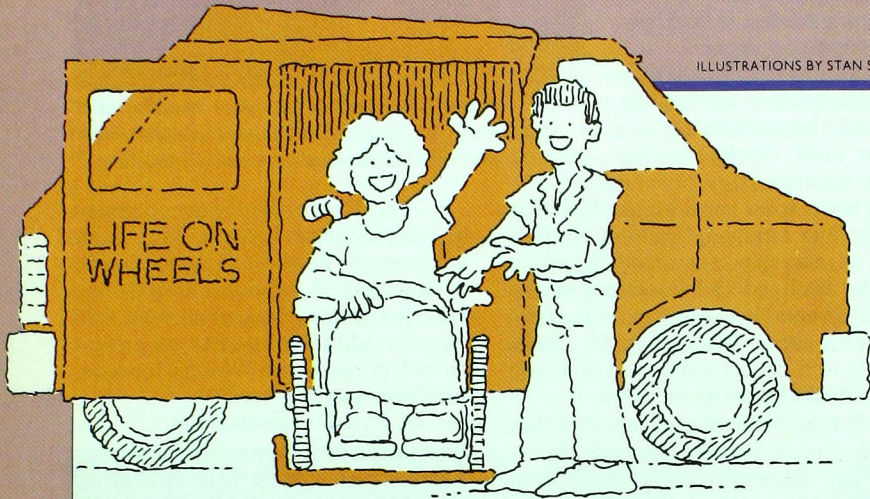
More laws aren't going to end the problem. In fact, there are no simple, easy solutions. "No amount of agitation is likely to change things while the cost incentives remain the same, and while opportunities for alternative employment are so limited," Phongpachit says. "The only real solution is a long-term one, and it lies in a massive change in the distribution of income between city and country, and in a fundamental shift in Thailand's orientation to the international economy."

Until then, girls like Goy will keep working at the Grand Prix and sending money home to their mothers and babies. Girls like Daeng will do their best to reconstruct their ravaged lives. And girls like the 12-year-olds at one Thai dance bar, clustered in little clumps like nervous sixth-graders on confirmation Sunday, with plastic number badges pinned to their pink satin dresses, will fret through hours of sweaty-palmed anxiety, wondering how many customers they'll have to take care of before the night is over. □

# SAMARITAN SAMPLER

RESOURCES FOR  
HELPING OTHERS  
IN THE NAME  
OF CHRIST

Compiled and written  
by Ginger Hope



ILLUSTRATIONS BY STAN SAKAI

## WHEELS ON WHEELS

**A** Chicago-area man's retirement hobby is a real pick-me-up for nearby nursing-home residents. Melvin Van Denend and 10 volunteers provide outings for about five people a day. Museum trips, lakeside drives and ball games are a rare treat for most of them.

"It's the first time I've been out

of this place in years," said one resident, typical of those who have no family ties. When residents ask why the volunteers do such a nice thing for free, they have a chance to talk about their Christian faith.

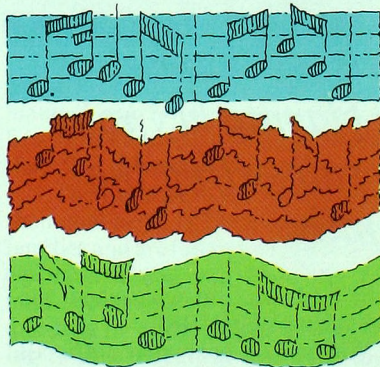
Life on Wheels, as Van Denend named his driving force, relies on private donations. The two-van fleet gets free upkeep from local mechanics, car washes, body shops, etc.

Life on Wheels, 2211 South Highland, 4-B, Lombard, IL 60148.

## FOR A SONG

**T**hey've got music coming out of their ears at Campus Crusade. Dig '50s rock 'n roll? Check out the Convertibles; '60s classics? Call Flashback. For a cappella vocals, see Vanguard. Or would a classical chamber ensemble give you more intense aural gratification? They've got you covered with Counterpoint.

These and a few other class acts make up Campus Crusade's music-ministry branch. The groups give audiences across the country a real earful—and, for those who have ears to hear it, a clear message with some Good News.

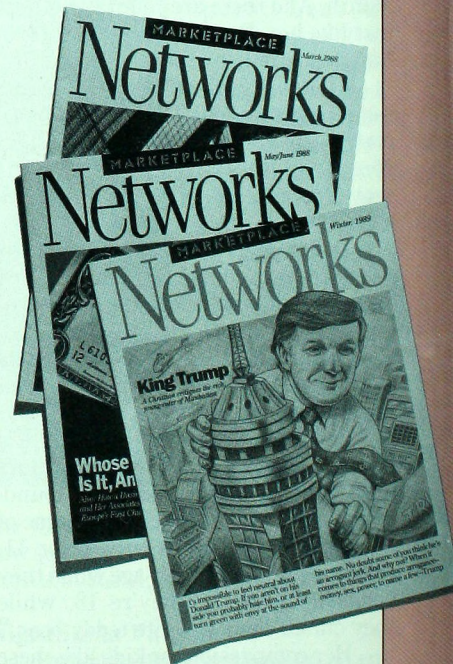


For information about Campus Crusade's music ministry, contact Pete Johnson, (714) 832-9862. To schedule a concert call (800) 962-SONG.

## THANK GOD IT'S WHAT?

**I**t's time for an overthrow of the TGIF (Thank God It's Friday) mentality among Christians," declares Pete Hammond in *Marketplace Networks*. "Thank God It's Monday. I will serve God and celebrate his kingdom in my job."

Hammond publishes *Marketplace Networks*, a sharp, upbeat newsletter for Christians in the



workaday world. On its pages you might find a critique of Donald Trump; advice about dealing with office politics; stories about biblical and modern "marketplace Christians"; or a digest of Christian thinking on money.

Order *Marketplace Networks* (donation requested) from Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship, P.O. Box 7895, Madison, WI 53707.



## THE BIBLE AND THE COOKBOOK

“When Christianity tells you to feed the hungry it does not give you lessons in cookery. ... [It does not] supercede the ordinary human arts and sciences: it is rather a director which will set them all to the right jobs, and a source of energy which will give them all new life. C. S. Lewis”



## BORN IN EAST L.A.

In the late 1960s, Sunny Arguinzoni founded Victory Outreach to help Latinos in East Los Angeles who were caught up in drug abuse, gangs and all the turmoil of that time and place. Both a church and a rehabilitation center, Victory Outreach now ministers to people of all ethnic backgrounds at more than 100 sites in the United States and overseas. All its community programs focus on church involvement and re-entry into mainstream life.

For information contact Victory Outreach, 13181 Crossroads Parkway North, Suite 250, City of Industry, CA 91746: (213) 695-5211.

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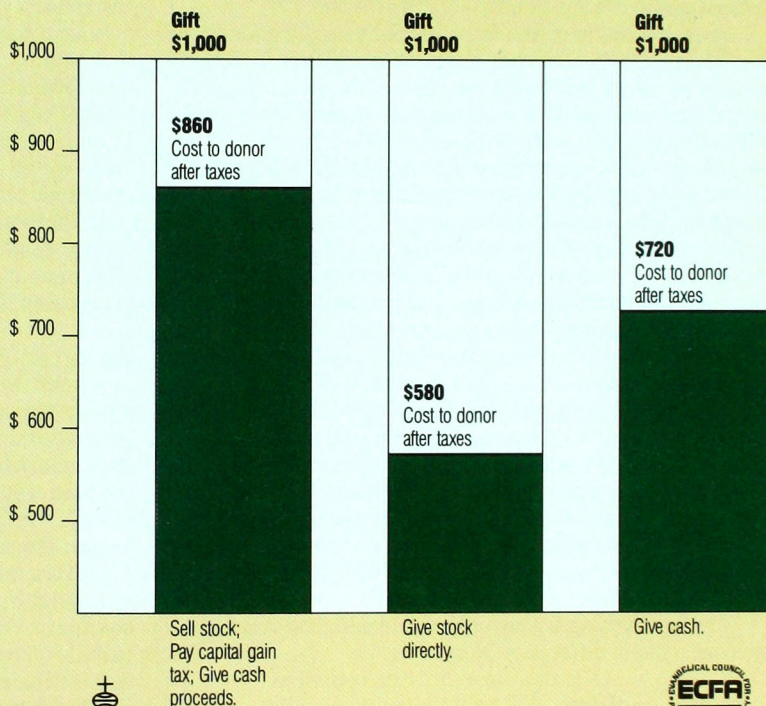
What is the plan? A wise way to give. Greater tax benefits are available to you when you give stock directly to **World Vision** rather than selling the stock and donating cash.

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# DARE TO FAIL, AND OTHER ADVICE

BY TED W. ENGSTROM AND EDWARD R. DAYTON

**B**oth of us are at the point in our lives where we are comfortable looking back down the roads we have traveled. It's been exciting. Would we do it all again? Gladly! We might do a few things differently, of course. For those of you just beginning the journey, or those who counsel young leaders, here are some things that strike us as important.

## School days

Probably many of you have had 16 years of education, possibly more. We in the Western world are the most schooled of all people. Isn't it true that our society believes in postponing adulthood? A person is considered an adult only after leaving school and taking a full-time job.

The result is expected: students usually don't act like adults. That is, they live out rituals of dress, horseplay and college humor—just weeks before they graduate to become pastors or leaders. Three months later, they wonder how they could have ever thought school was a heavy grind. They don't have much experience at managing themselves, much less managing others.

## Ages and stages

In her book *Passages*, Gail Sheehy points out that just like children, adults pass through normal phases. People respond differently, see things differently, at different ages.

When we're young we refuse to compromise. Perhaps in our thirties we start learning to compromise. Eventually we learn that compromise is what life's all about. We see that our ideals are less than ideal to others. "Our" goals are more desirable than "my" goals.

There's nothing wrong with the idealism of youth. But age does make a difference. Respect it.

## Faith and paradox

Technological advances have given us the illusion that we have much more control of our destinies than we actually have. Too often young Christians fail to grasp the paradoxes of life so clearly stated in the Bible. The ultimate paradox is God's sovereignty and human freedom. Logic says those two cannot coexist. With maturity, however, we discover that we can live and work as though both are true. Learn early to live in that faith.

## Dare to fail

To take on leadership often means isolation. There comes a time when you must choose an unpopular position. It doesn't take much courage to move ahead on something in which you have complete confidence. True courage moves ahead fully knowing that failure is possible.

## Love with purpose

Jesus said that the basic test of our commitment to him is our love for one another. Don't be so consumed with tasks and accomplishments that you have little time for relationships and love. But without focus, without shared purpose, love can become ingrown. Love with abandon, but love with purpose.

## Surprises on the job

You may have just graduated, but your education has just begun. Almost everyone is surprised by their first job. No matter how good the job description is, the position is seldom what we expected. Many recent graduates complain, "I'm not using 10 percent of what I learned." Be patient. You will. Not all of it, but a great deal. At the same time, build continued training into your goals.

Another paradox: the more we learn, the more humbled we are at our own ignorance. And yet with the feeling of ignorance comes a sense that it's all right not to know everything. Count on it.

## Be a reader

Read widely in as many subjects as you can. If you don't enjoy reading, learn to enjoy it. Read contemporary literature; read management and leadership books and articles. Build more bookshelves if you need to. But read! It's one of the best ways to grow.

## Learn from failure

From failure we often learn the most. There's nothing wrong with making a mistake. (Just don't make the same one again.) When you fail, pick yourself up and move ahead to build on the experience. Don't moan over it, but ask God to redeem the experience.

Leadership that is Christian is never without a purpose. Doubts will come. In a world where the chance of things going wrong far exceeds the chance of things going right, it's easy to feel like a failure. That's why you must reaffirm your purpose again and again.

## Someone is there for you

We have direct access to the Maker of the universe. He has gone before and goes ahead. Call on him. Counsel with him. God continually invites you into his presence. His way of working is by answering prayer.

Ours is a God who is for us. He isn't playing games. Entrust your life to him daily. In Psalm 32:8 God said, "I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will counsel you and watch over you." Looking back down the road of our lives, we can say it's true!

# PUTTING HIS BEST FOOT FORWARD

**F**or several nights in June 1982, the night sky over Beirut looked like the Fourth of July. Francis Scott Key's description of "the rockets' red glare, the bombs bursting in air" seemed to fit the chaos taking place. But even those words could not begin to describe the fury unleashed by Israel's bombing of that ravaged port city. Yet in the midst of that rain of bombs, a miracle was taking place.

That miracle had its roots in a discussion two University of Oregon students had had three years earlier about how they could tell the school's 17,000-member student body about Christ.

"What about trusting God to work it out that every student hears the gospel this year?" Dick Cole suggested to Joe Lang (not their real names). There were only 65 believers on campus at that time. They wanted to come up with an evangelistic approach that would be innovative, effective and scripturally sound.

Finally they designed a strategy. On a map, they portioned off the university into seven sections. During the next several days they walked around each section, asking God to do what he had promised Joshua: "I will give you every place where you set your foot." (Joshua 1:3)

After two months of trudging around campus, stopping to pray in each dormitory and academic department, Dick began to wonder whether he would ever see results from the daily strolls. "This is ludicrous," he complained. "If God does not answer prayer, this has sure been a waste of time." But the students continued their treks.

Two months later, their prayers were answered when Christian author Josh McDowell spoke on campus. (A few years later, the University of Oregon became the most fruitful ministry of The Navigators in the Pacific Northwest.)

Later that year, Dick transferred to Wheaton College, near Chicago. He resumed his campus walks—but for a different reason. The Wheaton students

**A**nthing large enough for a wish to light upon, is large enough to hang a prayer upon.

George Macdonald

already knew the gospel, but the number of graduates who were becoming missionaries had slacked off somewhat since 1950.

By the time Dick graduated, after several years of prayer walks and campus organizing, student interest in missions had increased dramatically, with one-fifth of the student body attending weekly mission meetings he had helped create.

By this time a firm believer in the power of the foot as a means of spreading the gospel, Dick decided to continue his walks when he was sent to the mission field of Beirut. Although a stroll around Beirut is not quite the same as a stroll around the University of Oregon, Dick decided to follow the call of God in his heart. He outlined four sections on a map of Muslim West Beirut and put his best foot forward.

After six months, Dick had to abandon the walks due to increased violence. Then in June 1982, the Israelis bombed West Beirut. Never had the city endured a more severe pummeling. When it was finally safe for him to venture out again, something along his prayer route seemed odd, but he couldn't figure out what it was. Then it hit him. The buildings just within the routes outlined for his walks remained standing. Buildings just outside those routes had been demolished.

"If this is what happened in the physical realm," Dick said afterward, "just imagine what must have happened in the spiritual realm."

*Adapted from Branches, a publication of REACH Ministries International.*

## Matters for Prayer

- ◆ **Beirut:** Pray for a peaceful resolution to the battle raging in Lebanon. Ask God for spiritual renewal among the believers there, and reconciliation between the warring groups.
- ◆ **Thailand:** Pray that God's people will seek long-term solutions for the problems leading to prostitution in Third-World countries.
- ◆ **Environment:** Thank God for Christians who are helping poor people in developing countries to replenish their land with vegetation and water.



JOHN McMILLIN / WORLD VISION

BY TOM SINE

*Nothing is more controversial than to be a follower of Jesus Christ. Nothing is more dangerous than to live out the will of God in today's world. It changes your whole monetary lifestyle. Am I suggesting that if you follow Jesus you won't be able to go out and buy a BMW? You got it!*

—Tony Campolo in *WORLD VISION* magazine. ("Will the Real Jesus Please Stand Up," Oct.-Nov. 1988)

# WILL THE REAL CULTURAL CHRISTIANS

# PLEASE STAND UP

*Biblical  
Christianity  
does not mean  
living the  
American Dream  
with a little  
Jesus overlay.*

“**W**ill the real Tony Campolo please stand up,” wrote one angry reader about Tony’s article in *WORLD VISION* magazine last year. Readers questioned Tony’s lifestyle, disputed his politics and rejected his theology. One person wrote, “Would he be kind enough to send me a list of approved cars? I own a Honda, it’s fairly nice and I might be living in sin.”

World Vision has never received so many letters responding to a single article, and many of those letters were pretty hostile. As I read Tony’s article again, I kept asking, “Why were people so upset?”

Two things impressed me about their letters: one, the intensity of their feelings, and two, that they completely missed the central issue. That is, to what extent has our secular culture shaped Christian faith in the United States? I suspect that many readers reacted so strongly because they were

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unwilling to deal with the cultural captivity of the American church.

So will the real cultural Christians please stand up? Until we recognize our captivity we cannot be free. To the extent that our secular culture's values captivate us, we are unavailable to advance God's kingdom. That's a serious problem.

We all seem to be trying to live the American Dream with a little Jesus overlay. We talk about the lordship of Jesus, but our career comes first. Our house in the 'burbs comes first. Upscaling our lives comes first. Then, with whatever we have left, we try to follow Jesus.

The problem is, once we try to do it all and have it all we don't have much time, energy or money left for anything else. And it's only going to get worse. Many of us who are older were able to buy homes and pursue our dreams on a single income. Today most families need two incomes to do the same thing. We

*Today we're taught that we can have anything we want as long as we aren't materialistic.*

have sold Christian young people the wrong dream, and they will have little left over to advance the gospel. The kingdom is in danger of losing a whole generation of workers.

Whatever commands our time, energy and resources, commands us. And most of us are living lives that aren't that different from our secular counterparts. One of the reasons we are so ineffective in evangelism is that we are so much like the people around us. What do we have to call them to? Oh, we hang around church buildings a little more. We abstain from a few things. And we aren't quite as hedonistic—though we sure keep trying.

So we aren't that different. We have reduced Christianity to a crutch to help us through the minefield of the upwardly mobile life. Our books, broadcasts and sermons encourage us to understand what God can do for us—help us get ahead in our jobs, color us beautiful and find us parking places when we go downtown.

Tony said in his article, "God created us in his image, but we have decided to return the favor and create a God who is in our image." This God

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satisfies our every longing and spares us every inconvenience.

Recently a young pastor named Tim Dearborn had to share a cab with four other people in Bangkok, Thailand. One of the passengers was a Marxist revolutionary on his way to India.

The Marxist quizzed Tim at length about his faith. Finally, he said, "How can you be a Christian? Don't you realize there's no way your cause can win?"

"What do you mean there's no way my cause can win?" Tim asked.

The Marxist explained: "I am on my way to India to organize fishermen to overthrow their oppressors. And I am quite willing to lay down my life for the revolution. Your American Christianity is preoccupied with what your God can do for you. And dying for self-interest is a contradiction in terms!"

He's right. And biblical Christianity is not a self-interested Christianity. When Jesus stood up in his hometown at the beginning of his ministry, he read from Isaiah: "The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor."

Later John sent his disciples to ask Jesus if he was really the Messiah. Jesus said, "Go back and report to John what you have seen and heard: The blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cured, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the good news is preached to the poor. Blessed is the man who does not fall away on account of me."

Clearly Jesus wasn't concerned with his own needs. He didn't even have a place to lay his head. Following God meant focusing on the needs of others, extending God's love to the poor, the disabled and the forgotten.

Following Jesus meant exactly the same thing for the first disciples. They were not preoccupied with their own needs but totally committed themselves to Jesus Christ and his mission—sight to the blind, release to captives and good news to the poor. To do that, they quit jobs, left homes and put Christ's mission at the center of their lives, trusting God to meet their needs. Read Matthew 6:24-33.

Biblical Christianity does not mean living the American Dream with a little Jesus overlay. It means committing our whole lives—not just our time, but our money—to God's purposes. Peter and Andrew walked away from their fishing business; Zacchaeus gave half

his money to the poor and four times to anyone he had cheated; and the rich young ruler was told to give all his wealth away.

First-century Christians understood that following Jesus was a whole-life commitment. They committed everything to Christ. Today we're taught we can have anything we want, including lavish homes and expensive cars, as long as we have a right attitude, as long as we aren't materialistic. Today we can be a spiritual leader in the church and never leave the church building. Seventy-five percent of the people I meet in churches have no time to minister to anyone else.

But God has entrusted us with only a certain amount of money, time and education. The more of those resources I spend on my own life and local church, the less is available to advance God's kingdom. And we live in a world where millions of Christians can't keep their kids fed and a world

*The more I spend on myself, the less is available to advance God's kingdom.*

where more and more people are unevangelized.

Thankfully that's starting to change. Many Christians are finding one evening a week to evangelize international students or work with abused kids. A doctor in Denver sold half of his practice. He used the 20 hours a week to start an inner-city health clinic. And he supports his family comfortably on half-time income.

I know many Christians who have changed their lifestyles so they can invest 20 to 30 percent of their income to advance the gospel around the world. A young couple in Seattle discovered a way to escape the mortgage trap. Instead of paying a half-million dollars for a \$100,000 house over 30 years, they built their own. Total cost: \$25,000. And they are investing the money they freed up in the work of God's kingdom.

So I invite the real cultural Christians to please stand up with me. Let's acknowledge that we have been co-opted by our culture. Then let's join that growing company of Christians who are choosing to seek first the advancement of God's kingdom. □

*Tom Sine is a consultant and free-lance writer living in Seattle, Wash.*

# OUT OF MALIBU, INTO AFRICA

**P**robably by accident, *My Vanished Africa* stands next to *Entrepreneur* on Brandon Williams' bookshelf. The two seem strange bedfellows, unless you know Brandon Williams.

*Entrepreneur* is natural enough. Brandon is a child of corporate culture. He plans to go into business just like his father.

*My Vanished Africa* is another story. In 1986, when Brandon was a sophomore at Pepperdine University in Malibu, Calif., he developed a fascination with Africa. He loved the movie "Out of Africa." His older brother had just returned from Africa with some amazing stories. Then Brandon saw another movie—he doesn't even remember the name of it—that showed the needs of Africans. He was determined to go.

He called Sam Jackson at World Vision. "I told him that I wanted to see what was there. I wanted to be touched. I don't think many Americans really understand the issues of the Third World. I wanted to understand what was going on."

Jackson doesn't receive many calls like that from college sophomores. Frankly, he didn't know if it would be worth it. "It's a big job to work out a trip like that. Then I met him. The kid blew me away. He was so serious about the trip and so determined."

The trip didn't disappoint Brandon. Of all the things he saw in Africa, it's easy for him to identify the turning point. The place was Louga, a parched piece of Senegal desert dotted with tiny villages. The person was Loc Le-Chau.

"I've shaken the hand of a U.S. president, but Loc Le-Chau is the most amazing man I've ever met," Brandon says. The director of World Vision's work in Louga held top positions in the Vietnamese government before fleeing in 1975, and advised a U.S. vice president as well.

But that's not what impressed Brandon. It was Loc's respect for the people he was trying to help. It was his rapport with village folk and bureaucrats alike. It was the number of babies in Louga named Loc.

"He's a professional, doing God's work professionally," Brandon says. "He's got all these charts and diagrams, like he's planning a major offensive—which he is. He doesn't just talk about how terrible things are. He talks about solutions and hope."

Brandon watched Loc talk to a village chief

about digging a well. Unless the village took responsibility to maintain the well, drilling would be pointless. "When you die," Loc said, "you can look down on your village and see strong children, happy children, a clean and green village."

"Yes," the chief said, "that is what I want."

"Before I went," Brandon says, "I thought I had a lot to offer the people of Africa. I thought in terms of answers and miracles. I had a lot to learn about pragmatism and reality."

And about how *not* to give. Brandon joined a neighborhood soccer game one afternoon in Louga. In a gesture of friendship, he left them the soccer ball. "How ignorant," he says now.

"It's like giving away \$50 bills in the U.S. We had to fight our way out of the mob we created.

"You realize that people are the same everywhere. Everyone will stretch out a hand for a freebie." Later, Brandon gave some soccer balls in exchange for planting trees.



Before the trip, Brandon already cared about the problems facing the people of Africa. Afterwards he wanted to do more than care. Because of his family's connections, Brandon knew some wealthy people. He decided to ask them to invest in Loc's work in Senegal.

That wasn't as easy as it sounds. These were people Brandon would turn to in the future for recommendations or even employment. "You don't want them thinking, 'Here comes Brandon, he's going to ask for money again,' every time you call." Besides, Brandon had never been very good at receiving. "I hate asking for things. It's easier to give, to feel generous.

"But I underestimated them. They not only agreed to see me, they agreed to give. And they did so willingly, even joyfully." Brandon raised \$135,000 for projects in Senegal and Mali.

"Sometimes I think of what Christ said: 'Blessed are they who have not seen, and yet believe.' The people who gave just because of what they heard—that's a great leap of faith. That's more admirable than anything I've done." □

Ginger Hope

**I wanted to see what was there. I wanted to be touched.**

**Hallelujah!**  
**Hallelujah!**  
**Hallelujah!**



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# WORLD VISION<sup>®</sup>

October/November 1989

*Blighting  
the  
land  
that  
feeds  
US*

*How to Create  
a Ghetto*

*Thailand's  
Biggest Pimp*



**4** **Blighting the Land that Feeds Us**

Those noisy, hand-wringing environmentalists are at it again, telling us we've got to stop cutting down trees and spraying our hair or we're really going to foul up the earth. Trouble is, they're right. And if we don't take heed soon, we're going to have to move. And good planets are hard to find these days.

**8** **A Keeper of the Earth**

Ask Wesley Granberg-Michaelson why he's so concerned for the environment and he's likely to quote from 2 Corinthians. The Bible, he claims, is his primary environmental textbook. And he would like to see more Christians understand that caring for the earth is every bit as much a part of the gospel as saving souls.

**12** **Thailand's Biggest Pimp**

World-wise and wary, Daeng can tell you a thing or two about Thailand's back-alley brothels and the customers who frequent them. But she'd rather not. She's only 14, and the memories aren't pleasant. She's out of the business now, but thousands like her are still holed up in small, dingy rooms or on display behind huge glass panels, driven or lured into the business by the biggest pimp in Asia: poverty.

**20** **Cultural Christians: Stand Up!**

If you own a BMW, you might want to skip this article. Of course, it's not just you Beemer drivers that Tom Sine and Tony Campolo want to reach. Most of us middle-class American Christians could stand a little tune-up when it comes to our materialistic tendencies. Even lowly Honda drivers.

*Natural disasters, together with man-induced destruction of the resources we depend on, are creating a world-scale environmental catastrophe.*

*This NASA photograph of the Ganges River in Bangladesh reveals extensive sediment in the Bay of Bengal. Much of it results from intensive, human-caused soil erosion.*

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**Dare to Fail, and Other Advice** 18

**Putting His Best Foot Forward** 19

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Until the Lord ushers in a new heaven and earth, the planet on which we live—blighted as it is by our greed and indifference—is all we've got.

A growing awareness of our world's plight gives Christians an opportunity to provide leadership in reviving and renewing the earth, until God ultimately makes all things new.

*Terry Madison*

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# A WORLD BEYOND THE BARRICADES

**O**n a recent vacation I was relaxing to the music of Victor Hugo's "Les Miserables" while reflecting on the terrible turmoil going on in China. The comparison between the youthful protest in France in the early 19th century, captured so poignantly in this musical, and the painful end of the student-led pro-democracy movement in China was unavoidable.

The student idealism of 19th-century France came to an end at the barricades. The rhetoric of revolution yielded to the reality of armed confrontation. Unfortunately, the youthful cause was no match for the heavy artillery of the central government forces. Virtually all of the students at the barricades died. The only sustaining hope was captured in the lyrics of one of the songs, "Is there a world beyond the barricades?"

In Tiananmen Square, the similarities were striking and painful. The justness and the rightness of a cause were deeply felt. Once again, rhetoric exceeded reality and, with the crushing weight of tanks and overwhelming numbers, idealistic hopes for a better way of life came to a bitter end. The "empty chairs and empty tables" of "Les Miserables" were brought up-to-date by the events of Tiananmen Square.

In Tiananmen Square idealism was replaced by fear. Future hopes gave way to a despairing present. The exercise of student arrests, imprisonments and executions was reported publicly. Behind the scenes, the work of the church was severely jolted.

World Vision's budding work in China has been placed on hold. Christian language teachers, about to leave this country for ministry in China, have seen their visas revoked. The Lausanne Conference on World Evangelization took place without any representation from mainland China. Clearly much was at stake. Just as clearly, much was lost.

But is there "a world beyond the barricades?" Certainly we learned some pragmatic lessons. In a highly centralized form of government, one with a long history of communist domination, neither economic nor democratic reforms can ever be taken for granted. The models for a transition from communism to democracy are few indeed. It just might happen in Poland. If so, this will be the first the world has ever seen. We need to be realistic.

It is also appropriate and timely to remember that *glasnost*, the new "openness" of another world power, cannot be taken for granted. *Glasnost* exists as a pragmatic expedient and, by

definition, will continue to exist only until something better comes along. It does not contain a moral imperative, and we need to be realistic about its enduring quality without such a dimension.

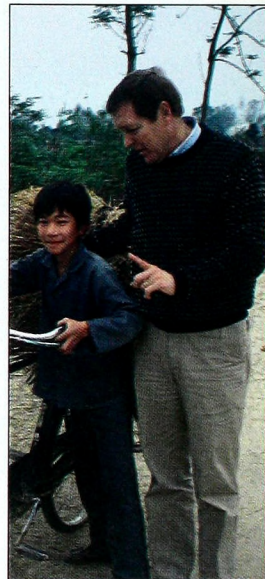
Most importantly, we need to remember that opportunities for the church won't last forever. It is not always a helpful exercise to try to ascertain the motives for *glasnost* in Russia, economic reform in China, the new openness in Vietnam—or any of the winds of change that exist throughout our world today. Whatever the motive, if we have an opportunity to place a Christian foot in the door, in such a way that the door will forever remain open, we are obliged to do it.

We do what we can do. It is possible today to satisfy the hunger for Bibles and other printed biblical materials. It is still possible to work with the church in a way that will affirm and lift up the church that has been made strong through persecution. It is certainly possible to be a living witness for the worth of the gospel, for things such as integrity, ethical standards and high moral conduct. It is possible to explain our motivation for being in these countries, an explanation that will invariably lead us to a discussion of kingdom values and the kingdom itself.

We do what we can do. But then we need to allow God to have the last word. The missionaries left China in 1949, but God certainly wasn't through with that part of the world. When China reopened in the late 1970s, missionaries from abroad were no longer needed. God continued to build his kingdom, and today there are somewhere between 40 and 50 million Christians throughout China. Tanks, soldiers and barricades mean nothing to our Lord. He alone can shut down the work of the kingdom. Gratefully he has never chosen to do so, but continues to do all those things that we can't do ourselves.

We rest in the assurance that, "He that hath begun a good work ... will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." Yes, there is "a world beyond the barricades." It is God's world and he is still not finished with it. □

**Bob Seiple talks with the son of a Chinese farmer whose future will be affected by recent events in Tiananmen Square.**



TERRY MADISON / WORLD VISION



BY LARRY B. STAMMER

# BLIGHTING THE LAND THAT FEEDS US



*People want a  
better life, so they  
overuse their resources.  
There must be  
a better way.*

**T**he muddy torrent raged down the hillside, sweeping aside everything in its path—including part of Anse-a-Galets, a small town on the Haitian island of La Gonave.

Three years earlier the waters claimed 33 lives. This time the people were ready. The thunder kept them alert. By midnight, the people in the worst danger had abandoned their homes. There were no casualties, but the flood took its toll: two churches, four homes and a drinking-water system.

“It was devastating,” says Father Bill Quigley, a Roman Catholic missionary. “The people have very little. If they have a little extra money they buy a comb. On another occasion they might buy a pot or pan. Then they lose everything in one night.”

For the 3,000 people of Anse-a-Galets and for the families who lost their homes, the remedy was obvious: rebuild. The worst was over. But the disaster will probably recur when the rains return. The homes have been rebuilt, but nothing has really changed.

Anse-a-Galets’ floods are part of a pattern. It’s true: natural disasters are getting worse, or at least more frequent, in poor countries. There are more floods, more mudslides, more droughts. That’s because people want a better life, and the



only way they see to get it is to overuse their resources. But what they're really doing is pushing that better life further and further out of reach.

The people of Anse-a-Galets strip their land of forests, destroying the very resources upon which they depend. They cut down Bahyonde trees to make charcoal, which they use for cooking or sell for a few pennies in Port-au-Prince, the capital city.

That's why the floods are getting worse. There is less and less growth in the highlands above the village to prevent soil erosion and flooding. The soil disappears so fast that some farmers believe stones grow in their fields. Meanwhile, Port-au-Prince needs bulldozers to clear its streets of the topsoil that flows down the mountains in the rainy season.

### Scratching heaven

Haiti's forests were once so lush that Christopher Columbus wrote of "thousands of kinds of trees so tall that they seem to be scratching heaven." Earlier in this century a U.S. administrator called La Gonave a "tropical paradise home for 10,000 people."

"Now it's no paradise, and it's home to 70,000 people. Another 20,000 are either in Miami or in the slums of Port-au-Prince," says Julian Pitchford, a water engineering consultant who has worked in Haiti and Africa for World Vision.

Pitchford says the island is critically short of water and can't sustain its too-large population. It's been severely deforested, resulting in soil erosion and a drop in food production. "All this has made quite a significant change to its climate," he explains. "There is much less rainfall."

La Gonave's growing population depends on ever scarcer wood for fuel and income. Little or no high-grade timber remains standing, but the demand has increased. So the island exports low-grade wood in the form of charcoal. Attempts to encourage tree-planting have been marginally successful at best.

What's wrong with the people of La Gonave? Can't they see what they're doing to themselves? Sure they can. But the simple truth is, they can't see any alternative.

### Change by degrees

Until recently we tended to view the cycle of poverty and environmental harm in local or, at best, regional terms. We lamented the flood in Bangladesh, the famine in Ethiopia, the mudslides in Brazil. We knew these calamities were rooted in environmental abuse. But they seemed remote, as remote as the ancient warning that we would reap what we sowed.

Now many of the world's leading scientists warn of world-scale environmental catastrophe—brought on by rich and poor nations alike.

For example: global warming—the "greenhouse effect"—could drastically shift crop-growing regions all around the world. Rising sea levels, caused by melting polar ice caps, could flood coastal cities and entire low-lying countries like Bangladesh. Many plant and animal species could vanish before they adapt to temperature changes.

Indeed, the 3- to 8-degree Fahrenheit increase predicted over the next 40 years, given current trends, is greater than the temperature changes during all of recorded human history.

While it's too early to say whether the 1988 drought was the first clear sign of global warm-

***We knew these calamities were rooted in environmental abuse. But they seemed remote.***

**Who's to blame for global warming? Nobody's innocent, really.**

ing, the drought was typical of global warming scenarios. It reduced China's grain crop by 3 percent, the Soviet Union's by 9 percent and the United States' by 30 percent. It left us with only a 60-day supply of surplus grain in the world.

That's a frightening figure, especially for developing countries that couldn't hope to compete in a bidding war. In that event, "millions of low-income, urban consumers would be forced to tighten their belts, even though they have no notches left," wrote Lester Brown in *World Watch* magazine.

Who's to blame for global warming? Nobody's innocent, really. The engines that drive the economies of the First and Second Worlds run on fossil fuels like coal, oil and gasoline. Seventy percent of all carbon dioxide emissions pour out of the smokestacks and tailpipes of industrialized countries. (Carbon dioxide is a major "greenhouse gas" that prevents solar radiation from escaping back into space.)

**Like there's no tomorrow**

Meanwhile, many parts of the developing world burn off tropical forests like there's no tomorrow, clearing land for agriculture, ranching and housing. This accounts for the other 30 percent of human-caused carbon dioxide emissions. That's expected to rise to 50 percent by the year 2025, chiefly because of increased energy use and deforestation. Forests covering an area about the size of Austria are destroyed every year.

It seems so obvious. Stop cutting down the trees. Think of the next generation.

Julian Pitchford, like others familiar with developing countries, is quick to understand what compels poor people to take a short view. He deplores it, but he understands it.

"It's easy to be critical of the poor who are tearing their island apart. But if you don't know how you'll feed your children tomorrow, planting trees for your grandchildren isn't a high priority," he observes.

It is against this backdrop of poverty, one found again and again in the developing world, that any discussion of global solutions must take place. When you have so little, development wins over environment without a fight.

Clearly we cannot go on this way. Like La



**A ruined field in Haiti: As trees disappear from the hillsides, flooding becomes more severe.**

Jon Warren

Jonave, the earth itself can only take so much. What are the alternatives?

There is hope. Like never before, leaders of industrialized nations and developing nations are focusing on their inter-connected environmental problems. While the West opens discussion about fossil fuels and ozone-destroying chemicals, developing countries acknowledge that their deforestation, desertification and other problems go beyond their own borders.

Last February, for example, a conference on global warming convened in New Delhi, India. Representatives of developing countries, while still pointing to poverty as an underlying cause, admitted to careless and short-sighted abuse of the environment.

**Who will pay?**

They added pointedly: "Having caused the major share of the problem and possessing the resources to do something about it, the industrial countries have a special responsibility to assist the developing countries in finding and financing appropriate responses."

For India and China, cutting back on ozone-destroying CFCs could mean denying their people refrigeration, unless an inexpensive substitute is made available. In Thailand or Brazil, saving the rain forest will exact a high short-term cost from a family's livelihood or a nation's ability to make debt payments. Who will pay to preserve the trees?

**VITAL SIGNS**

- About half the forests in poor countries have disappeared in this century.
- Destruction of forests and disruption of ecosystems will cause up to a million plant and animal species to disappear by the year 2000.
- Five of the past 12 years have been the warmest since 1900.
- Although CFCs were banned from aerosol cans in 1978, other uses of CFCs have increased, seriously depleting the ozone layer. More ultraviolet rays reach the earth, posing a threat to human health and retarding crop production.

- Of the toxic wastes produced in the United States, about one percent are actually destroyed.
- Ten thousand people die each year from pesticide poisoning; another 40,000 fall ill.
- One-third of the pesticides exported by the United States are banned for use at home.
- Food packaging makes up about a third of household garbage in the United States.
- In 1960, the average American produced 2.9 pounds of trash a day. Today's figure: 5 pounds per person.

*Statistics from Ecology and Life (Word, 1988) by Wesley Granberg-Michaelson.*

And there is an essential human element. Governments and banks can't solve the problems. Sustainable development—development that cares for the earth as well as the people—has to come through the people themselves, Pitchford notes.

"It's not something you do to them," he says. "It's something you do with them."

Perhaps the greatest hope of all comes from people who are doing just that, people like Barry and Janine Rands in Mali, West Africa.

When the Rands arrived in the easternmost region of Mali three years ago, they took a good look around them. Too much tree-cutting, as in La Gonave, had contributed to unnatural disaster. Two major droughts and 15 years of scant rain had turned the place into a wasteland. Trees that survived the drought were cut down for fuel and building material. The nomadic Tuareg people, once the aristocratic "lords of the desert," saw their whole way of life in jeopardy. Disease and suicide claimed many lives.

"We saw that if we were going to help, we had to address the ecological problems," Barry says. The Rands have designed innovative projects that help reclaim the devastated environment. They've focused on two things: using up less of the scarce wood supply, and making the most of the rain that does fall on the desert.

Janine started by playing with mud. She kneaded clay, sand and water until she found a mix that would stand intense heat. Then she

designed a cookstove. The mud stove uses about half as much wood as the traditional three-rock fire, gives better heat and is safer for children who play in cooking areas.

And—the crucial test for a development project—the stoves have caught on by word of mouth. More than 3,000 men and women have learned how to make them; more than 17,000 have been built. Since the stoves need to be replaced periodically, the crafters have a steady source of extra income. And unlike many short-lived development projects, the mud stoves require absolutely nothing that isn't locally and cheaply available.

### Ten glasses

Barry, meanwhile, concentrates on the water problem. Recently he asked a group of former nomads who were interested in conservation: "If these 10 glasses of water are all the rain that falls on our land this year, how many glasses soak into the ground for crops, trees, grass and our wells, and how much runs off or evaporates?"

Some guessed half. Everyone underestimated the waste. Barry poured nine and a half glasses of water onto the ground. "That's how much we lose," he said. "The high winds, hot climate and hard rains we can't change. The trees and plants that used to catch water are gone. The good news is, we can do something to help the water soak in."

His audience learned to build rock and earth dikes along the contours of the land, and to construct water catchments for planting trees. "In the Sahel," Barry explains, "the simpler things usually work the best." The low contour dikes break the force of run-off water so the silt stays behind the dikes instead of being carried off to some distant lake or swamp.

The people Barry spoke to that day went back to their homes and went to work. Before long they marveled at the results—green grass on a barren plain, soil wet enough after the first rain to plant trees and crops, and water already rising in the wells.

True, the amount of land that has been reclaimed is small. The desert is still growing. The Rands, however, measure achievement in the human spirit. "The people are realists," says Barry. "They understand that nothing's going to bring back the 'good old days.'

"But they are realizing that they aren't helpless victims. They can fight back. They're prepared to adapt. That spirit of realistic optimism is the best thing that's happened so far." □

*Larry Stammer is an environmental writer for the Los Angeles Times.*

**Earthen canals nourish rice fields in the Mali desert: "In the Sahel, simple things work best," says Barry Rands.**



***"If you don't know how you'll feed your children tomorrow, planting trees for your grandchildren isn't a high priority."***

*Wesley Granberg-Michaelson calls the Bible his primary ecological textbook.*

# A KEEPER OF THE EARTH



PETER WILLIAMS / WCC

Wes assured her his organization was rooted in Christ and had nothing to do with the New Age. He offered to send her some information. But her mission was complete, and the conversation was over. Wes went home frustrated and late for dinner.

That was years ago. Wes isn't at New Creation Institute any more, and he lives far from Montana. But the concerns raised by that caller are still very much with him.

Wes might even go so far as to say that she was missing part of the gospel. That there is more to being "saved" than she—and a lot of other Christians—realize. That the average evangelical Christian defines salvation too narrowly, more narrowly than the Bible does.

Wesley Granberg-Michaelson is a key figure

It was near closing time at the New Creation Institute in Missoula, Mont., when the phone rang. The caller didn't waste any time. She attacked the organization's name, based on 2 Corinthians 5:17.

"You're misusing the Scripture," she said. "I don't see anything in that verse about the creation being made new. That verse applies only to the individual."

"Well, you see..." Wesley Granberg-Michaelson tried to marshal his thoughts.

"God only made man in his image," she continued, "not the flowers, the mountains, the land. And it was man who sinned. So man needs to be redeemed, not creation."

Wes tried to say something about the connection between sin and the mistreatment of creation.

"No, sir," the caller said. "There isn't anything in my Bible about the environment. I bet you people are one of those New Age outfits."

in the "earthkeeping" movement, a Christian view of the earth and ecology. The term comes from the book *Earthkeeping*, written about 10 years ago by Loren Wilkinson.

Simply put, earthkeeping is the view that abuse of the earth is part of the sin problem. Being redeemed by Christ restores our relationship with creation just as it restores relationships with God and other people.

"That's a second dimension of brokenness that we've forgotten about, but it's very clear in the Bible," Wes says.

For a major spokesman, Wes is not an electric personality. He's a reflective, suit-and-tie type, a sensitive man who thinks things through deeply and thoroughly.

It was the move from Washington, D.C., to



Missoula, Mont., that prompted Wes to think about earthkeeping. Leaving a politicized, bureaucratic inner-city neighborhood, he found a place where "the relationship between people and nature was much more transparent."

Wes found a brand of commitment to the land unlike anything he'd ever seen. He remembers a crusty Montana rancher who was paid a call by a mining executive interested in strip-mining the coal from the rancher's property.

The rancher politely listened as his visitor outlined the small fortune he was prepared to pay and emphasized how close to the surface and accessible the coal was. Then the rancher smiled and replied, "Mister, you have absolutely no idea how *inaccessible* the coal on my land is." End of interview.

Wes hardly knew how to approach environmental issues from a Christian point of view. Exploring them became a prime focus of his thinking and writing. He found so much in the Bible that he calls it his primary ecological textbook.

And he is very tired of hearing the Bible, or Christianity, blamed for the way we abuse our planet. This idea became popular about 20 years

**G**od writes  
the gospel not  
in the Bible  
alone, but on  
trees and  
flowers and  
clouds and  
stars.

Martin Luther

## WHAT YOU CAN DO...

### WITH YOUR CHURCH

1. Start a study group to discuss a book on earthkeeping. Or study the Bible. "The theology is often so badly misunderstood," Wes Granberg-Michaelson says.
2. Explore projects for your local church. Sponsor a recycling project. Use the church as a recycling center for aluminum cans, bottles, newspapers and plastics. This helps the earth in a practical way, raises awareness and may even raise funds.
3. Offer a community service. Help people properly dispose of household waste such as paint, thinner and oils.
4. Tie in to local and national groups concerned about environmental issues. This can be a great aid to your thoughts and actions.

### ON YOUR OWN

1. Examine your eating habits: what you eat, where it came from, how it was produced. Organic foods are becoming more available, and are usually grown in ways that are kinder to the land.
2. When you shop, be aware of packaging. Avoid unnecessary bulk; look for recyclable or biodegradable materials.
3. Make recycling a habit. Find out what kinds of recycling are available in your area.
4. Check your water use and transportation habits. You may discover ways to cut back on excess use.



ago, especially through the writing of Lynn White, Jr. Pointing to verses such as Genesis 1:28 ("Fill the earth and subdue it"), White said the Bible and its followers paved the way for the exploitation of the earth.

Admitting that this verse has been used to justify much abuse, Wes refuses to place the blame there. "The issue is whether the Bible or Christian belief caused that mentality. I am convinced that cultural forces caused it, and then Christians were simply absorbed by what was happening in the larger culture. To blame a few isolated verses for this whole attitude is just plain silly."

He believes the true culprits were the combined forces of the Industrial Revolution, the Enlightenment and the technological revolution. These translated our relationship to the earth into one of acquiring raw materials for consumption and profit.

Prominent philosopher Francis Bacon declared that the purpose of science was to gain control over nature. The environment became a separate, even alien entity.

It is still this mentality, Wes says, that sets the Christian concept of earthkeeping apart from

Wes believes it was the move of technology from servant to master. "Technology has become an idol, an object of faith and an oppressive power. People look for a technological fix.

"Some people say the greenhouse effect or world poverty or hunger will be solved by technology. Even when we realize that technology caused many of these problems, we still somehow expect technology to make them right."

Why do we believe this way? Because it absolves us from questions about our lifestyles, our values and our compassion. "It's more painful to realize that problems will not be solved unless we rethink what we mean by success, progress and development."

Interesting concepts. But earthkeeping is not about concepts. "It's not a matter of biblical study and theology," Wes says. "It's a way of living." The call to tend the creation is ultimately a call to action. It's also a challenge to our habits and lifestyles. (For practical suggestions, see "What You Can Do.")

For example: In Winona County, Minn., Redeemer Lutheran Church donated two acres of land to The Land Stewardship Project. Developmentally disabled adults and other volunteers

## FOR MORE INFORMATION

### **AuSable Institute**

#### **of Environmental Studies**

7526 Sunset Trail N.E., Mancelona, MI 49659  
(616) 587-8686

Maintains a resource base and holds conferences.

### **Sierra Treks**

730 Polk St., San Francisco, CA 94109

Provides wilderness experiences for Christians.

### **Ecumenical Task Force**

#### **of the Niagara Frontier**

259 4th St., Niagara Falls, NY 14303

(716) 284-9961

Educates the religious community about toxic waste.

### **Eco-Justice Working Group**

475 Riverside Dr., New York, NY 10115

(212) 870-2511

Publishes resources for churches; lobbies for environmental legislation.

### **North American Conference**

#### **on Christianity and Ecology**

P.O. Box 14305, San Francisco, CA 94114

(415) 626-6064

Publishes a quarterly magazine; sponsors conferences.

### **Christian Farmers Federation**

115 Woolwich St., Guelph, Ontario N1H 3V1

Canada (519) 837-1620

Provides resources for farmers about land stewardship.

garden-variety ecology.

"An atheist ecologist starts with the notion that nature is a self-contained entity. You don't think of God or even of people as being included in the word 'nature,'" he explains. "But this kind of separation is totally alien to the biblical perspective. Christian faith can never understand the created order as something detached or unrelated."

Wes and his kind may seem to be a new phenomenon in Christian circles, but they're not. They're actually part of a long tradition that has been silent only in the past few centuries.

It wasn't called earthkeeping, but early church fathers and mothers stressed creation as a mark of God's great sovereignty. Wes points out that all of the early church creeds begin by affirming God as Creator and Sustainer of all that is. He notes that many strands of Christianity, such as the Franciscan monks, "had a very deep sense of being connected to the world of creation."

What silenced that strand in recent history?

tend the plot using organic farming techniques. In two years the garden yielded 7,500 pounds of organic produce, sold in local markets.

The Christian church in general remained largely uninvolved in the early part of the environmental movement. This began to change in the early 1980s.

"The church is realizing the urgency," Wes comments. "I think earthkeeping will become a strong issue in the 1990s. The environmental crisis is the greatest threat to life, apart from nuclear war, that we and the next generation will face."

But the activism begins within for Christians. "The kind of commitment it takes to preserve the earth must be a spiritual commitment, deeply rooted in our faith," Wes says.

And he firmly asserts the foundation of that commitment: "This world belongs to God." □

*Judith Hougen is a free-lance writer and poet living in Edina, Minn.*

**G**od expects us to keep the earth with as much tenderness as he keeps us.

Clifford E. Bajema in *The Banner*

BY BOB LUPTON

*Greenview was a nice place to live until the good neighbors started moving out.*

**G**reenview\* is one of Atlanta's earliest black communities. Whites who had lost their right to own slaves after the Civil War called it "niggertown," but those who lived in Greenview seemed undaunted. They built a proud, vigorous community despite the lines of demarcation that separated them from the rest of the city. Modest Victorian bungalows lined the cobblestone streets. There were parks and churches and schools. And a thriving business district.

There were, of course, some rough areas with rough people. But overall Greenview enjoyed a wholesome vitality. Many of the civic, professional and religious leaders who helped rebuild Atlanta after the war lived in Greenview. It was a good place to raise a family. The comfort of owning a permanent home in one's own community helped ease the pain of the prejudice most experienced outside Greenview.

Then in the 1950s and '60s, Martin Luther King, Jr. confronted the racism of Atlanta and the world, giving birth to a new era of reconciliation between whites and blacks. "White only" signs came down. Public schools were opened to all children. Fair economic and housing legislation was enacted.

The people of Greenview were excited and optimistic. They dreamed of new opportunities spreading out before them. Today, however, their once-thriving community is one of the most decimated areas in Atlanta.

It happened so subtly, the changes were almost imperceptible. Greenview's merchants gradually moved their businesses to Atlanta's greener pastures. Professionals and tradespeople found better jobs in higher-paying areas. Many started moving to suburban communities.

But many others in Greenview were unable to capitalize on these new opportunities. The elderly, those in broken families, the poor, whose energies were consumed with just trying to survive—these were the ones left behind.

\*The community's name has been changed.

Homes became rental properties and started to deteriorate. Families started to fragment. The general store closed, reopened as a thrift store and eventually was boarded up.

As the leadership withdrew, evil forces filled the void. Churches closed. Desperate people preyed on the vulnerable. The fabric of the community grew weaker as the stronger strands were removed. And in the end Greenview came apart, desolate and ruined.

It's not hard to create a ghetto. Just remove the capable neighbors. To produce a sub-standard school system, withdraw the students of achieving parents. To create a culture of chronically dependent people, merely extract the upwardly mobile role models from the community.

That's what happened in Greenview—and in thousands of other communities across the United States. That's what happens

when we pursue our own personal and family dreams, and abandon our neighbors to the agencies.

Those left in Greenview do not need more arms-length social services—government or religious. After 30 years of social programs and costly government investment, the people are still poor. The programs could never replace the neighbors who had abandoned the community.

Programs cannot restore communities. Only neighbors can do that. The people who remain in Greenview need educated neighbors to raise the school standards. They need political neighbors who will help organize against crime and drugs. They need spiritual neighbors to reopen churches, and entrepreneurial-minded neighbors to stimulate business. They need handy neighbors to restore their street-scapes,

# HOW TO CREATE A



DOUG DUDLEY / WORLD VISION

# GHETTO

and neighbors with moral and ethical values to reweave the tattered fabric of their community.

Too many people support laws eliminating segregation while they move to protected neighborhoods of personal privilege. Too many believe in loving their neighbor, but withdraw from those neighbors most in need. In order to love your neighbor you first have to *become* a neighbor.

The richest treasure of all remains to be rediscovered—the Christ who has never left Greenview.

*Bob Lupton is director of Atlanta-based FCS Ministries.*

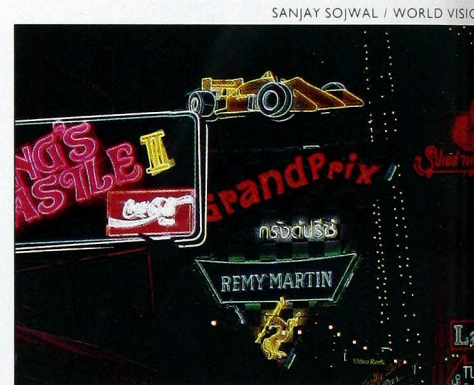
# POVERTY: THAILAND'S BIGGEST PIMP

Looking for all the world like a fifth-grader about to get her wrists slapped by the principal, Daeng (not her real name) sits trembling in a small chair, clutching a stuffed koala bear under one arm. Small-boned and slender in jeans and a blue cotton blouse, the 14-year-old glances furtively at the others in the room. Her arrow-straight anthracite hair brush-

es her shoulders as she shoots quick looks from one strange face to another.

But this isn't school, and what she fears isn't a simple wrist-slapping. Her former pimp has vowed to kill her and her family if he ever finds her. Even now, among friends in the safety of Bangkok's Emergency Home for Women and Children in Distress, Daeng still is reluctant to trust anyone. Especially a journalist. If her pimp reads about her in the paper, she's sure he'll come after her. A letter from her older brother strongly advised her not to return home. Her pimp had already ransacked the house.

Tricked by a "loan agent" who promised he'd take her to her older sister who was working in a restaurant south of Bangkok, she quickly found herself imprisoned in a dingy brothel with 50 other girls, where she was forced to spend the next three months. Working each night from 7 p.m. to 4 a.m., and sometimes even days, she would service as many as 12 men in a row. The thought of escape



SANJAY SOJWAL / WORLD VISION

tantalized her until she saw what happened to girls who tried. Those beaten to unconsciousness were the lucky ones. She had heard of others who didn't survive.

A police raid on the place put Daeng in jail. The next day she ended up at the emergency home. But she can't stay there forever. Nor can she go back home. And an angry pimp is still out to reclaim his stolen property and put her back to work—or worse.

## Morally bankrupt teenagers?

Prostitution is not unique to Thailand. Every major city in the world boasts (or tries to hide) its own sleazy district. But two things set developing countries like Thailand apart: the sheer number of prostitutes and the economic conditions driving them to the business. Most authorities say the figure is between 250,000 and 500,000 in Bangkok. Others say it's even higher.

Their average age cannot be overlooked either. While countries world-

*Two things characterize prostitution in countries like Thailand: the sheer numbers and the conditions that drive them into the business.*



wide, especially Asian ones, have sizable pedophile problems, this article deals with prostitutes who, if they lived in this country, would be of an age where their major concern would be picking out prom dresses.

Where are all these girls coming from? (And guys, too. There are more than 40 gay bars in Bangkok.) Are there *that* many broken homes and dysfunctional families? Is the lure of the big city *that* strong? Are there *that* many morally bankrupt teenagers? No. According to recent studies by the International Labor Organisation, the bottom line is economics.

"These girls were not fleeing from a family background or rural society which oppressed women in conventional ways," says Professor Pasuk Phongpaichit in his book, *From Peasant Girls to Bangkok Masseuses*. They left to help their families survive, he explains. In their rural society, they

**T**he average age of the recruits is 12 to 15. They're just girls."

large, choose to work there. Their options are: one, work in Patpong in order to live in a modest apartment, attend school and save to start a small business; or two, work as a seamstress, live in a hovel and forget about school or a business. But they *choose* prostitution, and no one threatens to beat them if they want to quit.

Second, there are the girls working in massage parlors—more than 200 of them in Bangkok—who generally earn less than their counterparts in the bars of Patpong, but who still make about 20 times what they could as a waitress. Most of them would rather be

trying to feed his family on not enough rice grown on a few measly acres of tired soil he's been turning with the same rusty plow and slow ox for years.

His teenage daughters have had their four to six years of school (if that much) and, after a couple years or so of working off the loan in that "restaurant" in Bangkok, his kids can come home and things will be better. Or so he reasons. He doesn't know, or doesn't want to know, or knows but looks the other way, that his daughters could be sleeping with up to a dozen men per night, up to 14 hours at a stretch. But he sees no alternative.

Most of the girls in these three groups see themselves as playing key roles in supporting the family. For brothel girls, how much of their salary goes home is not up to them. Girls in massage parlors and the bars of Patpong are freer to choose.

**Travel-weary teenagers hoping to land good jobs in the big city are often easy prey for pimps at Bangkok's Hua Lampong Railway Station. Social workers from the Emergency Center try to provide an alternative for them.**



were expected to contribute to the family income. Compared to other unskilled jobs, prostitution offered the best return.

"The girls felt they were making a perfectly rational decision within the context of their particular social and economic situation. The girls did not make the economic structure; and they could not escape from it."

Prostitution in Thailand takes many forms, from the girl on the street corner to organized sex tours that fly in Europeans, Japanese and others for weekend binges. But there seem to be three general groups of prostitutes.

There are the girls in Patpong and other nightclub districts who, by and

doing other work, but because they can make so much money for their families, they endure it for the short time they plan to be there.

Then there are the girls, often in their mid-teens, who come from poor families and are forced to work in brothels entertaining working-class Thai men. Escape is virtually out of the question for them unless they're willing to risk a beating. But economics, not abusive family situations, is the driving force propelling these girls into the trade. By and large they, or their parents, or both, see no other way.

A "loan agent" with a fistful of *baht* (Thai currency) offers an attractive solution to an up-country farmer

the throngs, and eye-watering hits of raw sewage stench rising through steel grates in the sidewalks.

### Nightlife in Patpong

Patpong starts cranking up its engines at about 6 p.m. Girls in street clothes begin filing into not-yet-open bars and making their way up nondescript stairways. Vendors set up their wares on sidewalks and on cloth-covered tables throughout the district's two blocks.

By 10 o'clock the pace is frenetic. Bootleg-cassette sellers boost their speakers to compete with each other and with thudding rock music spilling out open bar doors. Girls who earlier

much like any other big-city thoroughfare. By nightfall it takes on a carnival atmosphere. Lots of festivity. Lots of shoppers. Lots of Thais sitting at small curbside tables eating noodles or fried squid or oyster omelets or chunks of fish-head with the eye still gleaming up at them. In one deep breath you can catch wafts of roast pork sizzling on sidewalk hibachis, exhaust fumes from pingy little Yamaha scooters worming their way through

were leaning slinkily against doorways to entice customers into bars, now reach out and grab them by the arm.

Even more aggressive are the teenage boys—hawkers for the more daring, less-clothed girls in upstairs bars—who shove descriptive flashcards in front of your face and shout juicy phrases into your ear that describe the not-to-be-believed things taking place in their bars. Trying to walk past these guys is like trying to scuba dive through a bed of kelp.

And dancing their hearts out in this garish armpit of the city are the girls—hundreds of them, without whom the neon wouldn't flash, the rock 'n roll wouldn't scream and the customers wouldn't come.

### The tip of the iceberg

Goy, a dancer at Patpong's Grand Prix bar, looks like a 15-year-old—out of place in a late-night bar. She's actually 19, divorced and mother of a 7-month-old boy. She started working at the bar three months ago to support herself and her baby. For the time being, her mother is caring for the infant. Goy sends most of what she makes at the Grand Prix home each month. And there are countless others just like her. But this lively portion of Bangkok is only one part of the picture.

"Patpong is the tip of the iceberg," says Denis Gray, Thailand's Associated Press bureau chief. "Ninety percent of the prostitution scene is scattered around other parts of the city."

Daeng, the 14-year-old at the emergency center, is more the rule than the exception when it comes to typical prostitution cases. She's just one of thousands the center has helped in its eight-year history—and hundreds of thousands more it hasn't reached.

"The average age of the recruits is 12 to 15. They're just girls," says Khunying Kanitha Wichiencharoen, founder and director of the center. "Some of the ones we treat are only 10 or 11. Most kids lie about their age when they come here, saying they're 18, while they clutch their favorite teddy bear."

Her compassion for kids like these led Khunying Kanitha to do something to help. In 1981, with her prodding and guidance, the Association for Promotion of the Status of Women and the Women Lawyers Association of Thailand joined forces to form the center. Until recently, it consisted of a single shelter and halfway house in a quiet section of Bangkok where abused, abducted or otherwise distressed women and children could find refuge and assistance in recovering their health

and dignity.

Recently, Emergency Home 2: The Women's Education and Training Center, got underway with help from Jimmy and Rosalynn Carter, among others. The idea is to not only rescue women and children from crisis situations, but to help them redirect their lives by learning trades, from dressmaking to car repair.

Khunying Kanitha's workers also have positioned themselves on the front lines, trying to intercept kids as they stream into town from rural areas. At Bangkok's Hua Lampong Railway Station and at two bus terminals, Kanitha's troops are lined up behind long tables located beneath huge signs bearing the center's name. More than 50 trains arrive and depart daily, transporting some 30,000 passengers.

One girl from a poor family in the north came to Bangkok by train on the promise of a waitressing job. Passing through the terminal, she noticed the center's sign, but didn't think much about it. Two days later, after being locked in a brothel and forced to tend to a virtually continuous string of customers, she escaped out a back window and fled—straight back to the train station. She found the booth, sat down next to a sympathetic social worker and sobbed out her ordeal. She was taken to the center, where she got help finding a waitressing job.

It would be bad enough if all that these girls had to go through was the physical and emotional abuse inherent

*Most of these girls see themselves as playing key roles in supporting the family.*

in the business. But what about disease? What about AIDS?

Within the past year, officials have begun to admit that AIDS has dropped anchor in Thailand. "The number of AIDS cases is increasing, whether people like it or not," says Dr. Debhanom Muangman, dean of the Faculty of Public Health at Bangkok's Mahidol University.



"There are very few little girls left in the north," says Emergency Center director Khunying Kanitha Wichiencharoen. "They have all been brought down here."

"Asia has smaller figures because we started later," he says. "But we're catching up. The best thing we can do is educate the public, because they don't know how dangerous it is. And the sex establishments are jam-packed, not just with Western tourists, but Thais too."

### No simple solutions

What can be done to help these girls? Is there any way to prevent more kids from being hauled into the business? Can't they pass some laws or something?

Actually, they did. According to the 1960 Prostitution Act, prostitution is illegal in Thailand. Enforcing that law is another story. "The police are paid off to close their eyes to it," Khunying Kanitha says. "If they ever do raid a place, they usually warn the owners first to hide their best girls."

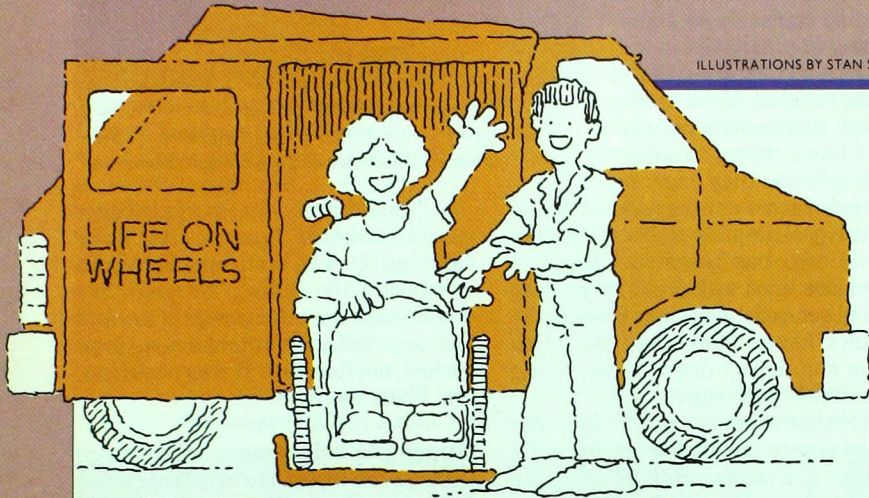
More laws aren't going to end the problem. In fact, there are no simple, easy solutions. "No amount of agitation is likely to change things while the cost incentives remain the same, and while opportunities for alternative employment are so limited," Phongpachit says. "The only real solution is a long-term one, and it lies in a massive change in the distribution of income between city and country, and in a fundamental shift in Thailand's orientation to the international economy."

Until then, girls like Goy will keep working at the Grand Prix and sending money home to their mothers and babies. Girls like Daeng will do their best to reconstruct their ravaged lives. And girls like the 12-year-olds at one Thai dance bar, clustered in little clumps like nervous sixth-graders on confirmation Sunday, with plastic number badges pinned to their pink satin dresses, will fret through hours of sweaty-palmed anxiety, wondering how many customers they'll have to take care of before the night is over. □

# SAMARITAN SAMPLER

RESOURCES FOR  
HELPING OTHERS  
IN THE NAME  
OF CHRIST

Compiled and written  
by Ginger Hope



ILLUSTRATIONS BY STAN SAKAI

## WHEELS ON WHEELS

A Chicago-area man's retirement hobby is a real pick-me-up for nearby nursing-home residents. Melvin Van Denend and 10 volunteers provide outings for about five people a day. Museum trips, lakeside drives and ball games are a rare treat for most of them.

"It's the first time I've been out

of this place in years," said one resident, typical of those who have no family ties. When residents ask why the volunteers do such a nice thing for free, they have a chance to talk about their Christian faith.

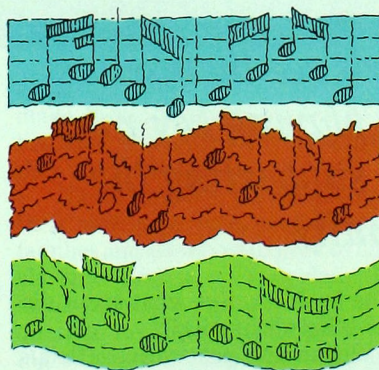
Life on Wheels, as Van Denend named his driving force, relies on private donations. The two-van fleet gets free upkeep from local mechanics, car washes, body shops, etc.

Life on Wheels, 2211 South Highland, 4-B, Lombard, IL 60148.

## FOR A SONG

They've got music coming out of their ears at Campus Crusade. Dig '50s rock 'n roll? Check out the Convertibles; '60s classics? Call Flashback. For a cappella vocals, see Vanguard. Or would a classical chamber ensemble give you more intense aural gratification? They've got you covered with Counterpoint.

These and a few other class acts make up Campus Crusade's music-ministry branch. The groups give audiences across the country a real earful—and, for those who have ears to hear it, a clear message with some Good News.

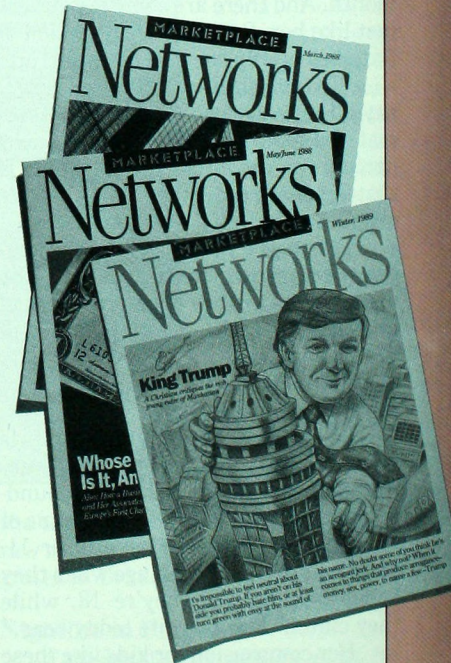


For information about Campus Crusade's music ministry, contact Pete Johnson, (714) 832-9862. To schedule a concert call (800) 962-SONG.

## THANK GOD IT'S WHAT?

"It's time for an overthrow of the TGIF (Thank God It's Friday) mentality among Christians," declares Pete Hammond in *Marketplace Networks*. "Thank God It's Monday. I will serve God and celebrate his kingdom in my job."

Hammond publishes *Marketplace Networks*, a sharp, upbeat newsletter for Christians in the



workaday world. On its pages you might find a critique of Donald Trump; advice about dealing with office politics; stories about biblical and modern "marketplace Christians"; or a digest of Christian thinking on religion.

Order *Marketplace Networks* (donation requested) from InterVarsity Christian Fellowship, P.O. Box 7895, Madison, WI 53707.



## THE BIBLE AND THE COOKBOOK

“When Christianity tells you to feed the hungry it does not give you lessons in cookery. ... [It does not] supercede the ordinary human arts and sciences: it is rather a director which will set them all to the right jobs, and a source of energy which will give them all new life. C. S. Lewis”



## BORN IN EAST L.A.

In the late 1960s, Sunny Arguinzoni founded Victory Outreach to help Latinos in East Los Angeles who were caught up in drug abuse, gangs and all the turmoil of that time and place. Both a church and a rehabilitation center, Victory Outreach now ministers to people of all ethnic backgrounds at more than 100 sites in the United States and overseas. All its community programs focus on church involvement and re-entry into mainstream life.

For information contact Victory Outreach, 13181 Crossroads Parkway North, Suite 250, City of Industry, CA 91746: (213) 695-5211.

# Last night these young Americans came closer to starvation. And closer to God.



They were stretched by a 30-hour weekend fast. Together with planned activities. Games. Films. Discussion. Prayers. Bible study. And songs.

These young Christians felt what it's like to be hungry. And they raised money to help feed hungry families around the world.

They shared an unforgettable night and day of fellowship and fun. Hunger and joy. They shared an experience that brought them closer to each other. Closer to a starving world. And closer to God.

That's the World Vision Planned Famine program. Share it with the young people of your church. And let them share their feelings with a hungry world.

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(area code) (area code)

Please send me materials needed to organize our Planned Famine today. We are considering the date: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Allow 30 days for shipping materials.)

**WORLD VISION Special Programs** P.O. Box 5002 • Monrovia, CA 91016



JA9PS1

# DARE TO FAIL, AND OTHER ADVICE

BY TED W. ENGSTROM AND EDWARD R. DAYTON

**B**oth of us are at the point in our lives where we are comfortable looking back down the roads we have traveled. It's been exciting. Would we do it all again? Gladly! We might do a few things differently, of course. For those of you just beginning the journey, or those who counsel young leaders, here are some things that strike us as important.

## School days

Probably many of you have had 16 years of education, possibly more. We in the Western world are the most schooled of all people. Isn't it true that our society believes in postponing adulthood? A person is considered an adult only after leaving school and taking a full-time job.

The result is expected: students usually don't act like adults. That is, they live out rituals of dress, horseplay and college humor—just weeks before they graduate to become pastors or leaders. Three months later, they wonder how they could have ever thought school was a heavy grind. They don't have much experience at managing themselves, much less managing others.

## Ages and stages

In her book *Passages*, Gail Sheehy points out that just like children, adults pass through normal phases. People respond differently, see things differently, at different ages.

When we're young we refuse to compromise. Perhaps in our thirties we start learning to compromise. Eventually we learn that compromise is what life's all about. We see that our ideals are less than ideal to others. "Our" goals are more desirable than "my" goals.

There's nothing wrong with the idealism of youth. But age does make a difference. Respect it.

## Faith and paradox

Technological advances have given us the illusion that we have much more control of our destinies than we actually have. Too often young Christians fail to grasp the paradoxes of life so clearly stated in the Bible. The ultimate paradox is God's sovereignty and human freedom. Logic says those two cannot coexist. With maturity, however, we discover that we can live and work as though both are true. Learn early to live in that faith.

## Dare to fail

To take on leadership often means isolation. There comes a time when you must choose an unpopular position. It doesn't take much courage to move ahead on something in which you have complete confidence. True courage moves ahead fully knowing that failure is possible.

## Love with purpose

Jesus said that the basic test of our commitment to him is our love for one another. Don't be so consumed with tasks and accomplishments that you have little time for relationships and love. But without focus, without shared purpose, love can become ingrown. Love with abandon, but love with purpose.

## Surprises on the job

You may have just graduated, but your education has just begun. Almost everyone is surprised by their first job. No matter how good the job description is, the position is seldom what we expected. Many recent graduates complain, "I'm not using 10 percent of what I learned." Be patient. You will. Not all of it, but a great deal. At the same time, build continued training into your goals.

Another paradox: the more we learn, the more humbled we are at our own ignorance. And yet with the feeling of ignorance comes a sense that it's all right not to know everything. Count on it.

## Be a reader

Read widely in as many subjects as you can. If you don't enjoy reading, learn to enjoy it. Read contemporary literature; read management and leadership books and articles. Build more bookshelves if you need to. But read! It's one of the best ways to grow.

## Learn from failure

From failure we often learn the most. There's nothing wrong with making a mistake. (Just don't make the same one again.) When you fail, pick yourself up and move ahead to build on the experience. Don't moan over it, but ask God to redeem the experience.

Leadership that is Christian is never without a purpose. Doubts will come. In a world where the chance of things going wrong far exceeds the chance of things going right, it's easy to feel like a failure. That's why you must reaffirm your purpose again and again.

## Someone is there for you

We have direct access to the Maker of the universe. He has gone before and goes ahead. Call on him. Counsel with him. God continually invites you into his presence. His way of working is by answering prayer.

Ours is a God who is for us. He isn't playing games. Entrust your life to him daily. In Psalm 32:8 God said, "I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will counsel you and watch over you." Looking back down the road of our lives, we can say it's true!

# PUTTING HIS BEST FOOT FORWARD

**F**or several nights in June 1982, the night sky over Beirut looked like the Fourth of July. Francis Scott Key's description of "the rockets' red glare, the bombs bursting in air" seemed to fit the chaos taking place. But even those words could not begin to describe the fury unleashed by Israel's bombing of that ravaged port city. Yet in the midst of that rain of bombs, a miracle was taking place.

That miracle had its roots in a discussion two University of Oregon students had had three years earlier about how they could tell the school's 17,000-member student body about Christ.

"What about trusting God to work it out that

every student hears the gospel this year?" Dick Cole suggested to Joe Lang (not their real names). There were only 65 believers on campus at that time. They wanted to come up with an evangelistic approach that would be innovative, effective and scripturally sound.

Finally they designed a strategy. On a map, they portioned off the university into seven sections. During the next several days they walked around each section, asking God to do what he had promised Joshua: "I will give you every place where you set your foot." (Joshua 1:3)

After two months of trudging around campus, stopping to pray in each dormitory and academic department, Dick began to wonder whether he would ever see results from the daily strolls. "This is ludicrous," he complained. "If God does not answer prayer, this has sure been a waste of time." But the students continued their treks.

Two months later, their prayers were answered when Christian author Josh McDowell spoke on campus. (A few years later, the University of Oregon became the most fruitful ministry of The Navigators in the Pacific Northwest.)

Later that year, Dick transferred to Wheaton College, near Chicago. He resumed his campus walks—but for a different reason. The Wheaton students

**A**nthing large enough for a wish to light upon, is large enough to hang a prayer upon.

George Macdonald

already knew the gospel, but the number of graduates who were becoming missionaries had slacked off somewhat since 1950.

By the time Dick graduated, after several years of prayer walks and campus organizing, student interest in missions had increased dramatically, with one-fifth of the student body attending weekly mission meetings he had helped create.

By this time a firm believer in the power of the foot as a means of spreading the gospel, Dick decided to continue his walks when he was sent to the mission field of Beirut. Although a stroll around Beirut is not quite the same as a stroll around the University of Oregon, Dick decided to follow the call of God in his heart. He outlined four sections on a map of Muslim West Beirut and put his best foot forward.

After six months, Dick had to abandon the walks due to increased violence. Then in June 1982, the Israelis bombed West Beirut. Never had the city endured a more severe pummeling. When it was finally safe for him to venture out again, something along his prayer route seemed odd, but he couldn't figure out what it was. Then it hit him. The buildings just within the routes outlined for his walks remained standing. Buildings just outside those routes had been demolished.

"If this is what happened in the physical realm," Dick said afterward, "just imagine what must have happened in the spiritual realm."

*Adapted from Branches, a publication of REACH Ministries International.*

## Matters for Prayer

- ♦ **Beirut:** Pray for a peaceful resolution to the battle raging in Lebanon. Ask God for spiritual renewal among the believers there, and reconciliation between the warring groups.
- ♦ **Thailand:** Pray that God's people will seek long-term solutions for the problems leading to prostitution in Third-World countries.
- ♦ **Environment:** Thank God for Christians who are helping poor people in developing countries to replenish their land with vegetation and water.



JOHN McMILLIN / WORLD VISION

BY TOM SINE

*Nothing is more controversial than to be a follower of Jesus Christ. Nothing is more dangerous than to live out the will of God in today's world. It changes your whole monetary lifestyle. Am I suggesting that if you follow Jesus you won't be able to go out and buy a BMW? You got it!*

—Tony Campolo in *WORLD VISION* magazine. (“Will the Real Jesus Please Stand Up,” Oct.-Nov. 1988)

# WILL THE REAL CULTURAL CHRISTIANS

# PLEASE STAND UP

*Biblical  
Christianity  
does not mean  
living the  
American Dream  
with a little  
Jesus overlay.*

“**W**ill the real Tony Campolo please stand up,” wrote one angry reader about Tony’s article in *WORLD VISION* magazine last year. Readers questioned Tony’s lifestyle, disputed his politics and rejected his theology. One person wrote, “Would he be kind enough to send me a list of approved cars? I own a Honda, it’s fairly nice and I might be living in sin.”

World Vision has never received so many letters responding to a single article, and many of those letters were pretty hostile. As I read Tony’s article again, I kept asking, “Why were people so upset?”

Two things impressed me about their letters: one, the intensity of their feelings, and two, that they completely missed the central issue. That is, to what extent has our secular culture shaped Christian faith in the United States? I suspect that many readers reacted so strongly because they were

MCMLXXXIX

In GOD We Trust

NIELSEN

unwilling to deal with the cultural captivity of the American church.

So will the real cultural Christians please stand up? Until we recognize our captivity we cannot be free. To the extent that our secular culture's values captivate us, we are unavailable to advance God's kingdom. That's a serious problem.

We all seem to be trying to live the American Dream with a little Jesus overlay. We talk about the lordship of Jesus, but our career comes first. Our house in the 'burbs comes first. Upscaling our lives comes first. Then, with whatever we have left, we try to follow Jesus.

The problem is, once we try to do it all and have it all we don't have much time, energy or money left for anything else. And it's only going to get worse. Many of us who are older were able to buy homes and pursue our dreams on a single income. Today most families need two incomes to do the same thing. We

*Today we're taught that we can have anything we want as long as we aren't materialistic.*

have sold Christian young people the wrong dream, and they will have little left over to advance the gospel. The kingdom is in danger of losing a whole generation of workers.

Whatever commands our time, energy and resources, commands us. And most of us are living lives that aren't that different from our secular counterparts. One of the reasons we are so ineffective in evangelism is that we are so much like the people around us. What do we have to call them to? Oh, we hang around church buildings a little more. We abstain from a few things. And we aren't quite as hedonistic—though we sure keep trying.

So we aren't that different. We have reduced Christianity to a crutch to help us through the minefield of the upwardly mobile life. Our books, broadcasts and sermons encourage us to understand what God can do for us—help us get ahead in our jobs, color us beautiful and find us parking places when we go downtown.

Tony said in his article, "God created us in his image, but we have decided to return the favor and create a God who is in our image." This God



THE NEW YORK TIMES 19-19-2018

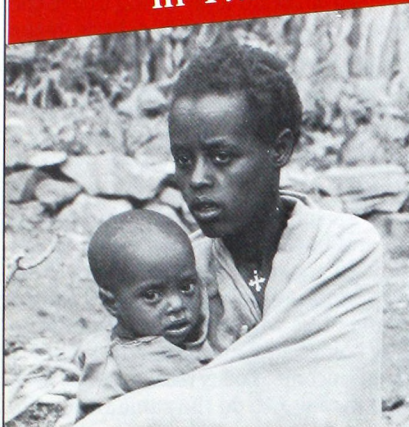


ROLEX  
19a to Family, Children,  
Duties of Honor

13 (16-19); D&C 6: 7  
(5-7).

ILLUSTRATION BY CLIFF NIELSEN

Your people need  
to know more about  
Ethiopia's famine  
than what they read  
in *Time*



Ethiopia's people are in crisis, and while *Time* and *Newsweek* often describe their plight, they don't tell your people what they can do to help them.

Sociologist, author and dynamic Christian speaker Tony Campolo visited Africa. And in World Vision's 16-minute color film, "Africa in Crisis," he candidly reveals the compelling truth about the situation.



To share with your people what many call Tony Campolo's greatest challenge, simply book a showing of "Africa in Crisis" right now. They will be filled with compassion — and moved to action.

### BOOK NOW AT NO CHARGE!

"Africa in Crisis: With Tony Campolo" is available to be shown to your congregation on a free-will offering basis.

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**1-800-444-2522**

Or return the coupon to **WORLD VISION**  
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Area Code \_\_\_\_\_ JA9FS1

satisfies our every longing and spares us every inconvenience.

Recently a young pastor named Tim Dearborn had to share a cab with four other people in Bangkok, Thailand. One of the passengers was a Marxist revolutionary on his way to India.

The Marxist quizzed Tim at length about his faith. Finally, he said, "How can you be a Christian? Don't you realize there's no way your cause can win?"

"What do you mean there's no way my cause can win?" Tim asked.

The Marxist explained: "I am on my way to India to organize fishermen to overthrow their oppressors. And I am quite willing to lay down my life for the revolution. Your American Christianity is preoccupied with what your God can do for you. And dying for self-interest is a contradiction in terms!"

He's right. And biblical Christianity is not a self-interested Christianity. When Jesus stood up in his hometown at the beginning of his ministry, he read from Isaiah: "The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor."

Later John sent his disciples to ask Jesus if he was really the Messiah. Jesus said, "Go back and report to John what you have seen and heard: The blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cured, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the good news is preached to the poor. Blessed is the man who does not fall away on account of me."

Clearly Jesus wasn't concerned with his own needs. He didn't even have a place to lay his head. Following God meant focusing on the needs of others, extending God's love to the poor, the disabled and the forgotten.

Following Jesus meant exactly the same thing for the first disciples. They were not preoccupied with their own needs but totally committed themselves to Jesus Christ and his mission—sight to the blind, release to captives and good news to the poor. To do that, they quit jobs, left homes and put Christ's mission at the center of their lives, trusting God to meet their needs. Read Matthew 6:24-33.

Biblical Christianity does not mean living the American Dream with a little Jesus overlay. It means committing our whole lives—not just our time, but our money—to God's purposes. Peter and Andrew walked away from their fishing business; Zacchaeus gave half

his money to the poor and four times to anyone he had cheated; and the rich young ruler was told to give all his wealth away.

First-century Christians understood that following Jesus was a whole-life commitment. They committed everything to Christ. Today we're taught we can have anything we want, including lavish homes and expensive cars, as long as we have a right attitude, as long as we aren't materialistic. Today we can be a spiritual leader in the church and never leave the church building. Seventy-five percent of the people I meet in churches have no time to minister to anyone else.

But God has entrusted us with only a certain amount of money, time and education. The more of those resources I spend on my own life and local church, the less is available to advance God's kingdom. And we live in a world where millions of Christians can't keep their kids fed and a world

*The more I spend  
on myself, the less is  
available to advance  
God's kingdom.*

where more and more people are unevangelized.

Thankfully that's starting to change. Many Christians are finding one evening a week to evangelize international students or work with abused kids. A doctor in Denver sold half of his practice. He used the 20 hours a week to start an inner-city health clinic. And he supports his family comfortably on half-time income.

I know many Christians who have changed their lifestyles so they can invest 20 to 30 percent of their income to advance the gospel around the world. A young couple in Seattle discovered a way to escape the mortgage trap. Instead of paying a half-million dollars for a \$100,000 house over 30 years, they built their own. Total cost: \$25,000. And they are investing the money they freed up in the work of God's kingdom.

So I invite the real cultural Christians to please stand up with me. Let's acknowledge that we have been co-opted by our culture. Then let's join that growing company of Christians who are choosing to seek first the advancement of God's kingdom. □

*Tom Sine is a consultant and free-lance writer living in Seattle, Wash.*

# OUT OF MALIBU, INTO AFRICA

**P**robably by accident, *My Vanished Africa* stands next to *Entrepreneur* on Brandon Williams' bookshelf. The two seem strange bedfellows, unless you know Brandon Williams.

*Entrepreneur* is natural enough. Brandon is a child of corporate culture. He plans to go into business just like his father.

*My Vanished Africa* is another story. In 1986, when Brandon was a sophomore at Pepperdine University in Malibu, Calif., he developed a fascination with Africa. He loved the movie "Out of Africa." His older brother had just returned from Africa with some amazing stories. Then Brandon saw another movie—he doesn't even remember the name of it—that showed the needs of Africans. He was determined to go.

He called Sam Jackson at World Vision. "I told him that I wanted to see what was there. I wanted to be touched. I don't think many Americans really understand the issues of the Third World. I wanted to understand what was going on."

Jackson doesn't receive many calls like that from college sophomores. Frankly, he didn't know if it would be worth it. "It's a big job to work out a trip like that. Then I met him. The kid blew me away. He was so serious about the trip and so determined."

The trip didn't disappoint Brandon. Of all the things he saw in Africa, it's easy for him to identify the turning point. The place was Louga, a parched piece of Senegal desert dotted with tiny villages. The person was Loc Le-Chau.

"I've shaken the hand of a U.S. president, but Loc Le-Chau is the most amazing man I've ever met," Brandon says. The director of World Vision's work in Louga held top positions in the Vietnamese government before fleeing in 1975, and advised a U.S. vice president as well.

But that's not what impressed Brandon. It was Loc's respect for the people he was trying to help. It was his rapport with village folk and bureaucrats alike. It was the number of babies in Louga named Loc.

"He's a professional, doing God's work professionally," Brandon says. "He's got all these charts and diagrams, like he's planning a major offensive—which he is. He doesn't just talk about how terrible things are. He talks about solutions and hope."

Brandon watched Loc talk to a village chief

about digging a well. Unless the village took responsibility to maintain the well, drilling would be pointless. "When you die," Loc said, "you can look down on your village and see strong children, happy children, a clean and green village."

"Yes," the chief said, "that is what I want."

"Before I went," Brandon says, "I thought I had a lot to offer the people of Africa. I thought in terms of answers and miracles. I had a lot to learn about pragmatism and reality."

And about how *not* to give. Brandon joined a neighborhood soccer game one afternoon in Louga. In a gesture of friendship, he left them the soccer ball. "How ignorant," he says now.

"It's like giving away \$50 bills in the U.S. We had to fight our way out of the mob we created.

"You realize that people are the same everywhere. Everyone will stretch out a hand for a freebie." Later, Brandon gave some soccer balls in exchange for planting trees.

Before the trip, Brandon already cared about the problems facing the people of Africa. Afterwards he wanted to do more than care. Because of his family's connections, Brandon knew some wealthy people. He decided to ask them to invest in Loc's work in Senegal.

That wasn't as easy as it sounds. These were people Brandon would turn to in the future for recommendations or even employment. "You don't want them thinking, 'Here comes Brandon, he's going to ask for money again,' every time you call." Besides, Brandon had never been very good at receiving. "I hate asking for things. It's easier to give, to feel generous.

"But I underestimated them. They not only agreed to see me, they agreed to give. And they did so willingly, even joyfully." Brandon raised \$135,000 for projects in Senegal and Mali.

"Sometimes I think of what Christ said: 'Blessed are they who have not seen, and yet believe.' The people who gave just because of what they heard—that's a great leap of faith. That's more admirable than anything I've done." □

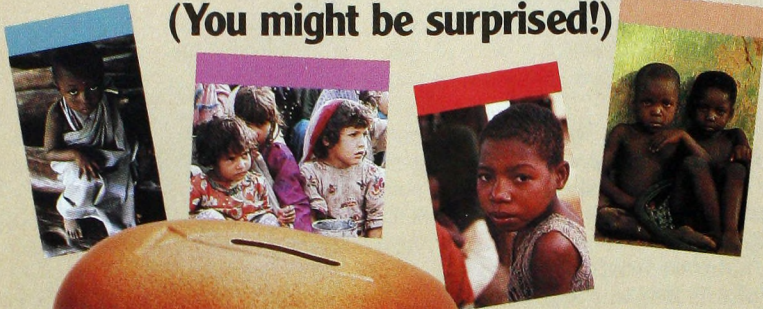
Ginger Hope

**I wanted to see what was there. I wanted to be touched.**



# What Can These Little Loaves Do for Your Church and Its Members?

(You might be surprised!)



Last year, with the help of more than 2,000 churches like yours, these little loaves provided more than \$500,000 to help feed hungry children and their families.

But the most amazing thing about them is what they can do for your church and its members!

By participating in World Vision's Love Loaf program, your members will have an opportunity to discover the joy that comes from sharing with others.

Their children will learn the meaning of compassion — and the importance of turning feelings into positive action. And families will be brought closer

together by sharing a common Christian goal.

Your church will benefit from such a program, too, as members join together in a meaningful church-wide activity. And pastors tell us there is no better way to dramatize the principles of stewardship.

Love Loaves can also help you raise funds for your own church projects. And they're available at no cost to you.

To order your Love Loaves, or for more information, just send in the coupon below today.

## To Order a Love Loaf Program for Your Church (OR FOR MORE INFORMATION COMPLETE AND MAIL TODAY)

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Position \_\_\_\_\_

Church \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_  
area code

Please send us \_\_\_\_\_ loaves (one per household).

We plan to distribute them on (date) \_\_\_\_\_

(Please allow 6-8 weeks for delivery.)

Also, please send us an inspirational  film,  VHS to use with this program.

Please send me a sample Love Loaf and additional information.  Please call me.



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