Henri Nouwen: **Finding Peace in Brokenness**

**SOUTH AFRICA:**
**The High Cost of Reconciliation**

A Personal Account:
**From Hate to Love in Soweto**

Joni:
**How the Church Shuns the Handicapped**

More Than Surgery:
**Mending Smiles**
Adam’s Peace
Author Henri Nouwen had no idea that through tending to the intimate daily needs of a severely disabled young man, he would discover a profound new dimension of peacemaking.

Mending Smiles
Cleft lips and palates—rarely if ever seen in this country—are not uncommon in the Philippines and other developing countries. But there are fewer of them now than a few years ago, thanks to plastic surgeons and other health care experts who donate time and talent to sculpt happy grins.

Two on South Africa
THE HIGH COST OF LIVING IT: Reconciliation means more than just holding hands and singing songs of unity. Author Gary Haugen hopes South Africans will pay reconciliation’s hefty price before civil war exacts a devastating toll.

YOUNG AND BLACK IN SOWETO: Caesar Molebatsi talks about his bitter past and his current ministry among angry, radicalized Soweto youth.

Disabling Attitudes in the Church
Joni Eareckson Tada, author and advocate for the disabled, offers a series of short vignettes that illuminate some attitudes many of us harbor, knowingly or not, toward the disabled.
RESTORATION—MORE THAN A WITHERED HAND

When the Vietnam War Memorial was dedicated in 1982, it brought a wave of emotional memories to many Americans. And in the years since, visitors in endless lines have lovingly run their hands over the names of loved ones etched in that long black marble monument.

It was five years before I could bring myself to visit the Wall. I had served in Vietnam 20 years before, and I still had an aching place in my heart for the dead and missing men who had been my close friends. So you can imagine the emotions that ran rampant in me as I returned to that tragic land a few weeks ago.

Last issue I wrote about those emotions, and briefly mentioned the reconciliation process we are initiating with the Vietnamese. From senators like John McCain, a former POW, and Mark Hatfield, there have been encouraging words for what we are doing. And Christian aid agencies are working alongside us to formulate plans to meet the needs of the Vietnamese people.

The government of Vietnam has asked World Vision and other agencies to provide materials and equipment for artificial limbs for the 60,000 people disabled by the war.

As I traveled I read again the story of Jesus restoring the withered hand of a man in the synagogue. He told the man to stretch out his hand, "and it was restored to normal, like the other." (It was on the Sabbath, and it made the Pharisees furious.) In his compassion he illustrated the true meaning of restoration—making something new from something old, recreating the original.

The greatest example of restoration began at Calvary. The sacrifice of Jesus Christ on the cross not only reconciled us as sinners to a holy God, but started the process of restoration, of making all things new. The ultimate restoration will be completed within the power and the glory of the kingdom of our coming Lord.

Heavenly thoughts such as these, however, often give way to earthly realities. Restoration is not an easy process. On a human level we have major hurdles to overcome. For many Americans the war in Vietnam goes on. At the Wall, men in old military fatigues weep unashamedly for something they cannot articulate. I feel it with my friends who are listed with crosses next to their names, signifying that they are still missing in action, symbols of a war without closure.

In Vietnam I watched the faces of young Amerasians as they looked at me and wondered about their American fathers. I heard the anger of a former South Vietnam officer who spent eight years in a “re-education” camp. He was systematically starved, worked, and humiliated to the point of death. And in North Vietnam I felt the despair of those who had won the war but lost the peace.

Now I believe we must continue reconciliation through ongoing acts of restoration. Most of us will need to transcend a considerable amount of pain. Yet it must be done.

Christ didn’t worry about whom he offended when he restored the withered hand. He didn’t wait for a “better time.” Restoration carries its own sense of urgency. It takes place at the first opportunity. As Christians we need to take the lead in reconciliation and restoration. For restoration brings dignity and normality to that which was old. And it allows God to do a new work in each of us.

A man with a withered hand was used by Jesus to illustrate his desire to restore the old and make something new. In this issue, noted author Henri Nouwen tells a touching story about Adam, a severely handicapped man whose life has brought much spiritual restoration to his friends. It is to Adam, who reminds us of our need to be reconciled to the Maker, and the handicapped in Vietnam and elsewhere, who remind us that continual acts of restoration bring credibility to reconciliation, that this issue is dedicated.
In the middle of this decade I moved from Harvard to Daybreak—from an institution for very bright people to a community for mentally handicapped ones. Daybreak, situated near Toronto, is part of an international federation of communities called l’Arche—the Ark—where mentally handicapped men and women and their assistants try to live.
When asked to return to Harvard to speak about peace, I suddenly realized that speaking about peace from this tiny family is not like speaking about peace as a professor. I need a new perspective and a new sensibility, a new language. It is not easy. It is even quite painful. I feel so vulnerable and so naked. But I will tell you the story of Adam, one of the ten people in our home, and let him become the silent witness for the peace that is not of this world.

Adam is the weakest person in our family. He is a 25-year-old man who cannot speak, cannot dress or undress himself, cannot walk alone, cannot eat without much help. He does not cry or laugh. Only occasionally does he make eye contact. His back is distorted. His arm and leg movements are twisted. He suffers from severe epilepsy and, despite heavy medication, sees few days without grand-mal seizures. Sometimes, as he grows suddenly rigid, he utters a howling groan.

Adam’s peace is first of all a peace rooted in being. Being is more important than doing. How simple a truth, but how hard to live.

The gift of peace hidden in Adam’s utter weakness is a gift not of this world, but certainly for this world. For this gift to become known, someone has to lift it up and pass it on. That may be the deepest meaning of being an assistant to handicapped people: helping them to share their gifts.

Adam can do nothing. He is completely dependent on others. His gift is purely being with us. Every evening when I run home to take care of Adam—to help him with his supper and put him to bed—I realize that the best thing I can do for him is to be with him. And indeed, that is the great joy: paying total attention to his breathing, his eating, his careful steps; noticing how he tries to lift a spoon to his mouth or offers his left arm a little to make it easier for me to take off his shirt.

Most of my life has been built around the idea that my value depends on what I do. I made it through school. I earned my degrees and awards and I made my career. Yes, with many others, I fought my way up to a little success, a little popularity and a little power. But as I sit beside the slow and heavy-breathing Adam, I start to see how violent that journey was. So marked by rivalry and competition, so pervaded with compulsion and obsession, so spotted with moments of suspicion,
jealousy, resentment and revenge.

Oh sure, most of what I did was called ministry, the ministry of justice and peace, the ministry of forgiveness and reconciliation, the ministry of healing and wholeness. But when those who want peace are as interested in success, popularity and power as those who want war, what then is the real difference between war and peace? When the peace is as much of this world as the war is, the choice is between a war which we euphemistically call pacification and a peace in which the peace-makers violate each other’s deepest values.

Adam says to me: Peace is first of all the art of living. I know he is right because, after four months of being a little with Adam, I am discovering in myself the beginning of an inner at-homeness that I didn’t know before.

When I cover him with his sheets and blankets, turn out the lights and pray with Adam, he is always very quiet. It’s as if he knows my praying voice from my speaking voice. I whisper in his ear: “May all the angels protect you,” and often he looks up to me from his pillow and seems to know what I am saying.

Ever since I’ve been praying with Adam I’ve known better than before that praying is being with Jesus, simply “wasting time” with him. Adam keeps teaching me that.

Adam’s peace is not only a peace rooted in being, but also a peace rooted in the heart. Somehow through the centuries we have come to believe that what makes us human is our mind. Many people define a human being as a rational animal. But Adam keeps telling me over and over again that what makes us human is not our mind but our heart, not our ability to think but our ability to love. Whoever speaks about Adam as a vegetable or an animal-like creature misses the sacred mystery that Adam is fully capable of receiving and giving love. He is not half human, not nearly human, but fully, completely human because he is all heart and it is the heart that is made in the likeness of God.

Let me quickly add that by “heart” I do not mean the seat of human emotions, in contrast to the mind as the seat of human thought. No, by “heart” I mean the center of our being, where God has hidden the divine gifts of trust, hope and love. Whereas the mind tries to understand, grasp problems, discern different aspects of reality and probe mysteries, the heart allows us to become sons and daughters of God and brothers and sisters of each other. Long before the mind is able to exercise its power, the heart is already able to develop a trusting human relationship.

When I say that I believe deeply that Adam can give and receive love and that there is a true mutuality between us, I make no naive psychological statement overlooking his severe handicaps; I speak of a love between us that transcends all thoughts and feelings, precisely because it is rooted in God’s first love, a love that precedes all human loves. The mystery of Adam is that in his deep mental and emotional brokenness he has become so empty of all human pride that he has become the preferable mediator of that first love. Maybe this will help you see why Adam is giving me a whole new understanding of God’s love for the poor and the oppressed.

The peace that flows from Adam’s broken heart is not of this world. It is not the result of political analysis, roundtable debates, discernment of the signs of the times or well advised strategies. All these activities of the mind have their role in peacemaking. But they are all easily perverted to a new way of warmaking if they are not in the service of the divine peace that flows from the broken heart of those who are called the poor in spirit. Adam’s peace, while rooted more in being than in doing, and more in the heart than in the mind, is a peace that calls forth community. At l’Arche the people hold us together as a family; in fact, the most handicapped people are the true center of gravity. Adam in his total vulnerability calls us together as a family.

The weakest members are not the handicapped residents but the assistants. Our commitments are ambiguous at best. Some stay longer than others, but most move on after one or two years. Closer to the center are Raymond, Bill, John and Trevor, each of whom is relatively independent, but still in need of much help and attention.
They are permanent family members; they are with us for life; they keep us honest. Because of them, conflicts never last very long, tensions are talked out, disagreements are resolved. But in the heart of our community are Rose and Adam, both deeply handicapped, and the weaker of the two is Adam. Adam, the most broken of us all, is without any doubt the strongest bond among us.

Because of Adam there is always someone home. Because of Adam there is a quiet rhythm in the house. Because of Adam there are words of affection, gentleness and tenderness. Because of Adam there is always space for mutual forgiveness and healing. Adam, the weakest among us, is our true peacemaker. How mysterious are God's ways!

Most of my adult life I have tried to show the world that I could do it on my own, that I needed others only to get me back on my lonely road as a strong, independent, creative man. And most of my fellow intellectuals joined me in that desire. But all of us highly trained individuals today are facing a world on the brink of total destruction. Now we wonder how we might join forces to make peace!

What kind of peace can this possibly be? Who can paint a group portrait of people who all want the center seat? When all want the honor of being the final peacemaker, there will be no peace.

Adam needs many people, none of whom can boast of any success. Adam will never be better. Medically, he will only grow worse. Each person who works with him does only a little bit. My part in his life is very small. Some cook for him, some do his laundry, some give him massages, some let him listen to music or take him for a walk or a swim or a ride. Others look after his blood pressure, regulate his medicine, look after his teeth. Even with all this assistance Adam often slips into total exhaustion. Yet a community of peace has emerged around him, a peace community not just for Adam, but for all who belong to Adam’s race. It’s a community that proclaims that God has chosen to reveal his glory in complete weakness and vulnerability.

I’ve told you about Adam and about his peace. But you’re not part of l’Arche, you don’t live at Daybreak, you’re not a member of Adam’s family. Like me, however, you search for peace in your heart, in your family and in your world.

I’ve told you about Adam and his peace to offer you a quiet guide with a gentle heart, a little light for walking through this dark world. In Adam’s name, therefore, I say to you: Do not give up work-
When I first saw Fremmalyn in California, I was repulsed. Her face is shocking—split up the middle since birth, from her upper lip through her nose and into the bridge between her eyes. Fremmalyn, too young to realize her handicap, is 2 years old.

I saw her again a few weeks later in Virginia Beach, Va., at a potluck dinner in the home of Father Leo Manalo. Thirty or 40 people, mostly Filipinos, were packed into his modest home, filling his kitchen and family room with laughter and music and the smell of good food. And there was Fremmalyn, dodging legs and racing around the coffee table.

I talked with her mother for a while, using gestures and simple phrases, since we had a language barrier. Fremmalyn came and sat in her lap. The more I watched her, the less I noticed her deformity, and the more I became taken by her smile and her joyful spirit. She was playful, a ham in front of the camera. When my shutter clicked and the flash lit the room, she would look my way and clap or smile. Yes, definitely a smile, a window to her effervescent spirit which became more evident by the minute. By the end of the evening I had nearly forgotten about her affliction—and was homesick for my own daughter.

Fremmalyn is one of the few patients brought to the United States from her home in the Philippines for extensive surgical work by Norfolk-based Operation Smile. This small but rapidly growing group of plastic surgeons and other health care experts volunteer.
The seed for Operation Smile was planted 35,000 feet over the Pacific Ocean in 1981. Bill, a plastic surgeon, and Kathy, a nurse and clinical social worker, were flying home from a whirlwind surgical visit to Naga, the Philippines, where they had worked with a team of plastic surgeons from Houston. As a result of their efforts, more than one hundred children would live dramatically improved lives, no longer sheltered by embarrassed families or shunned by playmates. But, wonderful as the work was, the Houston doctors had no plans for returning to Naga.

"We saw about 250 children turned away," says Bill, relaxing at home over a 9 p.m. dinner after a long day in surgery. "Before we left, the hospital administrator said to us, 'Someday, even if it's five or ten years from now, please come back, because these kids will still be here needing surgeries.'"

One year later, they did go back, bringing a team of 20 doctors and other health care experts, and treating 150 cases. Again, another 250 kids were turned away. They knew they had to expand their efforts. They were also beginning to realize that expanding their efforts would mean more than just additional plastic surgeons in the operating room.

For unknown reasons, the incidence of cleft lip and palate is three times higher in the Philippines than the United States. With no government health program to cover the costs of treating such cases, thousands of children are condemned to live with their condition for a lifetime. On their next trip, the Magees added a geneticist.

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Their time and talent to treat disfigured patients. Most would likely remain disfigured for life without their help. After patients like Fremmalyn receive treatment here—several surgeries over many months—they return home.

The handful of patients brought to the States are the exceptions. Nearly all of the 2260 cleft lip and palate cases Operation Smile physicians have treated over the last six years have been scalped and sutured on their home turf.

This has occurred primarily in the Philippines, although last year teams set up shop in Liberia and Kenya, and this June began work in Colombia. If founders Bill and Kathy Magee had their way, their teams would soon be in every country of the world.

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"Then we wondered, 'How can we repair their palates if we don’t teach them how to speak again?' So we brought along speech pathologists. And really, in order to be safe and address other needs that we see, we ought to have a dentist along. And so the teams just started to grow."

By February this year, the team that went to the Philippines had grown to 128, only 20 of whom were plastic surgeons. In six days they treated 550

Some were told to return next year. For others, there was simply no hope at all.
cases, screened more than a thousand, started an immunization program, made obturators (plastic mouth plates)—temporary help for cleft palate cases—and extracted 400 teeth.

Still, hundreds had to be turned away. Some were told to return next year. For others, there was simply no hope.

Delivering that news had been the job of DeLois Greenwood, former public affairs coordinator for Operation Smile. She told me about it as we wound our way through Virginia Beach on our way to the potluck.

“When I had to tell people they couldn't be helped...” Tears filled her eyes. “This happens every time I talk about this,” she said, wiping her eyes. “Father Manalo helped me out. Even though it was terrible news for these people, he had a way of telling them that helped ease the pain.”

Father Manalo serves as something of a spiritual advisor and figurehead for the sizable group of Filipinos in the Norfolk/Virginia Beach area who, in the last several years, have rallied to support Operation Smile. In addition to raising thousands of dollars, many of them have opened their homes to state-side patients—like Fremmalyn and her mother—providing just-like-home food, language and culture to help ease the transition from the rural Philippines to the urban United States.

But support for Operation Smile at home goes well beyond the Filipino community.

Several schools in the greater Norfolk/Tidewater area are using Operation Smile videotapes for subjects ranging from dental health and oral hygiene to geography and African culture. And five area superintendents have promised that if Operation Smile can drum up a curriculum guide, every student in their districts will learn about the organization.

Beyond the schools, local city governments—and the state of Virginia, itself—have officially recognized the efforts of Operation Smile. For two years running, the second week in January has been proclaimed “Smile Week” by Governor Gerald Baliles. It’s a week in which volunteer efforts in general are bathed in praise. But it was Operation Smile team members who got the ball rolling.

Putting whole smiles back on faces ravaged by cleft lips and palates—or even by tumors or burns—is the obvious goal of Operation Smile. But another not-so-hidden agenda is part of every trip.

Attorney Jeff Breit, who chairs the board of Operation Smile, met Bill Magee in 1980 and they have been fast friends ever since.

Fremmalyn had no problem trusting even the white “foreigners” at Father Manalo’s potluck as she darted from her mother’s arms to Kathy Magee’s lap for a hug and a smile.

“We give our time and our talent,” Bill says, “and they give us their smiles, their appreciation, a trinket, a basket of bananas. That’s all they have.

“When you start to tell somebody about it, tears well up in your eyes because someone gave you a basket of bananas. I can’t explain that but it happens. Why don’t tears well up in my eyes when someone gives me a couple thousand dollars for an operation?”

Fremmalyn, and hundreds of children like her in the Philippines, Liberia, Kenya and Colombia, will have a chance to live normal lives because of the sacrificial giving of Bill and Kathy and DeLois and Jeff and others.

“It doesn’t feel like a sacrifice,” says Kathy. “We give because we want to. It’s a ‘win’ for everyone.”

Write to Operation Smile at 400 W. Brambleton Ave., Group W, Norfolk, VA 23510 for further information.

Kathy and Bill Magee
It is not enough to come to some theoretical sense of reconciliation. Tangible barriers and measurable distances must be crossed.

Talk may be cheap, but some words are actually very expensive. "Reconciliation" is one of those pleasant and useful words which always seemed to express so nicely what the Bible taught about healing broken relationships. But in the South African township of Mamelodi, where the sound of houses being bombed in the night shattered my sleep, I began to learn how costly the word reconciliation can be.

What brought me to Mamelodi, located outside Pretoria, was a meeting with Christian theologians, educators and pastors dedicated to leading the South African church as a force for reconciliation.

At our first meeting, held in the plush comfort of a university campus in Pretoria, we received a stiff challenge from one of our committee members: "How can we help Christians address the national crisis when we meet together in the isolation and comfort of the white world? We will never be relevant to the crisis in South Africa as long as we remain insulated from township realities."

So our next meetings were held in Mamelodi, with accommodations in the matchbox homes of local residents. In the dark stillness of the first night, we were suddenly shaken by the piercing thunder of grenades. Two neighboring homes had been bombed by right-wing vigilantes—an act of senseless, brutal terror. At one home, we picked through the rubble and whispered prayers of comfort with the grief-stricken mother who had seen her two young sons devastated in the blast.

Later we returned to our meetings; but in the violent streets of Mamelodi and in the eyes of that
weeping mother, our committee began to see how painful and costly the word reconciliation can be.

The first costly demand of reconciliation is that white Christians begin to identify with the suffering of their black neighbors. The wounds of South Africa are so profound that whites and blacks cannot even begin to talk to each other until they have begun to weep together.Repeatedly I saw misunderstanding and disunity begin to crumble when whites made the unsettling journey into the black world. Whites and blacks began to talk about the same things when they began to share the same reality. The distrust of blacks melted away as whites proved their love by enduring the risks of township life. Ignorance and apathy vanished when whites were awakened by the same bombs as blacks. Responsible concern replaced irrational fears when whites exchanged propaganda and myth for firsthand experiences.

Secondly, Christians have rediscovered the old biblical principle that there can be no reconciliation without repentance. In the same way that we can only be reconciled to God if we take seriously the sins which have alienated us from God, Christians in South Africa cannot find peace until they are honest about the sins which have separated them. I found that nothing meaningful was ever accomplished in the attempt to reconcile blacks and whites without sincere repentance. On the other hand, there seemed to be no limit to the mountains of bitterness and suspicion which could be overcome by sincere expressions of contrition.

Moreover, while reconciliation often requires repentance from both parties, it is important to note that there are times when the source of enmity has mainly come clearly from one side. Under these circumstances reconciliation is not achieved by mediating differences, but by confronting the party at fault. In a marriage divided by a husband’s abuse of his wife, reconciliation is possible only when the husband takes responsibility for his actions. The wife may forgive him, but the relationship will not be restored until he has repented.

For the most part this is also the case in South Africa. The divisions and enmities which exist between blacks and whites in South Africa are primarily the result of the sins of the ruling white minority. This has been a painful but necessary realization for white South Africans.

The third costly demand of reconciliation is the principle that there can be no reconciliation from a distance. White and black Christians in South Africa cannot love and serve one another as long as they remain imprisoned in their respective ghettos. There must be an intimate sharing of experiences and burdens in order for enemies to become friends. Certainly this is the reconciliation which Jesus demonstrated. In order to be reconciled with us, he left the comfort, joy and immortality of heaven to experience our pain, sadness and death.

Christ demonstrated that it is not enough to come to some theoretical sense of reconciliation. Tangible barriers and measurable distances must be crossed.

Fourthly, reconciliation requires restitution. There must be an effort to repair the damage. In South Africa, white Christians are beginning to realize that it is not enough to simply acknowledge the decades of sin they have committed against their black brothers and sisters; they must go one step further and actually begin to repair the damage. This means restoring the basic rights and privileges that they have denied to others. It means restoring dignity and respect to economic, social and political relationships. It means restoring the fellowship of Christian unity to churches divided by race.

All of this brings us to the conclusion that reconciliation is costly. This is a surprising and painful discovery for many Christians. At first, reconciliation sounded like a pleasant experience—holding hands and singing songs of unity. But they are now beginning to discover its demands.

Do We Really See?

John Allwood, director of World Vision of Southern Africa, tells a story about an office employee whose performance was faltering. The worker frequently arrived at the office late and tired, and continually made mistakes while working.

One morning John felt he couldn’t put it off any longer. He had to tell her that if her performance did not improve, she would have to be dismissed.

He began with a friendly query about her morning trip to the office.

Her reply was heavy with emotion. “I can’t concentrate today, because the smell of a burning body is still in my nostrils.”

Every morning she had to walk through the troubled streets of Soweto before catching a train for the two-hour ride to the office. That morning she had been forced to walk past the burning body of a man who had been lynched the night before.

As John listened to the employee’s terrible experience, he thought about his own tranquil morning, with a shower, a glass of orange juice and a five-minute drive to the office.

Reconciliation is a humbling process. Before it can happen, people’s experiences need to be fully understood—their pain, anger, fear, guilt, grief and loss.

Do we really see the other person? Do we listen attentively enough to uncover our own assumptions and prejudices, so that we can move on to be reconciled?

Dianne Steinkraus is World Vision’s project manager for creative services.
In the pursuit of peace, white Christians will sit through hours of bruising confrontation as their black brothers and sisters begin to pull back the veil on the hideous crimes of apartheid. Black Christians will place their credibility and safety on the line when they are seen meeting with whites. White ministers and lay leaders will find themselves called traitors and communists if they speak up against injustice. White Christians will face the frightening reality that social justice will mean an end to their comfortable monopoly on power and privilege. And, as we discovered in Mamelodi, the process of reconciliation may mean putting their lives at risk in the midst of South Africa's burning townships.

Fear will always whisper that the price of reconciliation is just too high. But will the Christian church in South Africa find the courage and strength to pay the high price of reconciliation now, or the higher price of civil war later?

As South African Christians face the crucible of justice and reconciliation, they rely on every believer around the world to uphold them in passionate prayer.

Gary Haugen is an author and former missionary to South Africa, where he worked with the National Initiative for Reconciliation.

The wounds of South Africa are so profound that whites and blacks cannot even begin to talk together until they have begun to weep together.
pronged emphasis of African nationalism: economic self-reliance, political liberation and cultural emancipation. So from the beginning I felt compelled to fight not for equality, but for my right to be what God intended me to be. As my father sometimes said, "Don't get stuck on equality. Maybe God intended you to be greater."

I developed a strong anti-white feeling when I was young, because I was beaten by whites for having addressed them in a manner "unfitting for people in their station."

But even more crushing was a car accident in which I lost a leg, back in 1964. My case was casually dismissed out of court: "You blacks are all the same—you want more money from whites." That made me tremendously bitter, not only against the white people but against God himself. I felt God had forgotten us.

**If you do what the enemy does then you too are the enemy.**

**What changed your mind about God? What was the turning point?**

Through a personal struggle that lasted about two years, I came to a deeper understanding of who God is. I really believe that when people ask difficult questions about God, even when they ask out of deeply disturbing circumstances, they will get much nearer to God.

I read the Bible for 18 months non-stop before I became a Christian or even wanted to be identified with the Bible.

At the same time I was reading black history, coming to understand my own identity as a black person and as an African. And it was difficult for me to reconcile that with what I read in the Bible about justice. I couldn't understand how white people could be saved and still be racist and unjust. Either white people aren't really saved, I thought, or salvation is meaningless.

There were also some heavy teachings in the Bible that I was not ready to accept, like how you are to treat your enemies. I said, "That is not possible. You can't ask anyone to do that." But I came to understand that if you do what the enemy does, then you too are the enemy.

During this deep spiritual pilgrimage several Youth Alive counselors spent time with me day after day. This was one of the greatest things that happened to me. Each young person needs individual attention, just as I received. This can involve Bible study. It can mean simply listening—allowing or helping young people to articulate what they have been through.

**Many consider the youth of South Africa to be increasingly "militant" and "radicalized." Do you find this to be true?**

Yes. There are those who are already irrational in their radicalism, who are sick and tired of talking about liberation. They just want to get it over and done with. Then there are those who are very active in the trade union movement. They feel that some of the senior leadership within the black community is derailing, or at least slowing, the train of liberation. Of course, the cost of this radicalization is more severe government reaction.

Every kid who goes into prison for detention comes out angry. A very few come out totally broken, because of beatings and solitary confinement. I'm not talking about these. I'm talking about the ones who, while they were in prison, had time to think about the way the government treats blacks. Those kids tend to be much more radical afterwards.

**How old are these kids?**

We're talking about teenagers, and also young adults. Consider that these young adults would ordinarily be starting jobs, and would therefore be much more hesitant to join radical causes that might disrupt their economic life. This was the case in the late 1970s, even after the riots; today we're finding this age group as radical as the younger ones. It is frightening.

**Without a Trace**

I find Americans are naive when it comes to statistics about South Africa. Let me give you an example.

The American people read that 1000 black men were arrested last year. In America it means every one of those men got their one phone call. We don't have that in South Africa. If I am arrested for a traffic offense, go to court and am charged, I must have enough money to pay on the spot. Otherwise I will be sent to serve a three-month sentence.

On a short sentence like that I will be sold to a farmer. My wife could look all over the country without a clue as to where I am. She will go to every mortuary, every police station in Soweto, in Johannesburg, until she gets to the actual police station or court where I was tried. By that time if I am already sold, there is nothing she can do to buy me back. The farmer will take me anywhere he pleases.

If I am taken away for three months I will lose my job. My wife will probably spend two weeks looking for me, and thus lose her job. By this time the kids are looking, and the whole family has gone to pieces. This almost happened to me once. Now every time I am a little late my wife panics, because it has happened—people have just disappeared.

These things are inconceivable in the mind of an American. What you won't find in the "Race Relations Report" is the actual toll on humans that statistics represent.

Caesar Molebatsi,
reprinted with permission from Cornerstone

14 WORLD Vision / August-September 1988
What's pushing them toward radicalism?

When you go through a tragedy, one of two things happens. You either become a stronger person or you lose all self-respect. You do find those who are brutalized to the point of despair, but you find an incredible number who become radical because of what they have seen—what the police have done in the name of the government.

This has affected kids and their parents. When it affects people (like ministers) who would not normally be involved, you really see the seriousness of the situation.

Do you think the increasing radicalization helps or hinders liberation?

It can go either way. The more radical people become, the more those people who were previously apolitical and uninvolved become aware of the problems. In this sense radicalization has a positive effect.

Where it has had a negative effect is where the struggle has become self-defeating, where ideological differences have cost people's lives.

In 1976 ours was a simple, united struggle against a clearly defined enemy. But eventually you look beyond the common enemy and begin to develop your own vision and plans for the new South Africa. You have to be big enough, magnanimous enough to allow for differences.

People sometimes say that until we arrive at a unified vision for South Africa, perhaps we should not push so hard for liberation. However, I don't despair. And I know that the government plays up these differences.

Where do you see the American church in all this?

What has concerned me during this trip to America is the insular attitude I have seen. We are not placing enough emphasis on being world citizens. We have one world and we must recognize that the church of Christ is in every nook and cranny of it. What our own local assembly does affects the rest of the world. I find that people aren't too concerned about that.

As a result, if I may venture to say so, this affects your foreign policy. You don't put enough pressure on your public figures about the moral things they should be doing.

When you become so insular, you begin to consume yourself. But to the extent that you are involved with the rest of the world, when you begin to solve crises and look at causes, you break out beyond your own shores.

I'm talking about ordinary people in our congregations, students in our theological seminaries and universities. We've got to become a world community.
WORKABLE SOLUTION

Bible study groups are dangerous. You sit around and talk about stuff, like all the joblessness in your town. And how much the Bible says about helping people who are in trouble. Pretty soon somebody wants to do more than talk.

It happened in Atlanta not long ago. Five or six people from a Bible study group just wouldn't let the issue rest. Now they've got over a hundred churches and just about 200 volunteers involved in this job bank thing. Over 800 people who would have been jobless have found meaningful employment.

See what I mean? Dangerous.
Christian Employment Cooperative, 465 Boulevard S.E., Atlanta, GA 30312.

SHOWERS AND RAINBOWS

To name a desert ranch "Rainbow Acres" does stretch it a bit. Unless, of course, there's a chance of Showers.

Fourteen years ago, Dr. Ralph Showers left the pastorate to pour himself into ten dusty Arizona acres. What sprang up was Rainbow Acres, a ranch community where 100 mentally handicapped adults live productive, enjoyable lives free from the stigma of government welfare and housebound parental care.

A pot of gold may be on its way, too. Last September Rainbow Acres broke ground for a project to include a theme park and an international resource center for the mentally handicapped. The project is designed to make the ranch financially self-sufficient.

HOLLYWOOD

YOUNG AND RESTLESS

Whatever it is that draws the young and the restless, Hollywood's got it. Or at least a reputation for it. The streets of Hollywood are home, at any given time, to between 1500 and 4500 teen-age runaways.

Enter Centrum, a ministry of Youth With A Mission, on location in Hollywood. Centrum offers food, shelter, ongoing Christian nurture and counsel and a 24-hour hotline. A chance to rewrite the script, or at least alter the ending.

Centrum, staffed by volunteers and supported by donations, celebrated its tenth year in 1987. Youth With A Mission, P.O. Box 1110, Hollywood, CA 90078; (213) 463-5576.

If our global village had 100 families, 70 would have no drinking water at home, and 65 of them could not read. Seven families would own 60 percent of the land and consume 80 percent of all available energy. And just one family would have a university education.

Rev. Dr. Raimundo Pannikkar, Global Conference of Spiritual and Parliamentary Leaders on Human Survival, April 1988.
Here's a novel approach to college scholarship aid: Corporations donate goods and services to colleges. In exchange, the colleges award tuition credits to needy students.

Five Christian business leaders founded the Glen Ellyn, Ill.-based Education Assistance, Ltd. (From Collegiate Trends)

Small, private foundations are on the endangered species list.

Why? Private foundation regulations. Many donors have been obstructed by the “ifs,” “ands” and “butts.”

Today, private foundation regulations can actually hinder or prevent donors from setting up their own foundations. And experts say the laws make even the continued existence of small, private foundations infeasible.

But in spite of the regulations, some of us are determined to do “venture philanthropy.” John D. Rockefeller III used this term to describe the imaginative pursuit of less conventional ways of giving.

World Vision offers one such way—the Donor Advised Fund. Your fund can enable you to determine, to the fullest extent possible, the use of your charitable dollars.

So if you already have a foundation, or if you are thinking about setting one up, please give me a call and we will discuss a simple but effective alternative—the World Vision Donor Advised Fund.

For more information call Daniel Rice at (800) 426-5753 or, in California, (800) 451-8024.
got up at 5:50 a.m. to hike up Georgia’s famous (?) Stone Mountain with Dick Steuart. 5:50. That’s 2:50 a.m. Pacific Standard Time. My time.

I got up in the middle of the night to spend 45 minutes climbing up and down a big rock with this retired Army colonel and former missionary who climbs it every morning. Well, almost every morning.

“You know, the best intentions....” His voice trails off as we puff up the side of this thing in the chilly dawn, wind whipping our collars and a light rain slicking down the granite. Gray-haired, ruddy-complected and rough around the edges, Dick Steuart is a man who likes to chart his own course.

“I love coming out here to do this. It’s a great way to start the day. Really clears my head.”

Art Carney could play Dick Steuart. Not the young, black-and-white Art Carney from the “Honeymooners” days.

“...The older, crustier Art Carney who played Harry Coombs in “Harry and Tonto.”” Harry Coombs, retired English professor, was being evicted from his doomed apartment building as the credits rolled.

He wouldn’t move. Sat right in his big easy chair with Tonto, his cat, and hung on. They had to carry him out. His friends and relatives chided him for making a spectacle. He contended he was making a point: Don’t push me around. What I’m doing is important. Leave me alone and let me get on with it.

It took that kind of brass for Dick and his wife, Carol, to stick it out last year in southern Sudan, where they helped distribute grain to Sudanese displaced in the city of Wau. More than 50,000 people have crowded into the small capital of Sudan’s Bahr el Ghazal region, doubling the city’s population. They come fleeing drought and fighting that has ravaged their rural homelands for years. Unfortunately, what they discover in Wau is often little better — and sometimes worse — than what they have left behind.

With Dick’s background as a career military officer, and with their various stints in Christian mission and relief work since his retirement from the mil-
Dick figured that if nothing happened in the first 20 seconds, they were home free.

Here are people who have spent a lifetime traveling the globe. They showed me a small bamboo cup from Cameroon inscribed with the names of all the cities in which they’ve lived since they were married in 1952: Frankfurt, Heidelberg, Okinawa, Tuscaloosa, Nioro, and a dozen or so more. (“If I’m in a place over two years I get bored,” says Dick.) Yet of all the places they’ve lived, Africa has touched them in ways the others have not. Their home is richly adorned with rare antiques and treasures from around the world. But something they took from Africa—their bracelets and toe rings—are with them at all times. Constant reminders. The only other jewelry that’s always with them: wedding rings and Dick’s fat, worn graduation ring from West Point.

Dick would go back to Wau in an instant. Given the risks, he still misses the drama of the situation and the camaraderie that develops among people drawn together by dangerous circumstances. Carol wouldn’t be so quick to return.

In contrast to her sometimes impulsive husband, Carol appears more settled, quieter—the soothing balm who’s claimed the job of making sure the family unit maintains an even keel while bumping from city to city around the globe. To stay in shape—and to keep a case of osteoporosis at bay—she lifts weights, takes brisk walks and practices t’ai chi three times a week at a local Baptist church.

“Dick is the big get-up-and-goer of the two of us,” says Carol. “Dick felt very strongly about getting into mission work. I wasn’t against it, I just didn’t feel as compelled to do it. But, looking back on it, I know I grew a lot and I am thankful for all the experiences we have had.”

In 1978 they left their 45-acre New Hampshire farm, where they had lived for six and a half years, and began a year of language study in Lausanne, Switzerland. That prepared them for administrative jobs at the Wycliffe Bible Translators support center in Yaounde, Cameroon.

Among the places they’ve lived and worked around the world, Carol’s first choice for a return visit would be Nioro. “I miss the Malians,” she says. “We helped bring a good number of people to Christ. And when you form that kind of spiritual bond with people it makes it a little different relationship.”

The Steuarts have no immediate plans to work overseas. No one would blame them if they decided to settle down in their comfortable home on a tree-lined cul-de-sac in small-town America. They may stay there a while longer. Or they may be on a plane for the African bush tomorrow.

“As long as you’ve got good health, there are so many things you can do,” says Carol. “I’ve always felt that being older just means you’ve had more experience in many areas. You’re more mature. And going overseas is an exciting way to spend a year or two doing something really vital.

“I also think experiences like this...”
What’s Your Handicap?

BY EDWARD R. DAYTON

Silver or gold I do not have, but what I have, I give you. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk.”

Two Christian leaders had something to give. It wasn’t what you might expect. Based upon the previous few days’ happenings, you might have guessed they would organize a Committee for the Handicapped among the rapidly growing Jerusalem church. Helping the handicapped is a good business for Christians to be in. But they didn’t do that (at least not immediately). Rather, they dealt with the situation as they found it.

All Christians are in the business of helping the handicapped, but it is a special role for the Christian leader because every one of us is handicapped. Each of us is less than whole. Some of us have physical handicaps. (I happen to be colorblind.) All of us have inabilities, things we can’t do. The Christian phrase for it is, “I’m just not gifted in that area.”

And we are handicapped by “the sin that doth so easily beset us.” We struggle along with Paul, wanting to do good but finding evil right there with us.

Who is to help us find our place in the marvelous body of Christ? For there is a place. The day that you became a Christian there was a you-shaped spot ready for you. And it was your shape right at that moment. You were cleansed from all your sin, but there was no need for you to somehow have all your handicaps removed before you could be an effective part of Christ’s church.

Who Helps The Handicapped?

I sometimes tell people that I am like a broken ball bearing. If you look at one side of me, I may look bright and shiny and smooth. But there is a side which is rough and jagged and broken. I can be complete only as others come alongside me and fill out that broken side.

So Christian leaders not only seek gifts in those whom they lead; they also do their best to understand the handicaps so they can fit the members of a team together in a complementary way. One member may have great gifts of planning but be absolutely unequipped to present those plans to a congregation. Another may have a beautiful gift of compassion; if someone needs comforting, this is the person to call. But fix a broken toilet? All thumbs.

Identifying Handicaps

Before we talk about identifying handicaps, we need to first recognize gifts. If we begin with the understanding that God has gifted every one of us, we become less concerned about a person’s lacking gifts. Look for strengths before weaknesses. What is this person good at? What does she like to do? What do others say he does well?

The other side of the picture is what they don’t do well, what they don’t like to do, what others say they are not good at. Knowing both sides of the picture helps us discover where they fit the best, with whom they work the best, where they perhaps do not belong.

Honor the “Less Honorable”

But there is a deeper sense in which the leader is a helper of the handicapped. In the middle of 1 Corinthians 12, Paul has some very interesting things to say about the most handicapped: “On the contrary, those parts of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, and the parts that we think are less honorable we treat with special honor. And the parts that are the less presentable are treated with special modesty, while our presentable parts need no special treatment. But God has combined the members of the body and has given greater honor to the parts that lacked it so there should be no division in the body, but that its parts should have equal concern for each other.”

Imagine what would happen if we quietly identified all those we think are “less honorable” and started treating them with special honor. These “less honorable” would rise to the top and we would have a new set to honor. The entire body would become like a constantly bubbling, refreshing spring.

Handicapped people take our time. They take special care. They need to be given special honor. That’s upside down from the way the world thinks. But that’s what Christian leadership is all about.
Somebody from the local nursing home is parked in the church aisle. His hair is greasy, his shirt unevenly buttoned. His care-givers, overworked and underpaid, don't quite take the time they should to get him ready. But there he sits in his wheelchair, hands and feet curled and gnarled. He can't say much. He drools.

And we walk a wide circle around him.

We're not sure what God has to say about such folks. It's as if this young man's cerebral palsy is holding God hostage. What is God doing here? Hanging out dirty laundry?

I used to think that disabilities intimidated and embarrassed God. That was how I pictured my own diving injury 20 years ago. I figured that when I was standing on the raft, ready to take that deep dive into shallow water, God's back was turned.

Then the devil snuck up behind me, put a foot in the small of my back and gave a big shove. And tiptoed away in absolute delight.

About that time, God turned around and—oh!—suddenly saw what had happened to me, and had to grab a repair kit and go to work on my life, nervously muttering, "How in the world am I going to fix this one up to work for good?"

Well, that may have been a young girl's idea of how it all fit together. But that's not the picture that the Bible paints.

I believe that God singles out people with disabilities—both physical and mental—for a very special reason. They illustrate how, when we are at our weakest, God's grace and power are at their strongest.

I have a friend named Betsy who cannot speak. If you spoke her name, chances are she wouldn't really understand. Betsy also cannot walk. She sits up only for short periods and can't feed herself.

If you visited her, you might be asked to assist Betsy with daily routines such as eating and drinking. But you would also have to assist her with other intimate care, for my friend has no control over her bowels or bladder. She can't sleep straight through the night and awakens with desperate screams.

Would you want your church to invest in reaching out to Betsy and getting involved in her life? On a scale of one to ten, be honest, how highly would you value the time you spent with her?

Well, let me tell you about Betsy. She's an 8-month-old baby!

No, she can't quite understand her name yet. And sure, you'd have to feed her. You'd probably get more applesauce on yourself than in her mouth. But you wouldn't mind, not even changing her diapers. In fact, she'd rate pretty close to a "ten."

We tend to judge without all the facts, don't we? And sadly, we're greatly
Once I was a guest on one of those call-in Christian talk radio programs. The interviewer was asking for my perspective on how the church can roll up its sleeves and get more involved in helping people with disabilities.

When we paused for a commercial break, I heard the announcer say, "Ladies, for just $180 you can join our brand new weight-loss system. You’re guaranteed to lose 50 pounds."

Then the next commercial: "Gentlemen, come and hear Dr. So-and-So help you become more successful and attractive. Yes, come to our success seminar and learn how to be a winner."

Then we were on again. "Tell us, Joni," the interviewer said, "what can the Christian community do to help our brothers and sisters in Christ reach out to those with disabilities?"

"You don’t want to hear it," I warned him.

But he insisted. I said, "All right, I’m going to be quite frank with you. You just ran a couple of commercials that literally turned my stomach."

"Are those the values we really want to communicate? If we really believe that God’s power shows up best in weakness, we’ve got to tone down the Christian hype about beauty and success."

Look at David. God wants to defeat a seasoned warrior giant, right? But not with a handpicked West Point graduate. God selects David—a pimply-faced teenage shepherd.

Or take Sarah. It doesn’t take a fertility specialist to tell you that Sarah is not the most likely candidate for mother of a nation.

So why David? Why Sarah? I think this is why. God knew that when David slew Goliath and Sarah gave birth to a beautiful bouncing baby boy, the whole world would know who had done it. It wasn’t accomplished by human might, nor by intellectual prowess, but by the mighty arm of God.

That’s why we need to focus on the disabled in our churches. Because they really are God’s best audiovisual aids. God’s power shows up best in weakness.

A couple of years ago I got a nice letter from a woman in Alabama. She sent a clipping of a boy with a spinal cord injury in Coal Valley, Ill. She had sent this young man a copy of my book Joni. I thought that was really sweet.

The next day I got five letters. One from Georgia, one from Ohio, a couple from Oregon. More newspaper clippings, and all these people had sent my book to this young man in Illinois. I was beginning to get a little nervous. I remembered how I had felt when I was first injured and I received no fewer than 20 copies of The Other Side of the Mountain by Jill Kinmont, the Olympic skier who broke her neck.

Five days passed. I was up to 50 letters, 50 clippings and 50 people who had sent 50 books to Coal Valley. I began to get desperate.

I tracked down the phone number and dialed.

"Hello? Listen, you don’t know..."

She thanked me for being "an inspiration," and I flinched at the label.

"Don’t go any further! I’ve got exactly 50 copies of your book on my dining room table!"

"Oh, I am so sorry," I said. "Listen, call the Goodwill, give them to the Salvation Army, ship them off to the public library, do whatever you want with them. Just keep one book, would you? Put it up on a shelf somewhere and maybe in a year or two, you could brush the dust off and flip through it. Perhaps it’ll be encouraging then."

The young man’s mother thanked me for "being an inspiration."

I flinched at the label, and so many people with disabilities. But slowly it has dawned on me that there is value in being an encouraging example to somebody else. And people with disabilities can do that for us.

Oh Ken, I think it’s so wonderful that you’ve given up your life to serve Joni, many people tell my husband.

That attitude really makes him uncomfortable. Ken has not given up his life to serve a handicapped woman. Oh no, he’s given his life up to the Lord Jesus Christ in sacrificial service. And it just so happens that God has partnered him with me, a woman with a disability.

The call goes out to every Christian to serve sacrificially, and I think handicapped people give our churches a chance to answer that call. When it comes right down to it, God wants you involved.

When you give a banquet, invite the poor and the crippled and the blind and you will be blessed. For although these people cannot repay you, you will be repaid at the resurrection."

That tickles me. Two thousand years ago Jesus knew that there would be some people who would challenge the cost effectiveness of a ministry to disabled people.

But the kicker comes a couple of verses later: "Go out into the streets and alleys. Find the crippled and the lame and the blind. Go a step further—go out into the country lanes, the highways and byways. Find them and bring them to the banquet."

I love that. Jesus didn’t say, “Oh, incidentally, you may want to put a ramp at the front door just in case someone should happen to wheel by.” It was not a laissez faire approach.

Rodney passes out bulletins at the front door of our church before the Sunday morning worship service. People like Rodney. He smiles a lot and lifts the spirits of everyone who passes through those doors.

But there’s more to Rodney than a helpful spirit. He has struggled with the ups and downs of growing up with a severe mental disability. He has had his share of abuse and has seen people keep their polite distance. He has watched other kids go out on dates and drive their cars. And Rodney has struggled with more than his fair share of homework assignments.

However, Christ has given Rodney a deep sense of peace about his disability. He understands that he will never be quite like the other guys in the college and career department. But still he knows that God loves him. Rodney expresses Christ’s unconditional love with each bulletin he hands out.

Disabled people have spiritual gifts. We don’t always want to be on the receiving end. We like to serve. We want to reach out.
A remarkable new boldness and effectiveness in the realm of Christian witnessing is becoming more and more apparent to me these days. And I think I know the reason for that renewal. People are waiting in prayer until they get a “word” from the Lord, after which they act in utter obedience to that word.

While reviewing my concordance recently, I discovered that about one-third of the time the word of the Lord is mentioned in the New Testament, it is *rhema*, a word from the Lord given for a particular situation. Other times it is *logos*, which most often refers to the written word or the living word, Christ.

Are we actively awaiting that *rhema* from the Lord? All of us can stand to do that more in our personal lives and ministries. Nothing can be more adventurous than seeing God work through us in that way.

Norval Hadley
Director, Prayer Ministries

PRAY FOR:

- Unreached people in Kulu Valley, India, where most residents have never heard of Jesus Christ.
- The Family Friendship Ministry, which matches volunteers with people in need through a period of rehabilitation.
- The battle against meningitis in Chad, where some 175 deaths have occurred in recent months.
- The Ethnic Senior Leaders Conference, October 17-20, in San Bernardino, Calif.
- Protection from arrest or harassment for Christians in China, and that the gospel will continue to spread there.
- Albania, self-declared atheistic state, that it might become more open to the gospel.
- Angola, where some $110 million in food and other aid will be needed for war recovery.
- Nazarene church leaders in Haiti, who hope to start 88 new churches this year.
- Famine relief programs in Ethiopia which are helping people to feed themselves.
- The more than 1000 Kampuchean refugees in Thailand who have turned to Christ in the last two years.
- Freedom to evangelize in Bangladesh despite rising opposition.
- Mission Aviation Fellowship’s new transport services in Baja and northern mainland Mexico.
- Colombia, where problems related to political unrest and drug trafficking will require unceasing prayer.
- *The World by 2000 Radio Project*, of Sudan Interior Mission, who hope to reach every person in the world with the gospel by the year 2000.
- Low-income families in the U.S. who go without medical and dental care, rather than rely on charity.
- Uganda’s Teso District, where some 15,000 displaced people are in dire need.
- Mikhail Gorbachev, that an apparent softening toward Christians will continue.
- Joni Eareckson Tada and her efforts to link Christians with the disabled people around them.
- Reconciliation in South Africa, and that Christians will actively mend the brokeness found on both sides.
- The work of Henri Nouwen and others who care for the severely disabled and discover the roots of true peace in the process.
- The work of Youth Alive as it reaches out to confused young South Africans.
- Victims of terrorism and drought in Mozambique, many of whom have lost parents and other family members.
- Victims of AIDS, and family members in need of strength and courage as they witness the slow death of loved ones.
- The work of the English Language Institute/China and its Christian teachers.
- The work of Operation Smile, and that many more lives will be transformed through this compassionate outreach.
- Christian volunteers who freely give their time and talent to help meet desperate needs around the world.
- Teen-age runaways, that in their desperate search for love they may find shelter and the genuine love of Christ.
- Homeless children in the U.S. too young to understand why they must go to bed hungry while their peers on television are so happy and healthy.
ESPONSHIP  
It’ll Make You Feel Good.

You’ll Feel Good...
... knowing that you can help stop her hunger. Quench her thirst. Overcome her poverty. A sponsor can provide the things that will help stop the suffering and build a future...for a child in need.

You’ll Feel Good...
... knowing that Jesus’ love for children has been demonstrated through your compassion. And knowing your love can be shared directly through letters you and your child exchange.

You’ll Feel Good...
... knowing that you’re touching this hurting world. Sharing what you have with children who have so little — and often with families and the whole community. Nothing feels better than that. Nothing.

And It’s So Easy To Begin...
WORLD VISION has been helping needy children all over the world for 35 years. We’ve worked hard to make it easy for you to care. All it takes is a mere 65 cents a day — $20 a month — to become a World Vision Childcare Sponsor.

You don’t need to send any money now. Just mail the coupon below and we’ll send you a photo and full information about a special child for you to love. Then if you decide to keep the packet, mail your first $20 payment within 10 days. Or return the material and owe nothing. Please, become a sponsor today. You’ll feel good about it. And a needy child will feel even better.

WORLD VISION
World Vision is a Christian relief and development organization helping the poor in the name of Christ in over 80 countries throughout the world.

YES, I want to feel good!

☐ Please send me information and a photograph of a child who needs my help.

☐ I prefer to sponsor a child living in:  
☐ Africa ☐ Asia ☐ Latin America  
☐ Where most needed

☐ Enclosed is my first month’s payment of $20.

☐ I will send my first month’s $20 payment within 10 days of receiving the materials, or I will return them so someone else can help.

☐ I can’t sponsor a child now, but here’s a special gift of $________ to help care for a needy child.

Please make checks payable to World Vision. Thank you!

Name______________________________
Address____________________________
City/State/Zip_____________________

MAIL TODAY TO:  
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Pasadena, CA 91131
Henri Nouwen: FINDING PEACE IN BROKENNESS

SOUTH AFRICA: THE HIGH COST OF RECONCILIATION

A Personal Account: FROM HATE TO LOVE IN SOWETO

JONI: HOW THE CHURCH SHUNS THE HANDICAPPED

More Than Surgery: MENDING SMILES
CONTENTS

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Adam’s Peace

Author Henri Nouwen had no idea that through tending to the intimate daily needs of a severely disabled young man, he would discover a profound new dimension of peacemaking.

Mending Smiles

Cleft lips and palates—rarely if ever seen in this country—are not uncommon in the Philippines and other developing countries. But there are fewer of them now than a few years ago, thanks to plastic surgeons and other health care experts who donate time and talent to sculpt happy grins.

Two on South Africa

THE HIGH COST OF LIVING IT: Reconciliation means more than just holding hands and singing songs of unity. Author Gary Haugen hopes South Africans will pay reconciliation’s hefty price before civil war exacts a devastating toll.

YOUNG AND BLACK IN SOWETO: Caesar Molebatsi talks about his bitter past and his current ministry among angry, radicalized Soweto youth.

Disabling Attitudes in the Church

Joni Eareckson Tada, author and advocate for the disabled, offers a series of short vignettes that illuminate some attitudes many of us harbor, knowingly or not, toward the disabled.

World Vision

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World Vision is a nonprofit, Christian humanitarian agency dedicated to serving God by helping people care for those in need. It ministers to children and families, provides emergency aid, fosters self-reliance, furthers evangelism, strengthens Christian leadership, and increases public awareness of poverty around the world.

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RESTORATION—MORE THAN A WITHERED HAND

When the Vietnam War Memorial was dedicated in 1982, it brought a wave of emotional memories to many Americans. And in the years since, visitors in endless lines have lovingly run their hands over the names of loved ones etched in that long black marble monument.

It was five years before I could bring myself to visit the Wall. I had served in Vietnam 20 years before, and I still had an aching place in my heart for the dead and missing men who had been my close friends. So you can imagine the emotions that ran rampant in me as I returned to that tragic land a few weeks ago.

Last issue I wrote about those emotions, and briefly mentioned the reconciliation process we are initiating with the Vietnamese. From senators like John McCain, a former POW, and Mark Hatfield, there have been encouraging words for what we are doing. And Christian aid agencies are working alongside us to formulate plans to meet the needs of the Vietnamese people.

The government of Vietnam has asked World Vision and other agencies to provide materials and equipment for artificial limbs for the 60,000 people disabled by the war.

As I traveled I read again the story of Jesus restoring the withered hand of a man in the synagogue. He told the man to stretch out his hand, “and it was restored to normal, like the other.” (It was on the Sabbath, and it made the Pharisees furious.) In his compassion he illustrated the true meaning of restoration—making something new from something old, recreating the original.

The greatest example of restoration began at Calvary. The sacrifice of Jesus Christ on the cross not only reconciled us as sinners to a holy God, but started the process of restoration, of making all things new. The ultimate restoration will be completed within the power and the glory of the kingdom of our coming Lord.

Heavenly thoughts such as these, however, often give way to earthly realities. Restoration is not an easy process. On a human level we have major hurdles to overcome. For many Americans the war in Vietnam goes on. At the Wall, men in old military fatigues weep unashamedly for something they cannot articulate. I feel it with my friends who are listed with crosses next to their names, signifying that they are still missing in action, symbols of a war without closure.

In Vietnam I watched the faces of young Amerasians as they looked at me and wondered about their American fathers. I heard the anger of a former South Vietnam officer who spent eight years in a “re-education” camp. He was systematically starved, worked, and humiliated to the point of death. And in North Vietnam I felt the despair of those who had won the war but lost the peace.

Now I believe we must continue reconciliation through ongoing acts of restoration. Most of us will need to transcend a considerable amount of pain. Yet it must be done.

Christ didn’t worry about whom he offended when he restored the withered hand. He didn’t wait for a “better time.” Restoration carries its own sense of urgency. It takes place at the first opportunity. As Christians we need to take the lead in reconciliation and restoration. For restoration brings dignity and normality to that which was old. And it allows God to do a new work in each of us.

A man with a withered hand was used by Jesus to illustrate his desire to restore the old and make something new. In this issue, noted author Henri Nouwen tells a touching story about Adam, a severely handicapped man whose life has brought much spiritual restoration to his friends. It is to Adam, who reminds us of our need to be reconciled to the Maker, and the handicapped in Vietnam and elsewhere, who remind us that continual acts of restoration bring credibility to reconciliation, that this issue is dedicated.
In the middle of this decade I moved from Harvard to Daybreak—from an institution for very bright people to a community for mentally handicapped ones. Daybreak, situated near Toronto, is part of an international federation of communities called l’Arche—the Ark—where mentally handicapped men and women and their assistants try to live.
When asked to return to Harvard to speak about peace, I suddenly realized that speaking about peace from this tiny family is not like speaking about peace as a professor. I need a new perspective and a new sensibility, a new language. It is not easy. It is even quite painful. I feel so vulnerable and so naked. But I will tell you the story of Adam, one of the ten people in our home, and let him become the silent witness for the peace that is not of this world.

Adam is the weakest person in our family. He is a 25-year-old man who cannot speak, cannot dress or undress himself, cannot walk alone, cannot eat without much help. He does not cry or laugh. Only occasionally does he make eye contact. His back is distorted. His arm and leg movements are twisted. He suffers from severe epilepsy and, despite heavy medication, sees few days without grand-mal seizures. Sometimes, as he grows suddenly rigid, he utters a howling groan. On a few occasions I've seen one big tear roll down his cheek.

It takes me about an hour and a half to wake Adam up, give him his medication, carry him into his bath, wash him, shave him, clean his teeth, dress him, walk him to the kitchen, give him his breakfast, put him in his wheelchair and bring him to the place where he spends most of the day with therapeutic exercises.

I tell you this not to give you a nursing report, but to share with you something quite intimate. After a month of working this way with Adam, something happened to me. This deeply handicapped young man, who is considered by many outsiders a vegetable, a distortion of humanity, a useless animal-like creature who shouldn't have been born, started to become my dearest companion.

As my fears gradually lessened, a love emerged in me so full of tender affection that most of my other tasks seemed boring and superficial compared with the hours spent with Adam. Out of his broken body and broken mind emerged a most beautiful human being offering me a greater gift than I would ever offer him: Somehow Adam revealed to me who he is, and who I am, and how we can love each other.

When I carried him into his bath, made big waves to let the water run fast around his chest and neck, rubbed noses with him and told him all sorts of stories about him and me, I knew that two friends were communicating far beyond the realm of thought or emotion. Deep speaks to deep, spirit speaks to spirit, heart speaks to heart. I started to realize that ours was a mutual love based not on shared knowledge or shared feelings, but on shared humanity. The longer I stayed with Adam the more clearly I saw him as my gentle teacher, teaching me what no book, school or professor could ever teach me.

The gift of peace hidden in Adam's utter weakness is a gift not of this world, but certainly for this world. For this gift to become known, someone has to lift it up and pass it on. That may be the deepest meaning of being an assistant to handicapped people: helping them to share their gifts.

Adam's peace is first of all a peace rooted in being. Being is more important than doing. How simple a truth, but how hard to live.

Adam can do nothing. He is completely dependent on others. His gift is purely being with us. Every evening when I run home to take care of Adam—to help him with his supper and put him to bed—I realize that the best thing I can do for him is to be with him. And indeed, that is the great joy: paying total attention to his breathing, his eating, his careful steps; noticing how he tries to lift a spoon to his mouth or offers his left arm a little to make it easier for me to take off his shirt.

Most of my life has been built around the idea that my value depends on what I do. I made it through school. I earned my degrees and awards and I made my career. Yes, with many others, I fought my way up to a little success, a little popularity and a little power. But as I sit beside the slow and heavy-breathing Adam, I start to see how violent that journey was. So marked by rivalry and competition, so pervaded with compulsion and obsession, so spotted with moments of suspicion,
jealousy, resentment and revenge.

Oh sure, most of what I did was called mini­

stry, the ministry of justice and peace, the ministry
of forgiveness and reconciliation, the ministry of
healing and wholeness. But when those who want
peace are as interested in success, popularity and
power as those who want war, what then is the
real difference between war and peace? When the
peace is as much of this world as the war is, the
choice is between a war which we euphemistically
call pacification and a peace in which the peace-
makers violate each other’s deepest values.

Adam says to me: Peace is first of all the art of
being. I know he is right because, after four
months of being a little with Adam, I am discover­
ing in myself the beginning of an inner at-home-
ness that I didn’t know before.

When I cover him with his sheets and
blankets, turn out the lights and pray with Adam, he is always very
quiet. It’s as if he knows my praying
voice from my speaking voice. I whisper in his
ear: “May all the angels protect you,” and often he
looks up to me from his pillow and seems to know
what I am saying.

Ever since I’ve been praying with Adam I’ve
known better than before that praying is being
with Jesus, simply “wasting time” with him.
Adam keeps teaching me that.

Adam’s peace is not only a peace rooted in
being, but also a peace rooted in the heart. Some­
how through the centuries we have come to
believe that what makes us human is our mind.
Many people define a human being as a rational
animal. But Adam keeps telling me over and over
again that what makes us human is not our mind
but our heart, not our ability to think but our
ability to love. Whoever speaks about Adam as a
vegetable or an animal-like creature misses the
sacred mystery that Adam is
fully capable of receiving and
giving love. He is not half hu-
man, not nearly human, but
fully, completely human because
he is all heart and it is the heart
that is made in the likeness of
God.

Let me quickly add that by
“heart” I do not mean the seat of
human emotions, in contrast to
the mind as the seat of human
thought. No, by “heart” I mean
the center of our being, where
God has hidden the divine gifts
of trust, hope and love. Whereas
the mind tries to understand,
grasp problems, discern differ-
ent aspects of reality and probe
mysteries, the heart allows us to
become sons and daughters of
God and brothers and sisters of
each other. Long before the mind is able to exercise
its power, the heart is already able to develop a
trusting human relationship.

When I say that I believe deeply that Adam
can give and receive love and that there is a true
mutuality between us, I make no naive psycholog­
ical statement overlooking his severe handicaps; I
speak of a love between us that transcends all
thoughts and feelings, precisely because it is
rooted in God’s first love, a love that precedes all
human loves. The mystery of Adam is that in his
deep mental and emotional brokenness he has
become so empty of all human pride that he has
become the preferable mediator of that first love.
Maybe this will help you see why Adam is giving
me a whole new understanding of God’s love for
the poor and the oppressed.

The peace that flows from Adam’s broken
heart is not of this world. It is not the result of
political analysis, roundtable debates, discernment
of the signs of the times or well advised strategies.
All these activities of the mind have their role in
peacemaking. But they are all easily perverted to a
new way of warmaking if they are not in the ser­
cvice of the divine peace that flows from the broken
heart of those who are called the poor in spirit.

Adam’s peace, while rooted more in being
than in doing, and more in the heart than in the
mind, is a peace that calls forth community. At
l’Arche the people hold us together as a family; in
fact, the most handicapped people are the true
center of gravity. Adam in his total vulnerability
calls us together as a family.

The weakest members are not the handi­
capped residents but the assistants. Our commit­
ments are ambiguous at best. Some stay longer
than others, but most move on after one or two
years. Closer to the center are Raymond, Bill, John
and Trevor, each of whom is relatively indepen­
dent, but still in need of much help and attention.
They are permanent family members; they are with us for life; they keep us honest. Because of them, conflicts never last very long, tensions are talked out, disagreements are resolved. But in the heart of our community are Rose and Adam, both deeply handicapped, and the weaker of the two is Adam. Adam, the most broken of us all, is without any doubt the strongest bond among us.

Because of Adam there is always someone home. Because of Adam there is a quiet rhythm in the house. Because of Adam there are words of affection, gentleness and tenderness. Because of Adam there is always space for mutual forgiveness and healing. Adam, the weakest among us, is our true peacemaker. How mysterious are God's ways!

Most of my adult life I have tried to show the world that I could do it on my own, that I needed others only to get me back on my lonely road as a strong, independent, creative man. And most of my fellow intellectuals joined me in that desire. But all of us highly trained individuals today are facing a world on the brink of total destruction. Now we wonder how we might join forces to make peace!

What kind of peace can this possibly be? Who can paint a group portrait of people who all want the center seat? When all want the honor of being the final peacemaker, there will be no peace.

Adam needs many people, none of whom can boast of any success. Adam will never be better. Medically, he will only grow worse. Each person who works with him does only a little bit. My part in his life is very small. Some cook for him, some do his laundry, some give him massages, some let him listen to music or take him for a walk or a swim or a ride. Others look after his blood pressure, regulate his medicine, look after his teeth. Even with all this assistance Adam often slips into total exhaustion. Yet a community of peace has emerged around him, a peace community not just for Adam, but for all who belong to Adam's race. It's a community that proclaims that God has chosen to reveal his glory in complete weakness and vulnerability.

I've told you about Adam and about his peace. But you're not part of l'Arche, you don't live at Daybreak, you're not a member of Adam's family. Like me, however, you search for peace in your heart, in your family and in your world.

I've told you about Adam and his peace to offer you a quiet guide with a gentle heart, a little light for walking through this dark world. In Adam's name, therefore, I say to you: Do not give up work­ing for peace. But remember that the peace you seek is not of this world. Don't be distracted by the great noises of war, the dramatic descriptions of misery, the sensational exploitation of cruelty. Newspapers, movies and war novels may numb you, but they do not create a true desire for peace. They mostly create feelings of shame, guilt and powerlessness—the worst motives for peace work.

Keep your eyes on the one who refuses to turn stones into bread, jump from great heights or rule with great temporal power. Keep your eyes on the one who says, "Blessed are the poor, the gentle, those who mourn and those who hunger and thirst for righteousness; blessed are the merciful, the pure of heart, the peacemakers and those who are persecuted in the cause of upright goodness." Keep your eyes on the one who touches the lame and the blind, the one who speaks forgiveness and encouragement, the one who dies alone. Keep your eyes on the one who is poor with the poor, weak with the weak and rejected with the rejected. That one is the source of all peace.

As long as we think and live as if there is no peace and that it all depends on ourselves to make it come about, we are on the road to self-destruction. But when we trust that the God of love has already given the peace we are searching for, we will see this peace poking through the broken soil of our human condition and we will be able to let it grow fast, even to heal the economic and political maladies of our time.

An old Hassidic tale summarizes much of what I have tried to say.

The Rabbi asks his students, "How can we determine the hour of dawn, when the night ends and the day begins?"

One student suggests, "When, from a distance, you can distinguish between a dog and a sheep?"

"No," the Rabbi answers.

"Is it when you can distinguish between a fig tree and a grapevine?" asks a second student.

"No," the Rabbi says.

"Please tell us the answer, then," say the students.

"It is," says the wise teacher, "when you have enough light to look human beings in the face and recognize them as your brothers and sisters. Until then the darkness is still with us."

Let us pray for that light. It is the peace that the world cannot give.

Henri Nouwen is an author, educator and ordained Roman Catholic priest.
BY RANDY MILLER

MENDING SMILES

Their scalpels and sutures repair the external smiles; their compassion puts a smile in the heart.

When I first saw Fremmalyn in California, I was repulsed. Her face is shocking—split up the middle since birth, from her upper lip through her nose and into the bridge between her eyes. Fremmalyn, too young to realize her handicap, is 2 years old.

I saw her again a few weeks later in Virginia Beach, Va., at a potluck dinner in the home of Father Leo Manalo. Thirty or 40 people, mostly Filipinos, were packed into his modest home, filling his kitchen and family room with laughter and music and the smell of good food. And there was Fremmalyn, dodging legs and racing around the coffee table.

I talked with her mother for a while, using gestures and simple phrases, since we had a language barrier. Fremmalyn came and sat in her lap. The more I watched her, the less I noticed her deformity, and the more I became taken by her smile and her joyful spirit. She was playful, a ham in front of the camera. When my shutter clicked and the flash lit the room, she would look my way and clap or smile. Yes, definitely a smile, a window to her effervescent spirit which became more evident by the minute. By the end of the evening I had nearly forgotten about her affliction—and was homesick for my own daughter.

Fremmalyn is one of the few patients brought to the United States from her home in the Philippines for extensive surgical work by Norfolk-based Operation Smile. This small but rapidly growing group of plastic surgeons and other health care experts volunteer in 1987, Roxanne Martinez (left) had plenty to smile about. (Below) Roxanne, before her 1986 surgery in the Philippines.
please come back, because these kids will still be here needing surgeries.’”

One year later, they did go back, bringing a team of 20 doctors and other health care experts, and treating 150 cases. Again, another 250 kids were turned away. They knew they had to expand their efforts. They were also beginning to realize that expanding their efforts would mean more than just additional plastic surgeons in the operating room.

For unknown reasons, the incidence of cleft lip and palate is three times higher in the Philippines than the United States. With no government health program to cover the costs of treating such cases, thousands of children are condemned to live with their condition for a lifetime. On their next trip, the Magees added a geneticist.

“We noticed that a lot of these kids were pretty malnourished—most of them eating only one meal a day—so we added a nutritionist,” says Bill.

Some were told to return next year. For others, there was simply no hope at all.

KIDS HELPING KIDS

“It’s amazing how much ice cream kids eat in a week,” remarks Charles Bolton, assistant superintendent for the Chesapeake (Va.) School System. He was actually referring to the amount of ice cream one group of elementary school students did not eat one week, diverting their dessert money instead toward the work of Operation Smile, and coming up with $1400.

Garage sales, car washes, dances and bake sales held by students in the Chesapeake system and beyond have generated thousands of dollars in recent years. High schoolers in Virginia Beach created “Happy Clubs” a few years ago, and the idea has caught on in schools throughout the area. Several students have traveled to the Philippines and worked with the teams, scrubbing for surgery, performing educational skits, or involving young patients in play therapy to orient them to the strange and often fearful process they are about to undergo.

But involving children in the program goes beyond just fund raising—or even an occasional overseas trip.

Charles Bolton beams like a proud father when he talks about the impact a little awareness of needs overseas is having on children in his school district.

“I think it’s healthy for our children to realize that there are children out there who are not properly cared for, who have no medical care, or can’t go to school, or don’t have a box of crayons. And to realize that one of our responsibilities is to help people who are in need.

“Children helping other children is the key. Helping our children realize how fortunate they are, and that their world is not like the rest of the world.”
“When they gave us typical Liberian clothes at
the end of our visit, it was an honor to put
them on,” says Dr. Bill Magee, here embracing
a JFK Hospital staff member.

When they gave us typical Liberian clothes at
the end of our visit, it was an honor to put
them on,” says Dr. Bill Magee, here embracing
a JFK Hospital staff member.

cases, screened more than a thousand,
started an immunization program, made
obturators (plastic mouth plates)—
temporary help for cleft palate cases—and
extracted 400 teeth.

Still, hundreds had to be turned away. Some were told to return next
year. For others, there was simply no
hope.

Delivering that news had been the
job of DeLois Greenwood, former pub-
lic affairs coordinator for Operation
Smile. She told me about it as we
wound our way through Virginia Beach
on our way to the potluck.

“When I had to tell people they
couldn’t be helped….,” tears filled her
eyes. “This happens every time I talk
about this,” she said, wiping her eyes.

“Father Manalo helped me out. Even
though it was terrible news for these
people, he had a way of telling them
that helped ease the pain.”

Father Manalo serves as some-
thing of a spiritual advisor and figurehead for the sizable

group of Filipinos in the Nor-
folk/Virginia Beach area who, in the
last several years, have rallied to sup-
port Operation Smile. In addition to
raising thousands of dollars, many of
them have opened their homes to state-
side patients—like Fremmalyn and her
mother—providing just-like-home food,
language and culture to help ease the
transition from the rural Philippines to
the urban United States.

But support for Operation Smile
at home goes well beyond the Filipino
community.

Several schools in the greater Nor-
folk/Tidewater area are using Opera-
tion Smile videotapes for subjects rang-
ing from dental health and oral hygiene
to geography and African culture. And

five area superintendents have prom-
ised that if Operation Smile can drum
up a curriculum guide, every student
in their districts will learn about the
organization.

Beyond the schools, local city gov-
ernments—and the state of Virginia,
its—have officially recognized the

efforts of Operation Smile. For two
years running, the second week in Jan-
uary has been proclaimed “Smile Week”
by Governor Gerald Baliles. It’s a week
in which volunteer efforts in general
are bathed in praise. But it was Opera-

tion Smile team members who got the
ball rolling.

Putting whole smiles back on faces
ravaged by cleft lips and palates—or
even by tumors or burns—is the obvious
goal of Operation Smile. But another
not-so-hidden agenda is part of every
trip.

Attorney Jeff Breit, who chairs the
board of Operation Smile, met Bill
Magee in 1980 and they have been fast
friends ever since.

Christ made the
lame walk and the
blind see. Then
he began to
preach.”

“I am not a physician,” Jeff says. “I
don’t have the ability to change peo-
lle’s faces. I hate the sight of blood! But
I can help to change people’s attitudes
toward Americans. Many

people overseas picture
people in the U.S. as so-
called ‘ugly Americans,’
who show up with money
and guns and bully peo-
ple around.

“When we go to a
country, we try to work
hand-in-hand with the
local physicians, so that
they don’t feel like we’re
just these Americans
coming in, saying, ‘Hey,
move aside. We’re going
to perform some miracle
work, and then we’re go-
ing to leave in a few days.
Thanks a lot. Gotta go.’
That’s why I’m involved.”

Bill Magee takes that
thought a step further.

“The power of Opera-

tion Smile doesn’t lie just
in changing the face of a

child. Our purpose is also to use the

trust and the relationship that’s de-
veloped through the healing of that child’s
face so that we can help break down
barriers around the world.

“That may sound farfetched, but
look at Christ’s teachings and style. He
made the lame walk and the blind see.
He built trust. After he had created
that sense of trust, he began to preach.
So we go in and help these children and
build up trust. And there’s no shortcut
to that.”

Fremmalyn had no problem trust-
ing even the white “foreigners” at
Father Manalo’s potluck as she darted
from her mother’s arms to Kathy
Magee’s lap for a hug and a smile.

“We give our time and our talent,”
Bill says, “and they give us their smiles,
their appreciation, a trinket, a basket of
bananas. That’s all they have.

“When you start to tell somebody
about it, tears well up in your eyes
because someone gave you a basket of
bananas. I can’t explain that but it
happens. Why don’t tears well up in
my eyes when someone gives me a
couple thousand dollars for an
operation?”

Fremmalyn, and hundreds of chil-
dren like her in the Philippines, Libe-
ria, Kenya and Colombia, will have a
chance to live normal lives because of
the sacrificial giving of Bill and Kathy
and DeLois and Jeff and others.

“It doesn’t feel like a sacrifice,”
says Kathy. “We give because we want
to. It’s a ‘win’ for everyone.”

Write to Operation Smile at 400 W.
Brambleton Ave., Group W, Norfolk,
VA 23510 for further information.

Kathy and Bill Magee

—by priscilla kemp
It is not enough to come to some theoretical sense of reconciliation. Tangible barriers and measurable distances must be crossed.

Talk may be cheap, but some words are actually very expensive.

"Reconciliation" is one of those pleasant and useful words which always seemed to express so nicely what the Bible taught about healing broken relationships. But in the South African township of Mamelodi, where the sound of houses being bombed in the night shattered my sleep, I began to learn how costly the word reconciliation can be.

What brought me to Mamelodi, located outside Pretoria, was a meeting with Christian theologians, educators and pastors dedicated to leading the South African church as a force for reconciliation.

At our first meeting, held in the plush comfort of a university campus in Pretoria, we received a stiff challenge from one of our committee members: "How can we help Christians address the national crisis when we meet together in the isolation and comfort of the white world? We will never be relevant to the crisis in South Africa as long as we remain insulated from township realities."

So our next meetings were held in Mamelodi, with accommodations in the matchbox homes of local residents. In the dark stillness of the first night, we were suddenly shaken by the piercing thunder of grenades. Two neighboring homes had been bombed by right-wing vigilantes—an act of senseless, brutal terror. At one home, we picked through the rubble and whispered prayers of comfort with the grief-stricken mother who had seen her two young sons devastated in the blast.

Later we returned to our meetings; but in the violent streets of Mamelodi and in the eyes of that...
The wife may forgive when the husband takes responsibility. Reconciliation is possible only when the husband takes responsibility for his actions. The first costly demand of reconciliation is that white Christians begin to identify with the suffering of their black neighbors. The wounds of South Africa are so profound that whites and blacks cannot even begin to talk to each other until they have begun to weep together. Repeatedly I saw misunderstanding and disunity begin to crumble when whites made the unsettling journey into the black world. Whites and blacks began to talk about the same things when they began to share the same reality. The distrust of blacks melted away as whites proved their love by enduring the risks of township life. Ignorance and apathy vanished when whites were awakened by the same bombs as blacks. Responsible concern replaced irrational fears when whites exchanged propaganda and myth for firsthand experiences.

Secondly, Christians have rediscovered the old biblical principle that there can be no reconciliation without repentance. In the same way that we can only be reconciled to God if we take seriously the sins which have alienated us from God, Christians in South Africa cannot find peace until they are honest about the sins which have separated them. I found that nothing meaningful was ever accomplished in the attempt to reconcile blacks and whites without sincere repentance. On the other hand, there seemed to be no limit to the mountains of bitterness and suspicion which could be overcome by sincere expressions of contrition.

Moreover, while reconciliation often requires repentance from both parties, it is important to note that there are times when the source of enmity has mainly come clearly from one side. Under these circumstances reconciliation is not achieved by mediating differences, but by confronting the party at fault. In a marriage divided by a husband’s abuse of his wife, reconciliation is possible only when the husband takes responsibility for his actions. The wife may forgive him, but the relationship will not be restored until he has repented.

For the most part this is also the case in South Africa. The divisions and enmities which exist between blacks and whites in South Africa are primarily the result of the sins of the ruling white minority. This has been a painful but necessary realization for white South Africans.

The third costly demand of reconciliation is that there can be no reconciliation from a distance. White and black Christians in South Africa cannot love and serve one another as long as they remain imprisoned in their respective ghettos. There must be an intimate sharing of experiences and burdens in order for enemies to become friends. Certainly this is the reconciliation which Jesus demonstrated. In order to be reconciled with us, he left the comfort, joy and immortality of heaven to experience our pain, sadness and death.

Christ demonstrated that it is not enough to come to some theoretical sense of reconciliation. Tangible barriers and measurable distances must be crossed.

**Do We Really See?**

John Allwood, director of World Vision of Southern Africa, tells a story about an office employee whose performance was faltering. The worker frequently arrived at the office late and tired, and continually made mistakes while working.

One morning John felt he couldn't put it off any longer. He had to tell her that if her performance did not improve, she would have to be dismissed.

He began with a friendly query about her morning trip to the office. Her reply was heavy with emotion. "I can’t concentrate today, because the smell of a burning body is still in my nostrils."

Every morning she had to walk through the troubled streets of Soweto before catching a train for the two-hour ride to the office. That morning she had been forced to walk past the burning body of a man who had been lynched the night before.

As John listened to the employee’s terrible experience, he thought about his own tranquil morning, with a shower, a glass of orange juice and a five-minute drive to the office.

Reconciliation is a humbling process. Before it can happen, people's experiences need to be fully understood—their pain, anger, fear, guilt, grief and loss.

Do we really see the other person? Do we listen attentively enough to uncover our own assumptions and prejudices, so that we can move on to be reconciled?

Dianne Steinkraus is World Vision’s project manager for creative services.
In the pursuit of peace, white Christians will sit through hours of bruising confrontation as their black brothers and sisters begin to pull back the veil on the hideous crimes of apartheid. Black Christians will place their credibility and safety on the line when they are seen meeting with whites. White ministers and lay leaders will find themselves called traitors and communists if they speak up against injustice. White Christians will face the frightening reality that social justice will mean an end to their comfortable monopoly on power and privilege. And, as we discovered in Mamelodi, the process of reconciliation may mean putting their lives at risk in the midst of South Africa’s burning townships.

Fear will always whisper that the price of reconciliation is just too high. But will the Christian church in South Africa find the courage and strength to pay the high price of reconciliation now, or the higher price of civil war later?

As South African Christians face the crucible of justice and reconciliation, they rely on every believer around the world to uphold them in passionate prayer. □

Gary Haugen is an author and former missionary to South Africa, where he worked with the National Initiative for Reconciliation.

The wounds of South Africa are so profound that whites and blacks cannot even begin to talk together until they have begun to weep together.

The restless, troubled South African township of Soweto is Caesar Molebatsi’s hometown. He was born there and came up through its public school system. He returned there, after study abroad, to lead the very youth ministry which nursed him through the bitter, painful pilgrimage of his own youth.

Molebatsi talked recently with Tom Getman, World Vision’s director of government relations, about the much-publicized turmoil in his hometown, about its angry and impatient young population and about the lessening presence of Youth Alive Ministries in Soweto.

You’ve characterized your youth as bitterly anti-white. Why?

My father was a teacher. He prided himself in developing in us the three-
pronged emphasis of African nationalism: economic self-reliance, political liberation and cultural emancipation. So from the beginning I felt compelled to fight not for equality, but for my right to be what God intended me to be. As my father sometimes said, “Don’t get stuck on equality. Maybe God intended you to be greater.”

I developed a strong anti-white feeling when I was young, because I was beaten by whites for having addressed them in a manner “unfitting for people in their station.”

But even more crushing was a car accident in which I lost a leg, back in 1964. My case was casually dismissed out of court: “You blacks are all the same—you want more money from whites.” That made me tremendously bitter, not only against the white people but against God himself. I felt God had forgotten us.

If you do what the enemy does then you too are the enemy.

What changed your mind about God? What was the turning point?

Through a personal struggle that lasted about two years, I came to a deeper understanding of who God is. I really believe that when people ask difficult questions about God, even when they ask out of deeply disturbing circumstances, they will get much nearer to God.

I read the Bible for 18 months non-stop before I became a Christian or even wanted to be identified with the Bible.

At the same time I was reading black history, coming to understand my own identity as a black person and as an African. And it was difficult for me to reconcile that with what I read in the Bible about justice. I couldn’t understand how white people could be saved and still be racist and unjust. Either white people aren’t really saved, I thought, or salvation is meaningless.

There were also some heavy teachings in the Bible that I was not ready to accept, like how you are to treat your enemies. I said, “That is not possible. You can’t ask anyone to do that.” But I came to understand that if you do what the enemy does, then you too are the enemy.

During this deep spiritual pilgrimage several Youth Alive counselors spent time with me day after day. This was one of the greatest things that happened to me. Each young person needs individual attention, just as I received. This can involve Bible study. It can mean simply listening—allowing or helping young people to articulate what they have been through.

Many consider the youth of South Africa to be increasingly “militant” and “radicalized.”

Do you find this to be true?

Yes. There are those who are already irrational in their radicalism, who are sick and tired of talking about liberation. They just want to get it over and done with. Then there are those who are very active in the trade union movement. They feel that some of the senior leadership within the black community is derailing, or at least slowing, the train of liberation. Of course, the cost of this radicalization is more severe government reaction.

Every kid who goes into prison for detention comes out angry. A very few come out totally broken, because of beatings and solitary confinement. I’m not talking about these. I’m talking about the ones who, while they were in prison, had time to think about the way the government treats blacks. Those kids tend to be much more radical afterwards.

How old are these kids?

We’re talking about teenagers, and also young adults. Consider that these young adults would ordinarily be starting jobs, and would therefore be much more hesitant to join radical causes that might disrupt their economic life. This was the case in the late 1970s, even after the riots; today we’re finding this age group as radical as the younger ones. It is frightening.

Without a Trace

I find Americans are naive when it comes to statistics about South Africa. Let me give you an example.

The American people read that 1000 black men were arrested last year. In America it means every one of those men got their one phone call. We don’t have that in South Africa. If I am arrested for a traffic offense, go to court and am charged, I must have enough money to pay on the spot. Otherwise I will be sent to serve a three-month sentence.

On a short sentence like that I will be sold to a farmer. My wife could look all over the country without a clue as to where I am. She will go to every mortuary, every police station in Soweto, in Johannesburg, until she gets to the actual police station or court where I was tried. By that time if I am already sold, there is nothing she can do to buy me back. The farmer will take me anywhere he pleases.

If I am taken away for three months I will lose my job. My wife will probably spend two weeks looking for me, and thus lose her job. By this time the kids are looking, and the whole family has gone to pieces. This almost happened to me once. Now every time I am a little late my wife panics, because it has happened—people have just disappeared.

These things are inconceivable in the mind of an American. What you won’t find in the “Race Relations Report” is the actual toll on humans that statistics represent.

Caesar Molebatsi, reprinted with permission from Cornerstone
What's pushing them toward radicalism?

When you go through a tragedy, one of two things happens. You either become a stronger person or you lose all self-respect. You do find those who are brutalized to the point of despair, but you find an incredible number who become radical because of what they have seen—what the police have done in the name of the government.

This has affected kids and their parents. When it affects people (like ministers) who would not normally be involved, you really see the seriousness of the situation.

Do you think the increasing radicalization helps or hinders liberation?

It can go either way. The more radical people become, the more those people who were previously apolitical and uninvolved become aware of the problems. In this sense radicalization has a positive effect.

Where it has had a negative effect is where the struggle has become self-defeating, where ideological differences have cost people's lives.

In 1976 ours was a simple, united struggle against a clearly defined enemy. But eventually you look beyond the common enemy and begin to develop your own vision and plans for the new South Africa. You have to be big enough, magnanimous enough to allow for differences.

People sometimes say that until we arrive at a unified vision for South Africa, perhaps we should not push so hard for liberation. However, I don't despair. And I know that the government plays up these differences.

Where do you see the American church in all this?

What has concerned me during this trip to America is the insular attitude I have seen. We are not placing enough emphasis on being world citizens. We have one world and we must recognize that the church of Christ is in every nook and cranny of it. What our own local assembly does affects the rest of the world. I find that people aren't too concerned about that.

As a result, if I may venture to say so, this affects your foreign policy. You don't put enough pressure on your public figures about the moral things they should be doing.

When you become so insular, you begin to consume yourself. But to the extent that you are involved with the rest of the world, when you begin to solve crises and look at causes, you break out beyond your own shores.

I'm talking about ordinary people in our congregations, students in our theological seminaries and universities. We've got to become a world community.

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.


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.

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AUGUST-SEPTEMBER 1988 | WORLD VISION 15
Bible study groups are dangerous. You sit around and talk about stuff, like all the joblessness in your town. And how much the Bible says about helping people who are in trouble. Pretty soon somebody wants to do more than talk.

It happened in Atlanta not long ago. Five or six people from a Bible study group just wouldn't let the issue rest. Now they've got over a hundred churches and just about 200 volunteers involved in this job bank thing. Over 800 people who would have been jobless have found meaningful employment.

See what I mean? Dangerous.

Christian Employment Cooperative, 465 Boulevard S.E., Atlanta, GA 30312.

SHOWERS AND RAINBOWS

To name a desert ranch “Rainbow Acres” does stretch it a bit. Unless, of course, there's chance of Showers.

Fourteen years ago, Dr. Ralph Showers left the pastorate to pour himself into ten dusty Arizona acres. What sprang up was Rainbow Acres, a ranch community where 100 mentally handicapped adults live productive, enjoyable lives free from the stigma of government welfare and housebound parental care.

A pot of gold may be on its way, too. Last September Rainbow Acres broke ground for a project to include a theme park and an international resource center for the mentally handicapped. The project is designed to make the ranch financially self-sufficient.

YOUNG AND RESTLESS

Whatever it is that draws the young and the restless, Hollywood's got it. Or at least a reputation for it. The streets of Hollywood are home, at any given time, to between 1500 and 4500 teen-age runaways.

Enter Centrum, a ministry of Youth With A Mission, on location in Hollywood. Centrum offers food, shelter, ongoing Christian nurture and counsel and a 24-hour hotline. A chance to rewrite the script, or at least alter the ending.

Centrum, staffed by volunteers and supported by donations, celebrated its tenth year in 1987. Youth With A Mission, P.O. Box 1110, Hollywood, CA 90078; (213) 463-5576.

If our global village had 100 families, 70 would have no drinking water at home, and 65 of them could not read. Seven families would own 60 percent of the land and consume 80 percent of all available energy. And just one family would have a university education.

Rev. Dr. Raimundo Pannikkar, Global Conference of Spiritual and Parliamentary Leaders on Human Survival, April 1988.
GOOD NEWS TRAVELS

Penciled in your vacation plans for next year? Hold on to your Hawaiian shirt. Good News Travels may have a great escape for you—an escape from those pricey, homogenized holidays that remind you of what you’re trying to leave behind.

Good News Travels will send you packing to missionaries who need a hand from someone with your skills. You probably won’t pay more than $100 a week for room, board and transport, after you buy your plane ticket. And you’ll see the real thing.

Good News Travels, 333 N. Santa Anita, Suite 4, Arcadia, CA 91006; (818) 445-5515.

LET’S MAKE A DEAL

Here’s a novel approach to college scholarship aid: Corporations donate goods and services to colleges. In exchange, the colleges award tuition credits to needy students.

Five Christian business leaders founded the Glen Ellyn, Ill.-based Education Assistance, Ltd. (From Collegiate Trends)

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.

Find out more about the complete Planned Famine program for your church’s young people.

Call today Toll-free 1-800-445-9887 Or mail this coupon and we’ll call you.

Name ____________________________
Church __________________________
Address __________________________
City ___________________________ State __________ Zip __________
Home phone (area code) __________ Office phone (area code) __________ Best time to call __________

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
I got up at 5:50 a.m. to hike up Georgia’s famous (?) Stone Mountain with Dick Steuart. 5:50. That’s 2:50 a.m. Pacific Standard Time. My time.

I got up in the middle of the night to spend 45 minutes climbing up and down a big rock with this retired Army colonel and former missionary who climbs it every morning. Well, almost every morning.

“you know, the best intentions...”

His voice trails off as we puff up the side of this thing in the chilly dawn, wind whipping our collars and a light rain slicking down the granite. Gray-haired, ruddy-complexed and rough around the edges, Dick Steuart is a man who likes to chart his own course.

“I love coming out here to do this. It’s a great way to start the day. Really clears my head.”

Art Carney could play Dick Steuart. Not the young, black-and-white Art Carney from the “Honeymooners” days. The older, crustier Art Carney who played Harry Coombs in “Harry and Tonto.” Harry Coombs, retired English professor, was being evicted from his doomed apartment building as the credits rolled.

He wouldn’t move. Sat right in his big easy chair with Tonto, his cat, and hung on. They had to carry him out. His friends and relatives chided him for making a spectacle. He contended he was making a point: Don’t push me around. What I’m doing is important. Leave me alone and let me get on with it.

It took that kind of brass for Dick and his wife, Carol, to stick it out last year in southern Sudan, where they helped distribute grain to Sudanese displacees in the city of Wau. More than 50,000 people have crowded into the small capital of Sudan’s Bahr el Ghazal region, doubling the city’s population. They come fleeing drought and fighting that has ravaged their rural homelands for years. Unfortunately, what they discover in Wau is often little better — and sometimes worse—than what they have left behind.

With Dick’s background as a career military officer, and with their various stints in Christian mission and relief work since his retirement from the military in 1971, the Steurts have been around the block a few times. But what commodities manager Dick and nurse/office manager Carol found when they arrived in Wau in March 1987 was a little out of the ordinary, even for them.

At the time when Jim and Tammy and Ollie were the going concerns back home, Dick and Carol were ducking bullets by day and watching grenaded huts illuminate the skies by night. Tribal warfare between the Dinkas and the Fertites had heated up in the area, and tensions between government troops from the north and the southern-based Sudan People’s Liberation Army (SPLA) were intensifying. In midsummer, an SPLA-launched ground-to-air missile struck a government plane.

“It made a hole in the rudder of that plane that a blind man could throw a basketball through,” says Dick. Since that time, retaliatory attacks by both sides increased. And tribal hatred only fanned the flames.

Even before we went to Wau, we had heard stories of random violence: houses being grenaded, people being shot and so forth,” says Dick. “Many of the attacks came at night. The Fertites would find a courtyard in which a bunch of refugees were staying—kids, mostly—after having come in from the countryside. The Fertites would throw a grenade into a courtyard where they knew the Dinkas were staying. And the Dinkas would retaliate; it went back and forth.”

But the number of violent incidents in the town increased during the time they were there. And on August 11th it came to a tragic head, claiming the lives of some 200 Dinka civilians.

“I happened to be outside the morning the shooting started,” says Carol. “What I saw was the panic, the results of the massacre of these Dinkas in a little neighborhood in town. People just screaming and yelling, running as fast as they could.

“From what we could tell, the massacre was in retaliation for the planes that had been shot at by the SPLA,” says Carol.

General rioting and unbridled violence erupted shortly afterward throughout the town. By the time a semblance of order had been restored, another 200 people—mostly civilians—had been killed. On the doorstep of the home across the street from where Dick and Carol lived, a mother and her child had been killed when they had sought shelter there.

“By this time we realized we just couldn’t conduct relief operations there...
Dick figured that if nothing happened in the first 20 seconds, they were home free.

Here are people who have spent a lifetime traveling the globe. They showed me a small bamboo cup from Cameroon inscribed with the names of all the cities in which they've lived since they were married in 1952: Frankfurt, Heidelberg, Okinawa, Tuscaloosa, Nioro, and a dozen or so more. (“If I’m in a place over two years I get bored,” says Dick.) Yet of all the places they’ve lived, Africa has touched them in ways the others have not. Their home is richly adorned with rare antiques and treasures from around the world. But something they took from Africa—their bracelets and toe-rings—are with them at all times. Constant reminders. The only other jewelry that’s always with them: wedding rings and Dick’s fat, worn graduation ring from West Point.

Dick would go back to Wau in an instant. Given the risks, he still misses the drama of the situation and the camaraderie that develops among people drawn together by dangerous circumstances. Carol wouldn’t be so quick to return.

In contrast to her sometimes impulsive husband, Carol appears more settled, quieter—the soothing balm who’s claimed the job of making sure the family unit maintains an even keel while bumping from city to city around the globe. To stay in shape—and to keep a case of osteoporosis at bay—she works out, lifts weights, takes brisk walks and practices t’ai chi three times a week at a local Baptist church.

“Dick is the big get-up-and-goer of the two of us,” says Carol. “Dick felt very strongly about getting into mission work. I wasn’t against it, I just didn’t feel as compelled to do it. But, looking back on it, I know I grew a lot and I am thankful for all the experiences we have had.”

In 1978 they left their 45-acre New Hampshire farm, where they had lived for six and a half years, and began a year of language study in Lausanne, Switzerland. That prepared them for administrative jobs at the Wycliffe Bible Translators support center in Yaounde, Cameroon.

Among the places they’ve lived and worked around the world, Carol’s first choice for a return visit would be Nioro. “I miss the Malians,” she says. “We helped bring a good number of people to Christ. And when you form that kind of spiritual bond with people it makes it a little different relationship.”

The Steuarts have no immediate plans to work overseas. No one would blame them if they decided to settle down in their comfortable home on a tree-lined cul-de-sac in smalltown America. They may stay there a while longer. Or they may be on a plane for the African bush tomorrow.

“As long as you’ve got good health, there are so many things you can do,” says Carol. “I’ve always felt that being older just means you’ve had more experience in many areas. You’re more mature. And going overseas is an exciting way to spend a year or two doing something really vital.”

“I also think experiences like this make you much more tolerant of other people, even subcultures in our own country. I’m thankful that we’ve had these opportunities. I count them as real privileges.”

Still, for all they’ve done to help the world’s downtrodden, they sometimes wonder if it makes a dent. Dick gestures to a stack of newspaper clippings on the table. “See there’s drought and famine hitting Africa again. There’s a certain inevitability to that kind of thing, but you sometimes ask yourself, ‘What good is it for me to help if it’s just going to happen anyway?’

“I think we have to believe that our presence does help,” Dick continues. “If there are people anywhere suffering, and it is within your ability to help—if the Lord’s given you the wherewithal to go and work—then what else can you do? You have a moral obligation. You’re not going to be able to help everybody. But maybe you can help a few people. Or even just one child.”
WHAT'S YOUR HANDICAP?

BY EDWARD R. DAYTON

Silver or gold I do not have, but what I have, I give you. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk.”

Two Christian leaders had something to give. It wasn’t what you might expect. Based upon the previous few days’ happenings, you might have guessed they would organize a Committee for the Handicapped among the rapidly growing Jerusalem church. Helping the handicapped is a good business for Christians to be in. But they didn’t do that (at least not immediately). Rather, they dealt with the situation as they found it.

All Christians are in the business of helping the handicapped, but it is a special role for the Christian leader because every one of us is handicapped. Each of us is less than whole. Some of us have physical handicaps. (I happen to be colorblind.) All of us have inabilities, things we can’t do. The Christian phrase for it is, “I’m just not gifted in that area.”

And we are handicapped by “the sin that doth so easily beset us.” We struggle along with Paul, wanting to do good but finding evil right there with us.

Who is to help us find our place in the marvelous body of Christ? For there is a place. The day that you became a Christian there was a you-shaped spot ready for you. And it was your shape right at that moment. You were cleansed from all your sin, but there was no need for you to somehow have all your handicaps removed before you could be an effective part of Christ’s church.

Who Helps The Handicapped?

I sometimes tell people that I am like a broken ball bearing. If you look at one side of me, I may look bright and shiny and smooth. But there is a side which is rough and jagged and broken. I can be complete only as others come alongside me and fill out that broken side.

So Christian leaders not only seek gifts in those whom they lead; they also do their best to understand the handicaps so they can fit the members of a team together in a complementary way. One member may have great gifts of planning but be absolutely unequipped to present those plans to a congregation. Another may have a beautiful gift of compassion; if someone needs comforting, this is the person to call. But fix a broken toilet? All thumbs.

Identifying Handicaps

Before we talk about identifying handicaps, we need to first recognize gifts. If we begin with the understanding that God has gifted every one of us, we become less concerned about a person’s lacking gifts. Look for strengths before weaknesses. What is this person good at? What does she like to do? What do others say he does well?

The other side of the picture is what they don’t do well, what they don’t like to do, what others say they are not good at. Knowing both sides of the picture helps us discover where they fit the best, with whom they work the best, where they perhaps do not belong.

Honoring the “Less Honorable”

But there is a deeper sense in which the leader is a helper of the handicapped. In the middle of 1 Corinthians 12, Paul has some very interesting things to say about the most handicapped: “On the contrary, those parts of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, and the parts that we think are less honorable we treat with special honor. And the parts that are the less presentable are treated with special modesty, while our presentable parts need no special treatment. But God has combined the members of the body and has given greater honor to the parts that lacked it so there should be no division in the body, but that its parts should have equal concern for each other.”

Imagine what would happen if we quietly identified all those we think are “less honorable” and started treating them with special honor. These “less honorable” would rise to the top and we would have a new set to honor. The entire body would become like a constantly bubbling, refreshing spring.

Handicapped people take our time. They take special care. They need to be given special honor. That’s upside down from the way the world thinks. But that’s what Christian leadership is all about.
somebody from the local nursing home is parked in the church aisle. His hair is greasy, his shirt unevenly buttoned. His care-givers, overworked and underpaid, don’t quite take the time they should to get him ready. But there he sits in his wheelchair, hands and feet curled and gnarled. He can’t say much. He drools.

And we walk a wide circle around him.

We’re not sure what God has to say about such folks. It’s as if this young man’s cerebral palsy is holding God hostage. What is God doing here? Hanging out dirty laundry?

I used to think that disabilities intimidated and embarrassed God. That was how I pictured my own diving injury 20 years ago. I figured that when I was standing on the raft, ready to take that deep dive into shallow water, God’s back was turned.

Then the devil snuck up behind me, put a foot in the small of my back and gave a big shove. And tiptoed away in absolute delight.

About that time, God turned around and—oh!—suddenly saw what had happened to me, and had to grab a repair kit and go to work on my life, nervously mumbling, “How in the world am I going to fix this one up to work for good?”

Well, that may have been a young girl’s idea of how it all fit together. But that’s not the picture that the Bible paints.

I believe that God singles out people with disabilities—both physical and mental—for a very special reason. They illustrate how, when we are at our weakest, God’s grace and power are at their strongest.

I have a friend named Betsy who cannot speak. If you spoke her name, chances are she wouldn’t really understand. Betsy also cannot walk. She sits up only for short periods and can’t feed herself.

If you visited her, you might be asked to assist Betsy with daily routines such as eating and drinking. But you would also have to assist her with other intimate care, for my friend has no control over her bowels or bladder. She can’t sleep straight through the night and awakens with desperate screams.

Would you want your church to invest in reaching out to Betsy and getting involved in her life? On a scale of one to ten, be honest, how highly would you value the time you spent with her?

Well, let me tell you about Betsy. She’s an 8-month-old baby!

No, she can’t quite understand her name yet. And sure, you’d have to feed her. You’d probably get more applesauce on yourself than in her mouth. But you wouldn’t mind, not even changing her diapers. In fact, she’d rate pretty close to a “ten.”

We tend to judge without all the facts, don’t we? And sadly, we’re greatly
I  "Ladies, for just $180 you can join our
success."

want to communicate? If we really
couple of commercials that literally
warned him.

fertility specialist to tell you that Sarah
the Christian hype about beauty and
in weakness, we've got to tone down
believe that God's power shows up best
turned my stomach.

out to those with disabilities?

our brothers and sisters in Christ reach
the whole world would know who had
done it. It wasn't accomplished by
birth to a beautiful bouncing baby boy,
David slew Goliath and Sarah gave
this is why. God knew that when
mother of a nation.
is not the most likely candidate for

attractive. Yes, come to our success
help you become more successful and
tlemen, come and hear Dr. So-and-So
brand new weight-loss system. You're

guaranteed to lose 50 pounds.

A couple of years ago I got a
nice letter from a woman in Alabama. She sent a clipping of a boy with a spinal
cord injury in Coal Valley, Ill. She had
sent this young man a copy of my book
Joni. I thought that was really sweet.
The next day I got five letters. One
from Georgia, one from Ohio, a couple
from Oregon. More newspaper clippings,
and all these people had sent my book
to this young man in Illinois. I
was beginning to get a little nervous. I
remembered how I had felt when I was
first injured and I received no fewer
than 20 copies of The Other Side of the
Mountain by Jill Kinmont, the Olympic
skier who broke her neck.

Five days passed. I was up to 50
letters, 50 clippings and 50 people who
had sent 50 books to Coal Valley. I
began to get desperate.

I tracked down the phone number
dialed.

"Hello? Listen, you don't know
She thanked me for
being "an inspiration,
and I flinched at the
label.

me, but my name is Joni Eareckson...."

"Don't go any further! I've got
exactly 50 copies of your book on my
dining room table!"

"Oh, I am so sorry," I said. "Listen,
call the Goodwill, ship them off to the
public library, do whatever you want with
them. Just keep one book, would you?
Put it up on a shelf somewhere and
maybe in a year or two, you could
brush the dust off and flip through it.
Perhaps it'll be encouraging then."
The young man's mother thanked
for his life to serve a handicapped woman.

"Oh no, he's given his life up to the Lord
his life to serve a handicapped woman.

Ken, I think it's so
wonderful that you've given
up your life to serve
Joni," many people tell my
husband.

That attitude really makes him
uncomfortable. Ken has not given up
his life to serve a handicapped woman.
Oh no, he's given his life up to the Lord
Jesus Christ in sacrificial service. And
it just so happens that God has part­
nered him with me, a woman with a disability.

The call goes out to every Chris­
tian to serve sacrificially, and I think
handicapped people give our churches a chance to answer that call. When it
comes right down to it, God wants you
involved.
A remarkable new boldness and effectiveness in the realm of Christian witnessing is becoming more and more apparent to me these days. And I think I know the reason for that renewal. People are waiting in prayer until they get a “word” from the Lord, after which they act in utter obedience to that word.

While reviewing my concordance recently, I discovered that about one-third of the time the word of the Lord is mentioned in the New Testament, it is rhema, a word from the Lord given for a particular situation. Other times it is logos, which most often refers to the written word or the living word, Christ.

Are we actively awaiting that rhema from the Lord? All of us can stand to do that more in our personal lives and ministries. Nothing can be more adventurous than seeing God work through us in that way.

Norval Hadley
Director, Prayer Ministries

PRAY FOR:

☐ ☐ Unreached people in Kulu Valley, India, where most residents have never heard of Jesus Christ.
☐ ☐ The Family Friendship Ministry, which matches volunteers with people in need through a period of rehabilitation.
☐ ☐ The battle against meningitis in Chad, where some 175 deaths have occurred in recent months.
☐ ☐ The Ethnic Senior Leaders Conference, October 17-20, in San Bernardino, Calif.
☐ ☐ Protection from arrest or harassment for Christians in China, and that the gospel will continue to spread there.
☐ ☐ Albania, self-declared atheistic state, that it might become more open to the gospel.
☐ ☐ Angola, where some $110 million in food and other aid will be needed for war recovery.
☐ ☐ Nazarene church leaders in Haiti, who hope to start 88 new churches this year.
☐ ☐ Famine relief programs in Ethiopia which are helping people to feed themselves.
☐ ☐ The more than 1000 Kampuchean refugees in Thailand who have turned to Christ in the last two years.
☐ ☐ Freedom to evangelize in Bangladesh despite rising opposition.
☐ ☐ Mission Aviation Fellowship’s new transport services in Baja and northern mainland Mexico.
☐ ☐ Colombia, where problems related to political unrest and drug trafficking will require unceasing prayer.
☐ ☐ The World by 2000 Radio Project, of Sudan Interior Mission, who hope to reach every person in the world with the gospel by the year 2000.
☐ ☐ Low-income families in the U.S. who go without medical and dental care, rather than rely on charity.
☐ ☐ Uganda’s Teso District, where some 15,000 displaced people are in dire need.
☐ ☐ Mikhail Gorbachev, that an apparent softening toward Christians will continue.
☐ ☐ Joni Eareckson Tada and her efforts to link Christians with the disabled people around them.
☐ ☐ Reconciliation in South Africa, and that Christians will actively mend the brokenness found on both sides.
☐ ☐ The work of Henri Nouwen and others who care for the severely disabled and discover the roots of true peace in the process.
☐ ☐ The ministry of Youth Alive as it reaches out to confused young South Africans.
☐ ☐ Victims of terrorism and drought in Mozambique, many of whom have lost parents and other family members.
☐ ☐ World Vision’s involvement in Vietnam, through which thousands of disabled war victims will receive artificial limbs.
☐ ☐ Lawmakers in Washington, DC., that they may vote on legislation with sensitivity to the oppressed and hurting in the U.S.
☐ ☐ Mother Teresa and those who work with her in Calcutta and around the world to ease the suffering of the poorest of the poor.
☐ ☐ Victims of AIDS, and family members in need of strength and courage as they witness the slow death of loved ones.
☐ ☐ The work of the English Language Institute/China and its Christian teachers.
☐ ☐ The work of Operation Smile, and that many more lives will be transformed through this compassionate outreach.

☐ ☐ Christian volunteers who freely give their time and talent to help meet desperate needs around the world.
☐ ☐ Teen-age runaways, that in their desperate search for love they may find shelter and the genuine love of Christ.
☐ ☐ Homeless children in the U.S. too young to understand why they must go to bed hungry while their peers on television are so happy and healthy.
In love loaf

• Fortified: By the Word
• Enriched: From the Heart
• Necessary: To Save Lives

Thousands of churches across our
nation have already received the blessings
and growth that come from giving
freely from the heart.

Here's how it works:

• Each family in your church
  receives a Love Loaf to
take home and fill with
loose change.
• Place it on the
dinner table—the
kids love it!
• A month later,
everyone gathers to
break the loaves and
offer them to the Lord.

The funds will be
used to alleviate
physical and spiritual
hunger in World Vision’s
ministries around the
world. After the program,
the families can stay involved
by sponsoring a child through
World Vision’s sponsorship program.

We will provide the loaves, posters,
and all materials at no cost to you—
everything to help build enthusiasm for
your Love Loaf program.

To order your Love Loaves,
just fill out the coupon and send to
World Vision today!

You can help save
the life of
a child
for one
month.

$15/

$30/

$45/

□ Yes, we want to participate
in the Love Loaf program.

□ Please send us ________ loaves
(one per household)
We plan to distribute the loaves on
(date)
(Please allow four weeks for delivery of materials)

□ Please send us STEPS OF FAITH
with Bob Wieland:
Date: Choice 1
Choice 2
Check one:

□ 16mm film

□ VHS videotape

□ I have a question. Please call
me at: □ Home □ Work
□ We need more information before
we can make a decision.