

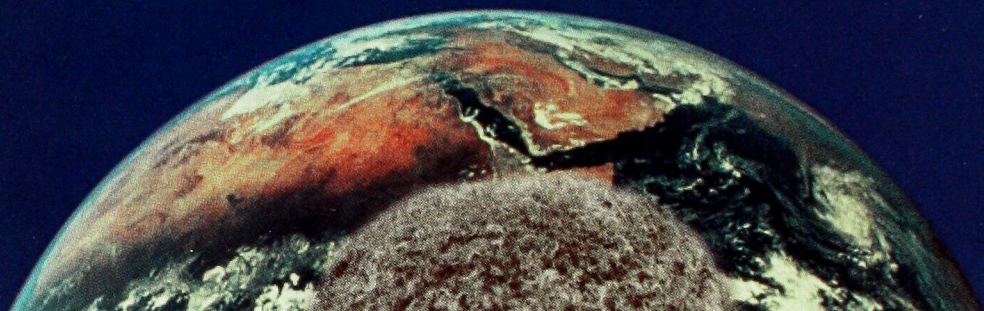
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February/March 1997

**HONDURAS:
SEEDS OF CHANGE**

pg. 8

**RAISING
COMPASSIONATE
KIDS** pg. 16



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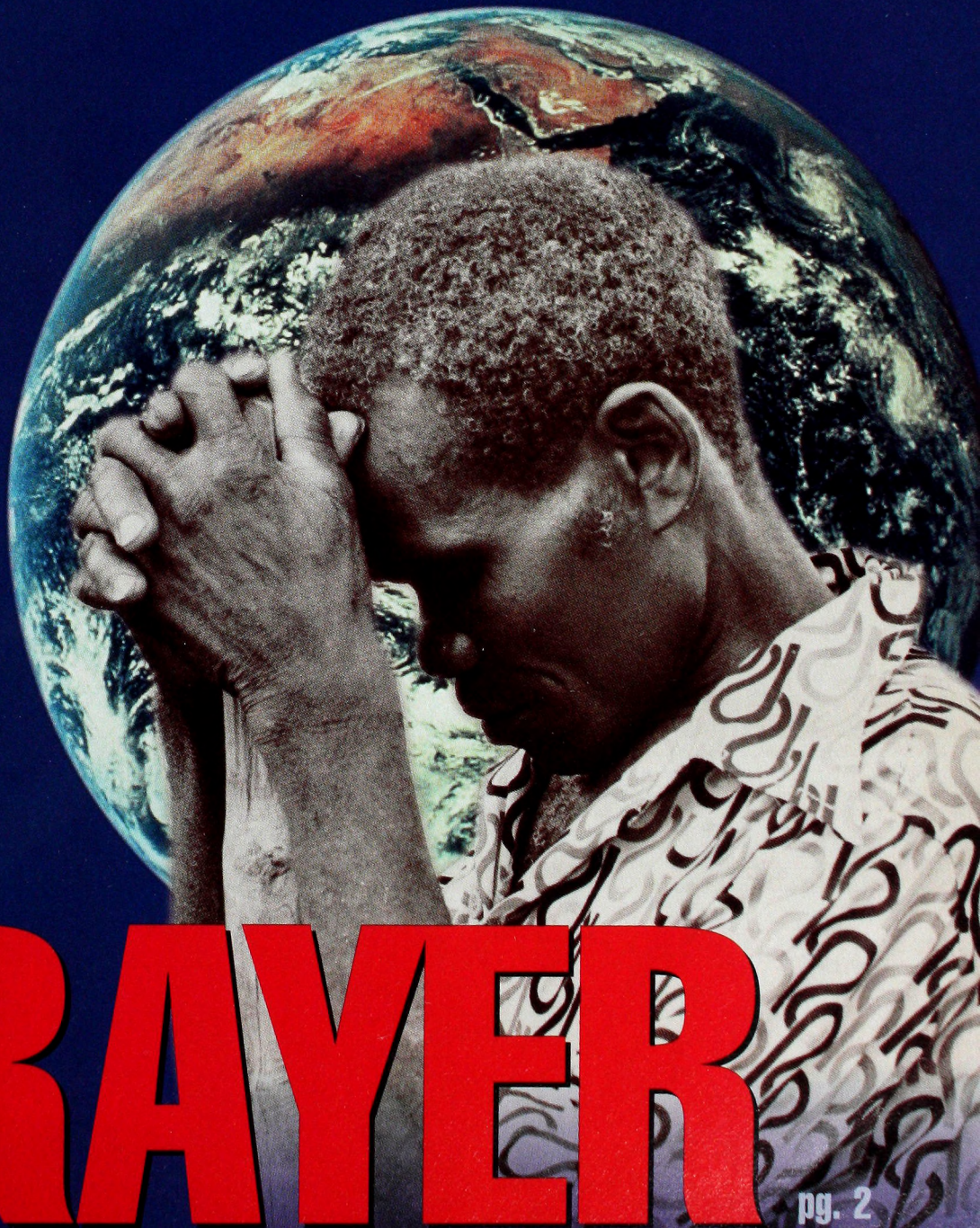
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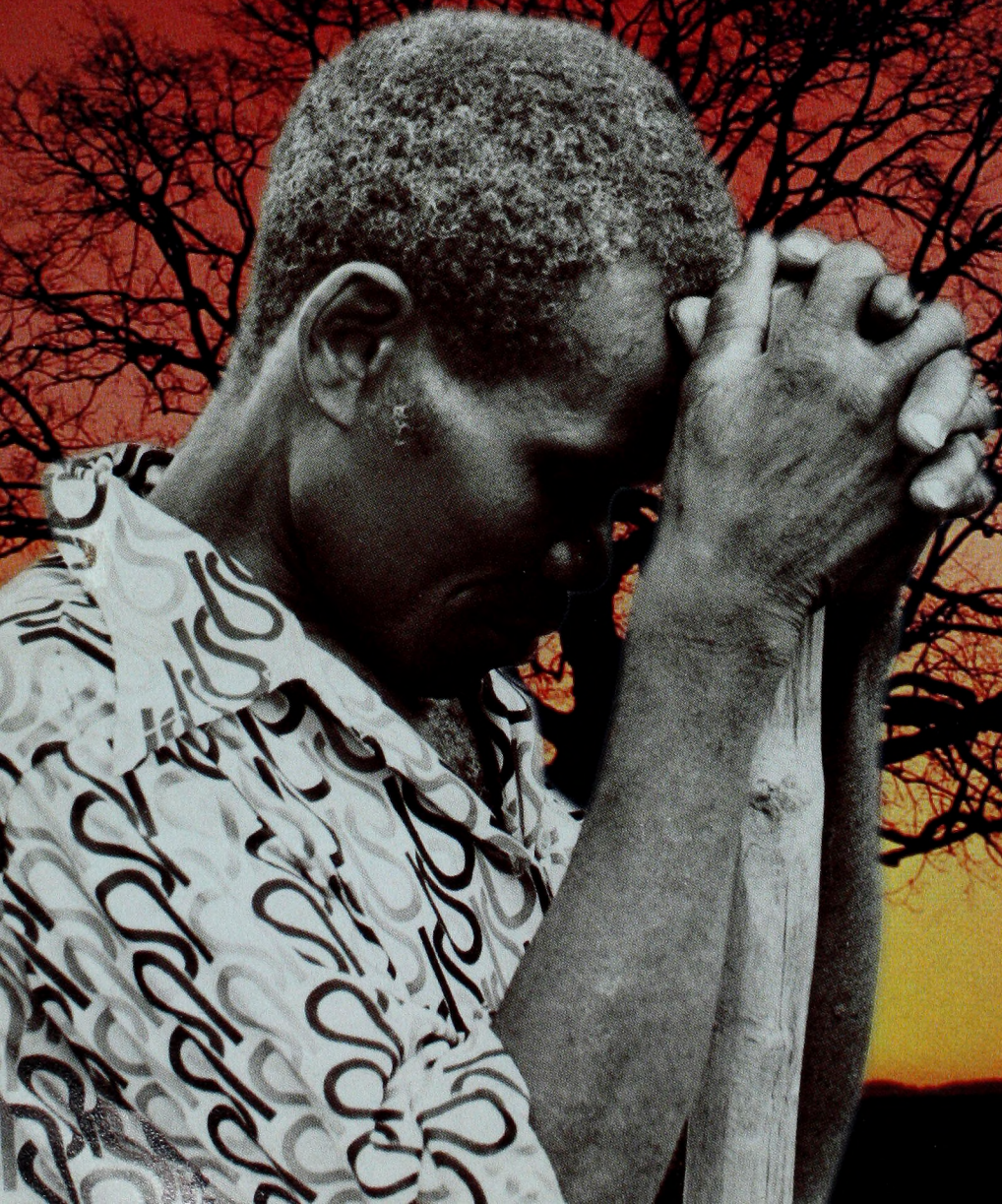


**YOU
CAN
CHANGE
THE
WORLD
THROUGH**

PRAYER

pg. 2

**"ALTHOUGH WE
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HAPPEN."**



IN GOD'S KINGDOM... **PRAYER** IS SOCIAL ACTION

BY JOHN ROBB WITH LARRY WILSON

S SEVEN YEARS AGO, a giant tree stood on the banks of the Awash River, in an arid valley about two hours' drive southeast of Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. It had stood there for generations, seemingly eternal.

For years, the people who lived in the surrounding district had suffered through famines because they were unable to bring water to the higher level of the surrounding land. Unable to grow adequate food, countless numbers suffered and died.

In their suffering, the people looked to the tree for help. Believing a spirit gave it divine powers, they worshipped the towering giant. Adults would kiss the great

trunk when they passed by, and they spoke of the tree in hushed, reverential tones. Children said, "This tree saved us."

In 1989, World Vision began a development project there, including an irrigation system to make the valley's parched earth bloom for the first time. But even as they labored to build the system, the great tree stood like a forbidding sentinel of the old order, presiding over the community, enslaving the people through fear. For spirits need to be propitiated with animal sacrifices and strict observance of taboos. In this way the tree's spirit ensured its continued grip on the mentality of the community, threat-



A once sacred tree-idol lies toppled in Ethiopia's Awash River.

ening the whole process of transformation so crucial to the people's future health and development.

When World Vision workers saw how the villagers worshipped the tree, they knew it was as an idolatrous barrier to the entrance of Christ's kingdom and transformation of the community.

One morning as the staff prayed together, one of Jesus' promises struck them: "If you have faith, you can say to this tree, 'Be taken up and removed' ... and it will obey you." In faith, they began to pray that God would bring down the menacing goliath.

Soon the whole community knew the Christians were praying about the tree. Six months later, the tree began to dry up, its leafy foliage disappeared, and finally it collapsed like a stricken giant into the river.

The people of the community were astonished, proclaiming, "Your God has done this! Your God has dried up the tree!" In the days and weeks afterwards, approximately 100 members of the community received Jesus Christ because they saw his power displayed in answer to the Christians' prayers.

EVANGELISM, SOCIAL ACTION—AND PRAYER

For years, Christians have divided themselves over the most effective means of transforming our world: verbal proclamation of the gospel—witnessing—or social action. In truth, the two cannot be separated. Without both, there is simply no Good News. And one thing ties them both together: prayer to a God of temporal justice and eternal salvation.

Traditionally, many evangelicals have been quite comfortable praying for the salvation of friends, family, and even people groups. But some of us still don't pray enough for justice for the oppressed, economic opportunity for the poor, or protection for the powerless. We thank God for

providing us food at dinner, yet do not ask him to feed those who are starving. After 11 years of combining evangelism and economic development among the world's poor through World Vision, I can say there is no holistic transformation of people apart from united intercession by God's people.

Wherever in the world there is significant development—people coming to Christ, health improvements, economic opportunities, adoption of kingdom values—it is the direct result of Christians praying.

In Matthew 18, Jesus said, "I tell you the truth, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven. Again, I tell you that if two of you on earth agree about anything you ask for, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven."

In God's kingdom, prayer is social action.

THE SPIRITUALITY OF SOCIAL PROBLEMS

As we seek to help the poor and stand against injustice, we forget that we are also standing against Principali-

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ties and Powers. Since the garden of Eden, humans have cooperated with Satan and his evil spirits to gain control over individuals and societies, leading to widescale famine, disease, poverty, slavery, injustice, and suffering. Whenever we try to help the victims of these tragedies, we enter a fray involving the great socio-spiritual forces that rule the world's massive institutions, social structures, and systems.

Satan and the Powers are dedicated to destroying human beings made in the image of God. Satan is the master deceiver and the author of idolatry, seeking to dominate the world by undermining faith in God, twisting values, and promoting false ideologies. He does this by infiltrating institutions, governments, communications media, educational systems, and religious bodies, and uses these to seduce humankind to worship money, fame, success, power, pleasure, science, art, politics, and religious idols.

Throughout much of the Old Testament, Satan induced Israel to abandon God and worship the false gods of the Egyptians, Amorites, Canaanites, Edomites—and they suffered God's promised consequences: oppression, slavery, foreign invasion, and poverty, (Judges 6:6; 10:6-16; Deuteronomy 28). The same sin and its consequences afflict the world today. Northern India is one of the world's darkest areas. Indians estimate there may be more than 300 million gods there. Kali, the goddess of destruction, is a regional deity worshipped in Calcutta, West Bengal. Anyone who has been to Calcutta has seen the devastating impact she and those who worship her have made upon the city's people.

Elsewhere in the world, the occult is behind some of the most brutal injustices of this century. In Cambodia, the Khmer Rouge—who killed as many as 2 million people in the 1970s—were based at two occult strongholds in the north where Shiva, the Hindu god of destruction and regeneration, and Naga, the serpent god, are worshipped. And during Liberia's recent civil war, SIM missionaries reported that "armies" of children practiced *juju*—a kind of African magic or witchcraft—to gain power. They would wear fetishes, call spirits to come into them, get drunk, and then murder whole villages of innocent people.

POWERS AFFECT THE WORLD

Such brutality and oppression—and their connection to spiritual powers—is not peculiar to the Third World. Talking to Christian leaders in Bosnia last year, I learned that Croats, Serbs, and Muslims—including many of their reli-

gious leaders—practice sorcery and black magic.

In the United States, we have suffered the likes of Charles Manson, Jim Jones, and the Branch Davidians—obvious examples of demonic influence. Theologian Walter Wink also sees demonic infiltration of the CIA, government administration, and armed forces to ensure continued U.S. political and economic dominance over weaker nations. Commenting on the blind allegiance so many citizens give to national self-interest, Wink writes, “What makes nationalism so pernicious, so death-dealing, so blasphemous is its seemingly irresistible tendency toward idolatry. In the name of this idol, whole generations are maimed, slaughtered, exiled, and made idolaters. One hundred million lives have been offered on the altar of this Moloch thus far in the 20th century.”

Referring to 2 Corinthians 10:3-5, Francis Frangipane, an Iowa pastor, wrote in his book *The Three Battlegrounds*, “There are satanic strongholds over countries and communities, churches and individuals. ... These fortresses exist in the thought patterns and ideas that govern individuals ... communities, and nations. Before victory can be claimed, these strongholds must be pulled down, and Satan’s armor removed. Then the mighty weapons of the Word and the Spirit can effectively plunder Satan’s house.”

Through prayer we participate with God to demolish strongholds, establish his kingdom, and change the world.

PRAYING AGAINST THE POWERS

In Revelation 4:1-8:6, John describes a God-given vision of mankind’s history. It is filled with images of God and celestial beings interacting with each other and with mankind. In these verses, the Lamb of God opens seven seals, each affecting the history of the world. By the end of chapter 7, all of heaven is singing and worshipping God, wondering what will happen next in this unleashing of human history.

At the beginning of chapter 8, however, they all fall silent. Seven angels with seven trumpets stand before God, ready to announce the unfolding fate of the world. But they must wait as an eighth angel offers God incense and *all the prayers of the saints*—prayers for justice, vindication, and victory. Nothing can happen until these prayers reach the nostrils of God.

“What happens next happens because people prayed,” Wink says. “The message is clear: History belongs to the intercessors, who believe the future into being. ... God works with us and for us, to make and keep human life humane. And what God does depends on the intercessions of those who care enough to try to shape a future more humane than the present.”

The apostle Paul emphasized, “Our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world, and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms,” (Ephesians 6:12). In this struggle, prayer is the de-

cisive weapon, and it is often aggressive and violent. Karl Barth said, “To clasp the hands in prayer is the beginning of an uprising against the disorder of the world.” The structures and forces of injustice, oppression, and war are so overwhelming, all our efforts to help the poor and needy will fall flat—unless we first invite God into the fray. Until we achieve victory in prayer, engaging the outer world is hopeless.

I’m not saying that prayer is all that is necessary to change the world. For too long, too many evangelical Christians believed prayer is a substitute for action, dumping on God the responsibility for doing what he already commanded us to do throughout Scripture. But neither is social action a substitute for prayer.

PRAYING A DESIRABLE FUTURE

West Africa is one of the poorest regions in the world. Few people are literate, political oppression is rampant, and Christians are often persecuted. Several years ago, Nathan*, a young agriculturalist, visited one of these countries to study its agricultural practices.

Over the next year, Nathan fell in love with a specific group of people he studied. He wanted to reveal God’s love to them by helping them agriculturally to alleviate some of their suffering. As a Christian, he knew that only prayer would enable them to see that love for what it was.

After returning home, Nathan prayed daily for that group of people, and for Christians who were trying to help them.

**Nathan, from a country that persecutes Christians, requested that his real name and country not be used.*



From Mexico City to Ho Chi Minh City, millions of youth survive on the streets through stealing, prostitution, drugs. **PLEASE PRAY** that the local churches and city officials will face the root problems of rootless kids.

Specifically, he prayed that a Christian organization would start a development project among them. One Sunday as he prayed, he felt especially attuned to God's Spirit. "I felt that whatever I asked that day, God would give me," he says, "so I asked for everything I had already been praying for, and then some."

Fifteen years after he had left the country, Nathan returned to visit the people he had been praying so long for. He discovered that a Christian organization had established a community development project in the very center of the region he had prayed for, and its work went far beyond his own prayers. People's lives were being changed. They were even becoming more receptive to God's love.

Doug Barnett, a World Vision technical advisor in West Africa, says, "Who knows how many of our Christian development activities have been bathed in prayer ahead of time by saints like Nathan? Although we may never see firsthand the results of our prayers, we might be surprised by what can happen."

PRAYER CHANGES THE WORLD

There are at least three ways that God honors our prayers to change the world.

■ **PRAYER BREAKS THROUGH THE FALSE DOMINION OF THE ENEMY.**

In Mark 9, as Jesus prepared to exorcise an evil spirit, he said, "This kind cannot be driven out by anything but by prayer." If this holds true for the demonization of individuals, does it not also hold true for the

Social action without prayer is soulless; but prayer without action lacks integrity.

spiritual oppression of societies?

Satan's main goal is to keep God from being glorified on earth. He hates God, and he hates human beings, who are made in God's image. Through culture, television, drugs, and even some religious practices, Satan and his minions influence the hearts and minds of people worldwide.

In Latin America, West Asia, the Middle East, and Africa, people are deeply afraid of these spirits and look for ways to protect themselves through amulets, elaborate rituals and festivals, or witchdoctors. Not surprisingly, these protections can be very expensive, contributing to the poverty and oppression of the poor.

In addition, by affecting what you believe, Satan can influence what happens to you. In Hinduism, for example, the idea of fate imprisons millions of people in spiritual and economic poverty. Fate determines the caste you are born

into. If you are born into a poor caste, you probably will not try to better your life by becoming an attorney or an accountant. Fate cannot be overcome.

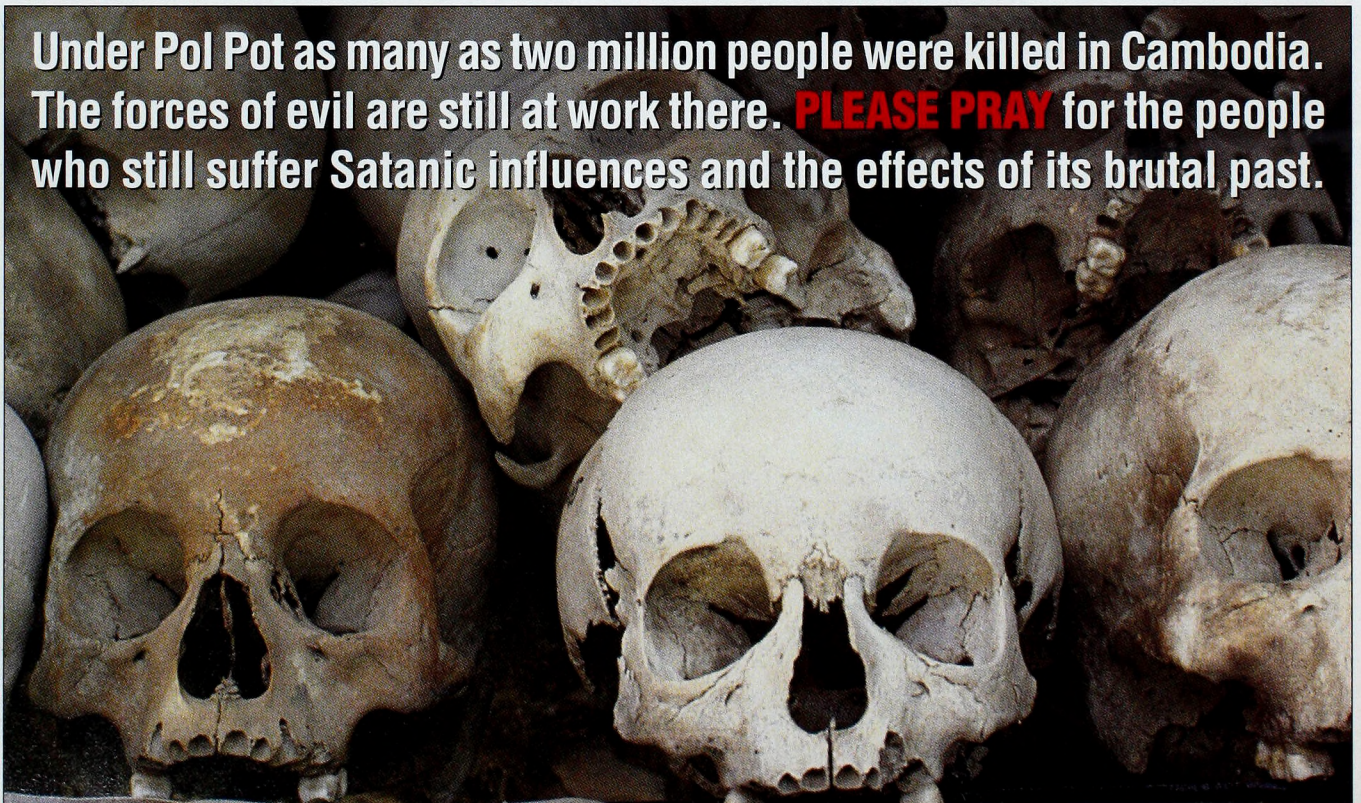
That's a Satanic stronghold, a deception that keeps people in bondage and impoverished, and keeps them from progressing. The New Testament calls this an act of war, a spiritual war in which spiritual weapons can help liberate people groups, cities, and nations from the powers of darkness. That is why united prayer is so important for the breaking of this demonic bondage.

In Mark 3:27, Jesus said, "No one can enter a strong man's house and carry off his possessions unless he first ties up the strong man. Then he can rob his house." Satan is not going to let go of individuals or a people group without a fight, and he must be dealt with before people can overcome that dominion. Paul said the god of this world has blinded the minds of unbelievers. So you've got to remove that resistance, that false dominion from a society if you want to see economic or spiritual transformation. Holistic transformation will not happen without united prayer.

■ **PRAYER CHANGES US AND LEADS US TO ACT.**

"Social action without prayer is soulless; but prayer without action lacks integrity," Wink says. As we pray for social change, the Holy Spirit begins to transform *us*, and we find ourselves getting involved in social ministries. It's as if

Under Pol Pot as many as two million people were killed in Cambodia. The forces of evil are still at work there. PLEASE PRAY for the people who still suffer Satanic influences and the effects of its brutal past.





Child labor is a worldwide problem as demonstrated by these children working at a dump in the Philippines. PLEASE PRAY for these youth robbed of their childhood.

God returns our prayers as a kind of divine command to become the answer to our prayers.

In 1992, after the Los Angeles riots surrounding the Rodney King verdict, 40 pastors in Fresno, Calif., starting meeting once a month to pray for the hurting people of their city. Soon they started praying with laypeople and Christian civic leaders from the tops of city buildings overlooking the urban landscape. They met in a different location each month, including city hall, the rescue mission, the county jail, high schools, the school district office, the International Trade Center, and Fresno Pacific College.

As all these Christians "got out of their churches and into the community," they saw, understood, and began responding to its needs, says Jim Westgate, a professor at Mennonite Brethren Bible Seminary in Fresno. Today more than 6,000 evangelical Christians are involved in Fresno's inner-city ministries.

Through Christ's redemption, human stewardship over the earth is being restored. And through prayer, we as his redeemed people reassert our God-given dominion over the world, ruling and reigning with Christ. Through believing prayer, we open the door for God's intervention in our troubled world, and open ourselves up to become part of God's answer to that world of need.

■ **PRAYER LEADS TO SPIRITUAL TRANSFORMATION.**

God cares whether people are hun-

gry or sick, whether they have clean water—about all the things they have to contend with. For that reason, World Vision is committed to transforming communities and infusing them with the values and qualities of the kingdom of God: love, civic responsibility, caring for one another, economic development. But more than that, we work for the spiritual transformation of these communities. We know that apart from a change in people's hearts, there will be no outward change. Unless people move toward the kingdom of God and become citizens of that kingdom, espousing its values, we will see little change in their outward lives.

This kind of change is not possible apart from conversion—people coming to faith in Jesus Christ. So evangelism is extremely important. And prayer must go hand in hand with sharing the good news.

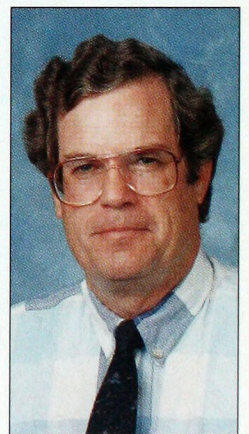
United prayer weakens and pushes back the spiritual darkness blinding countries, towns, and individuals, enabling them to hear and see the good news of Jesus Christ. United prayer opens hearts to a new way of living, and when hearts are changed, so are the communities in which people live.

HISTORY BELONGS TO INTERCESSORS

According to Scripture, intercessory prayer is the key to fulfilling God's gracious purpose for the peoples of the earth. In Psalm 2, God said, "Ask of me and I will make the nations your inheritance and the ends of the earth your pos-

session." Through Ezekiel, God said he looks for someone to "stand in the gap" before him. And through Isaiah, the Lord said he posts watchmen on Jerusalem's walls who will "never be silent day or night," giving themselves and the Lord no rest "till he establishes Jerusalem and makes her the praise of the earth."

We live in an age when people often pray small prayers and have limited expectations of God. Perhaps they believe he does not really care about the world's suffering. Perhaps they doubt his willingness to interfere in our temporal injustices. Maybe some people even believe him impotent. But I believe history belongs to the intercessors, those willing to believe that God is bigger than our suffering, those willing to believe that his power is more than able to answer to the world's needs, those willing to confront him with their God-given vision of a society full of justice, health, and love. 🌍



John Robb directs the Unreached Peoples Program for World Vision's Missions Advanced Research and Communications Center in Monrovia, Calif.

In Honduras:

SEEDS OF CHANGE

TEXT BY LARRY LEE

PHOTOS BY LUIS DIEGO SOLÓRZANO

With education and seedlings, World Vision is helping Honduras restore a green future to a denuded wasteland.

Angela Guevara stands behind her southern Honduran home kneading dough that will soon go into her big wood-fired outdoor oven. She later will sell the bread to buy food for her family.

About 50 feet away stands an unusual sight in this part of Central America: a grove of trees. Young and just beginning to produce seed, they represent a leap of faith for Guevara.

The trees offer her a vision of the future that is rare in an area of the world where living day-to-day is all many people dare hope for.

Two years ago, when Guevara heard that a World Vision project in her community was looking for land to plant spiny cedar

trees, an endangered species, she immediately offered hers. Inspiring her decision was the medical care and other aid her 8-year-old daughter, Cindy Johanna Gutiérrez, receives as one of 4,764 World Vision sponsored children in Valle, Honduras' southwestern province.


The land Guevara donated remains hers. Once the trees, now 2 years old, start producing seed on a regular basis, Guevara will be able

to sell the produce. After they have matured, she will sell the valuable wood. Then she will plant more trees, giving her family a steady income and providing an example for her skeptical neighbors.

It is an important example. Halfway across Valle

Angela Guevara





Mobi Elizabeth Sierra, 13, plants a tree on the grounds of Aguas Frías elementary school. World Vision provided students with 6,360 young trees to raise in a campus nursery.

lies the town of Aguas Frías, Spanish for "cold waters." It's a cruel misnomer for an area rapidly turning to desert. Valle is so hot that the locals jokingly call it a sinners' way station to prepare them for a scorching afterlife. It has been crippled by the slash-and-burn agriculture that has nearly wiped out the dry forests that once covered the region's hillsides.

Deforestation in Honduras began here. Now it threatens all the nation's forests. But World Vision, through education and support for replanting efforts, is helping people understand that trees are a valuable resource.

BURNING DOWN THE HOUSE

The massive loss of forested areas is not unique to Honduras. The United Nations estimates that from 1980 to 1990, the world lost about 1.3 percent of its forests each year to logging, farming, and development. In the Brazilian rainforest alone, an area the size of Belgium has been lost since 1992. This worldwide plundering of trees is threatening national economies and the global environment.

In few places is that more evident than in Honduras. According to Honduras' forest service, Cohdefor, satellite images show that from 1967 to 1990, 5 million acres of the country's forest were destroyed.

"The only pure forest that is left in the country is in the national parks and

the protected areas," says Ismael Hernández, a forest engineer and coordinator of Cohdefor's mapping section. But not even that is sacred anymore.

Hernández predicts that new computer images will show a greater loss between 1990 and 1994 than during the 23 previous years because of government repopulation efforts and private sawmills that are winning concessions to cut pine forests on government land. In addition, in a short-sighted attempt to help the country's poor, the government is giving them areas to grow food without looking at the long-range drawbacks. Deforestation is also a cultural problem, Hernández says. Hondurans like to produce their own staples, like beans, corn, and rice, and will cut away trees to do it.

The pattern is well-established. When the *campesinos*—poor farmers—have clear-cut an area, they grow crops for a few years using primitive agricultural methods that rapidly deplete the fertile soil. Once that has happened, they must move on to find new land to grow food. Then cattle ranchers move in. "Cattle

ranchers are the biggest destroyers," Hernández says, "because they support the campesinos' methods."

SPREADING LIKE WILDFIRE

The most devastated region of Honduras is Valle. For decades, deforestation was a way of life there. Today very little forest is left to cut down, and the region is turning into a virtual desert.

Perhaps the biggest problem contributing to Valle's deforestation—and a major barrier to efforts to reverse the problem—is the region's dense population. Crowded Valle has an average of 6.3 people in each household and 100 on each square kilometer of land, much higher than the Honduran average of 44 per square kilometer. In Honduras, each woman has an average of five children. Valle's population of 160,000 is expected to grow by 25 percent between now and 2000, reaching 200,000 people. All of them will rely on firewood for cooking.

To reduce the population in the area, the nation's president, Carlos Roberto Reina, announced in 1995 that he would open the fertile valley of the Sico and Paulaya rivers to *campesinos* wanting land. Hundreds streamed there, many of them from Valle, despite a lack of schools, health centers, highways, housing, and public utilities in the area.

At best, however, redistribution of the population is a stopgap measure. The great fear is that if Valle's environmental

THE ONLY PURE FOREST THAT IS LEFT IN THE COUNTRY IS IN THE NATIONAL PARKS."

Victorino Cárdenas, 33, of Aguas Frías, uses slash-and-burn farming methods to grow corn for his family on land rented from a cattle raiser. Over the past 30 years, Honduras lost more than 5 million acres of its forests, turning the southwestern part of the country into virtual desert.



problem isn't reversed through education and reforestation, and if a sense of respect for the environment isn't fostered now, population growth will threaten the rest of the nation's forests, turning Honduras into a giant Valle.

The Honduran government tried in 1970 to reforest a basin along the Choluteca River in southern Honduras, but administrative corruption doomed that program to failure. The result since then has been a continual spiral of failure in attempts to reforest the south.

Tulio Javier Duarte, an official with a cooperative of valley residents who fought the president's population shifts, says much of the blame lies with international lending organizations and banks, which haven't provided the technical assistance necessary for people to move out of farming and into forestry.

"We can change," he says, "but with aid."

STARTING OVER

World Vision is one group determined to provide that aid, particularly in Valle. Luis Alonso García Reyes is one of many World Vision educators in Valle promoting awareness in those who will shape Honduras' next century: young people.

García is in charge of the environmental program at Aguas Frias' Casta R. Alvarado Elementary School. He teaches all the children but works particularly with sixth graders, who from 8 to 8:30 each morning take care of 6,360 young trees in the campus nursery. Started from seed, the trees were transferred to the ground on May 30, 1996. That's Arbor Day in Honduras, marking the symbolic end of the dry season, which in the south lasts seven months—at least one month longer than in the rest of the country because of its denuded landscape.

From June through October, many of the trees will be planted around the school. Some, like tamarind, will produce income in time. The market is now paying \$9 for 100 pounds of tamarind, used to make a tasty beverage and frozen treats.

Since shade is so important here where the dry-season mercury hits 104 degrees Fahrenheit, more trees are planted along streets, and around health centers, high schools, churches, corner grocery stores, and water sources.

"There's a consciousness now to take care of the plants," García says.

World Vision loans equipment to Valle schools and is providing the seeds, materials, and technical assistance necessary to help reforest the region.

LEARNING A TREE'S WORTH

Last year many people built houses in Valle, but when they were ready to install roofing, they couldn't find any

WORLD VISION TEACHES THEM TO 'CONSERVE IT, TAKE CARE OF IT—NOT CUT IT, NOT BURN IT.'

wood. That convinced many villagers of the need to manage the forests, says Antonio Sánchez Díaz, a World Vision agriforestry technician. Slowly World Vision's efforts are changing people's attitudes toward their environment, and Valle is changing for the better.

For instance, those who make salt along the area's Pacific coast used to use wood for their ovens. But now that the firewood supply is low, they are switching to solar ovens, says Rosa María Galeas, a World Vision forestry technician.

World Vision has divided Valle into three areas with a total of 33 communities. Each town is in charge of its own projects because, as Galeas says, they know best what they need. But World Vision technicians like Galeas and Sánchez travel from area to area giving advice and assistance and making sure the projects are being run properly.

The idea, Galeas says, is to teach communities to plant trees at higher altitudes and plants down below. That way, farmers who clear an area for crops will leave the trees to provide shade and protect water sources.

Many of the wells built with World Vision funds are shaded by trees that were incubated in nearby nurseries by the very women who come to wash clothes. The shade keeps the wells from drying out during the long, hot dry season.

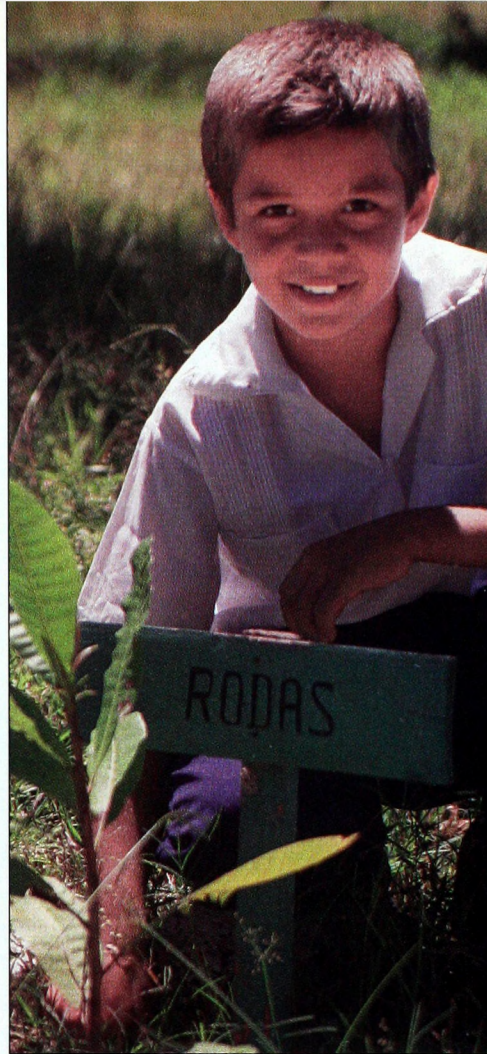
"If there's no shade, there's no water," says Juan María Morales, who heads the Valle region for World Vision. "The shade cools the land so more rain comes. It also maintains more moisture."

Women, who do their washing at the well, take turns caring for the trees. Three women in the morning and three in the afternoon tend the seedlings.

Most of the trees from World Vision-assisted nurseries end up on private land. At first many landowners don't see the value of having trees taking up what they think of as valuable cropland, Sánchez says. But World Vision technicians teach them the trees' worth.

The farmers learn to prune rather than cut down the trees. They use the limbs for firewood, which has gone up in price from \$3 for a cartload three years ago to \$8 today. The leaves can be used for fertilizer.

World Vision teaches them to "con-



José A. Rodas Torres, 8, cares for his own tree at the Aguas Frias elementary school.

serve it, take care of it—not cut it, not burn it," Sánchez says. In the process, Hondurans find that the trees provide a multiple service: forage, shade, wood, and natural fence posts.

Some, like Angela Guevara, are finding that growing trees can be a money-making proposition that will help put food on the table for their families while saving Valle's environment.

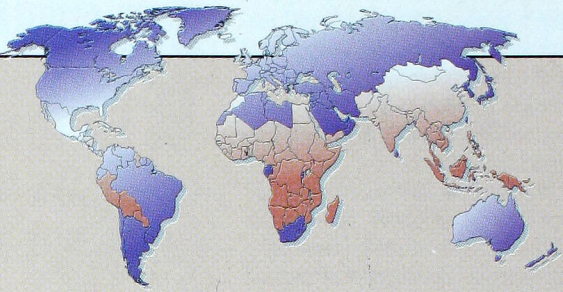
Indeed, World Vision's success in Valle led the Environmental Ministry of Honduras to give it the nation's award for conservation and protection of the environment last year, which is given to organizations that have carried out notable contributions for sustained conservation, recuperation, and proper usage of natural resources during the year.

What World Vision does in southern Honduras won't just shade Valle a bit more in coming years or bring a few more precious drops of rain. It also will inspire coming generations to care for the land that sustains them.

And that will make Valle's sunny days brighter. ☉

Larry Lee is a free-lance writer and teacher in Tela, Honduras.

WORLD VISION NEWS



GLOBAL FOOD AID DECLINES

Food aid to developing countries dropped from 15.2 million tons in 1992 to 8.4 million tons in 1995. In the same period, food assistance from the United States fell from 8.5 million tons to 4.2 million tons.

"Governments of the world are under serious fiscal constraints," said U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Dan Glickman. Farm subsidies are drying up, surpluses have virtually disappeared, and taxpayers in the United States and Western Europe are increasingly unwilling to pay for food to be sent to poor countries.

Meanwhile, global population is growing. Experts predict that an additional 2.6 billion people will need to be fed by 2025. The U.S. Department of agriculture has projected that poor countries will need between 27 million and 40 million tons of food assistance by 2005, compared to 15 million tons in 1996.

Late last year, a World Food Summit meeting convened by the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization declared that each country will have primary responsibility for feeding its people by either growing food or trading commodities for it. The summit pledged to halve the world's 840 million people facing chronic malnutrition—15 percent of the earth's population—by 2010. The goal was far more modest than a pledge at the previous World Food gathering in 1974 to feed all the world's hungry.

A hungry child of war-racked southern Sudan receives high-energy porridge at a World Vision feeding center in the community of Kapoeta.



STEVE REYNOLDS / WORLD VISION

WV GRANTS PIERCE AWARD TO 2 CHRISTIAN WORKERS

A Christian worker in eastern India and another in the West African country of Mali have been chosen to receive World Vision's Robert W. Pierce Award for Christian Service.

Iris Paul, a Methodist medical doctor in India's Orissa state, is recognized for her service in literacy programs, agricultural extension projects, training courses in income generation, and ministry to prisoners. Paul also has encouraged the founding of Christian worship centers in the region.

Nouh Yattara, pastor of a Baptist church in the Timbuktu area of Mali, has joined evangelism with work in social development. He has aided literacy training, water projects, small business development, and forestry programs.

The annual award commemorates the founder of World Vision, a Christian evangelist and journalist. It recognizes people whose work combines humanitarian service and evangelism and who have received little global recognition. Since 1980, it has been presented to 22 recipients from 18 countries. The award includes a wall plaque and a \$10,000 grant. Joint recipients share the grant.

THAI GIRLS LEARN TRADES TO AVOID SEX SOLICITORS

A World Vision project in the hills of northern Thailand is averting a threat of girl-child exploitation and prostitution before it can develop.

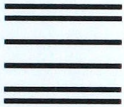
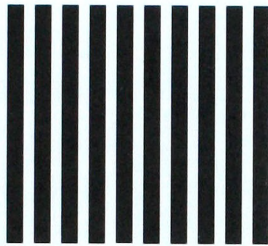
Traders in girls and young women regularly solicit parents among remote and impoverished hill tribes to send or sell their daughters for employment in major cities. Many are swallowed up in Asia's thriving sex trade.

HEARING-IMPAIRED CHILDREN RECEIVE SCHOOLING IN GAZA

World Vision is helping to free deaf children from isolation and a future without hope in the Middle East's Gaza Strip.

The Atfaluna School for Deaf Children, founded in 1992 by a Palestinian Arab women's group and assisted by World Vision, provides special education for more than 100 youngsters who are severely hearing impaired. It also maintains support services for 15,000 deaf people of all ages in the politically chaotic region. The narrow strip of Mediterranean shoreline south of Israel holds 900,000 Palestinian Arabs, 620,000 of them refugees from lands settled by Israelis.

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FORMER SPONSORED CHILD HELPED TO DOCTORATE DEGREE

Child sponsorship through World Vision helped Abraham Janet Jayakumari out of poverty when she was 9 years old. Her father earned barely \$16 a month as a vegetable vendor in the small Christian community of Nazareth in southern India. The family had five other children.

A bright student, Janet excelled in school and went on to Annamalai

University in the southern Indian state of Tamil Nadu. When she graduated, she hoped to study for a higher degree, but the cost proved beyond her means.

Again World Vision stepped in, bringing her into an extended sponsorship program that allows scholars of high merit to work toward advanced degrees. Today Janet, 26, is pursuing a doctorate in commerce. She presently is sponsored by a team of World Vision workers in the United States.

"I am very thankful to my sponsors," she says. "I was so lonely in my financial needs and they took care of me." When she completes her degree, she plans to work with World Vision in India.

Janet Jayakumari, 26 (center), of southern India, is studying for a doctorate degree with World Vision financing.

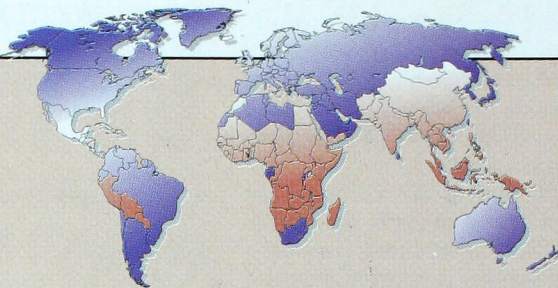
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WORLD VISION INDIA

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WORLD VISION NEWS



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"Governments of the world are facing budgetary constraints," said U.S. Secretary of Agriculture. "Farm subsidies are drying up, support prices have disappeared, and taxpayers in the U.S. and Europe are increasingly unwilling to support food aid to poor countries."

Meanwhile, global population is projected to reach an additional 2.6 billion people by 2025. The U.S. Department of Agriculture estimates that poor countries will need between 15 and 20 million tons of food assistance by 2005, compared to 15 million tons in 1996.

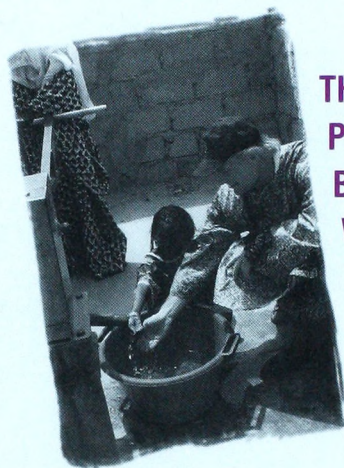
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WV GRANTS PIERCE AWARD TO 2 CHRISTIAN WORKERS

A Christian worker in eastern India and another in the West African



THE FAITHFUL PRAYERS OF BELIEVERS WORLDWIDE HAVE BORNE RICH FRUIT IN GHANA.

A World Vision Ghana worker trained in sharing Christ gathered village children to teach of God's love and commandments. Their mothers learned of these sessions and came to encourage the teacher: "This new message is life-changing—it has helped our children stop stealing." In fact, nine boys and girls gave their lives to Christ.

Your gift will help World Vision share the love of Christ and the power of prayer with spiritually hungry people worldwide.

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CHILDREN IN RWANDA

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I WANT TO HELP SHARE THE LOVE AND POWER OF CHRIST WITH OTHERS

- YES, I will give \$20 to provide** 10 copies of Gospel literature booklets. 4000/HZ7-L00
- YES, I will give \$50 to provide** training in communicating Christ effectively to young people and their parents. 4000/HZ7-L01
- YES, I want to sponsor a child.** I prefer to sponsor a boy, girl living in
- Africa Asia Latin America Middle East where most needed. HZ7-L02
- ENCLOSED is my first monthly payment of \$20.** Check (payable to World Vision)
- Bill my monthly sponsorship payment to my credit card
- VISA MasterCard American Express Discover

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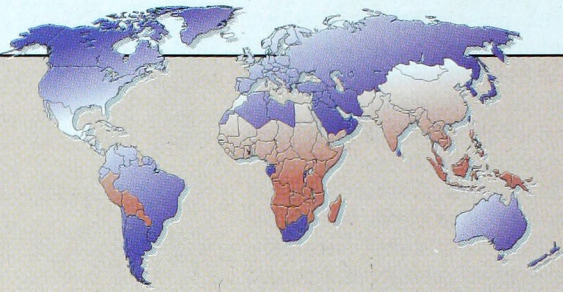
Signature _____

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"Again, I tell you that if two of you on earth agree about anything you ask for, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven."

—Matthew 18:19

WORLD VISION NEWS



GLOBAL FOOD AID DECLINES

Food aid to developing countries fell from 16.5 million tons in 1992 to 8.4 million tons in 1996. In addition, food assistance from the U.S. declined from 10.5 million tons to 4.2 million tons.

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A World Vision worker shared the good news of Christ to teach of the gospel. Their mother came to embrace the message in their hearts. Children and girls gave

Your gift of Vision Christ prayer hungry

A NEW LIFE IN CHRIST

In a small Ghana village, local Christians had received World Vision training in telling their neighbors about Christ.

While visiting homes one Sunday, they knocked on a woman's door. She asked, "What do you want?" "We come to share of new life that is found in Christ," they said. Upon hearing this, a question rose from deep in her soul: "Who directed you to come to this house at this time?" The visitors replied, "No one." The woman then opened her hand to reveal a small bottle. The contents were poison—she intended to put an end to her troubled life. Instead, she invited the guests into her home. Soon she invited Christ into her heart. With assistance from her new church family, she began solving many of her problems.



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At Atfaluna (Arabic for "our children") students learn sign language, reading, writing, mathematics, and computer skills from 20 teachers, five of them also deaf. Many of the children return to impoverished homes and help educate illiterate parents.

For years, humanitarian agencies have rescued victims of abusive employment in Asian cities by providing them with vocational training. Now World Vision is offering agricultural instruction and other assistance to keep the girls from leaving their home regions.

Near the city of Phayao, World Vision operates a greenhouse and chicken farm to train girls from five northern districts of Thailand. With vocational skills, the girls can help their families economically while avoiding lives of servitude and degradation.

"Our target group is 4,500 girls aged 14 to 25," says Pisanara Samphantawong, coordinator of the project. "In the two years we have been involved here, we estimate the number of girls sold by their parents has dropped as much as 80 percent." Many of the girls now complete their schooling and some have gone on to university, she added.

Girls are trained for local employment at a World Vision plant nursery in Thailand.



HELP FOR CHILDREN GOES ON IN RWANDA

World Vision continues to assist thousands of children orphaned or lost during Rwanda's 1994 civil war and more recent migrations of war refugees.

As a consequence of the strife and dislocation, the Central African country is full of widows, orphans and lost children. Many women care for displaced children as well as their own. Most have no income and grow food to survive.

Seventy-five per cent of the children in Rwanda witnessed the brutal killing of a close family member. As many as 115,000 were orphaned, lost, or abandoned. Some 500,000 live in poverty with distant relatives or foster families in rural areas. About 7,000 remain in children's centers around Rwanda. More than 1,000 exist on the streets of the small capital city, Kigali, and in city dumps where they scavenge for survival.

Since the war, World Vision has operated a major program assisting Rwanda's children with food, clothing, shelter, health care, education, and trauma counseling. Workers also promote recreational events.

"Sports and social activities involving the whole community are some of the best ways to help traumatized children," said Adrienne Paul, a World Vision coordinator. The activities, bringing together people divided by the country's tragedy, encourage cooperation and reconciliation, she said.

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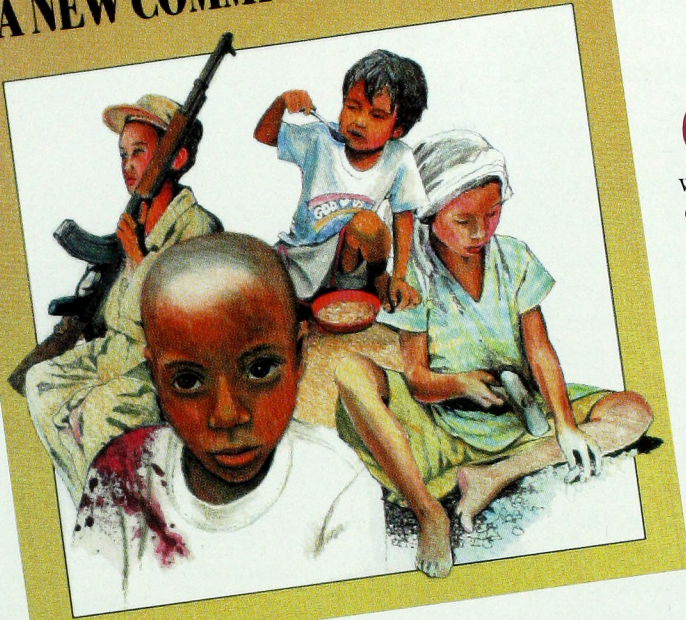
SAMARITAN SAMPLER

RESOURCES FOR
HELPING OTHERS
IN THE NAME
OF CHRIST

CHILDREN IN CRISIS: A NEW COMMITMENT

war traumas
street children
AIDS orphans
sexually exploited
the girl child
child laborers

Phyllis Kibourn
editor



CHILDREN IN CRISIS

Children in Crisis, edited by Phyllis Kibourn, a missionary and educator, teaches Christians how to assist the world's most vulnerable children: victims of homelessness, sexual exploitation, war, unjust employers, gender discrimination, and diseases such as AIDS.

The book challenges Christians to respond to these suffering children, the majority of whom are between the ages of 4 and 14. It also suggests practical ways for individuals and churches to minister to them. A "tool box" section lists agencies and organizations that help children.

For more information, or to obtain a copy of *Children in Crisis* at \$21.95, call MARC Publications at (800) 777-7752.

CONTRACT WORKERS

World Vision has openings for highly qualified individuals who wish to serve Christ and minister to the poor of the world. Assignments in developing countries are open for professionals experienced in the fields of public health, logistics, agriculture, and finance. Salary and expenses are paid. Foreign language skills are required for most positions.

Applicants may send a resume to: International Recruiting, World Vision, stop 243, P.O. Box 9716, Federal Way, WA 98063-9716; or e-mail: intljobs@wvus.org.

GREEN CROSS CHURCH ENERGY PROGRAM

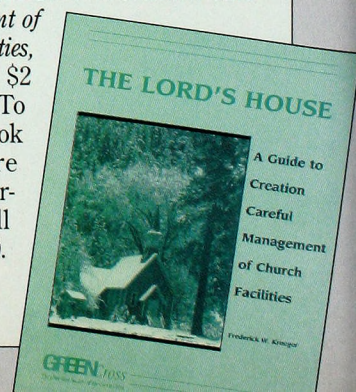
The Christian Society of the Green Cross, of Philadelphia, Pa., offers churches a detailed analysis of their electric and heating energy use and a plan to help them conserve energy and reduce utility bills.

For a moderate fee, Green Cross will send a heating and lighting specialist to examine church buildings, document their history of energy use, discern ways to reduce costs, and educate maintenance staff on applying their recommendations. A medium-size congregation of 100 to 200 can save approximately \$1,000 per year on lighting bills alone through

Green Cross guidelines. Savings on heating bills vary with how a congregation controls interior temperatures.

For churches wishing to design their own program to trim energy bills, Green Cross offers a handbook, *The Lord's House, A Guide to Creation Careful Management of Church Facilities*.

To order the book or to inquire about an energy audit, call (800) 650-6600.



Compiled and written by Stephanie Stevenson

LONG DISTANCE SAVINGS

UStel, a national long-distance carrier, offers a program exclusively through World Vision that allows you to save on calls while supporting World Vision's ministry.

UStel charges 9.9 cents a minute for all interstate residential calls in

the continental United States. The rate applies 24 hours a day, seven days a week. A percentage of the profits goes to World Vision's

global work assisting the poor and needy.

UStel will pay fees for changing long-distance carriers, guaranteeing satisfaction with a 90-day change-back offer.

For more information, or to subscribe to UStel, call (888) 511-6564 toll-free.



“ I have been driven many times to my knees by the overwhelming conviction that I had nowhere else to go. My own wisdom, and that of all about me, seemed insufficient for the day.

—Abraham Lincoln”

Profile #1 THE POWER OF ONE



“The Continuous Child Care Agreement provides us a wonderful opportunity to make a life-long commitment to sharing our own inheritance with precious children – to give them hope and a more promising future.”

*Marci and Joseph Palumbo
Somerset New Jersey*

When Marci and Joseph Palumbo married, each brought a World Vision sponsored child to their new family. When deciding how to invest a recent family inheritance, they saw the Continuous Child Care Agreement as an ideal opportunity to make a long term commitment to children and others in need.

“We could wait until we establish our family and careers, or we can put the future of these children as one of our top priorities now. Once you are aware of the dire poverty, hunger and illiteracy, you know you must offer what you can.

If even one little child learns to read, becomes a good parent or community leader, that is our reward.”



1-800-426-5753

“For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.”

Luke 12:34

The Power of One...

A series of donor profiles of those who know their gifts have the power to touch a life, that in turn can transform a family and even an entire community.

For more information on how you can help alleviate hunger, poverty and ignorance through a Continuous Child Care Agreement to World Vision, please complete and mail to: World Vision, P.O. Box 70084, Tacoma, WA 98481

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FWV297



BY JAN JOHNSON

RAISING COMPASSIONATE KIDS

in a Shopping Mall Culture



*In an age when
compassion seems
to be declining,
some parents
are still finding
ways to teach their
kids to care.*

Mike and Virginia Hostetler, of Scottsdale, Pa., are compassionate about issues in the developing world, but they wonder if they're communicating this to their children. "Materialism seems to have infiltrated even their prayers," says Mike, a film and video producer. "The other night their prayers focused on wish-fulfillment—'God, please help me get good grades, and give me new rollerblades.' I want them to see that God meets their needs, but I also want to communicate that God so loves the world, not just you and me."

Many parents today feel frustrated that their children are growing up in an affluent country without knowing how the rest of the world lives. Society's distractions—advertising, shopping malls, television—pull them in. They believe that most people live in the same privileged situation they were born into. They give little thought to the millions of people who struggle merely to survive.

"The generations near the turn of the 20th century had a strong call to missions, but the church hasn't brought the newer generations on board," says Steve Commins, executive director of World Vision's Center for Strategy Formation. "Now God is a personal idol, as if the purpose of my relationship with God is to make me happy. We used to have a stronger sense of community, which also helped people care more about others. Today those who volunteer at church, scouts, or soccer aren't acknowledged as the glue that holds the world together."

As parents, we look for ways to help our children develop compassion. Yet it's tricky. When they're indifferent we want them to care. When they're open-hearted we worry they'll want to give everything away. We shrink from lecturing. "Eat your

"I want my children to see that God is at work despite the pain and suffering, and we're a part of what God wants to do."

vegetables! Remember kids overseas with nothing to eat!" Yet if guilt doesn't work what does?

Learning to consider the needs of hurting people requires empathy—the ability to put ourselves in other people's shoes. This can be nurtured, especially if our children can see us interact with needy people in our own community. When they empathize with people close to home, it becomes easier for them to be sensitive to struggling people from different neighborhoods, different cultures, and different continents.

In a culture that says, "What about my needs?" and "Only the strong survive!" kids readily detect any difference in their parents' values. Families eager to help their children become compassionate about people in less fortunate lands find that it's not so much a matter of grand gestures as doing a little here and a little there in the ebb and flow of life.

Here are some ways parents have created opportunities for their children to experiment with being God's hands or feet in the world.

GIVING KIDS OPPORTUNITIES TO SERVE

Todd & Marge Evans, Matt and Scott, of Sonoma, Calif.



Scott, Marge, Matt, and Todd Evans

"We've always wanted our kids to care about people who are hungry," says Todd Evans, a United Church of Christ minister who works in the field of education. "When Marge worked for a food bank, she took the boys with her to deliver food to families who couldn't get into town."

"Some of these families were Hispanic migrant farm workers, and my kids were shocked to see them living in tents," says Marge, a former teacher and health counselor. Todd talked to his boys about recruiting migrant children for a local soccer team. "Since I was the coach," Todd says, "we worked with their parents filling out applications and insurance forms. The Hispanic kids became some of our best players and we all became buddies. When we moved, our children were surprised to see kids in their new school refusing to associate with Hispanics."

"One Thanksgiving we decided not to have dinner at home," Marge says, "but to serve at a community dinner for people who didn't have anywhere to go. Our kids were teenagers by then. I wasn't sure how they'd like it, but they happily welcomed guests and cleared tables. It's wonderful to give kids opportunities to serve," Marge adds. "They feel so good about it."

Todd recalls watching his sons at another dinner, a "hunger banquet," in which guests were served food according to the wealth of the continent they'd been assigned. "Those representing the

United States got pork chops," Todd recalls. "People representing developing-world countries got only bread. The adults played along, but the kids spoiled the game—they took their pork chops to the kids with only bread."

The most daring experiment in compassion the Evans family ventured was taking their children to a work camp in Latin America. "Our sons—13 and 14 at the time—were used to skiing vacations," Todd says. "We asked them

to try the work camp just once, then we'd go back to skiing. So we went to Nicaragua to build a school."

They cleared land, mixed cement, and did masonry work. The boys set up a basketball hoop and built a playing court, printing their names in the wet cement. "They saw that people did things differently, like mixing cement by hand," Marge says. "They saw people living without electricity, telephones, or televisions who were happy without those things."

Far from begrudging the lost skiing vacation, they greatly valued the trip. They learned from it too. Matt Evans chose to go back to Nicaragua a second time, and when he needed a topic for his college applications essay, he wrote about the family's trip.

When you teach your kids to give, watch out for repercussions, though, Marge cautions. "Our son, Scott, backpacks a lot. When he received an appeal for money to protect trees, he asked us to match his donation. He had learned not only that he could contribute to a cause he believed in, but that he could get others to contribute too."

EXPOSING KIDS TO A SUFFERING WORLD

Sara and Gerald Shenk, Joseph, Timothy, and Greta, of Harrisonburg, Va

Watching television news is a family event for the Shenks, and it always generates discussion. "During budget debates, for example, we talked about issues of compassion," says Sara Schenk, who works as assistant dean of Christian education at Eastern Mennonite Seminary in Harrisonburg, where Gerald serves as a professor. "My husband and I don't let the children take sides too easily. We tell them there are worthwhile issues on both sides. They shouldn't be part of the polarization, but work toward a common solution."

"Sometimes the news can be overwhelming," Sarah says. "We listen for news about countries where a relief orga-

TRANSLATING HARD FACTS INTO KID TALK

Compassion is nurtured into children over time, but if it's not discussed at church or at the dinner table, it might not exist for them. One of the challenges parents face is introducing complex information about the issues of compassion so their kids can understand and accept it. Here are some suggestions to help that process:

● **USE ONE-LINER FACTS** or statistics: Repeat facts that are easy to picture: Two-thirds of the world eats rice, beans, and other simple foods—no chicken, no hot dogs, no McDonald's.

● **ENJOY A "HUNGER MEAL":** When Jennifer Guevera, of Santa Barbara, Calif., was a child, her family ate bread and water for dinner every Friday of Lent to remind themselves of the hungry people around the world. "It made me think," she says. "I could get hungry in an hour, but I always could get something from the fridge. Other people couldn't."

● **HAVE FUN DELIVERING THE TURKEY:** Parents who want to expose their kids to different socio-economic backgrounds and ethnicities should be careful not to limit it to "a trip to see the poor folks." Try to work it out so that the experience doesn't emphasize the poverty of one group and the richness of another. Instead of just taking a turkey to a family during the holidays, ask that family to join you to go see a light display. This fosters mutual friendship rather than a one-way helping relationship.

● **WATCH VIDEOS THAT FOCUS ON CHILDREN** in developing countries: "Present videos with positive stories about children from other countries—children who aren't sick," says Gretchen Lovingood, a mother and grandmother from Santa Barbara, Calif. "After they feel some familiarity with children overseas, talk about poverty and how it affects these children." Also ask questions about the overseas children's games, toys, and schools. It's important to provide hope, which means focusing on situations where something positive is happening. The Mennonite Central Committee lends and sells videos, such as the "World's Children's Series," and "Folktales of Peace," available from the Mennonite Central Committee, 21 South St., Akron, PA 17501, (717) 859-1151.

● **GIVE GIFTS THAT HELP OTHERS:** Instead of giving presents that are consumed quickly or go unused, children can send gifts that offer basic necessities of life for marginalized people: a doctor's visit for a crippled Mexican child or medicine for someone needing eye

surgery in Cameroon. Alternative Gift Markets works with 20 nonprofit agencies in this effort and publishes a children's activity book illustrating possible gifts. The book is available from Alternative Gift Markets, P.O. Box 2267, Lucerne Valley, CA 92356, (800) 842-2243. Handcrafts made in developing countries are sold by organizations such as Self-Help Crafts, which pay artisans a fair return. Contact Self-Help Crafts, 704 Main St., Akron, PA 17501, tel: (800) 592-7238.

● **EXPERIMENT WITH CREATIVE WAYS TO GIVE:** Elaine Smythe of Springfield, Mo., suggested to her 9-year-old daughter, Helen, that she might ask her birthday party guests to bring money for their sponsored child, Roberto, instead of birthday gifts for her. At first, Helen didn't like the idea, but it grew on her. "At the party," Elaine says, "we read one of Roberto's letters and got out the globe and found Brazil, where he lives." Says 9-year-old Helen, "I thought it would be maybe \$20, but it was \$70! I think how he might feel more special because of the money."

● **OFFER HOSPITALITY TO INTERNATIONAL VISITORS:** When missionaries visit your church, offer to house them or serve them a meal so your children can be exposed to information about other cultures. International students often come from wealthy families, but hearing their stories can help open the door to other cultures for your children.

● **READ GLOBAL PRAYER DIGEST** with your family: This booklet offers daily stories of a people in the developing world who have little contact with the gospel. Reading the Prayer Digest as a family can give kids a greater sense of global awareness and remind them to pray for others. The Global Prayer Digest is available from the U.S. Center for World Mission, 1605 Elizabeth St., Pasadena, CA 91104.

● **PUT A WORLD MAP IN A PROMINENT PLACE:** Your family can quickly find places that come up in the news or at church. The map also can serve as a reminder to pray for people in those places.

● **VISIT OVERSEAS:** Organizations such as Parenting for Peace and Justice sponsor family vacation and travel seminars that visit families in developing countries. Also parents can take their kids to visit sponsored children overseas. *Survival of the Fittest: Keeping Yourself Healthy in Travel and Service Overseas*, by Christine Sine, offers basic information on immunizations, what to pack, and what to eat. The book is available from MARC, World Vision, (818) 303-8811.

More ideas are offered in the Parenting for Peace and Justice Newsletter, published by the Institute for Peace & Justice, 4144 Lindell Blvd. #122, St. Louis, MO 63108, (314) 533-4445. Jim and Kathy McGinnis are coordinators.

nization we support is involved. We talk about how its efforts empower people. I want my children to see that God is at work despite the pain and suffering, and we're a part of what God wants to do.

"When Timothy had to do a research project on the Mexican-American War of 1846," Sara says, "we were disturbed that his sources said Mexico should have willingly given up California and New Mexico to the United States."

"That sounds biased," Gerald said. "Let's dig a bit more. What did it look like from the Mexican side? Timothy ended up changing his thesis statement and writing a paper on the Mexican view of the issue."

On another occasion, Sara says, one of her sons felt pressured by his peers to have name-brand clothes. "I explained that it's not that we can't afford to buy those things, but that we focus on other things instead, like exploring the outdoors and developing relationships with people. Still, he thought we weren't tak-

Joseph, Sara, Gerald, Greta, and Timothy Shenk



ing care of him properly. Later I bought him high-quality shoes that weren't a name brand and he told me, 'You're not stingy. You're just careful.' He saw we weren't withholding good things from him but that we're committed to principles higher than materialism."

Sara admits being tempted to indulge her children and protect them from discomforts. "We want them to have everything they need and be safe. But sometimes they become pretty self-centered. If we imagine we're being good parents by isolating them from all want and suffering, they'll never get close to anyone who has less than they have."

The Shenks are involved in a church that moved its location to a low-income neighborhood and ministers to people there. At times their relationships have helped the Shenk's children see Christians working in unity.

"An articulate, capable man in our

*“How have I caved in to social pressures?
Why do we need new and better stuff?
Am I living the values I want my kids to have?”*

church has struggled with drug addiction and alcoholism,” Sara says. “The kids noticed how much time we spent talking with him and asked us why he couldn’t get his act together. We talked about addiction and how this man hasn’t known what it is to be loved. He’s now doing well in a rehabilitation program. Each of us at church gave him something—friendship, clothes, food—but no one could do it all.”

TEACHING KIDS BY EXAMPLE

Jim and Kathy McGinnis, Tom, David, and Theresa, of St. Louis, Mo.

“Trying to develop compassion in kids is frustrating,” says Jim, who with his wife in 1970 co-founded the Institute for Peace and Justice, an organization that promotes peace education and explores issues of social justice. “I watch them go to the mall to buy what they see advertised on television and I ask myself: How have I caved in to social pressures? Why do we need new and better stuff? Am I living the values I want my kids to have?”



Kathy and Jim McGinnis

TEACHING KIDS COMPASSION THROUGH SPONSORING CHILDREN

IMAGINE TELLING YOUR CHILD that she’s about to have a little brother or sister and she asks, “What country will it be from?” That is the question 10-year-old Pat Schmidt, of Colorado Springs, Colo., asked her parents 15 years ago.

Pat responded that way because the collection of photos on the wall in the living room included pictures of children the family has sponsored through World Vision over the years as well as family, baby, and graduation pictures.

Pat’s mother, Rose, has sponsored children since she heard Bob Pierce, World Vision’s founder, speak at a high school 30 years ago in Richland, Wash. Over the years their family has written letters and sent pictures to each of the 13 children they have sponsored. “When we received letters, we read them together,” Rose says. “In the past year, I organized a notebook of letters.”

The first time Pat remembers sponsorship making a big impact on her was when their dog died and she wanted another one. “I was upset, especially because my parents said we wouldn’t be getting one,” Pat says. “We were having financial problems at the time, and my mom explained that we could sponsor another child instead of getting a dog. At first that was rough but I began to wonder what made her do that. She loved the dog—why would she choose to sponsor a child instead? The more I talked with her, the more I saw how important sponsorship was.”

Pat recalls their family sending extra money for clothes for one of their girls. “The child’s family sent us pictures of her in her

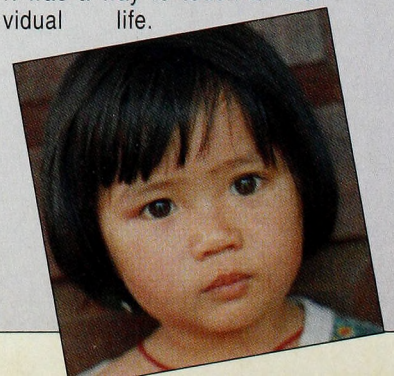
new clothes and shoes. In the letter, she said that no one in her family had ever had new shoes before. They were always handed down. I thought about how it would be to never have new shoes. That hit home. We put that picture on the family wall.”

Thoughts about the sponsored kids popped up at odd moments in Pat’s life. On the Fourth of July one year, she wondered what their children’s families ate at holiday celebrations. At school one day, Pat’s teacher was surprised that she knew the new name for Cambodia was Kampuchea. The Schmidts sponsored a child there.

“We’ve been more aware of the news,” Rose says. “One of the boys we sponsored was a teenager in Lebanon when factions were fighting there. We wondered what was happening to him. We offered many ‘one liner’ prayers for him: ‘Lord, be with him.’”

Pat says she likes finding out how her sponsored children have fared. “One of my mom’s kids is graduating from college this term in India. She’s female—that doesn’t happen often in their culture. With her education, her children probably won’t need to be sponsored and she can help in her community.”

Sponsorship was such a part of the Schmidt’s life that when Pat went to college she sponsored two children herself. “Even though I wasn’t making much money,” Pat says, “it was something I felt I needed to do.” Rose is pleased. “Sponsoring children has helped me emphasize to my children that we can make a difference by relating one-on-one with a child,” Rose says. “I’ve never thought of it as just sending money. It was a way to touch an individual life.”



Jim and Kathy's frustration has motivated their family to experiment with different ways of giving.

"Kids will give, but they're more willing to give when they benefit too," Jim says. "One of the most effective things we did as a family happened because we were trying to get our kids to shut off lights and save energy. If the energy bill in November of this year was less than in November of last year, we calculated in the difference. We used half the savings for a family bowling night and gave the other half to a fund that helps people who have difficulty paying energy bills. The children were willing to wear sweaters instead of turning up the thermostat.

"If children see us give, it helps. For a year, we saved appeal letters and sat down at dinner once a month and talked. Together we decided which ones we should give money to. Kathy and I allotted a certain amount. Then we asked the kids if they wanted to kick in some too. They usually did.

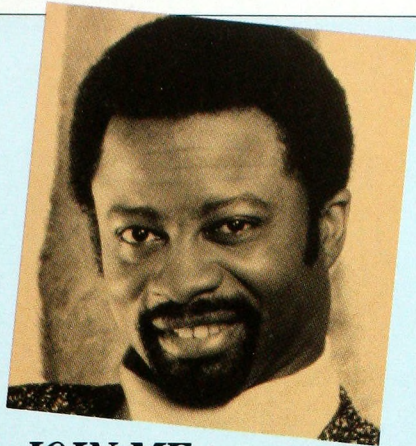
"Over the years, we've taken our kids to serve meals at a soup kitchen. While Kathy and I worked, our children played with kids who were residents. Later they wanted to go back because they knew people there. The experience fostered a mutual relationship, rather than the one-way helping relationship that often occurs when we help the needy.

"It also helps kids to have overseas experiences," Jim continues. "We stayed with a family in Nicaragua, when our daughter, Theresa, was 15. When it was time to leave, Elizabeth, their 13-year-old, gave Theresa one of the two shirts she owned. Theresa was overwhelmed. She then gave Elizabeth one of the nine shirts she'd brought with her. She had 18 more at home. Even though the gift-giving was an equal exchange, Theresa was powerfully impressed that Elizabeth's present was far greater. A kid remembers things like that forever."

Sensitivity and compassion for people less affluent than ourselves are born in ordinary moments. What do we see in a poor Hispanic boy playing soccer, in an old woman whose bedroom needs painting, in an unforgettable face on television news of famine, war, or natural disaster?

For our children, compassion is caught as well as taught when they see their parents connecting with these people. If we send money to our favorite causes, so will they. If we consider a holiday serving others time well spent, so will they. If we are willing to let our hearts be broken by the misfortunes of others, they will be ready to walk down the same path. ☉

Jan Johnson is a freelance writer in Simi, Calif.



JOIN ME... In Helping The Forgotten Children

"Every child should be touched, loved... and should wake up each morning with the hope that his or her dreams can come true. That's why I love World Vision! Sponsorship gives people like you and me the chance to give dignity—and a future—to needy children."

—Larnelle Harris

Five-time Grammy award winner Larnelle Harris knows about the needs of suffering children—and how compassionate people are helping to save them from lives of hunger, poverty and despair. He also knows that through World Vision Child Sponsorship, he can help change our hurting world—one child at a time.

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NEXT TO THE LAST WORD

I remember wondering when I heard news of the crash of Ethiopian Airline flight 961 off the Comoros Islands if any World Vision staff were aboard, but I dismissed the idea as extremely unlikely. I was wrong.

World Vision lost two senior staff in the tragic hijacking-crash. Ato Beyene Gutema and Ato Zelalem Aynew were among the 175 passengers and crew en route from Addis Ababa to Nairobi, Kenya. The field director and another senior staff member tried but failed to get on the flight.

Also aboard the flight was Mohamed "Mo" Amin, whose photographs taken with World Vision assistance during Ethiopia's famine of the mid-1980s helped awaken the world to the crisis that eventually took 1 million lives before it was stopped.

During the past decade, World Vision has lost nearly 30 employees to travel accidents, kidnappings, assassinations, civil war, and disease. I encourage you to read our cover story on prayer—and then pray for our staff and your missionaries.

—Terry Madison

WORLD VISION

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THE QUESTIONS CHILDREN ASK

Most of the children had nothing to bring. Fabiana, however, was different. If she were to enter this Mexico City shelter, folks would have to take her as she was, and that included her mice! She had three of them. They were part of who she was, and she adamantly refused to come inside without them.

Fabiana got her way, perhaps for the first time in her life. Now 13, she had encountered abuse by her father at age 3. She was "invited" by her prostitute mother to become a prostitute herself at 10 years of age. In between, she had stabbed her father during one of his advances, left home for a time, and learned the tough art of effective begging on the streets.

She refused her mother's invitation and took to the streets again. Finally, three years and three mice later, her innocence replaced by street-hardened cynicism, she consented to try a different kind of life.

the circumference of their circle and the limits of what will be tolerated. The circumference comes complete with litmus tests—social, ideological, theological—and only those who pass the tests stay in the circle, regardless of the commonality of its Christocentric center. History has ample examples of folks excluded for less than three mice!

For Fabiana, the shelter's love was tangible. A cage was purchased for the mice so they would be as protected as Fabiana. After all, she was asking that her mice be treated as she desired to be treated. The cage, which she decorated and equipped, became another metaphorical extension of her own desires. She made sure the mice had shelter, a predictable source of food, a space they could call their own, comfort, and, most of all, security. Fabiana's actions were speaking louder than words. She wanted for herself that which she was providing for her animal friends.

Would that we demonstrated as much care for the Fabianas of our world as she showered on her unsuspecting but seemingly grateful little creatures. It's not that we are incapable of caring, but it is also true that our attentions are not always focused on that which seems to command the mind of Christ—namely, the children.

Would that children could command as much respect as a redwood forest, a spotted owl, or the annual salmon runs in the Northwest. Would that we could be as emotionally involved with life within the human womb as we are with the tiny snail darter in a Tennessee waterway.

The giftedness that God gave his highest creation allows us to care for both, and to see the connectedness in all. But the importance he placed on human dignity demands a renewed emphasis on the children in our care, especially those who come complete with a bunch of mice.

There's a sign hanging in the World Vision Street Children's shelter: "Each time a child is born, it is proof that God has not lost faith in humanity." The next day, I saw proof that, in addition to faith, God also has given us a hope that is tangible.

We saw more children, but children who had "graduated" from the shelter and were now in a home of their own. For these children, love was allowed, trust was complete, smiles were genuine, and hope was visible. The hard shell of reinforced hurt was removed, and Christian staff were now able to give meaning to the soft places of their lives.

They sang for us, danced for us, and allowed the totality of their human creativity to emerge. They gave testimonies to God's working in their lives. They spoke of the hope of being reunited with families, if appropriate, and the longer-term aspiration of interdependence within the human community.

They embraced us—English-speaking North Americans with funny accents and strange clothes. They embraced diversity, opened their home to us, and answered a number of questions that only children can ask. ☉

**World Vision
President Bob
Seiple and Fabiana
(right) play an
educational card
game on AIDS with
residents of World
Vision's street
children's shelter
in Mexico City.**



ALEJANDRO VELEZ PAS / WORLD VISION

Would that children could command as much respect as a redwood forest, a spotted owl, or the annual salmon runs...

The mice were her way of testing the motivation of staff in the World Vision Street Children's Program, *Los Niños del Calle*. Would they embrace her as she was? Could they accommodate the differences? How far would love go to transcend that which made this street child different?

There are now almost 2 million kids living on the streets of this world's most populated city. Would she qualify for special attention? Fabiana needed to know.

But we all should be asking the same questions. What keeps us from embracing people? What extra baggage do we find repellent? What are the metaphorical equivalents of three mice carried around by a scruffy, hard-nosed little girl?

We exclude for a variety of differences. Political ideology, doctrinal "jots and tittles," gender issues, economic gaps, national borders—to be all-inclusive, the list would be long.

Christians are no exception. Some define themselves by their center, Jesus Christ. But others point to




She is enjoying pure
water for the first time.

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when it reaches her soul.



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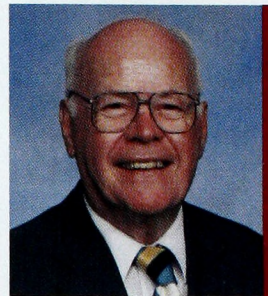

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Profile #2 THE POWER OF ONE



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to make a commitment to
lifting the hopes and lives of
others while guaranteeing
us a secure income for
the rest of our lives."*

William Whann
Lehigh, Florida

Growing up in an orphanage, William Whann recognized early the power of giving and the difference it can make to those in need. He plans to give most of his estate to help people learn to help themselves.

"My World Vision Gift Annuity provides tax benefits and a lifelong income while allowing me to support others in their struggle to become self-reliant, World Vision is in my estate plan for one reason: I see the impact their projects are having in improving the quality of life for mankind.

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*"Freely you have received,
freely give."
Matt. 10:9*

The Power of One...

A series of donor profiles of those who know their gifts have the power to touch a life, that in turn can transform a family and even an entire community.

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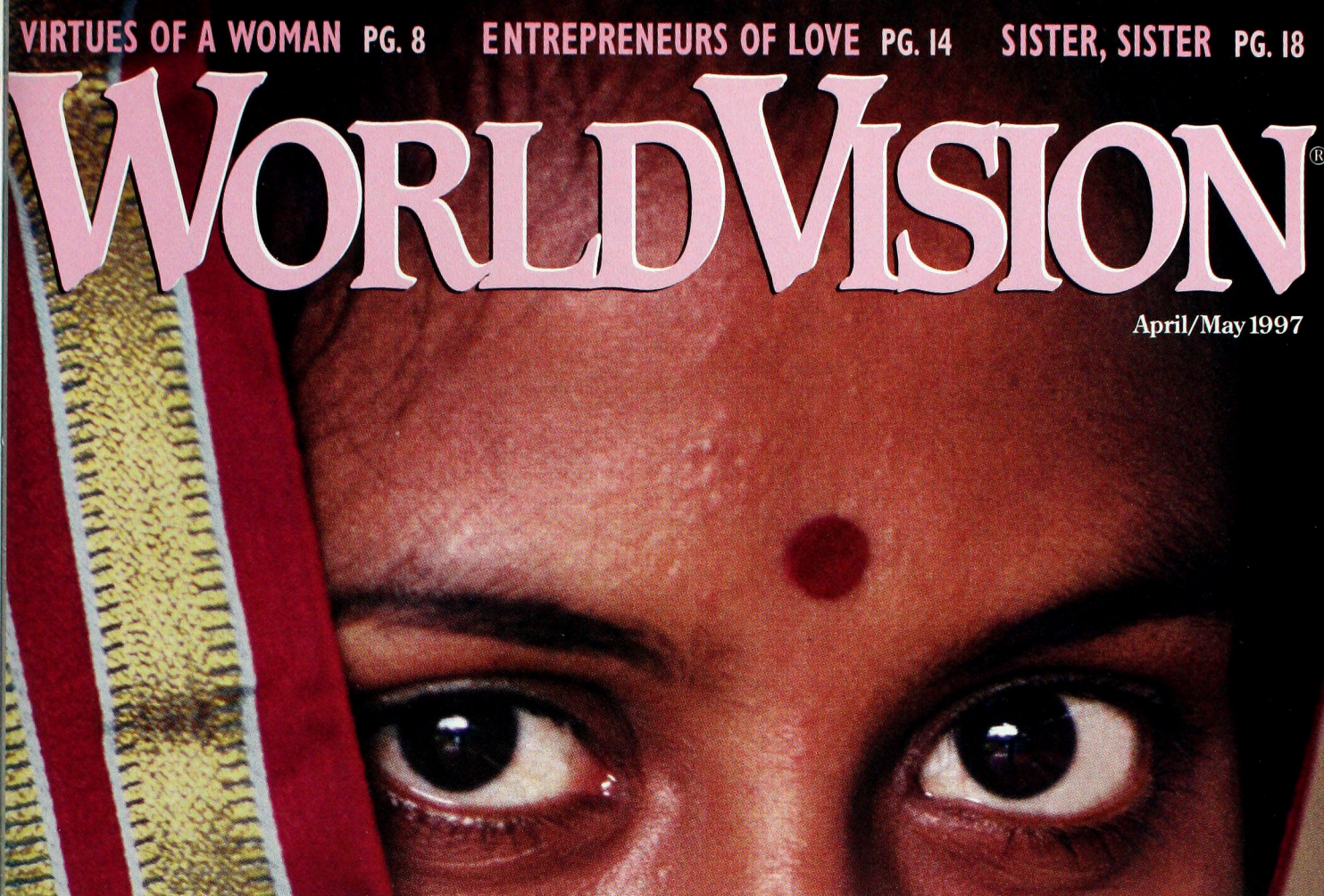
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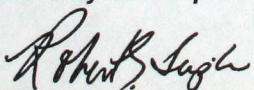
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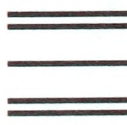
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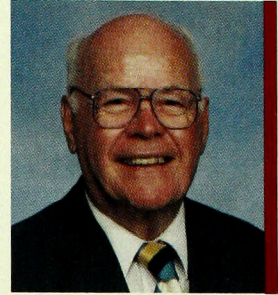
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