

In defining a child's spirituality, it is important to remember that children are created in the image of God and as such have an innate spirituality. As caregivers seeking to provide healing and hope to those who have been emotionally and spiritually wounded, we must approach children in our ministry from the basis that they are spiritual beings and, therefore, are spiritually aware. This approach is a key part of working with children since spirituality can be nurtured and developed or it can be damaged, even abused.

How does recognizing a child's spirituality affect our work? It provides an awareness of the opportunities we have to help children explore and give shape to their own spirituality. We need to grasp these opportunities, allowing children to explore, ask questions and find the answers. We especially need to think about the four areas of spiritual awareness in a child: self, others, environment and God, and then determine what are the spiritual development opportunities of the activities we plan.

A key question for those working with exploited and wounded children is, "How do we work with those children whom life has enraged and who have a disrupted spirituality?" Jesus never told us how to work with children or what strategies to put in place for a sexually abused child or one who has served as a child soldier. Instead he told us to sim-

IN FOCUS

—Phyllis Kilbourn

ply let the children come and then learn from them; look to them and explore the way they are and become like them. Jesus' priorities are not about what we can do for children but what we can learn from them to influence our practice.

Our contributors to this issue discuss various strategies to facilitate spiritual development in children. Lee Hall helps us understand why focusing on a child's behavior is not enough to elicit change. A relationship between our words and actions and our hearts requires that a child's heart be shepherded.

Irma Chon challenges godly caregivers—who have the most direct impact on a child's spiritual formation—to not underestimate the spiritual capacity of children. As Eli guided Samuel in his spiritual development, so must we guide the children we nurture. Several effective ways to accomplish this goal are provided.

To help us understand how children develop spiritually, Thirza Schneider explains the relationship between children's faith development and their physical, psychosocial, cognitive and moral development.

Joanne Major gives us thought to ponder in describing our lives in a combination of care-receiving and care-giving roles. She explores Scriptures that provide examples of God's servants being thoughtful and effective caregivers. When we realize the importance of our God-given caregivers' task, we will be

encouraged to continue in the role God has entrusted to us.

May the Lord give you much wisdom as you plan activities that enable children to explore their spirituality rather than simply seeing them as empty vessels to be filled by our biblical or Christian knowledge. Through utilizing a child-centered approach in our work, we will understand that this approach is about putting a child in our midst, seeing their world from their perspective and allowing this to challenge us as adults and define the way to guide that child.



Children's spirituality is the child's development of a conscious relationship with God, in Jesus Christ, through the Holy Spirit, within the context of a community of believers that fosters that relationship, as well as the child's understanding of—and response to—that relationship" (adapted from Sheldrake, 2000, p. 40).

COMING SOON TRAINING SEMINARS

Charlotte NC

Seminar 1—July 23–25

Trauma and Crisis Care

Seminar 2—July 25–28

HIV/AIDS

Deadline for registration and
hotel reservation: July 6
For more information contact
crisiscare@comporium.net

LOOK FOR . . .

In Focus	1
Shepherding...a Child's Heart	2
Understanding the Spiritual Capacity of Children	4
Vital Steps in the Spiritual Nurture of Children	5
Thoughts on Recruiting Prayer	6
News/Events/Resources	7
Caregiver's Time-out	8

Shepherding What We Cannot See—A Child's Heart

Kids, stop yelling." "Stop hitting your sister." "Hey, you know you should be sharing." "You know how to behave better than that!" Why do we think children will change by a mere comment exhorting them to behave a certain way? Why are we always focusing on behavior?

Behavior is secondary

Jesus tells us not to be concerned only about our behavior. In fact Jesus chastised the Pharisees because they were interested solely in their outward appearance. Jesus called them white-washed tombs. Outwardly they appeared obedient but were really unclean, full of hypocrisy and lawlessness on the inside (Matthew 23:27-28). God looks beyond our acts and physical appearance and peers into our hearts (1 Samuel 16:7). Our Creator and God demands that we love Him with all of our hearts. The Pharisees didn't understand this fact. They mistakenly thought that God didn't see their hearts, that He only saw what they did and heard what they said.

So Jesus redirects our attention by teaching us that our acts and words come from the desires and beliefs in our hearts. What is inside us is what should concern us.

For from within, out of the heart of man, come evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, coveting, wickedness, deceit, sensuality, envy, slander, pride, foolishness. All these evil things come from within, and they defile a person (Mark 7:21-23).

The Pharisees were worried about defiling the man by eating with unclean hands (outward acts), but Jesus wanted them to understand that their hearts were the problem, not ceremoniously unclean hands. Though their lips honored God, their hearts were far from Him.

Our Savior also wants us to understand that behavior doesn't just

magically appear. Hurtful comments, hitting, not sharing, snide remarks, saying "mine" come from the overflow of the heart. Our deeds and words are manifestations of what is already in our hearts. There is an organic connection between what we do and say and what we are believing and desiring in our hearts (Luke 6:43-45).

Truth in the heart results in walking blamelessly and doing what is right.

He who walks blamelessly and does what is right and speaks truth in his heart...who does not slander with his tongue and does no evil to his neighbor, nor takes up a reproach against his friend (Psalm 15:2-3).

Wicked desires and unbelief result in robbing, murdering, cursing, and declaring absurdities like "I am above adversity."

In arrogance the wicked hotly pursue the poor; let them be caught in the schemes that they have devised. For the wicked boasts of the desires of his soul, and the one greedy for gain curses and renounces the LORD. ...all his thoughts are, "There is no God." He says in his heart, "I shall not be moved; throughout all generations I shall not meet adversity." His mouth is filled with cursing and deceit and oppression; under his tongue are mischief and iniquity. He sits in ambush in the villages; in hiding places he murders the innocent. His eyes stealthily watch for the helpless; He says in his heart, "God has forgotten, he has hidden his face, he will never see it" (Psalm 10:3-4, 6-8, 11).

We may not have been aware that this connection exists between our action/words and our hearts, but once it is pointed out we begin to understand some of the things Jesus told us. What is going on in the heart is what counts. In

God's eyes the hate in the heart offends, not just the murder; and the lust in the heart violates God's law, not just the adulterous act (Matthew 5:21-22).

James further shows us that sin starts with the desire in the heart which, if left unchecked, gives birth to a sinful act (James 1:14-15). We sin because we are enticed by the ruling or strongest felt desire in our hearts.

So if we want to see behavior change, we must first have the heart change. Jesus exhorted the Pharisees to clean the inside of the dish then the outside would be clean. Purifying the heart effects behavior change. If we are interested only in how our children behave, are we any different from the Pharisees?

How do we help our children change their behavior?

If we want to help our children change, learn to share or have self-control, we need to help them search their hearts. They need to be aware of the desires, cravings, fears and hopes ruling their hearts (Psalm 139:23-24).

But we can't see what is in the heart, so how can we go about changing it? Praise God, Jesus has once again given us the clue: The desire or belief in one's heart is revealed in one's actions and words. If we observe the action, we can know what is in the heart because the two are connected in the same way the fruit and the roots of a tree are connected. If oranges are hanging off the branches, the tree is an orange tree. We can tell what is underground and hidden by looking at the fruit.

Numerous biblical examples spell out this connection. Abraham told his wife to say she was his sister. What was his reason or motivation?

Abraham said, "I did it because I thought, There is no fear of God at all in this place, and they will kill me because of my wife. Besides, she is indeed my sister, the daughter of my father

though not the daughter of my mother, and she became my wife (Genesis 20:11-12).

Abraham's words and actions tell us his heart motivation:

- He was afraid to be killed for his wife's beauty.
- He thought himself to be justified in his lie by the fact that she was his half-sister.
- One could also say that he did not believe that God was powerful enough to protect him since there was no fear of God in that area of the world.

The Pharisees discussed what answer to give to Jesus.

"By what authority are you doing these things?" Jesus said to them, "I will ask you one question; answer me, and I will tell you by what authority I do these things. Was the baptism of John from heaven or from man?" And they discussed it with one another, saying, "If we say, 'From heaven,' he will say, 'Why then did you not believe him?' But shall we say, 'From man?'" - they were afraid of the people, for they all held that John really was a prophet. So they answered Jesus, "We do not know" (Mark 11:28-12:1).

Their carefully chosen words reflected the ruling desire: fear of the possible violent response from the people.

An example of a child

A child has cheated on his test. Often the teacher or parent will rebuke the child, saying, "You shouldn't do that; that's a bad thing to do" and then punish the child. The child is expected to modify his behavior.

What if the child is lazy? What if the child is afraid of being severely punished by his parents or guardians if he doesn't get a good grade? What if the child is afraid to say that he doesn't understand the material? Would you treat each of these cases the same? Wouldn't your help look different for each case? The child's motivation for sinning *does* change our strategy.

If we don't help our child deal with the fear, desire or attitude in his heart, how will the child confront the situation the next time around? Does fear or

laziness just go away? Or is the threat of further punishment or pressure from outside sources, such as parents and teachers, all the child needs to change? What happens when the child grows up and the threat or pressure is no longer there?

Some concrete steps to take

We must help the child examine his heart. We can, first of all, ask questions that open his eyes to see what desire is ruling his heart. What did you want to avoid? What or who were you afraid of? What did you want to accomplish? What is most important to you?

After getting answers to those questions, choose a Scripture verse, passage or story that addresses the child's desire or fear. If the child is old enough, have him read God's standard, God's expectation not only for his behavior but for his heart. Let God's word convict him of his sin. We don't have to lecture, yell or "beat him with a two-by-four." The persuasion of his sin doesn't rest on the caretaker's shoulders. The standard by which we are disciplining and training our child is not our own, after all. Let the Holy Spirit use the Scriptures to penetrate and bear down on the soul of your child. Then let the child confess with his own mouth his sin and sinful attitude.

Now, point him to the Lord and to Scripture passages that breathe hope into his heart. He is not alone. Share how you, too, are tempted as he is.

The Lord will not abandon us. He will finish the work he started. He will give us what we need to change. We *can* change by God's amazing grace.

The last step is to show what that change needs to look like. If the child was cheating, what will it look like to fortify his soul to resist the next temptation? What can the child do differently to avoid the temptation? The plan of action that will bear good fruit will be determined by the child's original struggle and temptation.

Change of behavior is effected by a change in the heart. Wash inside first and the outside will be clean. Go for the heart. It is the steering wheel of the car and the handlebars of the bicycle. Whatever desire or belief is ruling in the heart will be the guide for the child's actions and words.

This article is only a brief description of how to help our children everywhere to grow to be more like Christ. Hopefully it has inspired you to believe that change for them is even more possible because our God has shown us the way and provided the strength we need to change.

I encourage you to read, devour and apply the book *Shepherding a Child's Heart*.¹ Tedd Tripp has clearly explained how to shepherd your child's heart for the glory of our Lord. First of all, it will challenge your own walk with the Lord! Then together, whether as a family or in your ministry, you can turn to Him and watch how He transforms your children. If you are dealing with children in crisis situations, they are no exception. The power of God's Word reaches even the hardest or most deeply wounded heart!



Currently on WEC International homestaff in USA, Lee, among other responsibilities teaches several topics, including *Shepherding a Child's Heart*, to missionary candidates. With her husband, David, she served in Cote d'Ivoire, West Africa for 15 years, ministering to women and children. The couple has two adult daughters.

¹ *Shepherding a Child's Heart*; Tedd Tripp (1995), Shepherd Press, P.O. Box 24, Wapwallopen, PA 18660 (Also has a workbook.)



OTHER RESOURCES

Teach Them Diligently; How to Use the Scriptures in Child Training, Lou Priolo, Timeless Texts, publishers

The Heart of Anger, Lou Priolo, Calvary Press Publishing (Also has a workbook.)

Don't Make Me Count to Three, Ginger Plowman, Shepherd Press.

Understanding the Spiritual Capacity of Children

Irma Chon

My prayer and passion is to see the children of the nations, regardless of the odds stacked against them, "experience the Father's love" and establish an intimate relationship with Him through reading the Word—what we call daily TWA (Time With Abba)—and learn to hear and obey His voice through prayer.

December 30, 2004 Catherine Brown (Catherine@gatekeepers.org.uk) printed a prophetic word that told how God would raise up child champions of prayer whose words will be powerful and prophetically anointed. These young prayer warriors will need to be mentored as Eli mentored Samuel.

If we are to nurture children in their spiritual growth as Eli nurtured Samuel, we must understand the spiritual capacity of children. What we presume about a child's spiritual capacity will be the greatest factor in determining how we will lead them.

1 Samuel 3 shows us that a child can be taught to wait on God and commune with Him. It shows us that children not only receive revelation from God but they also can obey God and be used by Him to influence others and be used in prophecy.

As parents and spiritual caretakers of children, we have the most direct impact on a child's spiritual formation. As Eli guided Samuel, we need to guide the children who have been entrusted to our care.

Ways that we can give this guidance on a daily basis are to:

- ✱ Give your child a personal journal in which to record his/her TWA.
- ✱ Encourage your child to do TWA first thing in the morning. A gentle reminder often helps.
- ✱ Ask the child to read a Scripture passage aloud.
- ✱ Then have your child write or draw in the journal book a favorite verse, prayer or picture God shows the child in his mind.
- ✱ Encourage your child to pray using the passage he/she read. Your child could commit to pray for a person or a world event on a regular basis.

- ✱ Have your child spend a few minutes listening to God's answer, then journal what God said.

Listening to God and learning to hear His voice is an important part of the training that we need to give children. God is speaking to them all the time, but our children need us to help them understand how to tune in to God's voice. They need to hear us teach them as Samuel needed Eli to say, "Samuel, that voice is God speaking; go and lie down and if He calls you, say, 'Speak, Lord, for your servant is listening.'" I give the following instructions to children when leading them to understand how to hear the voice of God in their TWA and prayer time. I adapted them from a good friend in Virginia, Pete Hohmann.

1. Tune in to God's voice.

Before we can hear God, we must know what His voice sounds like. The Bible says that God's voice is like a gentle whisper (1 Kings 19:11-12). Usually it is not a whisper that we can actually hear with our ears, but the Holy Spirit speaks directly to our spirits through spontaneous thoughts. "Spontaneous" means that these thoughts seem to just appear in our hearts. They are not just something we were already thinking about. When God puts His thoughts in our hearts we often feel peace, or faith, or conviction or a special excitement. God can put a thought, a word, an idea, a feeling, an impression or even a vision in our hearts.

2. Quiet your heart

—so you can hear God's voice.
Psalm 46:10 says, "Be still and know that I am God." Our minds can be so busy and noisy that we can't hear God's gentle whisper. It's impossible to empty our minds of all thoughts, and we should not try to make our minds blank. What we need to do is focus on Jesus.

Express your love for Him—more with feelings and desire and less with actual words. It's like sitting quietly with your best friend. Just being together is enough. Listening to a worship CD is also a great way to quiet your heart.

3. Open the eyes of your heart

—and ask God to fill them. Acts 2:17 says, "I will pour out my Spirit on all mankind, and your sons and your daughters will prophecy, and your young men will see visions, and your old men will dream dreams." Imagine your heart as a movie screen. Ask God to fill this screen with His words and pictures. Pray, "Lord, I present the eyes of my heart to you. Fill them with vision and revelation." Just as your physical eyes see into the natural world around you, your spirit sees into the supernatural world when you ask God to open them.

4. Write down thoughts

—that come to your heart. We call this "journaling." Habakkuk 2:2-3 says, "Record the vision...for the vision is yet for the appointed time...though it tarries, wait for it...it will surely come." To journal our questions and God's answers, simply ask a question and write down the spontaneous thoughts that come to your heart. Don't try to figure out if your writing is God or not until you finish writing. Nothing stops the voice of God speaking to you more than doubt. When you finish writing you can compare what you wrote to the Bible. You can also write down what God speaks to you from the Bible and any other lessons God is teaching you.

Don't expect your children to be perfect in hearing and discerning the voice of God all the time. Remember they are kids; they get tired or distracted at times, just as we do! Be assured that you have been entrusted with nurturing a generation of children who are becoming houses of prayer for all the nations!

My prayer is that the generation of boys and girls which you have been entrusted to lead will grow together in Him and experience His love!



Irma Chon has ministered to children and youth for over 20 years. She currently serves as Children and Youth Pastor at Cornerstone Christian Fellowship near Columbus, Ohio. Irma holds a Bachelors Degree in Christian Education and a Masters Degree in Church Ministries/C.E. She has a passion for mobilizing kids to pray on behalf of children at risk and for the nations.

Vital Steps in the Spiritual Nurture of Children

Thirza Schneider

Children's spiritual development is affected by a variety of factors. Many people ministering to children in crisis are mistaken in their belief that one can simply share the gospel with a child and the child will simply believe. Unfortunately, the process is much more complicated. To understand how children develop spiritually, one must first understand some basic points about their physical, psychosocial, cognitive and moral development.

Faith develops as children find order and meaning in each period of life. With each new level of faith development, children have new capacities for relating and trusting others and God. Faith does not unfold automatically. It develops in relationships with others. When these relationships are broken or betrayed, children's faith development suffers.

Primal Faith

Primal faith is a basic disposition to trust. As babies learn to trust the people around them, they trust themselves as worthy of being loved. This embryo of faith can come to maturity in a relationship with God. The influence of this first basic faith is critical. It lays the foundation on which later faith will be built. Basic trust is the essential foundation for faith in God. If that basic trust does not form in infancy or is destroyed later in life, trust must be built or rebuilt before a person can come to a life-sustaining faith in God.

Intuitive Faith

Rather than being shamed or made to feel guilty, children who are affirmed by loving adults when they express autonomy and initiative, develop a healthy sense of their worth and abilities. They incorporate into their image of God this affirming love of parents and their sense of being lovable. That strong sense of God's loving care is the faith young children need.

Literal Faith

The capacity for concrete logical thought makes this stage of faith possible. This faith also requires that children be able to see things from another

person's point of view. A literal faith understands justice in terms of reciprocity—an equal exchange. Children are very concerned about what is fair. Out of this belief comes the view of God as a powerful ruler who is stern but fair. God can be counted on both to reward good behavior and punish those who are bad. Children may also fear that God will leave them if they do not keep up their end of the bargain.

Conventional Faith

In early adolescence the brain can think more abstractly and children construct their faith by synthesizing meanings, beliefs and values received from various sectors of their world. Interpersonal relationships are increasingly important. God is understood in terms of an extension of human relationships. Many young people experience a deep hunger for a personal relationship with God. They want to be known and accepted by the One who can know them more fully than anyone else. And they long for acceptance from God that affirms the worth of their personhood. When we present God as One who offers companionship, guidance and love, early adolescents desire to know and be known by that God.

As can be clearly seen in this faith development, children who are at risk or living in crisis situations are already disturbed at the primal faith stage. They have never learned to trust. Additionally, they have not learned that they are lovable and capable of doing great things. As a result most of these children do not develop in their faith and have a hard time believing that a God exists who truly cares for them and whom they can trust one hundred percent.

All children do a lot of thinking. They try to make sense out of their lives and understand what is happening to them and why. Most children also turn to spiritual resources while trying to figure out the answers to life. They think about who God is and what he might be like. They may think about things they know about God from their religions but, even if they have no religious background at all, they think about

God in some way. Interwoven into their thought processes are insights they have learned from other people, such as their parents or teachers. However, they construct their own understandings to guide their lives, and their thought processes are not necessarily a copy of what society around them is thinking.

Children in Crisis and God

Healthy psychosocial, cognitive, moral and faith development is an important part of spiritual formation. It sets the stage for a relationship with God. In that sense children on the streets or in similar circumstances seem to be at a disadvantage spiritually, because their entire development is negatively affected and stunted. However, the children often are very responsive to God.

It seems that abused children often develop an image of God as the idealized parent who brings them comfort. Children who have never known a father or have only known an abusive, criminal or alcoholic father tend to respond with great openness to the idea that they have "another Father, who is in heaven." To know that they do have a Father who loves them and watches over them brings them comfort.

In addition to this father concept, the children who have lost all sense of hope respond with great desperation to the hope the gospel brings. Like a drowning person desperately grasping for that branch that means survival, so the children respond to the love and hope of God.

The gospel needs to be explained to children in concrete terms. Even when working with street youth in their teens, workers need to concretely show them how much God loves them. This teaching can be done through stories but absolutely needs to be shown through the worker's actions. Street workers need to meet the children on their level. A development in moral reasoning comes through relationships, when children want to please those they love. As relationships become close between children and staff, the children will observe what the staff members do and desire to imitate them because they love the staff, want to be like them and please them.

Bible stories

Bible stories are very important for children. Often the children can identify with the experiences of the biblical characters. Stories inspire their imagination and help them reflect on the meaning of life and who God is.

Some issues to keep in mind when sharing stories with children follow:

- Make God real to them; don't use abstract ideas.
- Use pictures.
- Let the children act out stories; repeat stories (helps them master what they're learning).
- Let the children interact with each other.
- Enter the story as the children do by using your imagination.
- Use real-life stories of how God changed people's lives.

Discipline

Children need to experience justice in their interaction with staff members. The staff should treat them with respect,

listen to them and give them a sense of value. The team also needs to actively teach them inductive discipline. The children need to be made aware of the consequences of their actions, the impact their actions have on others and the fact that they should take responsibility for their actions. Let the children describe their own behavior in terms of good and bad. Ask what is the right or wrong thing to do and why. Help them discover the moral principles. Staff needs to set rules in their activities so the children learn that certain guidelines are in place and there is right and wrong.

Sin

Children must also know what God says about their victimization. They may be astute in discerning their own sin, but they are usually very shallow in their ability to sort out responsibility when they have been sinned against. "Bad things happen to me, therefore I am a bad person." They think they are getting what they deserve. Wounded

children must understand that they are not capable of causing other people to sin against them.

Alternative lifestyle

Children cannot be expected to behave differently and in more moral ways if no alternative to their means of survival is provided. As long as they are on the streets, they cannot be expected to stop stealing, practicing prostitution, using drugs or being violent. They must be provided with a "just moral community" before they can truly move on to the next level in moral reasoning.



Adapted from Lesson 16, "Spiritual Nurture," Offering Healing and Hope to Children in Crisis, Module 2: Street Children, (2006) Phyllis Kilbourne, Curriculum developer.

NOTE: One of the best resources for counseling street children and introducing them to the love of God is "Picture Me" developed as part of the Pavement Project by Life Words (was Scripture Gift Union). This resource is designed for use specifically with street children. Find out more via www.lifewords.info or www.viva.org

Thoughts On Recruiting Prayer

—Marjorie McDermid

Jeremiah, one of God's great prophets during Israel's captivity, begged the people to "Arise, cry out in the night for your children, who faint from hunger at the head of every street.... Young and old lie together in the dust of the streets; my young men and maidens have fallen by the sword...." (Lamentations 2:19, 21NIV). What a picture of many children and youth today!

We need prayer supporters who will help us pray and cry out to God for the souls, bodies and minds of these young ones. The importance of recruiting prayer for the children cannot be underestimated. A great pool of prayer supporters exists in your Christian community. Your Christian family members, believing friends, donors...and beyond...can all become a vital part of your work and have their own exciting ministry as they connect with you and the children for whom they pray.

Well-known prayer advocate for children, Esther Ilinsky says, "The key to being motivated to pray for children in crisis is simple: Love them." How can you light the fire of love in your prayer workers?

For Whom to Pray

A background history/story of the child's life in brief but including vital details will introduce the child and specific needs. Pictures are extremely important—and today are not too difficult to take and e-mail to the prayer partners.

Key to continued interest is keeping the prayer partners informed regularly of significant changes in the child's needs, attitudes and behaviors—whether positive or negative.

An "adoption" program can work well for recruiting prayer. Such a plan takes a lot of time and effort. You may need a staff member dedicated to helping prayer partners connect with the children.

Remember, also, the largest prayer pool of all is the children to whom you minister. They also can learn to pray. No one knows better than they how and for what to pray. To quote Esther Ilinsky again: "Praying is the most valuable gift children can give to their unfortunate peers."

How to Pray

- Extensive help can be gained by contacting—
- Esther Network Int'l Children's Global Prayer Ministry www.libertycc.org/lcci/childrens.htm
 - PrayKids! www.navpress.com/Magazines/PrayKids!/
 - The Australian Children's Prayer Network www.surf.to/kidspray
 - Generation of Destiny Prayer Website www.godprayer.org
 - Kids in Ministry International www.kidsinministry.com
 - Harvest Prayer Ministries www.harvestprayer.com
 - Powerpack Ministries www.powerpackministries.co.uk
 - In His Arms Ministry pamphlet "31 Things to Pray for Children at-Risk" (inhisarms.org)

Obtaining the desire of your heart, the conversion and spiritual development of "your" children, will require a lot of prayer, and for this work you need to recruit help.



Global Children's Prayer Network in Planning Stages

The first Children in Prayer Global Consultation took place in Malaysia, September 26-30, 2006. Hoping to lay a foundation for the future, 170 men, women and children representing 35 nations met to —

—Listen to the Lord and each other and learn methodologies that will encourage children to become agents of prayer transformation for their communities, nations and world.

—Build ongoing supportive relationships that will grow into an international network of ministry specialists that supports the common mission.

—Discuss and formulate possible strategies for mobilizing children worldwide to partner in prayer.

John Robb of World Vision and the International Prayer council, who convened the consultation, described what God is doing in a children's prayer movement as a "quiet tsunami." In southern India, for example, children are becoming agents of transformation in their communities. Children in developing prayer clubs are asking God to show them the needs around them. Collectively, the children draw picture-maps identifying what God reveals to them (alcoholism, AIDS, unemployment...). Next they draw a map of what their community would look like if it were transformed by God's power. Then they pray and watch what God will do. Many people are coming to Christ in response to the children's prayers.

Six children's prayer towers in Indonesia welcome children for prayer three times weekly. More than 1,000 children from around the nation gather several times yearly to pray.

Eunice, a 17-year-old Malaysian girl, has begun a ministry to connect youth in prayer for their nation. This vision, birthed out of Ezekiel 37:10, has encouraged young people to help redeem the Internet for the Lord by way of a 24/7 Web-based prayer community.

Asked about the youth prayer "tsunami," children attending the consulta-

tion said that soon it will be anything but "quiet." They believe that with the blessing, encouragement and mentorship of older generations, they can fulfill the destiny to which God is calling them.

Adapted from an article by Kim Butts, vice president of Harvest Prayer Ministries. Used with permission.

Advanced Course on Trafficking and Slavery

In the Fall, 2007, Donna Hughes will teach an advanced course on human trafficking and slavery through the University of Rhode Island. The course will be taught entirely online, so you can enroll and complete the course from anywhere in the world. The course is appropriate for advanced undergraduate students, graduate students and professionals working in the field.

WMS 490 "Campaigns and Services for Victims of Trafficking and Slavery" focuses on historical and contemporary campaigns for ending human trafficking and slavery and on providing services to contemporary victims of human trafficking and slavery. For more information go to <https://webct.uri.edu/public/2076-URIPS-WMS-490-SEC3000-1749/index.html> or contact Dr. Hughes at dhughes@uri.edu.

Dr. Donna M. Hughes is Professor and Eleanor M. and Oscar M. Carlson Endowed Chair in Women's Studies at the University of Rhode Island. Her work on sex trafficking is on her web site at (<http://www.uri.edu/artsci/wms/hughes>).

Children At Risk Courses

A renowned Children At Risk specialist will teach a course at Western Seminary this summer:

July 16-20, 2007

DIS 562L. Intervention Strategies for Children and Youth at Risk is designed to provide students with understanding about the most common challenges that children at risk face in their growth, key approaches to encouraging their healing and an understanding of which signals

should trigger the worker to enlist the help of a trained specialist.

Lecturer Gundelina Velazco, PhD, is the training director for Justice for Children, International. She has trained workers and developed inventive programs in numerous countries and authored significant books on children at risk.

For more information contact Krista Cain at kcain@westernseminary.edu.

Free Downloadable Book on AIDS

AIDS is Real and It's in Our Church, a valuable guide for churches and Christians in combating the spread of HIV, can be downloaded free at www.aids-is-real.com. Also available: "Spider," a children's story about preventing HIV infection.

Training Opportunities

Youth With A Mission (YWAM) Brazil, offers training schools for workers interested in Children at Risk (CAR), HIV/AIDS, and Urban Community Development. All three schools are bilingual, accredited with the University of the Nations and offered at YWAM in Belo Horizonte, Brazil. Each training has a 3-month lecture phase followed by a mandatory internship of 12 months.

For further information go to www.bhcentro.jocum.org.br.

AS YOU LIKE IT!

A number of people on the *The Barnabas Letter* mailing list have asked for e-mail service. We are grateful because, of course, we save on postage. If you also would like to receive the letter in pdf. format by e-mail, please contact us at crisiscare@comporium.net. Otherwise, we are happy to continue mailing the letter to you via the postal service.

Caregiver's Time-out

Joanne Major



In Appreciation of Caregivers

We spend almost all of our lives in a care-receiving or a care-giving relationship. We all came into this world as helpless babes, needing to be cared for in every way, unable to do anything for ourselves. Most of us have been blessed with loving parents who nourished us, provided for us, and saw to our well-being for many years. For you who have not had such parental love and care, perhaps loving, caring "others"—grandparents, aunts and uncles, friends—have met those needs as you grew up.

Think back through our lives and appreciate with me a few "others" who have cared for us, albeit, to a much lesser degree than the daily care of parents. Teachers, throughout our school years, gave of themselves, guiding us that we might learn and mature. For those of us who were blessed to have them, Sunday school teachers cared enough to want us to know of Jesus' love. Sports coaches helped teach us team work and good sportmanship. Friendships (although we probably didn't recognize it at the time) taught us mutual sharing and caring. No doubt we could think of many other caregivers to whom appreciation is due.

As we grow into adults, no longer needing full care (mind you, do we ever get to the place where we don't appreciate that surrounding love and care of family and friends?) we, ourselves, become caregivers to friends, spouse, children. Many professions or jobs put us into the caregiving mode—doctors, nurses, teachers, firemen, policemen, those serving in caregiving institutions—just to name a few. Later in life we may be called upon to be caregivers to elderly parents or someone in our extended family.

This process is the usual course of life for most, both for those who know Jesus as Lord and for those who are not yet part of His family. But, how blessed and privileged are we who do know the Savior and who have been called to serve Him by caring for others.

Scripture contains many examples of God's servants being thoughtful caregivers. I remind us of just a few.

In 2 Kings 4:8-13, the "great woman" of Shunem said of Elisha to her husband, "I perceive that this is an holy man of God...let us make a little chamber...for him...that when he cometh to us, he shall turn in there. And...on a day that he came, he turned in there." In appreciation of her kindness, Elisha said to her (through his servant Gehazi) "behold, thou hast been careful for us with all this care."

From the book of Ruth we learn of Ruth's great love and care for her widowed mother-in-law, Naomi. Ruth showed that care when she and her sister-in-law, Orpah, were entreated by Naomi to return each to her mother's house after the death of their husbands. "But Ruth clave to her...and Ruth said, intreat me not to leave thee or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge; thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God."

In Luke 10:30-37 Jesus, that truest caregiver of all, teaches us a great lesson of loving and compassionate care for those in desperate need. He uses the story of the Good Samaritan who found "a certain man" who "fell among thieves, stripped him of his clothing, wounded him, and departed, leaving

him half dead. A certain Samaritan...saw him...had compassion on him...brought him to an inn and took care of him," and upon leaving instructed the innkeeper to "take care of him...I will repay you."

We are all moved as we look upon the artist's depiction of many little children gathered around Jesus "that He might put His hands on them and pray." We're reminded that He rebuked His disciples by saying, "Let the little children come to me, and do not forbid them; for of such is the kingdom of Heaven" Matthew 19:13-14.

How important and valued in God's economy are you caregivers who minister to children in crisis around the world! We "on this end" realize you are reaching kids, whom the Savior loves, in extremely hard places—poor places, dirty places, disease-ridden places, sin-filled places. You are taking the love and care of Jesus to precious children—children who are abandoned and abused, sick and starving, trafficked and trashed, unloved and unwanted.

As you minister to these children in Jesus' name, trying to meet every facet of their needs, sharing with them the message of salvation and a new life in Jesus, we can feel with you the heaviness of the task before you. I encourage you to continually remember the One who is the greatest Caregiver of all! Our Lord Jesus. I remind you of a hymn which asks "Does Jesus Care?" The answer is definite: "Oh, yes, He cares!" The Apostle Peter (1 Peter 5:7) emphasizes that answer by admonishing you to cast "all your care upon Him, for He cares for you." Do know that you are remembered in prayer, loved and appreciated. We thank God for you.



Joanne is a retired WEC International missionary, having served in Equatorial Guinea and for many years on USA homestaff. Her first caregiver task was as a teenaged baby sitter. She says her most gratifying caregiver role was caring for her mother for four years until her death in her 101st year. Joanne is well known for her helps ministry and love of mentoring young workers.



Crisis Care Training International is a ministry of WEC International.
Phyllis Kilbourn, Director <crisiscare@comporium.net>
Marj McDermid, editing and layout