

# The Barnabas Letter

*To encourage, enrich and equip*

*A Publication of Crisis Care Training International*

## ***Bring the Children “Home”***

### **IN FOCUS**

Some time ago, my friends told me they had been out shopping for a new “home.” Immediately, a haunting query arose: Can a “home” be shopped for as one would groceries or a new suit? I think not. Just as a suit doesn’t make the man, so a house doesn’t really make a “home.”

What *does* it take to *make* a home? The dictionary defines home as the dwelling place of a family. But home is much more than that, isn’t it? At the time of this writing this was a serious subject for me. I had just enrolled in Bible College and was living with my daughter. As I looked around the room I called “home,” I asked myself: where is my “home?”

With closed eyes, I thought of the word “home.” Suddenly, I was in the little apartment I grew up in. It was a cold winter morning, but my Mom’s kitchen was cozy warm. The aroma of freshly brewed coffee and toasted Italian bread greeted me as I entered the room. The soft light shining through the frosted window caught my mother’s smile. “Good morning sleepy-head, come sit by me.” Then the ritual began. She poured the two of us a hot cup of coffee and

buttered two slices of warm Italian bread. As we sat close to one another she would whisper; “Who’s better than us?” I remembered feeling so happy to be “home” with her. She is gone now. At her Memorial Service the pastor said, “Ann was truly a *home-maker*.” And she was!

Then the words of Psalm 127 came to mind: “Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain who build it.” The Hebrew word used for house is *Bayith*. It means a dwelling, a family and/or a household. The words of Jesus also came to me. “I go to prepare a place for you ... that where I am you may be also ... I am always with you.” John 14:2,3; Matthew 28:20. Peace and clarity filled my heart. My home is with Jesus and the Father is my dwelling place. In the early morning, as we break the bread of life together, His word brings warmth and delight to my soul and I hear Him whisper: “Who’s better than us?”

This quarter Barnabas addresses children in crisis and church planting. Let’s remember that their little hearts ache for the sanctuary of “home” that only Jesus can provide. And, they long to hear Him say “*Who’s better than us?*”

*“Welcome Home!”*



***God’s desires all His children to be part of a community of faith. If the children cannot go to the church, why not start the church among the children?***

*—Peter Clark*

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# Can Children and Church Be Mentioned in the Same Sentence?

—Peter Clark



*You can't church plant  
among children!*

So declared one missionary to a group of people who were intending to do exactly that. This comment was made despite the fact that there were already several examples within the same mission of churches that were almost exclusively children. Maybe you have heard the same—a church just cannot start among children, can it? If there is any mention of children and church planting in the same sentence, it usually has something to do with starting a children's ministry when planting a church—among adults.

*Two serious misunderstandings  
hinder church planting  
among children.*

Additionally, when working with children at risk or in crisis, one of the re-occurring problems is that it can be very difficult for a local church to open its doors to these children. Much effort is placed on getting the children to be *acceptable* to the church so that they can finally go to church. This occurs so often that many give up trying, and the children never end up in a church because they perceive it to be a foreign and hostile environment. However, this is contrary to God's desire that all of His children, regardless of their age, be a part of a community of faith. If the children cannot go to the church, why not start the church among the children?

Two serious misunderstandings hinder church planting among children. The first is the concept of a *baby* Holy Spirit. Now, of course, no one will admit that they believe in a *baby* Holy Spirit, but their practice makes it clear they believe the Holy Spirit who indwells children is somehow different from the Holy Spirit who indwells adults. If you find that hard to believe, consider

when was the last time you heard someone under the age of 18 testify about what God is doing in their lives, or give a word—no matter how brief—before the congregation?

Do we believe that the same Spirit who dwells and works within us is present and at work in children who believe? Do we believe that God can use them to minister to others -- both children and adults? Or is God somehow limited in what He can do until believers reach a certain age? We need to be looking for opportunities and be encouraging children to exercise their Spirit-given gifts.

*A church that denies the work of the  
Spirit in one age group is probably not  
discipling the other  
age groups very well either.*

The second misunderstanding concerns the church itself. If your definition of church includes such things as a building, a seminary-trained pastor, and a choir or worship band, the idea of a church among children will almost certainly be unthinkable. But the question that every church planter must ask is: *Am I trying to reproduce my own church heritage and traditions, or am I seeking to effectively disciple people?* So many notions of what a church has to be have distorted the real, central core of what church is. Time and space unfortunately do not allow me to give an exhaustive definition of what church is, but allow me to suggest that if the only room

for children in your definition of church is in the nursery or Sunday school classroom, then there is probably something wrong with your definition, not only for children, but for adults as well. A church that denies the work of the Spirit in one age demographic is probably not discipling the other age groups very well either.

*So many notions of what a church  
has to be have distorted the real,  
central core of what church is.*

D.L. Moody, at the age of 21, started a Sunday school mission for impoverished children living in Chicago. Within a year there were 300 children attending and within two years, there were over 1,000 children and adults attending classes on Sunday and every weekday evening. This by a young man who had come to Christ only four years before, was a traveling shoe salesman, and had no formal theological training; in fact, he only had a fifth-grade education!



Were there other churches in Chicago? Certainly! So why did Moody see such a rich harvest in such a short time? Although he called it a Sunday school mission, what Moody really did was start a church for children. He believed, first and foremost, in the power of the Spirit; in both his own life and in the lives of others regardless of their age.



Can there be a church among street children, gathering together in one of their favorite hangouts? How about in the common room of an orphanage? Could it also occur in a prison cell? Sure, why not? The problem is not with the Holy Spirit, but with a lack of imagination to look at the harvest fields and say:

*What would a community of faith  
look like here,  
in this place,  
with these children?*

*Peter Clark is a missionary with WEC International where he has served in church planting ministry for better than fifteen years.*

*He and his wife Sarah have worked in eastern Europe among a church planting team where they also served as field leaders.*

*In addition, from the beginning, Peter and Sarah had a heart for children in crisis and initiated ministry in prisons and in many orphanages as part of their church planting efforts in Eastern Europe.*

*They presently reside at the WEC USA headquarters with their three children where they are enjoying a well earned sabbatical.*

# Why Children?

—Tami Showden  
CCTI International Training Coordinator



Of the 2.2 billion children in the world, nearly two-thirds of them are at risk and in crisis because of abandonment, neglect, abuse and exploitation. It is in Christ and His church where they will find true hope and healing. If that's the case, then how do they fit into church planting? Is there a place for the "least of these" in our plans, buildings and growth?

I believe there are three issues at hand. Historically, children have not been considered a part of the church planting effort or valued as worthy participants in its growth. Second, the church is often unaware of the multitudes of hurting children in their communities; they simply do not see them. Finally, if they do see these children, they may feel ill equipped to minister to their unique and profound needs. Resolving these issues for the church is the heartbeat of my ministry.

***What was impressed upon my heart every time I embraced a child was that they were image bearers of God.***

My work began in the country of Kyrgyzstan. God called me out of a successful sales career to build the church by reaching the orphaned children. Every day I arrived at the orphanage, I prayed I would be the hands and feet of Jesus caring for the children. What was impressed upon my heart every time I embraced a child was that they were image bearers of God and not simply the future church, but *the church of today*, and worthy of ministry. I spent countless days teaching the Bible to these precious ones, leading them in prayer and encouraging them to pray for one another. Their caregivers took notice. They began to ask, "What is this love you bring to the children?"

After adopting my daughter, Tabi, from Kyrgyzstan, I left Central Asia with a burning in my heart to be an advocate for the hurting children—they need a voice in the church. In my response, a teammate and I created *Red Card*; a family curriculum for churches designed to raise awareness for children in crisis, mobilize prayer on their behalf, and equip families to offer practical help. I have found great joy in watching children take this class and realize they are not too young to help their peers who are hurting throughout the world.

Two years ago I began seeking the Lord for the next step in bringing hope to children in crisis. God answered by revealing the need to train and equip the indigenous church to respond to the needs of the hurting children. Soon after I read the CCTI newsletter where they expressed the need for more trainers. I wrote to CCTI right away and said YES! In January of 2012, I attended the CCTI Curriculum Course: Trauma and Crisis Care and in June of 2012 I traveled to the Philippines with CCTI to teach this course to caregivers and practitioners.

Participants expressed their heartbreak over the many hurting children who were not in a place to receive the hope that God offered to them because they had no concept of a loving heavenly Father. It is common for children in crisis to have a distorted view of God because of the abuse, abandonment and exploitation they have faced at the hands of their earthly fathers. It is imperative that the church understand the traumatic experiences of children at risk the resulting impact of trauma in order to reach them with the hope of Christ.

***The Lord has allowed me to touch the lives of caregivers and children in crisis all over the globe.***

During the trip to the Philippines, I knew the Lord was leading me to join CCTI full time. Praise the Lord I now serve as Training Coordinator for CCTI and He has allowed me to touch the lives of caregivers and children in crisis all over the globe! Recently we took this training to Ethiopia where the Lord blessed us beyond anything we could have imagined! How thankful I am for this opportunity—it's a powerful privilege and an awesome responsibility!

It is my deepest passion and prayer that we are planting churches that, from the beginning, understand who is right outside our doors and are inviting them in—even if they are children.



### ***Red Card: Standing Against Oppression, Providing Hope***

is a dynamic, eight-week family curriculum on children at risk. Lessons raise awareness of six different types of children at risk:

- Children in Poverty
- Orphans in Institutions
- Street Kids
- Child Laborers
- Children of War
- Children Affected by HIV/AIDS.

Lessons include videos, simulations, family processing time, prayer, at-home activities, and practical steps for involvement. Scripture woven through each lesson helps participants gain a biblical perspective on God's heart for the least of these, and our mandate to respond. Hands-on learning allows participants to step into the daily lives of children at risk, motivating them to make a difference.

Designed as a cross-generational church class, *Red Card* may also be used in home groups and to train short-term family teams going to minister to children at risk.

The *Red Card* curriculum set includes: DVD with seven video segments and promotional video CD-ROM with eight printable lessons, teacher background notes, and weekly class posters, customizable files of promotional materials (posters, letters, flyers, web text, promotional clip, and more), 30 Pathfinder journals and 30 sets-of-eight prayer cards. The content is age-appropriate for children in grade 4 and up.

***This family-oriented curriculum is cutting edge, and is an incredible opportunity for families to serve, worship, and learn together.*** F.Knoll, Pastor, White River Community Church

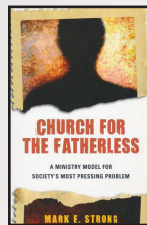
***This information is absolutely needed by the church to call us to action in an arena we have ignored for too long. Having the whole family in the class was excellent!***  
K. Allred, class participant.

For more information about Red Card,  
and to see a sample lesson, go to:  
<http://www.redcardkids.com/>

## **Resources: Church Planting and Children**

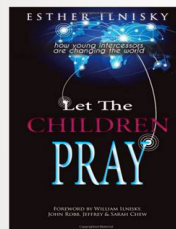
### **Books**

***Church for the Fatherless: A Ministry Model for Society's  
Most Pressing Problem*** —Dr. Mark E. Strong  
Inter-Varsity Press ISBN: 0802405738



Fatherlessness is rampant in our churches as well. When planting his church, Mark Strong realized that fifteen of twenty core leaders, whether they were in their twenties or sixties, white or black, had grown up without an active father figure in their lives. And he determined to make a difference in the lives of the next generation.

***Let the Children Pray: How young intercessors are  
changing the world*** —Esther Ilnisky  
CreateSpace ISBN-10: 1478228156



Praying children not only get God's ear, they get results! Esther teaches you how your children can be released to pray with purpose and power. Your children can be equipped and released to join the growing army of young warriors who are helping to change both generations and nations. God's response to the children's prayers (remarkable testimonies included) confirm a new generation of mighty prayer warriors in our homes and churches - a virtually untapped resource for such a time as this!

### **Websites**

***Children's Prayer Network***  
<http://www.kidspray.org.au>

The vision of the Children's Prayer Network is to mobilize and network praying children; to support and encourage the nurturing, discipling, training and equipping of these children. Our goal is to enable children to take their place in God's family as part of the army He is raising up to reach this generation. *Great resources available.*

# Out of the Mouth of Babes

Dedicated to children who hear their Father's voice.

*Behold, children are a heritage from the Lord,  
The fruit of the womb is a reward.  
Like arrows in the hand of a warrior,  
So are the children of one's youth.  
Psalm 127:3,4*

*From the lips of children and infants  
you have ordained praise because of your  
enemies, to silence the foe  
and the avenger.  
Psalm 8:2*

## **God is Good!** By Tabi Snowden

**M**y Mom adopted me from an orphanage in Kyrgyzstan. I had a lot of facial deformity but God made it possible for me to have many operations. In 2006 my Mom received a picture of a girl in Kirgizstan named Feruza who had the same facial deformities that I had. The social worker asked my Mom if she could help Feruza get the surgery she needed and my Mom did help her get surgery here in the USA. This year Feruza needed more surgery because the tear duct was not working in the only good eye she had and she could not see out of it anymore. Feruza's Mom could not cope and although she loved her daughter, she asked my Mom to adopt Feruza.

My mom asked me what my thoughts were and I told my mom: *She can't give Feruza up when she is eight years old. That is horrible. Feruza would never get over that!* My mom stopped and prayed about it and said my words were very wise. I told my Mom; *That's just what God had laid on my heart.*



Tabi in Ethiopia

The Lord then provided the surgeon for free and the other finances needed for Feruza's eye to be operated on this past July, as well as the finances for her to return next summer for a follow-up surgery. There is also a school for the blind who has agreed to take Feruza starting this fall. Feruza can stay at this school during the week, and with relatives in Bishkek on the weekends. **God is good!**

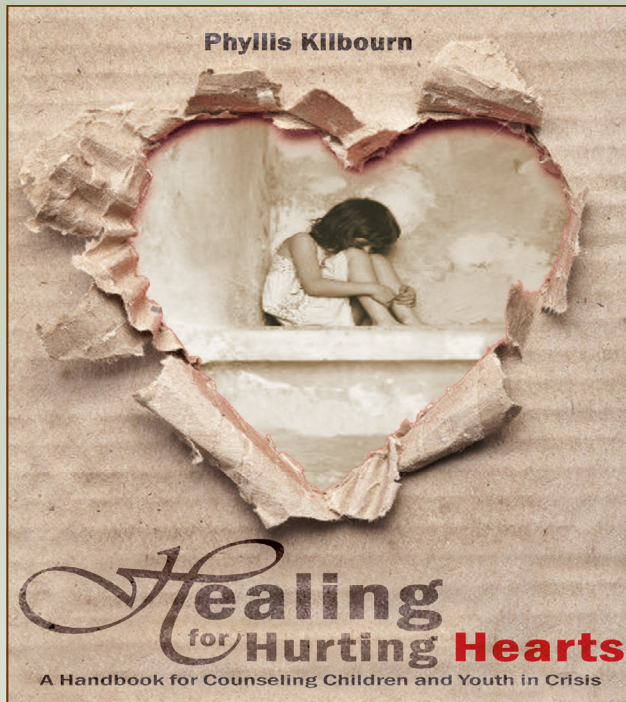
*Tabi Snowden will celebrate her twelveth birthday on January 13, 2014. She has a huge heart for the Lord. She attends Cherry Hills Christian School in Denver, Colorado. Tabi just returned from Ethiopia with her Mom, Tami, where they both ministered to children in Ethiopian villages—many were orphans. Tabi is wise beyond her years in the Lord and often times has blessed me with a word from Our Father.*

—Rosemary Sabatino, CCTI Director

**C**hildren are the heritage of the LORD! Through them God is building His kingdom on earth. It is the responsibility of the church to nurture them as they grow in grace and in the knowledge of their Lord. (Deuteronomy 6:4,7). Even as they are growing, children have been given a ministry arrows in the hand of a warrior and praise which stills the enemy and the avenger! Recognizing that as children come to know the Lord they do not receive a baby Holy Spirit, we dedicate this section of Barnabas to the children who hear their Father's voice!

What's *new!*

BOOK PREVIEW



**Finally!**  
**Practical help for those  
who work with children at  
risk and children in crisis!**

***Healing for Hurting Hearts***  
**Dr. Phyllis Kilbourn, Editor**

So many have asked us:  
*“How can I talk with and  
counsel the children?”*

In this handbook, various  
qualified Christian authors offer  
practical advice and guidance to  
those who counsel troubled youth in  
order to bring healing to their  
hurting hearts.

This text will also help workers understand how the gospel of Christ can  
inform and impact their interactions with children and youth in crisis.

**Pre-order price—\$12.95 (Reg. \$14.99) or 3 for \$35**  
**Available NOW at: [www.crisiscaretraining.org](http://www.crisiscaretraining.org)**

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# Caregiver's Time-out

—Amy Wilson



## *Don't Be Paralyzed by the Opposition!*

As seen throughout this issue of *The Barnabas Letter*, there is often much opposition to children being included in church planting efforts. Some may be surprised by this. Often things that the enemy sees as a threat are met with opposition. However, when you are in the midst of this opposition, it may often be difficult to see it for what it is—an attack from the enemy!

Many of you involved in ministry to children at risk or in crisis often experience much personal difficulties or turmoil. You may feel that for every step forward you take, you are moved two steps back. The next time this occurs (or if you are in the midst of that now), take heart! Take it to the Lord and let Him encourage you. You will be assured that you are indeed doing His work by bringing the love and care of Jesus to His little ones. Don't let the enemy paralyze you and prevent you from continuing to be the Lord's hands and feet.

When the enemy attacks you, as he is most assured to do, my prayer is that you can use the following verses, thoughts, along with others the Lord leads you to, as a quick reference of rich treasure to remind you of God's love and purpose for you.

“Toxic thoughts leave no room for truth to flourish. And in the absence of truth, lies reign.”  
From the Lysa Terkeurst devotional, *Unglued*

“Brothers and sisters, never become tired of doing good.” 2 Thessalonians 3:13 NCV

“Though I walk in the midst of trouble, You will revive me; You will stretch out Your hand against the wrath of my enemies, and Your right hand will save me.” Psalm 138:7 NKJV

“The Lord your God in your midst, the Mighty One, will save; He will rejoice over you with gladness, He will quiet you with His love, He will rejoice over you with singing.”  
Zephaniah 3:17 NKJV

“Neither he who plants is anything, nor he who waters, but God who gives the increase. Now he who plants and he who waters are one, and each one will receive his own reward according to his own labor. For we are God's fellow workers.” 1 Corinthians 3:7–9 NKJ



Crisis Care Training International is a ministry of WEC International.  
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