

**G**enerations of people living in chronic poverty have continually overwhelmed communities all over the world. Countless organizations, both Christian and secular, are involved in addressing poverty alleviation. Some focus on the international issues of fair trade and third-world debt, while others pay attention to national issues like attracting investment capital, curbing corruption and controlling currencies and interest rates. Other agencies have been working locally to empower communities to develop programs that range from agricultural improvement to economic development projects.

But are these programs making a lasting difference? While we must answer “Yes” in a few cases, statistics point out the reality that the number of those living in poverty increases daily. This trend is fueled by the mass migration to the cities. We continually are confronted with the truth of the words of Christ, “The poor you will always have with you.” Considering this declaration, and the difficulties in making a lasting difference, the Church must grapple with the issue whether or not to continue to support, encourage and participate in interventions that seek to reach out to those in poverty as a component of living out the gospel. Do we have a unique message of hope in our strategies and projects or do we feel helpless to make a difference? Our response depends a lot on whether we see the poor as an unsolvable problem or as an opportunity to demonstrate God’s heart of compassion.

A worker in the slums discovered the government in her area simply saw

## IN FOCUS

—Phyllis Kilbourn

the poor as a problem. She states, “My greater concern is our kids; the main squatter area where they were living was totally demolished. Every home and much of their belongings were just bulldozed away by a government callous to the poor! So much makes me angry here as in ‘gearing up’ to become a world class city, the homes and livelihoods of the poor being broken apart.”

This worker’s concern highlights one strategic tool that is so small it is often overlooked and underutilized by both missions and others engaged in poverty alleviation—the child. That is why your ministry is so important! A shortcut to breaking the cycle of poverty in a community is to focus attention on the child. Children are not just a beneficiary of your programs but also a solution to many of the key issues in both poverty and evangelism. The holistic development of a child offers countless answers to issues that will bring not only immediate change but also lasting transformation.

**P**ointing out the situations of the poor in Cambodia, Timothée Paton shares his conviction that only a God-given compassion for the poor enables a person to respond to the needs of the poor and gives the “stickability” to keep engaged in their lives. His compassion has led to the formation of the Bridge of Hope ministry for children at risk in poverty-stricken areas. He shares this strategy with us, noting that there is rejoicing when, one by one, children without

hope walk over the Bridge into new life.

Craig Greenfield, also working with Cambodia’s poor, guides us further in our journey toward an effective ministry with the impoverished. Through his personal story of an incarnational lifestyle with the poorest of the poor, Craig emphasizes the need to establish a close identification with and compassionate response to them. As in all ministries, trust relationships must first be established. He also introduces us to Project Halo, a very effective church- and community-based strategy used to restore hope to orphans in the slums.

In the Caregiver’s Corner Rosemary Sabatino, ROH summer team leader to Senegal, asks us a probing question: “What’s hanging on your wall?” Through biblical illustrations of the “wall hangings” of Old Testament leaders, she warns that how we answer that question will determine whether we are filled with hope or despair; victory or defeat.

**U**nless we grasp the belief that ministry to the disadvantaged is high on God’s priority list, we may shrink from the costly involvement. May you always by faith envision the poverty-stricken communities you work in as filled with safe, happy, healthy and educated children who know a powerful God loves them. Such a community will be filled with hope and unlimited potential.



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# PASSION *that* WILL KEEP YOU GOING

—Timothée Paton

*"I'm running hard to the finishing line. I'm giving it everything I've got. No sloppy living for me. I'm staying alert and in top condition" (1 Cor. 9:27 The Message).*

**W**here do you start to minister when poverty and oppression stares at you from everywhere? Cambodia has the highest rate of child abandonment in South-East Asia. One-third of all Cambodian prostitutes are children. Over 300,000 people are disabled, 30,000 of them victims of landmines. Sixteen percent of the population suffers from mental disorders, but less than one percent of the national health budget (which is only \$2.50 per person annually) is allocated to mental health care. The easiest solution would be to throw up our hands and feel little can be done.

When I arrived in Cambodia almost eight years ago, I found that between 15 and 20 thousand children lived on the streets. I knew no one there, had never been to Asia, and I knew not a single word of Khmer. But I had a passion burning in my heart for children at risk in Phnom Penh. That passion got me going and kept me involved. You may have money, years of training in children's ministry and a big network of Christian friends back home. But if you don't have passion for the poor and the lost, you won't last.

***Money, years of training in children's ministry, a big network of Christian friends can't replace passion for the poor and lost.***

I have visited a number of Christian agencies serving the poor. They have great offices, big buildings, brand new cars and well-paid staff. But the passion has gone: the fire has died. Money cannot buy passion. It comes from God. It will get you started and will keep you going even in the worst of places.

Some years ago, among many articles of the famous and rich, the popular French magazine "Paris Match" published a two-page article about two

Catholic nuns. These women left their comfort in France to reach out to the street children in Mongolia, working at the time in temperatures of -30 C. Passion will get you to do what no one has ever done before.

The ancient story of Telemachus speaks to our point. Rome was celebrating its temporary victory over Alaric the Goth in its usual manner, by watching its gladiators fight to the death in the arena. Suddenly a rudely-clad, robed figure boldly leaped into the arena. Telemachus was one of the hermits who devoted themselves to a holy life of prayer and kept themselves apart from the wicked life of Rome. Although few Roman citizens followed their example, most of them had great respect for these hermits, and the few who recognized Telemachus knew he had come from the wilds of Asia on a pilgrimage to visit the churches and celebrate Christmas in Rome.

Without hesitating an instant, Telemachus advanced upon two gladiators who were engaged in their life-and-death struggle. Laying a hand on one of them, he reproved him for shedding innocent blood, then, turning toward the thousands of angry faces around him, called to them: "Stop murdering each other!"

Shouts drowned out his voice. "This is no place for preaching! Get on with the combat!" Pushing Telemachus aside, the two gladiators prepared to continue the fight, but Telemachus stepped in again. Enraged at the interference of an outsider, the gladiators turned on Telemachus and stabbed him to death. The crowd fell silent, shocked by the death of this holy man. But his death was not in vain, for from that day to this, no gladiators ever went into combat in the Coliseum.

***The fire that comes from the Holy Spirit will enable you to do the impossible.***

God's Spirit burning in you will lead you even in the middle of the arena. When everyone stands back and watches, passion will move you to stand up for righteousness even in the poorest, most remote and most dangerous places on earth.

Where do you start? In a city like Phnom Penh, hundreds of little ones work endless hours scavenging through rubbish for a living. You probably cannot help them all at once, so where do you begin? You start with one child. Then another. Take one child. Invest your time and your prayers into that life. It has to be one child, one life at a time.

When the Bridge of Hope ministry was launched less than two years ago in Phnom Penh, I told the staff that if in our first year 25 or 30 children at risk crossed the Bridge into a new life, we will have done really well.

Each staff member at the Bridge (missionaries and local workers) is responsible for a small number of children. A child has "crossed the Bridge" when he or she 1) has a home, 2) attends school, 3) has enough to eat each day, 4) does not need to work for a living, 5) has his/her emotional and physical needs met, 6) and is linked to a local church. When one child crosses the Bridge, the whole staff celebrates!

A missionary friend serving in northern Cambodia sent me this story taken from the book *Don't Waste Your Life*, by John Piper. He tells about a couple who took early retirement, he at 59 and she at 51, so they could go to Florida, collect seashells, play softball, cruise on their 30-foot trawler and take it easy. Piper comments, "At first I thought it might be a joke. But it wasn't. Tragically, this was the dream: Come to the end of your life—your one and only God-given life—and let the last great work of your life, before you give an account to your Creator, be this: playing softball and collecting shells. Picture them before Christ

at the great Day of Judgment: 'Look, Lord. See my shells.' That is a tragedy."

Millions of children-at-risk all over the world wait for someone to lead them across the bridge of hope to safety on the other side. This harvest field, as Jesus pointed out, is white, and still too few workers are gathering the precious crop. I urge you to get into the business of saving a child. Then another. And never, never lose your passion!



*Tim Paton hails from the UK, though he would tell you he is a Frenchman. Born an MK (missionary kid) in France, he feels at home there. He currently ministers to street children in Cambodia through The Bridge of Hope, a ministry which he founded.*

## Keep the Flame Alive!

*So don't sit around on your hands! No more dragging your feet! Clear the path for long-distance runners so no one will trip and fall, so no one will step in a hole and sprain an ankle. Help each other out. And run for it!*

*Make sure you don't take things for granted and go slack in working for the common good; share what you have with others. God takes particular pleasure in acts of worship — a different kind of "sacrifice" — that take place in kitchen and workplace and on the streets.*

*Stay on good terms with each other, held together by love. Be ready with a meal or a bed when it's needed. Why, some have extended hospitality to angels without ever knowing it! Regard prisoners as if you were in prison with them. Look on victims of abuse as if what happened to them had happened to you.*

*Keep your eyes on Jesus, who both began and finished this race we're in. Study how he did it. Because he never lost sight of where he was headed — that exhilarating finish in and with God — he could put up with anything along the way: cross, shame, whatever.*

(Passages from Hebrews chapters 12 and 13 in *The Message*.)

## A STORY OF HOPE FOR

# ORPHANS OF THE URBAN POOR

—Craig Greenfield

**A**t 25 years of age, when I walked away from my life as a rising young corporate executive to move into a squalid slum community in Asia, I had no idea what God was going to do. Together with my wife, Nay, a refugee from the Khmer Rouge regime that killed her father, we joined Servants to Asia's Urban Poor. We made our home in a dirty but lively Cambodian slum called Victory Creek Bridge, crowded with humanity, rats and disease.

Our first slum house was a two-room shack, barely tall enough for one to stand upright, with only one window and one door to let in light. Our bathroom contained little more than a squat toilet and a bucket for washing, but an unused electricity pylon began in the house below and rose up like a turret through the middle of our bathroom ceiling, towering high above our house. We were "built in," enclosed on three sides and below, and a thatch hut tottered on wooden stilts directly in front of our only window.

One of our first visitors was the local witch doctor, who had come to see whether we would pay him some money to do a ritual in our new home. We welcomed him and gently let him know that we had already asked Jesus to bless and protect our home.

But as we sat around in a circle on the floor of our new house, sipping water, the witch doctor decided to perform a little ceremony anyway. Suddenly, the old man's bloodshot eyes locked with mine over the rim of the vessel. Sucking noisily from the cup, he retained the water in both cheeks and turned his head to one side. Water droplets burst in a glistening shower from his mouth, spraying half the tiny room. I was too shocked to protest. Like a video in slow motion, I watched helplessly as he pursed his lips and slurped another mouthful of water. The second spray covered the rest of the room, including a few vile droplets on my arm. Then his tongue, flecked white with spittle, darted in and out between moist lips as he muttered an incantation over our newly-rented slum home. The impromptu ceremony over, he sat back and declared, "Welcome to Victory Creek Bridge...."

## AND SO BEGAN OUR LIFE IN THE SLUM

A tiny boy of perhaps just four years old with huge sunken eyes like deep brown pools of sorrow, shook me to the core and set our future direction in slum ministry. I never saw Visal wear anything but a pair of pale blue and white striped pyjamas, which became increasingly oversized on his diminishing frame. He was the first of many children I watched succumb to AIDS.

We got to know Visal and his mother through the tiny Christian fellowship we attended in the village near our home at Victory Creek Bridge slum. The worship services were punctuated by his frail, racking coughs which seemed to cause him great pain and made us all wince in sympathy. His suffering made many of the happy-clappy worship songs seem embarrassingly frivolous.

Eventually, Visal grew so gaunt that I could hardly look into his sad eyes. The pale blue and white striped pyjamas were like a tent on his skeletal frame. Then one day we heard that he had died. His short life and his death impacted me deeply.

Living at Victory Creek Bridge, as we were drawn into the lives of friends with AIDS and children like Visal, I realized that a second generation was being orphaned. AIDS had now become the single greatest threat facing the children of Cambodia's urban poor communities. The disease was stalking the slums and leaving another generation of children without parents. And one of the worst things

# The problem of orphanhood has no ideal solution. Nothing, no one can truly replace a mother and father—only offer alternatives.

about AIDS, as opposed to cancer, war or accidental death, is that AIDS is more likely to take both parents, creating double orphans or children who have suffered through the death of both their mother and their father. An estimated 77,000 Cambodian children made up this fatherless and motherless generation who had nursed their parents to their deaths by AIDS.

Most of the children we knew who were affected by AIDS themselves were not infected with the virus—only their parents. However, the levels of care, support and protection the children received decreased steadily as their parents became sicker. The parents' illness usually led to a loss of income as Mum or Dad could no longer work and the sale of household assets was inevitable as cash was redirected towards medical treatment. Often, in desperation, the family would seek out traditional healers, like our friend the witch doctor, who took advantage of their vulnerability with grandiose claims and ridiculous cures such as eating live cockroaches or swallowing magic herbs. These people didn't realize that AIDS has no cure.

I knew that the problem of orphanhood had no ideal solution. Nothing and no one can truly replace a mother and father; they can offer only better or worse alternatives. Apart from going to live in an orphanage, which is less than ideal, the options for orphaned kids in Cambodia were fairly limited. Cambodian communities, despite decades of war and societal breakdown, had already absorbed thousands of orphans into the extended family and informal community systems. At least five percent of families nationwide had taken in children who are not their own. However, only one in twenty of these families received any kind of outside support. Households headed by elderly people and women especially struggled. Already living at the edge of poverty, they had to stretch their insufficient resources even further to care for orphaned relatives. Child-headed and teen-headed households also battled to survive, dependent on each other and particularly on older siblings.

We began to research and sketch out on paper what a ministry to support these families might look like. HALO

became the project name. It stands for **Hope, Assistance and Love for Orphans**. Hope signified the spiritual needs of the orphans which would be served through local Christian youth mentors, discipleship and gospel camps. Assistance referred to the orphans' physical needs for food, clothing and shelter, which would be met through small business loans, grants and vocational training. And Love denoted their emotional and social needs which would be met in the context of their families and communities with support from the local church.

So, one sweaty night in a tiny Phnom Penh slum house, Project HALO was born. Our vision was to see Cambodian communities, led by the church, caring for their own orphans. We had no idea what it would become. Six years later, despite twice being evicted by local authorities, confrontations with corrupt government soldiers and other challenges, an innovative ministry, caring for over 1000 orphans, has been established; a Christian youth movement of Big Brothers and Sisters for orphans is spreading through the Cambodian church like wildfire and the witch doctor's house is now home to a weekly worship meeting.

## HOW PROJECT HALO WORKS

At a fraction of the cost of supporting a child in an orphanage, Project HALO is able to support a grandmother (or aunt or uncle), for example, who would otherwise be unable to care for their orphaned relatives. Sometimes, when the oldest child is in the late teens, and a support network of neighbors and/or extended family has been established, we consider setting up a "teenager-headed household." Infrequently, when no extended family is available, we recruit compassionate Cambodian couples who are willing to take in orphaned children as their own. These families are carefully screened and trained. All these solutions allow the children to stay in their own communities, with their own friends and extended family support networks. These children have lost their parents: why take away everything else they know and love as well? We provide support in a variety of ways designed to promote independence.

## Case Study

### Grandmother Frees Herself from Lone Shark's Grip

At this stage in her life 69-year-old Ownga expected to be supported by her daughter and son-in-law. But when they died of AIDS, her plans were shattered and her two granddaughters naturally looked to her for comfort and support.

Project HALO initially supported them with school fees and rice each month. Now, with a small loan from Project HALO, she has been able to avoid taking out expensive monthly loans from the local loan shark and increased her income by about 20%. Using a savings box from Project HALO, she is saving enough each month to buy next month's goods. She is now almost self-sufficient.

## 1. Guidance, Encouragement and Follow-up

One of the critical success factors of Project HALO is the careful monitoring, visiting and relationship-building with each and every orphan and family. Our Cambodian staff are strong Christians, skilled in giving appropriate advice and guidance to the families and children and often provide a listening ear and encouraging parental figure to the bereaved children. Before the parents die, staff members get to know the family and gently encourage the dying parents to plan for the future care of their children. Our staff provides a sense of stability and continuity for the children through the difficult period of their parents' death and ensure that the children are not exploited or forgotten.

## 2. Big Brothers and Sisters Movement

Our vision is to see Christian youth putting their faith into practice in a simple and powerful way, as big brothers and big sisters for orphans all over Cambodia. Big Brothers and Sisters form themselves into groups of between five and ten young people, normally through their church youth group. Big Brothers and Sisters of Cambodia provides training and then each big brother or sister is matched up with one orphaned, little brother or sister from the local community. The big brothers and sisters commit to visit their orphan at least once a week. During this visit the big brother or big sister encourages, listens to and plays, prays, eats (anything fun!) with the orphan. Once a month as a group, Big Brothers and Sisters also meets regularly to pray for the orphans and have a fun outing together. Camps are held on an annual basis.

## 3. The Memory Book

The death of a parent can have a devastating effect on a young life. However, given appropriate support and information, children can be helped to understand what has happened and can learn to live with their loss. "My Memory Book" is a colorful activity book developed in Cambodian by Project HALO. The book helps bereaved children deal with their feelings of grief and at the same time provides a keepsake which will be an invaluable memory of their parents in years to come.

## 4. Savings, Loans & Income Generation

Project HALO provides budgeting advice to families caring for orphans, teaching them how to save for emergencies. We provide them with "piggy banks" and monitor their level of savings each month. Occasionally small business loans are made at no interest to help families begin earning an income. Our staff works closely with each family to make a plan for the point where they are able to stand on their own two feet.

## 5. Education Sponsorships & Vocational Training

Education is the one chance a poor child gets to break free of the cycle of poverty. Project HALO has a policy of encouraging every child to attend school or other training. In Cambodia students must pay their teachers a small fee to study each day, so the poorest families find that education is beyond their reach. We support a large number of children to attend their local school with school fees, uniforms and stationery. In many cases, these children have never had the opportunity to attend school. In other cases, children were working to pay for their school fees. Project HALO also sponsors a number of teenagers, who had dropped out of school, to attend vocational training in hairdressing, sewing, mechanics, electronics, etc.

## 6. Emergency Relief—housing, rice, clothing, etc.

For a poor family living hand-to-mouth any extra burden can spell disaster. Project HALO ensures that every family in the program has the very basics of food, shelter and clothing. In some cases, we provide building materials and the family provides the labor needed to fix up their home. A small number of the most vulnerable families receive an emergency allocation of rice each month until they can get on their feet.

Other emergency items sometimes provided in cases of hardship include: cooking utensils/pots & pans, mosquito nets, sleeping mats and blankets, second hand clothing and shoes. Project HALO works hard to ensure that we are not creating dependency and works closely with each family to make a plan for becoming independent.

## 7. HIV+ Children's Clinic

Servants' staff holds a weekly clinic for a number of HIV+ children, providing basic medicines, milk powder, nutritional supplements and advice. Although Servants' doctors strongly promote breast-feeding, in the case of HIV positive mothers the rate of infection passed from mother to child has been proven to be reduced from 27 percent to 8 percent when anti-viral drugs are provided at birth and breast milk is replaced with hygienically prepared milk powder. After compassionate counseling where mothers are given the options, medical staff carefully train and follow up mothers who have HIV/AIDS, helping them care for their children and teaching them health, hygiene and nutrition.

There is hope—hope for orphans and widows. And it starts with a simple step: moving into the neighborhood.



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*Craig Greenfield is the International Coordinator of Servants to Asia's Urban Poor, a movement started by Viv Grigg, a missionary in Manila, who had become increasingly burdened by the desperate situation of the millions of poor in the city. Grigg launched a movement to reach the poorest of the poor in Asia and around the world: Servants to Asia's Urban Poor. Servants has established teams in the Philippines, Indonesia, Cambodia and two Indian cities, as well as Sending Offices in Australia, New Zealand, UK, Philippines and Switzerland.*

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## Urban Poor: The World's Largest Unreached People Group

At the beginning of the 21st Century, a major shift in the demographics of the world's population took place. No longer is most of the world rural peoples. Now, more than 50 percent of our population lives in towns and cities.

The past century has seen the most massive migration in human history—that of people to the cities. The result is overcrowding and poverty on a scale never known before.

Poverty, overcrowded slums, inadequate sanitation, injustice and exploitation, a lack of health and education services, prostitution and child exploitation, HIV/AIDS and rampant disease are all part of the hopelessness that to millions is daily life.

Yet there is hope. Jesus came to bring the "good news" of eternal life, wholeness and healing to the poor (Luke 4:18) and the Bible speaks often of our responsibility to them. The urban poor are the largest and neediest unreached people group confronting today's church. We ignore this challenge at our peril: "I was hungry... and you gave me nothing to eat." —Jesus (Matthew 25:31-46)

# Three Causes of Poverty

—Dr. Timothy J. Keller

**W**hat does the Bible say are the causes of poverty? Biblically, there are three answers to that question. One cause is “oppression” or injustice. One of the key Hebrew words most often translated “poor” in the Old Testament is *ani*, meaning “the wrongfully dispossessed.” Oppression is any social condition or unfair treatment that brings or keeps a person in poverty (see Ps. 82:1–8; Prov. 14:31; Ex. 22:21–27). Delayed (Deut. 24:15) or unjustly low wages (Eph. 6:8–9), court and government systems weighted in favor of the great and wealthy (Lev. 19:15), and high-interest loans (Ex. 22:25–27) are examples of oppression.

A second cause of poverty is natural disaster or calamity. Examples abound in the Scripture, including crop failures, disabling injury, victimization by criminals, floods, storms, and fires. Joseph’s hunger relief program (Gen. 47) helped those in poverty because of famine. God’s social legislation assumes that there would be a steady stream of Israelites who would “wax poor” (Lev. 25:25,39,47). Such passages seem to have in view this kind of poverty, caused by circumstances.

Thirdly, poverty is caused by personal sin. A life of laziness (Prov. 6:6–7) and problems of self-discipline (Prov. 23:21) can bring about poverty. Expensive tastes and luxury-seeking can be a reason for economic trouble (Prov. 21:17).

We must distinguish these three causes if we are to give appropriate kinds of help.

Do we see now how crucial it is to distinguish these three causes? These distinctions are essential if we are to avoid uncritically adopting either the “liberal” or the “conservative” ideology toward the poor. The “liberal” tends to see all the poor as oppressed, and thus does not see the importance of conditions in mercy ministry. But the “conservative” tends to see all the poor as irresponsible, and thus overemphasizes conditions in mercy. Both sides oversimplify the complex causes of poverty.

We also must distinguish these three causes if we are to give appropriate kinds of help. We must beware of becoming one-dimensional in our analysis. We should recognize that the roots of much poverty will not only be dealt with by an exhortation to “work,” but also with counseling, education, various sorts of aid, and with a display of respect and loving concern.

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## HOPE AND QUIETLY WAIT

*Recently we published an article by Laura Dewing in the Caregiver’s Time-out column. Our edited version did not make clear that Laura is talking about two different events, two battles. The first battle was for Jericho in Joshua’s day (Joshua 6). The second battle is recorded in 2 Chronicles and we take up the lesson there:*

As we hope and quietly wait, we must do as they did in Jehoshaphat’s battle in 2 Chronicles 20, where he cried out to the Lord, “O Lord, wilt Thou not judge them, for we have no might against this great company that comes against us, neither know we what to do: BUT our eyes are on Thee.”

And what did the Lord tell them to do? Go home? Continue to fret and despair? Mourn because of the oppression of the enemy? Lift the white flag and surrender to the enemy? NO! He told them to go out onto the battlefield, face the enemy and merely sing and praise the beauty of holiness. And, the children of Israel in Joshua’s day circled the enemy territory as the music played unto the Lord.

*Laura has been living these lessons as she has struggled for more than three months to have her home heating unit properly repaired, and she adds this further note for our edification:*

In 1 Chronicles 14 David’s enemies came and spread themselves in the valley, and David enquired of the Lord. Then he went out and smote them. But the enemy came yet again and spread themselves in the valley. We find that David enquired AGAIN of God. We can’t stereotype our approach to the trials and battles we face in this life. Each one should thrust us afresh in dependence upon the Lord.

Prov. 3:5,6 doesn’t tell us to acknowledge Him once for all, but to trust and acknowledge Him IN ALL our ways (including our trials and battles). The victories come by fresh reliance and fresh truth. As we ask the Lord of hosts afresh, He will lead us on to fields of conquest, victory unto victory. Psalm 119:24, “Thy testimonies also are my delight AND my counsellors.” We can find much insight and gain much courage in the battle-testimonies of His precious Word.

*Thanks, Laura.*



## Fuller Theological Seminary to Hold Sex Trafficking Conference

The ASHA Forum Consultation For North America (<<http://www.fuller.edu/sis/ashaconsultation/aboutcse.asp>>) is holding a conference on ministry to sex trafficking victims at Fuller Theological Seminary from April 27–29, 2007.

The “Empowering North American Christians to Minister to Sexually Exploited and Trafficked Children in America and Around the World” will provide the latest information on the tragedy of child sex trafficking and what Christians can do to help these victims of sexual violence.

The U.S. State Department estimates that nearly one million people are trafficked across international borders each year. Profits from this organized crime operation are estimated to be \$10 billion.

For more information on what you can do to fight sex trafficking, access this site: Initiative Against Sexual Trafficking, c/o The Salvation Army USA, National Headquarters, <http://www.iast.net/> <<http://www.iast.net/>> .

## Children-at-Risk Training Week In Edinburgh

Edinburgh, Scotland— The International Christian College (ICC) will hold its fifth annual Children @ Risk Training Week, August 6–10, 2007 at ICC. The training sessions will focus on working with children with HIV/AIDS.

## Street Children’s Curriculum in Spanish

With joy and thanksgiving Crisis Care Training International announces the translation into Spanish of its training curriculum *Offering Healing and Hope for Children in Crisis, Module 2: Street Children*. Longtime missionary to Peru, David Constance has almost completed the translation task, and the finished product should be available later this year.

## New Books Available Soon

*Creating Hope for Children in Crisis*, Cherilyn Orr, Anne Jones and Wendy Leaver

This book commences with the authors honest sharing of some of the challenges, heartaches and eventual success of designing and starting their ministry to refugee children in Athens. From mistakes made and their discovery of a lack of adequate resources to help them, they wrote *Creating Hope for Children in Crisis*.

Along with building an understanding of children’s trauma and their response to it, the authors attempt to help child care workers build on a child’s natural resilience to create hope in the face of their loss. The book offers a variety of activities and programs designed to bring healing to children in crisis. One section focuses on sharing God’s word with children in crisis along with a five-lesson curriculum highlighting what and how to teach. Also included are visual-aid posters and coloring pages for these lessons. The concluding section provides step-by-step examples of five programs and how to design them from start to finish.

For information on preordering the book go to <<http://www.creatinghope.net/>>.

*The Urban Halo, A Story of Hope for Orphans of the Poor*, by Craig Greenfield

“Somon ... asked me a question I have since been asked many times by Cambodians, ‘Craig, I am very poor. What can Jesus do for me?’”

Encounters like this one forced this young college student to think more deeply about the nature of the kingdom of God. The Jesus who had nowhere to lay his head and walked the dusty roads with his disciples declaring that he had come to bring healing and “good news to the poor” and promised “blessed are you who are poor,” what would this Jesus say to Somon?

*The Urban Halo* is the gripping story of one couple who dared to leave their New Zealand “comfort zone” to live incarnationally among the poorest of the poor in the slums of Phnom Penh. By so living, Craig and his wife established a close identity with the community that gave authenticity to their calling and provided opportunities to launch hope-filled strategies for the orphans. The strength of the strategies developed and utilized lies in the fact that they are church- and community-based and include a strong prevention component.

One not only learns holistic strategies for working with orphans of the poor, but also is deeply challenged to more fully join them in their struggle-filled journey for justice.

*The Urban Halo* is due out in April, 2007. For more information go to <[www.servantsasia.org](http://www.servantsasia.org)> or e-mail <[info@servantsasia.org](mailto:info@servantsasia.org)>.

## Another Excellent Resource

*Ministries of Mercy: The Call of the Jericho Road*, by Timothy J. Keller

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# Caregiver's Time-out

—Rosemary Sabatino



## What's hanging on your wall?

**Y**ears back, while working on a team in the sales industry, we were instructed, during a slack in sales, to hang on the walls of our minds remembrances of our past sales achievements. The supposition was that by filling our thoughts with the positive results we had experienced in the past, we would be encouraged to persevere to future success. If a member of the team seemed particularly disheartened a colleague could ask, "What's hanging on your wall?" Reflecting on Lamentations 3, it seems to me that sometimes the Lord might have asked a similar question.

The prophet Jeremiah expresses the deep depression of his soul as he recalls the bitterness, misery, and affliction he endured during Judah's rebellion against God and their subsequent destruction and captivity by the Babylonians (Lam. 3:1–20). *The Message* paraphrases verses 17–20 as follows: "I gave up on life altogether. I've forgotten what the good life is like. I said to myself, 'This is it. I'm finished. God is a lost cause.' ... I'll never forget the trouble, the utter lostness, the taste of ashes, the poison I've swallowed. I remember it all—oh, how well I remember—the feeling of hitting the bottom."

**P**raise God the chapter does not end there in utter despair. I imagine I hear the Lord asking—*Jeremiah, what else is hanging on the walls of your heart? What else do you remember?* And the prophet's reply—*Yes, Lord, there is one other thing. "This I call to mind and therefore I have hope. It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed, because His compassions fail not, they are new every morning; great is Thy faithfulness"* (Lam. 3:21–23, KJV).

Jeremiah "called to mind," that is, he purposely reminded himself of the Lord's mercy, and this gave him great hope! This hope is not just an anxious wishing, but it is translated from the Hebrew word *yacha*, which denotes an expectation and a surety on behalf of the prophet. He knew from experience and from scripture that, because of God's character, this would not be the end of the story, and he determined to quietly and confidently wait as he put his trust in the unfailing mercy, or *cheched*, of the Lord (Lam. 3:25–26).

**S**everal years ago the Lord brought the Hebrew word *cheched* to my attention, and through an ongoing study, it has become a source of great blessing and encouragement to me. Translated mercy, loving-kindness and goodness in the KJV, and as steadfast love, and constant love in other versions, it is used over 241 times in the Old Testament. However, no English word truly captures its meaning.

*Cheched* is God's love for us, and it includes the concepts of absolute loyalty and steadfastness, along with a fidelity to covenant obligations. It is an everlasting love, with no beginning and no end, and it is unconditional. It is the kind of love that one would die for, and it was fully displayed in the Lord Jesus Christ. Not something God possesses, *cheched* is something God is, and He actually described Himself in terms of *cheched* as He passed before Moses in Exodus 34. "The Lord, the Lord God, compassionate and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in loving-kindness (*cheched*) and truth; who keeps loving-kindness (*cheched*) for thousands, who forgives iniquity, transgression and sin; ..." (Ex. 34:6–7).

Scripture gives evidence that God's loyal love propels His passionate pur-

suit of His purpose in, through, and with His people. It was *cheched*—God's covenant loyal love—that saved Lot from the destruction in Sodom and Gomorrah (Gen. 19:19); prospered Jacob in Laban's employ; preserved Joseph's life in prison (Gen. 39:21); and led the Israelites out of bondage from Egypt. *Cheched* appears in the Psalms 127 times, often when David testifies to his experiential trust and reliance on God's unfailing love in times of trouble, failure, and strife. "Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy loving-kindness" (Ps. 51:1); "When I said my foot slips, your mercy, O Lord, held me up" (Ps. 94:18); "Let the morning bring news of your unfailing love, for I have put my trust in you" (Ps. 143:8).

**D**avid's words have touched my heart deeply during my own times of trouble and failure. I could probably fill the walls of my heart with remembrances of God's faithful, loyal love, which is beyond comprehension!

One instance, during my husband's illness, particularly comes to mind. I had bitterly responded to my suffering husband's request, and I was cut to the core by my sin and insensitivity. That night as I read and prayed through Psalm 143 and called on God's unfailing love, He brought repentance and forgiveness. He assured me of His love without condemnation. Not only did my husband forgive me, but the love we shared became sweeter than we had ever experienced.

From that time until now the Lord has never failed to respond when I trust in His loyal, covenant love. I can confidently and quietly wait as I put my trust in His *cheched* and say with the psalmist and the prophet, "Thy mercy endureth forever" and "great is Thy faithfulness!"



*Rosemary is currently a missionary candidate with WEC International, preparing to minister to children in crisis with Rainbows of Hope. Twice she has led a short-term team ministering to street children in Senegal and will do so again this summer.*



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