

# The Barnabas Letter

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To encourage, enrich and equip

*Fear not, for I have redeemed you;  
I have summoned you by name; you are mine.  
When you pass through the waters,  
I will be with you;  
when you pass through the rivers,  
they will not sweep over you...  
... For I am the LORD, your God,  
the Holy One of Israel, your Savior.* Is. 43:1-3a NIV

## IN FOCUS

—Rosemary Sabatino

As we begin a new year filled with uncertainties we can rest in the promises of God our Savior - He may not always remove the circumstance, but **He will see us through it!** God assures us of this in Isaiah chapter 43 where we see God's beautiful and providential hand of purpose in every step of our earthly journey—even in those filled with pain and sorrow.

First and foremost the Lord is addressing this word to His own precious redeemed ones (vs. 1). Praise the Lord this includes you and I. Notice the use of the word “when” not “if” denoting an expectation that what follows will occur. We **will** pass through the **waters**. Often in scripture the word waters represents a symbol of hardship. In fact the Hebrew word from which waters is translated is *Mayim*<sup>1</sup>, which is very close to our English word mayhem, and means waters of danger or violence, but thankfully it carries the connotation of being transitory. These troubled **waters** are symbolic of the harsh and trying external circumstances brought upon us by a dying, broken world.

We **will** also pass through the **rivers** (Hebrew *Nahar*<sup>2</sup>, relating to floods caused by underground streams). The external circumstances **will** bring with them **rivers** of internal anxieties and strife that could overwhelm us. Yet the Lord allows them to come. For it is during these times of trial and tribulation that we experience in a new and intimate way the presence of the great **I AM** and the resurrection power of our Savior Jesus Christ.

A few years ago I was in a serious spot that brought with it great anxiety and fear. The only prayer I could pray was one four letter word that I wrote boldly across my diary—**HELP!** The Lord took me to Psalm 93:3; *The seas have lifted up, O Lord, the seas have lifted up their voice; the seas have lifted up their pounding waves (NIV)*. “Lord,” I exclaimed, “this is exactly how I feel!” Then I read verse four; *Mightier than the thunder of the great waters, mightier than the breakers of the sea-- the LORD on high is mighty (NIV)*. Almost immediately the Lord's presence enveloped me and the *peace that passes understanding* filled my soul. My circumstance did not change; it was a great loss that was painful and unforgettable. But I emerged with a new experiential knowledge of Immanuel—God with me. And,

an understanding of God's purpose as explained in Isaiah 43:10,11: *Ye are my witnesses ... whom I have chosen that ye may know and believe me, and understand that I am he ... I, even I, am the LORD; and beside me there is no savior (KJV)*.

Our focus this quarter is on the horrendous losses experienced by children in crisis. We're reminded that the grieving process is God's gift to children to not only restore their emotional health, but to lay a foundation for them to receive the spiritual healing and hope of Jesus that will carry them through the troubled waters that may lie ahead.

We are grateful to Mary Beth Young for sharing practical strategies in her article *Counseling Children Who Have Experienced Loss*. In *Let the Children Shout Hosanna*, Esther Ilinsky gives us a beautiful example of how engaging children in intercessory prayer helps them express their own feelings of loss and aids in their healing process. Our own Dr. Phyllis Kilbourn shares an excerpt from module one of the CCTI curriculum, *Offering Healing and Hope to Children in Crisis*, focused on grief and loss. Then, you will be tremendously moved and challenged by Davison Zhou as he brings us the touching story of *Thandi's Loss: One child among millions*. Finally, don't miss the Caregiver's Time Out, where Susan Craig explains how God can use the small resources of many to supply needs and fill the void of physical loss.

The Lord has appointed His Church to be agents of restoration to a dying world suffering the pain of hardship and loss. While witnessing the effects of the recent tragedy suffered by the people of Haiti, one small picture of hope will ever remain with me. A little girl, maybe ten or eleven years of age, was being interviewed after being pulled out of the rubble. As she raised her little hand clutching a Bible she exclaimed: “I was not afraid; God was with me!”

Yes, the raging **waters** and the flooding **rivers will come**. They may bring pain and sorrow and leave lasting scars. But we will know that our redeemer lives! He will take the circumstances and redeem them for the good of His kingdom. And the scars left behind, like our Savior's, will be a beautiful memorial to the truth of His everlasting faithfulness and redemptive power!

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1. Strong's #04325; Strong's Exhaustive Concordance Online

2. Strong's # 05104; Strong's Exhaustive Concordance Online

# *Counseling Children Who Have Experienced Loss*

—Mary Beth Young MSW LCSW



**M**ost children have experienced some type of loss in their lives. There are many types of loss; some are more devastating than others. Children in crisis have experienced multiple losses, yet they may not have gone through the grieving process. Young people need a good trusted adult who can guide them to deal with their grief and work through it. So how can care-takers counsel young people who have experienced multiple losses?

## *Providing hope*

(1) When young people experience loss upon loss upon loss, they may often demonstrate an attitude that no matter what they do it will not make the situation any better. So your task is to **gently provide realistic hope that things can get better and that working together, you can help them grieve or work through these losses**. The more losses a child has had, the more he may need help from you to figure out how to deal with them.

(2) The caretaker can **begin by providing a safe, secure and welcoming atmosphere**. If the child is living on the street or with other relatives, this atmosphere can be provided by the person or group of people staffing the drop-in center or whatever ministry is reaching out to young people.

(3) **Meet their physical needs** (as best you can) before addressing emotional needs. If hunger is an issue then food and physical nourishment are a priority. It is impossible to think about addressing their emotional needs unless their physical needs are first met.

(4) As you spend time with the young person, and after you have developed a trusting relationship, **begin to initiate conversations about the losses that have been experienced**. Usually, young people hold everything inside. You can initiate conversations by saying something like, “I’m guessing you might be wondering why your life is like it is right now and I’m wondering

what you might be thinking about ... .” This gives the child an opportunity to talk about more personal information or to reject your invitation.

(5) As children open up about what they are thinking, they will usually reveal some type of loss in their life. You then need to help them define this loss. In other words, **assist the child to identify that what she has experienced is a significant loss**. You could say something like, “I bet you wish things were different for you right now. It seems like losing your \_\_\_\_\_ (parents, home, friends, security, a sense of belonging, etc.) worries you,” or “is hard on you and you might wonder if you’ll ever feel like you did before this happened.” Young people do not have the words to verbalize that what they have experienced is a loss. By defining the losses, you are giving the child the words to express what she has experienced.

## *Developing Trust*

(6) Once children have identified what they have experienced as a loss, **repeat or summarize these specific losses (which they stated) back to them**. You can say something like, “It seems like you’ve experienced several losses such as \_\_\_\_\_,” and then list the stated losses along with some losses that may have been left out. Young people know the losses they have experienced but hearing someone else delineate them specifically makes the losses more real.

(7) **Provide education about loss and grief**. You can say:

- “When young people have experienced losses such as \_\_\_\_\_ they often keep their thoughts and feelings inside. What will help you work through these losses is to begin talking about them and begin looking at your thoughts and feelings about these losses.”

- “Grieving is when we begin to identify the thoughts and feelings we have about our loss and we accept the loss and try to deal with it as best we can.”
- “Your loss of \_\_\_\_\_ seems to have really made a big difference in your life. A lot of young people who have experienced this kind of loss get very sad or very angry or even feel like they no longer care about anything or try to run from these feelings. These feelings are a normal and natural response to what you’ve experienced.”

### *Assisting to Grieve*

Explain to the young person that grieving is a process that takes time and that you are available to help through the grieving process. Let the child know that feelings are released through grieving. You can let them know that grieving is the way God has provided for us to deal with the pain of loss so that we can gradually begin living life again.

**(8) You will want to help children identify the specific feelings they have about each loss** they have experienced. Some children may feel numb and some may feel sad or angry. Some children may feel confused about why this happened to them, some may feel guilty and some may feel scared that life will never get better for them.

**(9) Help children to express the feelings about the loss(es) they have experienced.** For adolescents, this can be achieved through talking. For young children, you can “talk” with them about this through drawings, play, puppets, stories, etc. One example is to have the child draw an outline of himself or a large picture of himself. Have the child color the picture with different colors which represent how he is feeling now when thinking about \_\_\_\_\_ (his losses). Red could be anger, black sadness, blue happy, etc. This gives the child a way to express all the feelings he is feeling inside.

**(10) Assist the young person to grieve these losses.** Allow the child to focus on one loss at a time. Focusing on too many losses at one time can be overwhelming. Grieving is:

- Allowing children to experience their losses (feel the feelings).

- Helping children accept that these losses have occurred (not denying, minimizing or ignoring the loss, or fleeing from it through substance use or other forms of escape) and accepting also that their life may never be the same because of these losses.
- Assisting children to figure out how they can make sense of the loss. While children are grieving, you will want to gently remind them that life is still worth living to the fullest and encourage them to begin being a part of life again, even in small ways.

**(11)** Sometimes someone is responsible for causing the loss. When this is the case, **the issue of responsibility and forgiveness needs to be addressed.** You will never want to “force” a child to forgive until and unless the child is ready. You can initiate the conversation about forgiveness to get a sense of where the child is with this subject.

**(12) Coming to closure.** Once the grieving process is complete, a concrete form of closure can be helpful to the child. She could give a testimony about how she has dealt with grief. Or the child might pray with a young person acknowledging how she has worked through grieving and is now ready to move on with life.

While closure rituals may be important to young people, they need to know that grieving may resurface in the future, especially when significant life events occur (such as marriage, having children, etc.) or when they experience new losses. Prepare children to expect that the grieving process may need to be re-addressed at these times in the future.

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*She welcomes the opportunity to provide consultation to caregivers who face sensitive situations while ministering to children in crisis. She can be contacted through CCTI at [crisiscaretraining.org](http://crisiscaretraining.org).*

# Let the Children Shout Hosannas!

Esther Ilinsky

***Hosanna! Hosanna! God save us!  
God save us!***

The sight and sound of 300 children shouting this repeatedly, along with 40 deaf children joining them in sign language, was truly electrifying. It seemed as though their pleas pierced through the heavenlies right into the throne room of God. I stood amazed!

***Giving the children their very own weapon to use against their foes released them from a spirit of fear.***

This incident took place at The Intergenerational Prayer Gathering in Kingston, Jamaica where children expressed their valid fears because of a recent rash of kidnappings, killings, rapes and robberies. It had been a perfect time to introduce them to a prayer principle that I call *The Power of the Hosanna* (hosanna literally means *God save us*). Referring to Matthew 21, I explained to the little ones how the religious leaders were upset with Jesus over the children shouting Hosanna to Him. I shared how Jesus scolded the leaders with a response from Psalm 8:2—“have you never read, ‘from the lips of children and infants you [God] have ordained praise ...’” (NIV). Then I quoted the second half of the Psalm 8 verse “... to silence the foe and the avenger (NIV).”

It took only a nanosecond for the children to catch on, and they responded with the resounding shouts of *Hosanna, God save us*. As has happened many times, the hosannas culminated in genuine intercession from anointed children who had experienced a new, bold faith in God and the wild celebration that followed brought a rousing *AMEN!* Giving the children their very own weapon to use against their foes released them from a spirit of fear. Then I asked, “Now, how do you feel?” They answered, “Good, peaceful and happy.”



Because of their response I decided to take them to the next level and explain the *In-the-Gap Principle*. Understanding and exercising this principle has opened vast doors of healing for hurting children who put themselves in the place of others just like them. “How many children in the world do you think feel just like you do?” I asked. Joey raised his hand, sighed and said, “Too many, Miss Esther.”

Although it gendered a contemplative hush, Joey’s answer was the perfect set-up for an action response. I said, “Well, since you all know best how they feel, you are the best ones to stand in for them and present them to God.” They responded with another round of *Hosanna! Hosanna! God save us! God save us!*

***The best part was that focusing on others seemed to help them express their feelings of loss and add to their own healing.***

In fact, their petitions, declarations and celebration, while in-the-gap for other children, lasted longer than for themselves. The best part was that focusing on others seemed to help them express their feelings of loss and add to their own healing as well.

During this time I learned that Joey’s abusive daddy had abandoned him, his mom and his sister. It was evident that he was hurting deeply and our group gathered around him to pray and cry together. As you might imagine, Joey’s prayer—with tears—went on for a very long time. As he cried out to God for others like himself we could see he was experiencing healing as well; it was incredible.



This encounter led to the final phase of *The Power of the Hosanna*, which I label *The Identity Prayer Principle*. The children were asked to imagine what it would be like for them to be living in different circumstances. We encouraged them to pray with feeling and compassion for other children around the world; to see what Jesus sees, hear what He hears and feel what He feels.

We asked, “Imagine yourself living in—

- “Iraq, Iran or Afghanistan where there is hatred, war and killing.”
- “Africa or India where there is poverty, hunger, homelessness and hopelessness.”
- “China or a Muslim country where most children have never heard of Jesus and where it’s sometimes dangerous to be a Christian.”

“What would it feel like to be disabled, terminally ill, living in an orphanage/foster home or actually homeless?” (The issues can go on and on.) “What hope or future do all these children have?”

At this point, the children were way ahead of me, standing resolutely in the gap they shouted *Hosanna*, *Hosanna*, *God save us*, *God save us!* It was both heartrending and heartwarming to hear them pray—to see genuine tears as they symbolically “became” those children and petitioned God for kids they’ll never know. I asked again, “Now how do you feel?” This time their answer was, “Great, fantastic and terrific.”



Indisputably, today’s children, as never before in history, are worldly-wise, knowledgeable and, in too many cases, have experienced first-hand the horrific atrocities being inflicted on their generation in our

chaotic world. However, I believe Jesus has made another triumphal entry of sorts ... except this time the church universal has awakened and is equipping and releasing her children to fulfill their God-given destiny.



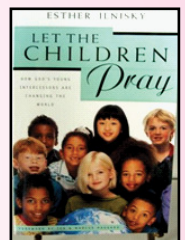
Yes, indeed, the sound of *Hosanna! Hosanna!* is echoing loud and clear all over the globe as children from every tongue, tribe and nation petition God on behalf of their own generation ...

... to silence their rampaging foe and avenger.

**E**sther Ilnisky has been an integral part of the Worldwide Prayer Movement since 1990. She is a pastor’s wife, former missionary, speaker, teacher, musician and a published author. She has traveled extensively conducting Adult, CGPM and “InterGenerational” Prayer Gatherings.

Esther has interacted with church leaders and parents worldwide whose children are being acknowledged and released to their full prayer potential.

Her book, “Let the Children Pray,” now in several languages, is a proven voice on behalf of praying children. Esther says, “My message is to awaken the Church to its most untapped resource of prayer power – her children.”



She adds, “Learn from church history. It is documented that praying children were central in past great awakenings and revivals. Now, in our day, God is again raising up a generation of anointed young prayer warriors—righteous seed, world Christians—who passionately petition Him for their generation for such a time as this!”

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## Training Tips

*Plans fail for  
lack of counsel,  
but with many advisers  
they succeed  
(Proverbs 15:22 NIV)*



### An Excerpt from:

*Offering Healing and Hope for Children in Crisis*

*Module 1: Trauma and Crisis Care*

by:Phyllis Kilbourn, Ph.D.

A Crisis Care Training International Curriculum

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### Importance of Grieving

It has been proven that the emotional health of a grieving child will be determined by how well he or she grieves. Completing the grieving process is essential to recovery and closure.

Some people believe that if a child does not talk about his pain he will forget it. However, this will result in unresolved grief, stemming from trying to shield the child from pain by not talking about it. Denial of pain is often seen at funerals or in cases of social stigma (such as HIV / AIDS). Children who cannot/are not allowed to grieve normally bury their feelings deep inside.

Grieving losses is the gift that God gives to children to restore the emotional health they have lost and to enable them to once again live with joy and peace. But as long as a child's inner space is filled with "frozen emotions" no room remains for restoration. Completing the grieving process enables children to bring closure to their traumatic experiences.

Children, however, need help in grieving their losses; they do not have adequate coping mechanisms to handle them alone. Our task is to help facilitate the release of the buried emotions within a child so healing can occur.

### Process of Healthy Grieving

Grieving is a process, not an event. Children need to be given adequate time to grieve in the manner that works for them. Children will not always grieve in an orderly or predictable way; we all grieve in different ways. There is

no one correct way for a child to move through the grief process and the feelings that are released through grieving.

How can we help children who are grieving? The following steps are essential for children to work through their grief and loss issues and to be restored to emotional health.

#### Step 1: Identifying the losses

To offer forgiveness, children need to identify what losses have occurred from the emotional hurts they have experienced. They need to know and understand these losses so they can forgive. To identify their losses, they need the help of a trusted friend.

#### Step 2: Expressing their feelings

Children have built-in grieving systems that enable them to deal with the losses in their lives. Feelings give energy to their grieving systems. When children can freely feel and express their pain, they energize their systems to do their work. The following illustrates two ways to help children express their feelings:

- Have the children visualize their hurt, fear or pain. Then have them draw, use clay or other medium to express their feelings. Talk with the children about their feelings expressed in the art piece.
- Read stories to the children that allow them to project their feelings onto the story characters. This can open a dialogue with a child in a way that is not threatening. (Reading animal stories and using puppets are two good methods.)

Sharing feelings about their pain with others confirms the belief, *Someone really does care about me*. Whenever we share our story in a loving and caring environment, we experience healing. Children need to be given the opportunity to express their feelings, positive and negative, in words, poetry, story, drama or even a song. Once their negative feelings are expressed, they can go to the source of their pain in a more positive way.

#### Step 3: Taking time to grieve losses

Children's grieving systems cannot grieve all their losses at one time; losses must be grieved one at a time. This exercise requires time and must occur as the child is ready. Also we must remember that the loss may mean different things to a child at different stages of his or her development. For example, a child who is the victim of incest immediately

loses a sense of security and trust in adults. When she becomes a young adult contemplating marriage, she is confronted with the fear of intimacy. If the child hasn't grieved her initial losses (trust and security), later losses will only compound her grief and make it more difficult to work through and come to closure.

#### Step 4: Forgiving the one who caused the loss

One of the most important dimensions of grieving is the ability to forgive the one who has caused the loss and pain. This act is not easy and some feel that it is impossible. How often we hear the statement, *Forgive? Never! After what that person did to me, I will never forgive him.*

One has to admit that most crimes committed against children are hideous and violent violations against their humanity and basic rights of protection. Forgiving anyone for such sins, even after dealing with the emotional pain, often seems impossible. Nevertheless, beyond being required by God, it is necessary for inner healing. And God does make it possible for one to forgive.

Forgiveness comes at the end of the grieving process. Often forgiveness does not occur because one lacks understanding of what real forgiveness is and isn't. The following explanation of forgiveness is vital to helping children understand the meaning of forgiveness which is a prerequisite to bringing closure to the traumatic event.

#### What Unforgiveness Does

Unforgiveness causes a root of bitterness to spring up, poisoning a person's mind and, eventually, making him or her an emotional cripple. Unforgiveness hurts the child offended, not the offender. Wounded people often see their bitterness or hatred as a power that keeps them from being hurt again. They build a wall around themselves and live within this wall in a confined seedbed of anger, fear, bitterness, desire for revenge, jealousy and depression. The child thus becomes a prisoner within the walls created by unforgiveness.

#### What Forgiveness Is Not

Children highly prize justice. We all hear their cries of, *That's not fair!* Therefore they need to know that forgiving the offender does not erase his or her responsibility for the wrong done to them.

Forgiveness also is not forgetting. Forgiveness does, however, release the pain of the event even though the

memory remains. The child does not have to pretend that the event never happened. While Jesus does heal the painful memories, He does not remove the history of what happened.

#### What Forgiveness Is

Forgiveness is a foundational principle to facilitate inner healing and is directly related to our emotional well-being. It is a process, not an instantaneous act. While God can forgive instantaneously, we cannot. We need to understand the trauma and resulting losses to know why and for what we forgive the perpetrator. Forgiveness removes the moral hindrances that stand between the abused and the abuser, leaving the consequences in the hands of God. At this point forgiveness becomes the lancet that pierces the emotional abscess created by hurt, anger and bitterness and allows the poison to drain away, setting the wounded free. We must allow the children to pour out their emotional pain before the Lord and, in His power, extend forgiveness. Only then will they truly be set free.

#### CCTI Curriculum

Available at [crisiscaretraining.org](http://crisiscaretraining.org)

*Offering Healing and Hope to Children in Crisis* is a curriculum prepared to train caregivers to work with children who have experienced deep trauma.

∞ **Module 1: Trauma and Crisis Care:** this core module presents foundational issues and principles that provide caregivers with an understanding of children's traumatic experiences and the resulting impact of trauma as well as basic prerequisites to planning and implementing interventions. Textbook for use with this module: *Healing the Children of War: A handbook for ministry to children who have suffered deep trauma.*

∞ **Module 2: Street Children:** provides an understanding of the impact of street life on children and their behavior. It also discusses effective prevention and intervention principles and strategies that assist children to give up street life and return to a structured environment with adult oversight. Textbook: *Street Children: A guide to effective ministry.*

∞ **Module 3: Care for Orphans and Vulnerable Children (OVC's):** provides an overview of the situation for OVC's worldwide and an understanding of their lives and needs. It explores the impact on children losing their families and homes, and discusses models of alternative placement programs for children requiring out of home care. Some basic intervention strategies are considered and how best to care for those involved in the children's lives.

# Thandi's Loss: One Child Among Millions

—Davison Zhou



Thandi is a tall, gorgeous young girl with a dark glittering complexion. Her eyes are dark brown and perfectly fit her slim face. If you look through her eyes, you can actually see her soul which testifies to the saying that *the eye is the window of the soul*.

Thandi's parents passed away some five years ago and she and her two younger brothers were left in the care of their elderly grandparents. Their parents died just months apart, due to HIV/AIDS. The little money that came from their father's terminal illness benefits was used to pay the traditional healer who was hired to remove the "spell" that threatened to wipe away this poor family. The healer also took five head of cattle which left them with no tools to till the land that provided their only source of sustenance.

Thandi and her two brothers have all dropped out of school because the grandparents could not afford the high tuition costs. They have to work hard to get food so they can take good care of their grandchildren whom they love dearly. In their eyes, the children are the hope for their future and they carry the name and legacy of the family. The family wakes up before dawn so they can work before the sun gets too hot. After hours of toil, the family sits down under the shade of a tree to enjoy *maheu*, a traditional brew that helps to quench their thirst after sweating in the hot sun. The fields are far away from their home, hence they spend the whole day out there and they return before dusk to prepare and eat their only meal for the day.

***Many children like Thandi suffer from the effects of corruption, poverty, hunger, greed, and disease ...most... caused by our own selfishness and lack of care and love for our neighbor.***

The youngest brother has always been sick since he was a baby. It appears he is HIV positive but nobody knows exactly. The family lives in a remote rural village of Southern Africa. Each time they visit the nearest clinic, they get only Panadol to ease the pain. The people who administer the test for HIV/AIDS visit the village once every quarter. If you miss them, it means you have to wait for three to four months, meanwhile,, the drugs often run out. Even the government seems to have forgotten about these poor souls. The last time they saw their member of parliament was when he wanted their votes. People often ask where God is in all this mess.

The family has set their eyes on Thandi as the only hope for their survival. If she gets married to a rich man in the village, he might help the family. They are thinking of an arranged marriage to someone with four other wives. She doesn't love him but it makes perfect sense that she is the redeemer of the only family she has ever known and loved. Her other brother had also suggested that Thandi should go and sell her body at the township so that they could buy food. They attend a local Catholic church and nobody seems to care about helping this vulnerable and needy family. People, even Christian brothers and sisters, always make false promises. They tell this family to go in peace, and they will be praying for Thandi's family. Isaiah says, "The poor and the needy search for water but there is none; their tongues are parched with thirst, but I the Lord will answer them. I the God of Israel will not forsake them" (Isaiah 41: 17).

Thandi has no Bible and neither do any of the people in her family. They want to believe in God but they are not sure how to find Him. The traditional (custom) religion teaches that God is so far away He can only be reached by those who have gone before us through death. They often go to the silent graves to ask their parents to petition their plight with this spirit known as God. How are they going to know the way to God unless someone tells them? All they see is gloom and death gnashing its teeth to devour them one by one. "Now, O women, hear the word of the Lord, open your ears to the words of His mouth. Teach your daughters how to wail; teach one another a lament. Death has climbed in through our windows and has entered our fortresses. It has cut off the children from the streets and the young men from the public squares." (Jeremiah 9:20-21 NIV)

Throughout the whole world, many children like Thandi and her two brothers suffer from the effects of corruption, poverty, hunger, greed, and disease. Most of these calamities are caused by our own selfishness and lack of care and love for our neighbor.

We see these situations daily, but our senses have become numbed to the point that we no longer react to the plight of the orphans and vulnerable children around us. The solution to this problem is at the tips of our fingers and God has shown us how we can help. He holds us responsible for the four corners of our world - which is the people around us. "The axe is already at



the root of the trees, and every tree that does not produce good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire. ‘What should we do then?’” ...we ask. The answer: “The person who has two tunics should share with someone who has none, and one who has food should do the same” (Luke 3:9–11NIV).

Children like Thandi become prostitutes—not by choice — but as a way to earn a living. I speak to some of the girls in the area where I work and they tell me that it is better to die of AIDS than to die of hunger. What they do at night (thinking that they are hiding from their communities) is a taboo that brings shame and ridicule to their families and society. They know it’s wrong and in a perfect world they would not do it, but they do it anyway.

The first thought that comes to mind for people like me is to rebuke, shun and pass judgment yet they are crying for your help and mine. Unscrupulous men and women deceive these young ones to engage in sexual activities with people they don’t love on the pretext of helping. One girl was told that if she wanted to save the life of her sick uncle, she had to sleep with him, since his illness is treatable by sleeping with a virgin girl. In this case, it was HIV/AIDS and they both died. What a way to solve societal problems!

***You and I can make a difference by  
rescuing one child at a time.***

The boys resort to crime not because they are criminals. They just want to get a meal for the day. One boy admitted that he had killed a man who had resisted his effort to steal a car from him. According to this boy, people should let him steal from those he perceives to be rich because they will receive compensation from their insurance companies. They think the world should be this way because they don’t have an education; hence they can’t find a job. The shocking result is that we continue to lose parents and grandparents to HIV/AIDS. And if we don’t act now, none of us will be safe because these desperate people live next door to us. Either they will die the same way their parents died or they will kill people and we will continue to arrest them and fill our prisons.

**W**e cannot continue to watch and complain about how our governments have become corrupt and do not help the needy. You and I can make a difference by rescuing one child at a time. These children are poor innocent souls, deeply loved by our heavenly Father. Above all, He knows about them and their plight. God wants you to partner with the many organizations that seek to help our world be a better place for everyone created in His image.

***Davison Zhou** is currently working with God’s Garden in Zimbabwe where they are committed to bringing the life-giving presence of Jesus Christ to orphaned children in rural villages untouched by other organizations through agriculture, education, medical and spiritual support in the context of their caregivers and community. [godsgardens.org](http://godsgardens.org)*

## • NEWS • EVENTS • RESOURCES

### Grief and Loss Resources

#### Books

- ***Take my Hand: Guiding your child through grief***  
By: Sharon Marshall Lockett  
Zondervan 2001; ISBN0-310-23845-5  
This book helps parents and caregivers teach a child about death and Heaven. Co-authored with her son, Jeff Johnson, this book shares the perspective of both parent and child on the journey of recovery.
- ***Good Grief: Feelings, Loss & Death Under 11’s***  
ISBN: 1853023248  
***Good Grief 2: Exploring Feelings, Loss & Death 11+***  
ISBN: 185302340x  
by: Barbara Ward  
A unique curriculum pack, in that it gives children the opportunity to explore a range of both positive and negative feelings within a safe environment. The practical and factual information across differing religious creeds and cultures, and those of no faith, gives plenty of scope for teachers and other caregivers to give information to children growing up in our multi-racial/multi-cultural society.
- ***Talking With Children about Loss***  
by: Maria Trozzi  
ISBN 0-399-52543-2; Penguin Putnam Inc 1999;  
[www.penguinputnam.com](http://www.penguinputnam.com)  
Maria Trozzi has 20 year of experience in dealing with children’s grief and offers words, strategies and wisdom to help children cope with death and other difficult times.
- ***The Hurt that They Feel: Helping preschoolers deal with tough issues***; Compiled by Rhonda R. Reeves;  
New Hope Publishers 2004; ISBN 1-56309-839-3  
This book Tackles some of the toughest issues young children face with the help of biblical solutions. Highly regarded educators and ministers, including the late Fred Rogers from Mister Roger’s Neighborhood, address abuse, violent anger, illness and death, and divorce, among others. Application questions are included with each chapter.
- ***The Loss That Is Forever: The Lifelong Impact of the Early Death of a Mother or Father***  
By: Maxine Harris  
Plume – 1995; ISBN 0-525-93869-9  
Through extensive research, interviews with more than sixty-five men and women, and the compelling writings of such well-known figures as C.S. Lewis and Eleanor Roosevelt, Dr Maxine Harris illustrates how themes of loss and survival weave through the lives of those who have lost a parent in childhood.

## Caregiver's Time-out

—Susan Craig



### Little is Much When God is in It

From the time I arrived in Cote d'Ivoire in 1987 I received requests from friends and strangers alike for money or material goods. How the person approached me with his/her request, my relationship with the person and my "generosity" reading, as well as what I had available at the time, all influenced my responses. I did not have the means to honor everyone's demand. And, even if I could honor every request, the trap of dependency (those to whom I give becoming dependent on me) lurked in the shadows.

Much later, and after taking some excellent courses that equipped me to promote church-centered savings and loan associations, I looked for biblical stories of people whose financial or material needs were met by God through the use of their own resources and social associations—without "outside" funding intervention. My model story is found in 2 Kings, chapter four, and verses one through seven. It has become one of my favorite texts for my infrequent preaching on Sunday mornings, talks to Christian women's groups, and promotion of church-centered savings and loan groups in local churches. Christian leaders here love its message. I'll explain why.

The story in my Bible titled *Increase of Widow's Oil* says the widow of a man from the company of [God's] prophets cried out to the prophet Elisha. She was in dire circumstances. Her husband left unpaid debts behind him and, to reimburse the debts, his creditors threatened to take her two sons as slaves.

Elisha reacted by asking how he could help her. Now if Elisha was a modern-day West African prophet, bishop, evangelist, pastor, elder, deacon, or other church leader, he might have answered his own question by doing any of the following:

- reach into his pocket and offer her some of the money owed to the creditors,

- offer to go talk to the creditors in hopes that they will write off all or part of the debt,
- go see the widow's relatives to ask them to pay the debt,
- assure the widow that he will seek God for a solution and get back to her,
- call a special church leaders' meeting to discuss ways of meeting the widow's need,
- pray with the widow, asking God to intervene and deliver her from her husband's creditors.

All these responses are good and more or less scripturally sound. However, Elisha didn't do any of the above. After asking the question of how he could help her, he immediately asked another question: "... what do you have in your house?" If I was that widow I would have felt like an instantly inflated, then deflated balloon. My hopes would have been up as soon as Elisha implied he could help me, and I could have suggested to him numerous ways to remedy my problem. To me he was saying that he could take care of my problem. But, no, he threw the ball back into my court. He didn't even give me the chance to answer his first question but immediately asks another—one that demands something of me. How could I possibly have anything if all I have left are two children who will be taken from me because I have nothing else?

*I looked for people whose needs  
were met by God through their own  
resources and social associations*

No matter how the widow felt, she answered Elisha's second question with the facts. She had "nothing...at all [at home] except a little oil." However, the little which was like a half-empty container to her, was like a half-full container to Elisha. He instructed her to collect empty jars from her neighbors. At that point I would have said, "Most honorable Prophet Elisha, aren't you the one who changed Jericho's spring water from bad to good? And didn't you transmit God's message of victory over Moab to the kings of Israel, Judah, and Edom? Can't you and God just rid me of these creditors by yourselves without getting me and the little that I have involved?"

Fortunately, the widow didn't question Elisha's strange instructions. By faith she

and her sons poured her oil into all the empty jars that she got from her neighbors. God himself could have produced jars for the oil just as miraculously as He multiplied the oil, but He didn't. Why did He bring the widow's neighbors into this? It shows us that even for a miracle, she needed others; her neighbors, her family, her community. Additionally, she was able to pay off the creditors and have something for her and her sons to live on afterwards only in direct proportion to her positive relationships with her neighbors. It was the jars they gave her that received what she needed. When I have only one jar with a little oil, it's not worth much. But, when I associate with others by pooling our resources, for example, that gives us volume that can more easily turn a profit.

The widow's faith and submission to God and his prophet amaze me. When the oil stopped flowing I would have jumped up and down, shouted "Hallelujah," flown open my door and declared to all the world that I just witnessed a miracle. Even if the miracle happened behind closed doors (God didn't want this made public), I wouldn't have been able to contain my joy. But, the widow controlled her emotions and didn't assume anything. She went and told the man of God that the oil stopped flowing. And he told her, "Good job. Give me that oil and I'll take care of your debt for you. You can relax." No. He told her to sell the oil and pay her debts, and, she and her sons can live on what is left.

She was not let off the hook. The miracle did not absolve her from responsibility for her husband's debts or from work. That's why Christian leaders here love this story. They realize that they don't have to be, or provide, the answer to every person's problem. Rather, they can help those in need to see value and possibilities in the little they have, encourage them to associate with others to maximize their potential, and let the responsibility for the problem and the work needed to solve it rest with the person.

May the Lord give us His love, compassion, discernment and patience for every needy person He sends our way. And may He sometimes throw a miracle into His solution to complete our joy!



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