

## “Let’s Roll”

*Be strong and courageous, and act; do not fear nor be dismayed, for the LORD God, my God, is with you.*

*He will not fail you nor forsake you.*

*1 Chronicles 28:20 NASB*

## IN FOCUS

—Rosemary Sabatino

**L**et’s Roll. For those who may not know, this is a saying that denotes a call for urgent and, oftentimes, bold and decisive action. It’s no wonder that these two words, *Let’s Roll*, became the battle cry which called forth quick and determined action from ordinary citizens that very well may have saved a nation.

On the morning of September 11, 2001, terrorists hijacked four commercial airliners in a strategically planned attack against the United States. Each of the four planes would be used as weapons, but only three would meet their predetermined targets. Two jet airliners crashed into the World Trade Center’s Twin Towers in New York City, and a third aircraft into the Pentagon in Arlington, Virginia (headquarters for the U.S. military). The fourth plane, United Airlines Flight 93, never met its intended target—the Capital building in Washington, DC, which houses U.S. lawmakers and Legislative officers. Instead, thanks to 32 brave passengers and crew members, Flight 93 crashed into an open field killing all on board, including the terrorists.

After learning of the planned attacks, the passengers and crew of Flight 93 could have been immobilized by fear, but they made a collective decision to fight back. As one passenger gave the battle cry, *Let’s Roll*, they together took quick and decisive action. Showing unity and courage under adversity, they sacrificed their own lives to defeat the enemy and possibly save a nation.

We too have an enemy whose strategically targeted attacks against God and His kingdom are most diabolically manifested in an all-out assault against children and families. It is our job to see that the enemy does not reach his target. Yet, those of us who desire to bring healing and hope to children at risk and in crisis, when faced with the enormity of the task and the oppression of the enemy, can become discouraged, dismayed and even fearful and immobilized at a time when *Let’s Roll* is the order of the day.

In 1 Chronicles 28:20 the Lord gives us His version of *Let’s Roll*—*be strong and courageous and act*. The Hebrew word *chazaq*, translated *strong* means to be resolute and denotes urgency. *Courageous* is translated from the Hebrew *amats*, meaning to be bold and brave. And finally, the word *act* is translated from *asah*, which simply means to take action.<sup>1</sup> These are the words

1. Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance Online; Crosswalk.com

David used to bolster a young, dismayed and fearful Solomon as he faced the enormous task of building the temple and they are words which can bolster us as well. Solomon was encouraged to urgently take bold and decisive action knowing that the Lord God who strengthened and sustained his warrior father would be with him and would never forsake him. In addition, Solomon was assured in verse 21 that the Lord would send other skilled workers to join with him in the work. Their unity of task would bring the courage to finish well. In essence David was saying, *Son, you have nothing to fear, so take courage and Let’s Roll!*

For children living with disabilities, courage is a way of life. Especially for those children and their caregivers who are living in cultures where little or no help is available. This quarter the Barnabas attempts to shed some needed light on the subject of children and disabilities and we are grateful to our contributing authors. Dr. Phyllis Kilbourn gives us an overview of the needs facing children with disabilities, and she also challenges us for ministry in her article *Disabilities: An Introduction*. She also offers an excerpt from her forthcoming book *Let All the Children Come: A Handbook for Holistic Ministry to Children with Disabilities* in an article entitled *Disability and Children at Risk*. In her article *Char: Care for the Caregiver*, Julie Bohn encourages self care and also offers practical ways to achieve it. And in the *Caregivers Time-Out*, Kay Landis shows us a practical and simple way for us all to be *Reaching the World* of children for Jesus.

**R**eaching the world of children at risk and in crisis, and especially those with disabilities, requires an investment of time, unconditional love and compassionate relationship on the part of the church. It isn’t an option; it’s a mandate—*Let [all] the little children come to me, and do not hinder them for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these (Matthew 19:14 NIV)*. The time is now for the church to take urgent, decisive action and to respond with unity, courage and sacrifice to defeat the enemy and save a generation.

### Let’s Roll!

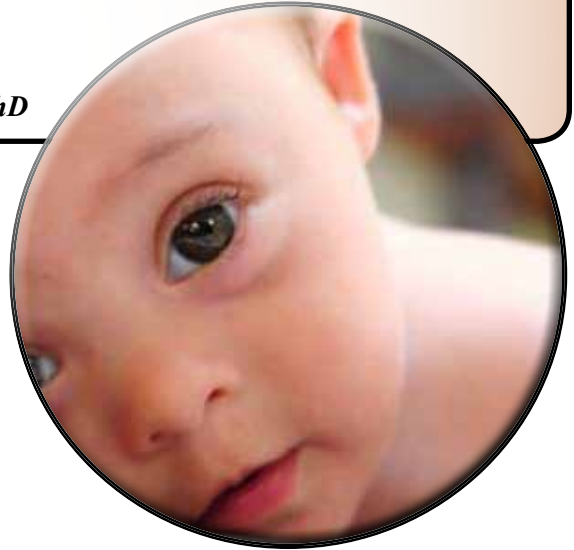
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## ***Disabilities:***

### ***An Introduction***

—Phyllis Kilbourn, PhD



She was only weeks old, so beautiful as I picked her up and held this little bundle of joy called Maria! Her story was one that was similar to so many I have heard. Found on the street, rejected, deserted by her mother, but there was a real significant difference. You see, little Maria was found in a cardboard box on a street in Guatemala City, left there not so much because the family was poor and destitute, although I am sure they were, but left there because she had Down syndrome!

***Maria is just one of the estimated one billion people in the world who have some form of disability.***

As you can imagine, as I held her and thought about this, my eyes filled and my heart ached! Yes, I knew that all over the world such children are often kept out of sight, hidden in back rooms and closets, and treated as if they are not human beings.<sup>1</sup>

Maria is just one of the estimated one billion people in the world who have some form of disability, including physical, mental, nutritional or emotional. Of this population, UNICEF has estimated that around one quarter or 200 million are children.<sup>2</sup> Some studies, particularly in developing countries, indicate that the proportions and numbers may be significantly higher due to underreporting.

#### **We Face a Big Task**

The situation of children with disabilities worldwide is often bleak:

- Eighty percent of all people with disabilities live in developing countries, places where there is a shortage of doctors, clinics and rehabilitation facilities.

- Often children with disabilities are left to be cared for by others in orphanages.
- The presence of a child with a disability in an already poor family or community increases demands on limited resources and adds another dimension to the family's and community's ability to cope.
- Many children with disabilities end up living on danger-filled city streets with no provision of essential basic needs.
- Families of children with disabilities have significant needs as well.

***In order to effectively meet their needs we must understand the context surrounding children with disabilities.***

A variety of opportunities for compassionate and holistic ministry can be gleaned from the situation and needs of children with disabilities; needs that, if met, help lay a solid foundation for their spiritual development. But in order to effectively meet those needs we must first understand the context surrounding children with disabilities and the consequences of disability on them.

## Barriers to Full Enjoyment of Rights

In addition to increased risk of exploitation, children with disabilities constantly face barriers that keep them from the full enjoyment of their rights. These rights include participation in community and family life; access to education, health services and rehabilitation; social and legal assistance; opportunities for play and cultural activities; and educational opportunities such as vocational and life-skills training.

*Jesus modeled compassionate and purposeful ministry to individuals with disabilities, so must we.*

According to the World Health Organization: "Across the world, people with disabilities have poorer health outcomes, lower education achievements, less economic participation and higher rates of poverty than people without disabilities. This is partly because people with disabilities experience barriers in accessing services that many of us have long taken for granted, including health, education, employment, and transport as well as information. These difficulties are exacerbated in less advantaged communities."<sup>3</sup>

The loss of a child's rights stems from root causes such as poverty, social issues (such as stigma and discrimination), lack of health care and rehabilitation services, inaccessible transport (especially for medical services), not enough "disability friendly" facilities, lack of helpful information and various forms of exploitation. These barriers hold children back from achieving their full potential. Often children's abilities are overlooked and their capacities underestimated. Consequentially, they are excluded from activities in their communities and families.

Victor Pineda reminds us of the importance of helping children with disabilities achieve their full potential. He says: "People with disabilities may have difficulty seeing, hearing, walking or remembering. But they also have dreams, hopes and ideas they want to share . . . Every person in the world looks different and has different ideas, experiences, traditions and abilities. I learned that these differences create new possibilities, new hopes, new dreams and new friendships."<sup>4</sup>

Barriers from poverty, stigma, community attitudes and educational exclusion: we must eliminate them all. As well, we must eliminate the exploitation and various violations of child's rights that often force people with disabilities to the margins of society. Because such barriers can hinder children from developing their God-given gifts and potential, the church also must join in advocacy and action for the elimination of these barriers, empowering children with disabilities to participate in all aspects of family, church and community life.

## Challenge for Ministry

As Peter Ustinov has said, "Our ability to deal with children with disabilities is a yardstick of our ability to deal with all children."<sup>5</sup> This also could be a valid measuring stick for the investment of the church and families into the lives of children with disabilities. Just as Jesus modeled compassionate and purposeful ministry to individuals with disabilities, taking time to be with them, to support and to fully accept them whether they were lame, blind, lepers or epileptic, so must we.

**Phyllis Kilbourn, founder of both Rainbows of Hope and Crisis Care Training International, is a child advocate, trauma trainer and author/editor of a number of handbooks focused on interventions for children in crisis and has served in Liberia and Kenya with WEC International.**

**She holds the PhD in education from Trinity International University, Deerfield, Illinois. Dr. Kilbourn has taught crisis care training seminars and/or conducted research in many countries across Africa, Eastern Europe, Asia, Latin America and North America.**



1. Sam Martin, "Prayer Letter for The Arms of Jesus Children's Mission" (unpublished manuscript, n.d.).
2. UNICEF Innocenti Research Centre, "Promoting the Rights of Children with Disabilities," Innocenti Digest No. 13 (2007): iv, <http://www.unicef-irc.org/publications/pdf/digest13-disability.pdf>.
3. World Health Organization, World Report on Disability (Geneva: World Health Organization, 2011), [http://whqlibdoc.who.int/publications/2011/9789240685215\\_eng.pdf](http://whqlibdoc.who.int/publications/2011/9789240685215_eng.pdf), xi.
4. Victor Santiago Pineda, It's About Ability: An Explanation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (New York: UNICEF, 2008), 3, 5.
5. UNICEF, "China: Children with Disabilities," [http://www.unicef.org/china/protection\\_community\\_485.html](http://www.unicef.org/china/protection_community_485.html).

# “Char”

## Care for the Caregiver

—Julie Bohn



**“Caregiver: a person who assists a sick or disabled person; a person who attends to the needs of a child or dependent adult.”<sup>1</sup>**

The majority of you who are reading this article are probably caregivers of children in crisis, whether they have a disability or not. Are you growing weary in doing good? Do you feel guilty if you desire time for yourself? Are you beginning to resent those for whom you are caring because you are exhausted and don't have a life outside of their care? One of the greatest gifts you can give your charges is to take care of yourself. You will find that, as you set aside time for rest and refreshment, you will be able to respond better to the needs of those in your care.

**Jesus did not expect His apostles to go without care ... “Come with me by yourselves to a quiet place and get some rest.”**

As the greatest Caregiver who ever lived, Jesus lovingly attended to the needs of the children and adults in His presence. The response must have been overwhelming as the multitudes often “pressed around Him.” (Mark 5:24) Although He definitely felt the weight of caring for people, He was also able to fall asleep in the boat (Luke 8)—Jesus knew it was important to take care of Himself. In Luke 5:15—16 we read that “the news about him spread all the more, so that crowds of people came to hear him and to be healed of their sicknesses. But Jesus often withdrew to lonely places and prayed.” Jesus realized that He needed time to be refreshed by the Father to continue His work. Yes, He was fully God but He was also fully man and as a man Jesus grew tired too and needed rest.

Jesus did not expect His apostles to go without care either. In Mark 6:30—32 we read, “The apostles gathered around Jesus and reported to him all they had done and taught. Then, because so many people were coming and going that they did not even have a chance to eat, he said to them, Come with me by yourselves to a quiet place and get some rest. So they went away by themselves in a boat to a solitary place.” The feeding of the five thousand occurred right after this time

of rest. Jesus knew His disciples would not have the energy to care for the multitude if they didn't take time for rest and refreshment and He made sure they got away from those for whom they were caring in order to spend some time alone with Him.

If Jesus and the apostles needed to take time to care for themselves, isn't it even more necessary for you to take the time to care for yourself? Appropriate amounts of sleep, healthy food and exercise are essential for one's own health. This may mean asking others to help care for your charges so you can get some sleep, eat a hot meal, go for a walk by yourself or take some time to go out with friends. In a forthcoming book edited by Phyllis Kilbourn, *Let All the Children Come: A Handbook for Holistic Ministry to Children with Disabilities*, there are many ways for the church to provide respite for caregivers listed in the chapter titled *Helping the Church Make Christ Accessible*. Once again, if Jesus needed time for Himself, there is no reason for caregivers to feel guilty about taking some time for themselves and the church can help.

While our physical state definitely impacts our attitude about life and what we are called to do, withdrawing to a lonely place to pray will provide the greatest refreshment. Lettie Cowman writes, “Covet to get alone with God. If we neglect it, we not only rob ourselves, but others, too, of blessings, since when we are blessed we are able to pass on blessings to others.”<sup>2</sup> And Rene Schlaepfer adds, “In Luke 10: 41, 42 Jesus rebukes Martha for being distracted in her serving by saying, ‘Martha, Martha,’ the Lord answered, ‘you are worried and upset about many things, but few things are needed—or indeed only one. Mary has chosen what is better and it will not be taken away from her.’ If He had asked Mary for a drink, do you think she would have sprung to her feet and helped Him out? Of course! But she started with—and stayed with—a restful focus on Christ.”<sup>3</sup> Mary was willing to serve but knew it was more important to spend time with Jesus and then she would have the strength to serve as He directed. As caregivers our work is never done and it seems our charges need help with ever so much. Even so, we still need to take the time to be alone with Jesus to receive His **char**. The Greek word **char** (pronounced “care”) is the root

2. Lettie Cowman, *Streams in the Desert*, (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, ), 71.

3. Rene Schlaepfer, *Grace Immersion: A 50-day Plunge into God's Amazing Grace*, (Aptos, CA: Twin Lakes Church, 2010), 17.

1. *The American Heritage College Dictionary*, 3rd ed., (2000), s.v. “caregiver.”

word of three Greek words translated in the New Testament as *grace, joy and thanksgiving*.

Grace: *Charis* is the Greek word translated as grace meaning *that which affords joy or pleasure; the merciful loving-kindness by which God, exerting his holy influence upon souls, turns them to Christ, keeps, strengthens, increases them in Christian faith, knowledge, affection, and kindles them to the exercise of the Christian virtues*.<sup>4</sup>

***Make time to care for yourself ... to experience His grace and joy and then respond with thanksgiving. You and your charges will be much more peaceful if you do.***

In a Focus on the Family broadcast this idea was presented as giving someone what they need the most when they deserve it the least. Jesus desires to give us His loving-kindness and His blessings and we certainly can do nothing to deserve either. Receiving His grace then *kindles* within our hearts the desire to pass His grace on to others. For example, when Gina projectile vomits on her caregiver, His *charis* comes in the form of clean clothes and fresh air. His *grace* is then passed on to Gina by her caregiver in the form of kind words and a hug. When Derek destroys yet another child's toy, Jesus' *charis* to his caregiver is patience, calm and wisdom. His *grace* is then passed on to Derek by the caregiver in the form of loving discipline that points him to Jesus.

Joy: *Chara* is the Greek word translated as *joy or gladness* meaning *the cause or the occasion of joy or gladness of persons who are one's joy*.<sup>5</sup> Do you really understand that you are God's joy? In Psalm 17:8 David calls himself *the apple of [God's] eye*. God delights in you and is just waiting for you to delight in Him as He passes His joy on to you. Joy, of course, goes much deeper than simply laughing. However, one of the best ways to help yourself and your charges find joy is to find or make opportunities to laugh. At a camp for individuals with disabilities where I worked for many summers we had an "I Did It" award made from a paisley wheelchair safety harness covered in patches and buttons. One was chosen to wear this creation for a day by doing something silly in the act of caregiving. It could be as simple as calling your camper by the wrong name. The campers did the nominating and the voting on who would be chosen to wear it for the day. It was a way to turn those "mistakes" we all make into something everyone could enjoy as long as you are willing to laugh at yourself. Find out what makes your charges laugh and see to it those things happen often. You will

find yourself laughing right along with them. Kelly got the giggles hanging from a Hoyer lift while I was trying to put a diaper on her so she could go on an outing. Soon we were both laughing at my attempts. When Joey wet himself because he didn't want to come in from playing outside, his, "Uh oh, made a puddle" made you smile inside even though you had a mess to clean up. Even the worst messes can be cleaned up with joy when we remember what Jesus said in Matthew 25:40 "Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me."

Thanksgiving: *eucharisteo* is the Greek word translated as *thanks*, meaning *to be grateful... give thanks*.<sup>6</sup> This is the word used in Luke 22:19 when Jesus took the bread and the cup and gave *thanks*. He knew for the bread to symbolize His broken body and the cup His shed blood He would have to die on the cross and yet He still *gave thanks*. Ann Voskamp in her book *One Thousand Gifts*, was challenged by this idea and decided to create a list of one thousand things she was thankful for in her day-to-day life of homeschooling six children and being a farmer's wife. Caregivers could have the children in their care help them to come up with a similar gratitude list. For example:

- the smile of gratitude you get when you change Vivian's diaper first thing in the morning
- the "I will pray for you" from David with Down's syndrome
- clean clothes when yours or theirs are soiled
- a chickadee to brighten your day
- the "yes ma'am" from Colin instead of running in the opposite direction when you ask him to do something,
- a friend who comes by to watch your charges for a while so you can have some time to yourself

You get the idea. Keeping a gratitude list or journal transformed Mrs. Voskamp and is now transforming me to focus on God's blessings and look for those rather than on the negative things we tend to keep track of so easily.

Jesus took care of Himself in order to care for others. He desires to "*char*" for you also. Make the time to care for yourself. This includes time to experience His *grace* and *joy* and then respond with *thanksgiving*. You and your charges will be much more peaceful if you do.

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4. Thayer and Smith, "Greek Lexicon entry for Charis", *The New Testament Greek Lexicon*.

5. Thayer and Smith, "Greek Lexicon entry for Chara", *The New Testament Greek Lexicon*.

6. Thayer and Smith, "Greek Lexicon entry for Eucharisteo", *The New Testament Greek Lexicon*.



## **Disability and Children at Risk**

*An excerpt from: "Let All the Children Come:  
A Handbook on Holistic Ministry to Children with Disabilities"  
Editor—Phyllis Kilbourn*

**F**or a large majority of the world's children, disabilities not associated with birth are acquired through crisis experiences that not only cause children not to function within the expected norms, but also make them vulnerable to abuse and exploitation. Children of war, street children and child laborers are prime examples of children who are vulnerable to disabilities resulting from dangerous occupations, accidents or harmful exploitation.

Children at risk are not only vulnerable to disability, but disability also increases risks to children. As confirmed through research, credible reports and statistics, children with disabilities are among the most stigmatized and marginalized of all the world's children. Negative societal attitudes expose children with disabilities to greater risk of violence, abuse and exploitation. While all children are at risk of being targeted victims of violence, children having a disability find themselves at significantly increased risk because of the stigma, negative traditional beliefs and ignorance associated with disabilities.

One of the many contexts where children with disabilities are especially at risk is in situations of war. Knowledge gained from examining this exploitive situation in the context of disability can be transferred to other forms of exploitation experienced by children.

### **Disabilities Caused by War**

At eight years old Nermina had been the joy of her family. She could make them laugh with just a smile, she could make them proud by the way she joined others doing the chores and the way she succeeded in her school work, and she always had friends with whom she played.

But now that was over. The landmine had taken her foot. Now she was a burden. She could not smile; she had to be helped everywhere; and her friends were too busy running and jumping to just sit with her. Even her smile was lost somewhere in the past.

It was Tuesday at the hospital. Nermina had been in this special hospital for two days. It seemed right that she was banished to this sterile place. Her friends probably no longer wanted to be with her; her family only cried when they looked at her; she knew that she could no longer walk the miles to school, pick berries for the market, or kick the ball when it rolled in her direction. She did not belong any more.

Nermina's story so well describes the experiences of countless children caught up in violent civil wars. According to the WHO, "for every child killed in warfare, three are injured and acquire a permanent form of disability. In some countries, up to a quarter of all disabilities result from injuries and violence."

Along with the disabilities children acquire through clearing fields of landmines is the difficult fact that, according to the United Nations, one of every four soldiers in the world is a child. Opportunities for disability-type injuries are rife for the child soldier, including mental and physical challenges from the drugs and alcohol given them for bravery in fighting during the day and forgetting what they have done when night falls.

Eleven years of civil war in Sierra Leone is another prime example of how war brings about an increase in disability. Thousands of young people were forced to suffer disabilities, "both as a result of forced amputations—the tragic hallmark of the rebel forces—and the collapse of the national health system including childhood immunizations. As vaccinations ceased, disabling diseases such as polio crept back into overcrowded slums, mainly affecting children under the age of five."

**R**egardless of how children acquire a disability, they require special care and attention, or else they become at risk of being excluded from within their society, community and even family. Unfortunately for the vast majority of children, especially in developing countries, access to rehabilitative health care or support services is not available. Lack of care has resulted in hundreds of thousands of children with disabilities being destined to live their lives in institutions, often deprived not only of love and affection but also of the most basic physical requirements.



**Resources Addressing Children and Disabilities**

**Books**



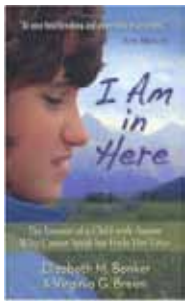
*Special Needs Smart Pages: Advice, Answers, and Articles About Teaching Children with Special Needs*

Joni and Friends; Gospel Light

This comprehensive resource includes Bible lessons, inspiring real-life stories, teacher devotionals, training articles, and more—plus a CD-ROM. 328 reproducible pages, softcover from Gospel Light.

ISBN: 0830747192

ISBN-13: 9780830747191



*I Am in Here: The Journey of a Child with Autism Who Cannot Speak but Finds Her Voice*

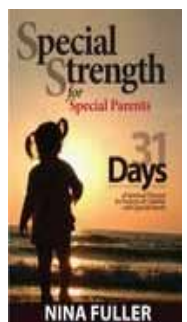
Elizabeth M. Bonker, Virginia G. Breen

Revell / 2011 / Hardcover

*I Am in Here* is the spiritual journey of a mother and an autistic daughter who refuse to give up hope, who celebrate their victories, and who keep moving forward despite the obstacles.

ISBN: 0800720717

ISBN-13: 9780800720711



*Special Strength for Special Parents*

Nina Fuller; Publisher: GMA Publishing, 2006

This encouraging, life-giving book is for parents of special needs children. The constant demand of having to be strong for others often leaves these parents feeling isolated, depleted, and fatigued. But they will be blessed to read the 31 daily doses of hope, and reflect on the faithfulness of God through the good times and the bad.

ISBN-10: 1592680755

**CDs**



*Special Words for Special People: Offering Grace to the Weary*

Charles R. Swindoll;

Publisher: Insight for Living, 8 CD set

Suffering is one of the most profound mysteries in the human experience. Whether it comes as a result of sinful choices, through the realities of

living life in a sinful world, or by some accident or physical malady, all of us know the grinding pressure of pain. But there is hope and encouragement and grace for weary souls, for those who wince under the stings of daily suffering.

**Forthcoming Resource from CCTI**

[www.crisiscaretraining.org](http://www.crisiscaretraining.org)



**“Let All the Children Come”**

**A Handbook for Holistic Ministry to Children with Disabilities**

Editor: Phyllis Kilbourn

Look for this resource to be available by October 2012!

**Websites**

[Insight for Living Ministries](http://insightforliving.typepad.com/specialneeds/)

**A Special Needs Blog**

**by Colleen Swindoll Thompson**

<http://insightforliving.typepad.com/specialneeds/>

When life falls apart, confusion sets in. Personal questions are unanswerable, emotions are uncontrollable, and strength seems unattainable; such are the realities of shattering circumstances. Special Needs Ministries represents a source of hope for people by offering sound teaching, resources, and personal counseling. We invite you to visit the Special Needs blog, managed by Colleen Swindoll, director of Special Needs Ministries and the parent of a child with special needs. Colleen is intimately aware of the daily challenges you face, and she is honored for the opportunity to interact with you.

[Grace Immersion by René Schlaepfer](http://www.graceimmersion.com)

<http://www.graceimmersion.com>

Do you have a nagging sense you are never doing enough for God? Do you have a vague feeling of guilt and constant disapproval? Do you feel guilty when you enjoy yourself? Rediscover grace!

[One Thousand Gifts by Ann Voskamp](http://onethousandgifts.com)

<http://onethousandgifts.com>

Just like you, Ann Voskamp hungers to live her one life well. Forget the bucket lists that have us escaping our everyday lives for exotic experiences. In *One Thousand Gifts*, Ann invites you to embrace everyday blessings and embark on the transformative spiritual discipline of chronicling God’s gifts. It’s only in this expressing of gratitude for the life we already have, we discover the life we’ve always wanted...a life we can take, give thanks for, and break for others.

**Resource List compiled by**

**[Handi\\*Vangelism Ministries International,](http://www.hvmi.org)**

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# Caregiver's Time-out



## *Reaching the World*

—*Kay Landis*

Approximately 1.5 billion children live in crisis situations worldwide; including 150 million living on the streets, 218 million child laborers, 12.5 million sexually exploited and 15 million orphaned by AIDS. We could go on and on with such staggering statistics. The numbers truly are daunting, and as caregivers we can easily become discouraged. Even when we focus on our individual ministries, we can become overwhelmed by the task at hand. We often begin to ask ourselves, “How can I feasibly care for each child? Where will all the money I need come from? How do I keep up? Will any of this make a difference?”

*I would wonder if any of our efforts were making even a small dent.*

I too have asked myself these questions. As request after request from street moms came to our attention and reports of our street kids' ill fates rolled in, I would wonder if any of our efforts were making even a small dent in the overwhelming number of street children in the Philippines, let alone the world. Wouldn't it be easier to just give up since all those children couldn't possibly be helped?

In an effort to tune out all the cares of the ministry, one night my husband and I decided to watch a movie and, strangely, divine revelation came. Our choice for the evening was *The Core*. It was another one of those “the earth is in danger due to a military mishap and must be saved by the gallant efforts of a select number of mentally and physically elite.” After a series of mishaps and accidents, the main character shakes his head and confesses, “This just all seems too big.” His companion's response was revelatory to the main character and, ironically, to my husband and me as well. He answered, “You are attempting the impossible. Trying to save the world? It's overwhelming. I came to save my wife and two children. Six billion lives? That's too much. I just hope I'm smart enough and brave enough to save three.”

Are we smart enough and brave enough to save three? Are we able to look upon the faces set in front of us and focus on them instead of the multitudes? With God's help I believe we can. In doing so, we will be more ministry-focused and we won't become burdened by what we are unable to do.

Are you smart enough to possibly save three? Or even just one? James 1:5–6 (HCSB) states, “Now if any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives to all generously and without criticizing, and it will be given to him. But let him ask in faith without doubting.” The Lord gave Moses the wisdom to lead thousands; He gave Joseph a plan to save Egypt; and He gave Paul the words to speak to the early Church. He gives the same wisdom today.

Are you brave enough to save two or three? After Moses died, Joshua had the intimidating task of leading thousands of Israelites. “Be strong and courageous. Above all, be strong and very courageous. Haven't I commanded you: be strong and courageous? Do not be afraid or discouraged, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go” (Joshua 1: 6–9 HCSB). It's almost like God was saying, “Come on boy! Don't be so discouraged and scared! I'm right here with ya!” I believe He is telling us the same today.

“Really? Just three? Only one? But there are so many!” you may think. Impacting and changing one life is a more feasible goal than saving thousands. The key is to focus on the one set before you at that time. Your ministry may have tens or hundreds of children, but when you focus on just one or two at a time it does not become overwhelming. Let's follow Jesus' example. He often spent focused time with just three disciples. And, those three disciples helped spread the gospel throughout the known world. We never know what that one or two or three will accomplish for the Lord.

The influence of one can be astounding. Mordecai Ham may have thought he was going to have a regular tent meeting that night. Another hundred or so people would attend— but was it making a difference? Little did he know an energetic young man would be moved and touched by his message and, that evening, would commit his life to the Lord. That one young man was Billy Graham. He was only one, but through him thousands have come to the Lord.

*JR was one out of hundreds who we know was miraculously changed.*

Focus on the one God puts in your path. My husband and I ministered to many street children during our time in the Philippines, but we especially focused on one. JR was one out of hundreds whom we know was miraculously changed. With a national dropout rate of over 50 percent, JR, a street kid, graduated from high school, went on to finish Bible school and now ministers in villages throughout his island. Yes, the influence of one can be worth it.

Save the 1.5 billion children in crisis? That's unrealistic. But I know with God's wisdom, His courage and His strength, you and I may be able to save just three. If each of us were to reach just three, who knows, we may end up reaching the world!



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