



Looking Up...

The *MISSION TO CHILDREN*

Reaching Out

www.MissionToChildren.org

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Malawian Children's Camp

Of the reported 1.1 million orphans living in the African country of Malawi, half of them have been orphaned as a result of AIDS. In addition, more than half the population lives below the poverty line, with 21% surviving on less than \$1 a day. Within this country lies an extremely poor village called Dzuole. The village is known for its "traditional dancers," who practice forms of ancestral witchcraft. There is currently no church established in the village.

In the autumn of 2009 Mission To Children will be supporting a two-day camp for 1,000 children from Dzuole ranging in age from 5 to 14. During the camp they will hear the Gospel of Jesus Christ and make a five-colored "salvation bracelet." They will also receive nutritious meals, learn songs, hear stories, and play games. Each of them will leave with a small gift, such as soap or crayons.

The cost of the camp is \$3 per child. Would you commit now to praying with us in the months ahead for the indigenous Christian volunteers and the 1,000 Malawian children who will attend, as well as for the financial provision for the camp? Please pray that God would loosen the chains of spiritual darkness in Dzuole and free this village with the light and truth of Jesus Christ.

"Because of God's tender mercy, the Morning Light from heaven is about to break upon us, to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, and to guide us to the path of peace" (Luke 1:78-79).



Mothers sow seeds of love that blossom and multiply into the joys of life.

Thank God for Mothers

"When she speaks, her words are wise, and she gives instructions with kindness . . . Her children stand and bless her. Her husband praises her: 'There are many virtuous and capable women in the world, but you surpass them all!' Charm is deceptive, and beauty does not last; but a woman who fears the Lord will be greatly praised." (Proverbs 31:26-30)

A mother's love accepts us for who we are, believes in who we can be, and loves us during the in-between.

Mothers are makers of men and women who can confront the coming generations with love and righteousness.

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Melting Down But Looking Up

Dr. John Garmo – President

Headlines and news reports bring daily reminders of the historic and global economic meltdown affecting (and in some cases afflicting) millions of people these days. Some of those are MTC partners who have had to decrease or suspend their ongoing support of ministries like this in which they love to participate.

“If God is sovereign and loving, then our *response* to circumstances is more important than our circumstances themselves.”

I know personally how an economic meltdown can affect a family. Twenty-five years ago, my wife and I endured a sustained period of severe stress following the loss of my job. Jan was a full time mother and homemaker, so I was urgently motivated to pursue every job opportunity I could find. Weeks later, no job emerged. Our financial and emotional tanks soon read “empty” and our physical energy reserves were exhausted. It looked like meltdown time for the Garmo family. We knew neither where to turn next nor which direction to take. It was exactly where God wanted us to be.

Principles and priorities become clearer in times like these, if we take time to think about them. One principle of worship that Jan and I latched onto was this: *If God is sovereign and loving, then our **response** to circumstances is more important than our circumstances themselves.* We therefore determined that even when melting down we would keep looking up. To honor that priority we clung desperately to God. We nourished our hearts with the salve of Psalms, the wisdom of Proverbs, and the examples of men and women throughout the Scriptures who trusted God not only for their future but for their present. Through it all, God redirected our focus from meltdown to worship. May we never forget Proverbs 3:6 – “In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths.”

How about you? I invite you to reflect on these questions and e-mail your reply to me at Info@MissionToChildren.org—under the subject line “Knowing God guides me.”

- In what ways during the past several months have you seen God bless, provide, or meet a specific need that caused you to praise Him? (If you feel otherwise, comment on that as well.)

- What do you think God is teaching you through this season of uncertainty?
- Which of these has God brought to your mind to calm your concern: An attribute of God? A verse of scripture? A particular song? Some other source of encouragement?

Oh, my job search? After more months of diligent rummaging God surprised me with work that met our family needs and also helped prepare me for the multifaceted responsibilities of international ministry leadership that He later entrusted to me. That is so like Him!

MTC and many other global evangelical missions are preparing for the “World Weekend of Prayer for Children at Risk” on June 5-7. As you join others to pray for the children, will you also please pray for ministries such as MTC who, despite the economic meltdown, are still reaching out to meet those needs in ways that transform lives and glorify God?



“Show me the right path, O LORD; point out the road for me to follow. Lead me by Your truth and teach me, for You are the God who saves me. All day long I put my hope in You” (Psalm 25:4-5).

This is an excellent tool in the hands of creative parents, grandparents, teachers, pastors, and Bible study leaders. We would love to hear how it works for you.

DILIGENCE

Willingly completing the tasks I have accepted

Paul (Acts 9; 2 Corinthians 11; Hebrews 12; 2 Timothy 4)



Soon after Jesus Christ arose from the grave and returned to heaven, an angry and strong-willed man named Saul journeyed to Damascus. He wanted to hunt and capture anyone who believed on Jesus as the Messiah.

Suddenly, just before reaching Damascus, a blinding light from heaven drove him to his knees. God spoke to Saul and changed his life: Instead of suppressing the Gospel, Saul would spend the rest of his life proclaiming the Gospel! Love replaced anger and a new name, Paul, replaced his old name, Saul.

Paul redirected his strong will to accomplishing the task God gave him. It was never easy. He was imprisoned, whipped, stoned, beaten with sticks, and shipwrecked at sea. His life was in constant danger.

But Paul was persistent. He did not quit. His endurance encouraged other Christians to continue by looking to Jesus as their example. Paul wrote, "Let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us. Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith. For the joy set before Him He endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God."

Near the end of his life, Paul's diligence enabled him to write, "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith." Although it involved extreme hardship for many years, Paul willingly completed the task he accepted.

What Jesus Said About "Diligence"

"Then Jesus told his disciples a parable to show them that they should always pray and not give up. He said: In a certain town there was a judge who neither feared God nor cared about men. And there was a widow in that town who kept coming to him with the plea, 'Grant me justice against my adversary.' For some time he refused. But finally he said to himself, 'Even though I don't fear God or care about men, yet because this widow keeps bothering me, I will see that she gets justice, so that she won't eventually wear me out with her coming!' And the Lord said, 'Listen to what the unjust judge says. And will not God bring about justice for his chosen ones, who cry out to him day and night? Will he keep putting them off? I tell you, he will see that they get justice, and quickly. However, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on the earth?'" (Luke 18:1-8)

Memory Verse: "Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" (2 Timothy 2:15).

Diligence in Action

Research three Biblical characters who demonstrated diligence. For each of the three, answer questions about their diligence such as: Who? Where? When? How? Why?

Other Biblical Examples

Noah (Genesis 6-8)
Josiah (2 Chronicles 34)
Joshua (Joshua 6)

Scripture References

- **Diligence**
Deuteronomy 28:1
1 Timothy 4:12-16
Hebrews 12:1-13
2 Peter 1:5-11

Diligence Inspires:

- **Alertness**
Mark 13:33
Ephesians 6:18
1 Peter 5:8-9
- **Cautiousness**
Proverbs 14:16
- **Creativity**
Exodus 35:30-35
Ephesians 2:10
- **Persistence**
Luke 18:1-8
James 1:12
- **Thoroughness**
Psalm 51:2
2 Timothy 3:17
2 Timothy 4:7-8

Lack of Diligence

- **Laziness**
Proverbs 6:6
Proverbs 18:9
Matthew 25:24-30
Romans 12:11
Hebrews 6:12

The **MISSION TO CHILDREN**

Caring for, and cultivating Christlike character in, children—especially those at risk

World Weekend of Prayer (June 5-7)



"Does it mean nothing to you, all you who pass by?" (Lam. 1:12)

In our world today, the weakest and poorest of these are the millions of at-risk children who have lived their lives in a constant state of suffering and endangerment. Do our hearts break for these little ones and stir us to act on their behalf? Or are we indifferent and deaf to their cries? As obedient sons and daughters of the Almighty God we can be fighting for these children on our knees, praying for the earthly authorities who rule over them, and interceding for these precious souls that are in desperate need of the salvation and everlasting hope of Jesus.

We invite you to join with us and others during the World Weekend of Prayer, June 5-7, to lift up the needs of at-risk children everywhere. Consider the following statistics that amplify the need for Christ's love to be manifested in prayer and action:

It is estimated that more than 15 million children under 18 have been orphaned as a result of AIDS. Around 11.6 million of these children live in sub-Saharan Africa.

Approximately 25,000 children die each day due to poverty, and around 27-28% of all children in developing countries are reported as being underweight or having stunted growth.

In Psalm 82, verses 3-4, God exhorts governing authorities to "defend the cause of the weak and fatherless; maintain the rights of the poor and oppressed. Rescue the weak and needy; deliver them from the hand of the wicked."

It is estimated that 1.2 million children are trafficked every year through abduction, a false parental agreement, running away, traveling with family, being sold by their parents, or are orphans sold from the street or institutions.

Together, let us lift up these specific needs to our Heavenly Father:

- Pray that in every country God would raise up men and women of character who will ignite change in their country's laws and leadership to care for the needs of their people.
- Pray for every hurting, starving, deprived, diseased, abused, or enslaved child—that God would pour out His unconditional love, strength, and comfort on them and rescue them from the clutches of evil.
- Pray for MTC and all other Christian organizations that are working hard to combat and prevent these injustices to children—that we would be God's hands and feet, bringing the hope of the Gospel to children at risk.
- Ask God how He wants you to take action on behalf of these children.

"Rise during the night and cry out. Pour out your hearts like water to the Lord. Lift up your hands to Him in prayer. Plead for your children as they faint with hunger in the streets."
(Lamentations 2:19)



We can be God's hands and feet to children at risk

Canada
The Mission to Children
PO Box 51143
RPO Beddington
Calgary AB T3K 3V9

USA
Mission to Children
PO Box 2217
Escondido, CA
92033-2217

(877) 766-2400 (toll-free)
www.MissionToChildren.org



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