



# Looking Up...

The **MISSION TO CHILDREN**

*Reaching Out*

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

September 2009



## A Famine of the Word of God

“The time is coming,” says the Sovereign LORD, “when I will send a famine on the land—not a famine of bread or water, but of hearing the words of the LORD” (Amos 8:11).

Have you ever met someone who has never heard the name of “Jesus”? Individuals living in unreached pockets of the world probably have not heard His name because they are experiencing spiritual famine—a famine of hearing the words of the LORD. Here in North America we may have a Bible in each room, but in many areas of the world whole provinces or even countries have limited or no access to God’s Word.

In May of 2008 a major earthquake hit Sichuan Province in China. That opened the door for some Christian aid organizations to demonstrate God’s love as they served. Many new house churches were born. Now the government is requesting closure on these new house churches.

This month’s focus is to provide Chinese Children’s Bibles for those who have never heard the name of Jesus, and those who have, but need to hear it again. A child’s Bible is typically read by the entire family, and God’s Word will introduce them to Jesus. Our prayer is that Jesus will soon hear His name spoken by many new people groups in China. Will you share in this outreach so that many can hear and respond to the Good News of the Gospel?



“Christlikeness” in Tamil language

“As it is written, ‘How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the gospel of peace, who bring glad tidings of good things!’” (Romans 10:15b)

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## Courage to Contend

Dr. John Garmo – President

One day early this year I was sitting in a van and roasting in the tropical noontime heat of downtown Monrovia, Liberia. People crowded the sidewalks, unwelcome odors radiated from the streets, and sweat rolled down my rib cage. I was angry about being robbed in Brussels en route to Liberia and sleep-deprived by the extended travel across many time zones. Stress and fatigue were causing intestinal gurgles that also gave me understandable concern. I feared

**Through prayer, you can participate in God's work instantly and distantly.**

for my health, my emotional energy, and my spiritual preparedness for the week of work ahead.

Suddenly a barefooted teenager stepped out of the pack of people moving along the street. Quick as a cat, he scooped up something lying in the gutter. It was a piece of bread that someone had tossed aside. Brushing it briefly with his other hand, he popped it into his mouth and continued down the street.

I envisioned the contaminated water and bacteria-infested dirt on that crust—and almost gagged on his behalf. Then I saw the bigger picture. I sat back in my sweat and reminded myself, “He is why I am here. This boy is like the thousands of teens and 20-somethings—many of them former child soldiers—who are influenced by the young men and women whom God is allowing me to teach this week. God can transform his life, and I get to help them help him!” His plight rekindled my courage and willingness to be a bit uncomfortable and sacrifice a bit of safety in order to contend for the hearts and lifestyles of children, youth, and adults across Liberia.

How does a person sustain the steadfast courage needed for ministry? In a word: prayer. Millennia ago God chose to work through the prayers of His people. His Word is filled with examples (Jesus) and exhortations (Paul). I cannot explain it well, but there are times when I feel transported through the day on the prayers of God's people. It's like being carried by the river while going downstream in a kayak. I sense this particularly when I serve in situations of intensive ministry. What a blessing it is to realize God is answering the prayers of His people during those times!

In India our ministry partners tell us that the children we serve pray often for us. I thank God for their ministry to us through prayer. In North America we are blessed by other faithful prayer warriors. Among them is Esther Rempel, pictured above. Esther was one of MTC/Canada's first board members. More importantly, Esther is a committed person of prayer. Today, vibrant and delightful at age 95, she continues to pray faithfully for MTC and me.



*The children we serve often pray for us*

Do you feel hampered by health or other circumstances that seem to limit your involvement in worldwide ministry? Think again! Through prayer, you can participate in God's work instantly and distantly. Since God works through the prayers of His people, worship Him today by bringing Him your praise, thanks, and requests. You are able, and He is worthy.

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.

# COURAGE

## Conquering fear in order to assist others

### Esther (Esther 3-9)



When Xerxes was king of Persia, an evil man named Haman became second in command. All royal officials bowed before him—except one named Mordecai. Haman was furious with Mordecai, and since Mordecai was Jewish, hateful Haman plotted to destroy not only Mordecai, but all Jews in Persia on the same day.

The queen of Persia was a beautiful young woman named Esther. No one in the royal court knew she was Jewish—or that Mordecai was her uncle. Queen Esther was terrified by the news of Haman's wicked plan. What could she do? The king's law said anyone who approached the king uninvited would be killed unless the king lifted his golden scepter of mercy—and the king had not invited Esther for several weeks.

Mordecai told her to go to the king anyway and plead for the lives of her people. He reminded Esther that her life was already at risk even in the palace, since she was Jewish. Queen Esther was very frightened. But did God perhaps make her the queen especially for this moment of courage?

After begging God for safety, she dressed in royal robes and approached the king. He lifted his golden scepter and listened to her plea. Then King Xerxes agreed with his queen. The Jews were protected, their enemies were punished, and Mordecai became second to King Xerxes. Thousands of families were saved—because Esther conquered her fear and risked her life.

#### What Jesus Said About "Courage"

"The disciples were in trouble far away from land, for a strong wind had risen, and they were fighting heavy waves. About three o'clock in the morning Jesus came toward them, walking on the water. When the disciples saw Him walking on the water, they were terrified. In their fear, they cried out, 'It's a ghost!' But Jesus spoke to them at once. 'Don't be afraid,' He said. 'Take courage. I am here!' Then Peter called to Him, 'Lord, if it's really you, tell me to come to you, walking on the water.' 'Yes, come,' Jesus said. So Peter went over the side of the boat and walked on the water toward Jesus. But when he saw the strong wind and the waves, he was terrified and began to sink. 'Save me, Lord!' he shouted. Jesus immediately reached out and grabbed him. 'You have so little faith,' Jesus said. 'Why did you doubt me?'" (Matthew 14:24-31)

**Memory Verse:** "Have I not commanded you? Be strong and of good courage; do not be afraid, nor be dismayed, for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go." (Joshua 1:9)

#### Courage in Action

Evangelism requires courage. Outline and memorize the plan of salvation together, including scripture references. Role-play a presentation of the Gospel to each other.

#### Other Biblical Examples

Elijah (1 Kings 18:20-40)  
Stephen (Acts 7:1, 51-60)

#### Scripture References

- **Courage**  
Joshua 1:6-9  
2 Samuel 10:12  
2 Chronicles 15:8  
2 Chronicles 26:16-18  
Acts 4:13  
1 Corinthians 16:13

#### Courage Inspires:

- **Decisiveness**  
Romans 14:13  
2 Corinthians 9:7
- **Initiative**  
Ezra 7
- **Boldness**  
Proverbs 28:1  
Acts 4:31  
Acts 14:3  
Ephesians 3:12  
Philippians 1:19-21  
Hebrews 4:16

#### Lack of Courage

- **Fear**  
Deuteronomy 31:6  
Isaiah 35:4  
Matthew 14:25-33  
Mark 4:37-40  
Romans 8:15  
2 Timothy 1:7  
1 John 4:18

## Bearing the Fruit of Character – Part 3

Over the past two months, we have been sharing the testimonies of Indian youth who are bearing the fruit of character through CSI India. We pray that your joy will be multiplied and your faith strengthened by God's transforming work in their lives through the cultivation of Christlike character.

### CONVICTION

"Character Solutions has brought many changes in my life. In my past . . . I would not have confidence in anything. I was not a faithful person. I was really impressed and inspired by [Cultivating Character's story of the] eagle. He had a conviction to get food for his hungry family. No matter whatever situation or condition it was, he had the confidence. It taught me to be faithful and to have confidence in my life . . .

Abraham believed in God. When God told him to sacrifice his son, he trusted God, and he knew God would do what was best for him. I started having trust in God. Now I am having a good relationship with God."

– Pretisia, 16 years old

### COURAGE and KINDNESS

"I really thank God for letting me learn Character Solutions because I learned so many things . . .

Before, I was a really shy and fearing person, and as I have learned Character Solutions, I can see in myself that I'm improving of being bold . . . Also, I was really an unkind and impatient person, but Character Solutions taught me to be kind to others, and I know that somehow I'm changing my character. Also, I was a person who was really difficult to forgive others. It remains in my heart, but I have learned to forgive others and take everything easy . . . I'm so thankful to God and so happy."

– Inchineile, 12 years old

psalm 15:1-5

**i have a dream** that one day, no one will go hungry. That no child will be used for sexual exploitation, and no family will break apart. That those in power will truly care about the good of mankind, and not just their votes. That people will be known, not by their skin color, but by their **character**. That i will take responsibility and pledge, "The good starts with me." And **i believe, today i have the opportunity to be part of the solution.**

*(daydreams of over 220 million children, locally and abroad, living with the consequences of corruption)*

# #11922



**USA: Combined Federal Campaign #11922**

Tell your friends who are U. S. Federal civilian, postal, and military employees they can give to Mission to Children this fall through the CFC. Please use MTC's code #11922 when selecting a charity. MTC can be found in the Alpha Index or under Christian Service Charities. Thank you for your support.

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- A clear and strong commitment to evangelical Christianity
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- Adherence to strict standards