

Every Child Matters to God

God's Grace Foundation Quarterly Newsletter

June – August 2006



Hello Everyone

Welcome to this edition of every child matters to God. Thank you to everyone who attended the Southwark prayer campaign for children organised by GGF in February. As you joined us to release God's power to loose the bonds of

wickedness and undo heavy burdens, your light shall break forth like the morning and your healing shall spring forth speedily in Jesus name (Isaiah 58: 6 – 9). We cried unto the Lord for His light to shine in every darkness in the lives of children and young people living in Southwark. We also prayed for schools in Southwark and the proposed education reforms. We believe God that the education reforms that will be implemented will benefit the children and young people of the United Kingdom.

There is a great need to continue to pray for UK's education system - for God's will to be done and for righteousness to reign in our schools. I will also encourage all parents and guardians to ensure they attend their children's parents' evenings. This will enable you to know what is going on in the school and you will be made aware of any new developments that might affect your children.

The World Wide Day of Prayer for Children at Risk is an annual event co-ordinated by Viva Network with the aim of bringing together Christians around the world to pray for children at risk. Last year 1.2 million people took part in this event with many testimonies reported following the event. More information about Viva Network is available on their website (www.viva.org).

With an estimated one billion children suffering from extreme deprivation today, it is more vital than ever that we pray. We at God's Grace Foundation hereby invite you to join us as we participate in this event with brethrens from all around the world crying out as one for deliverance and help to reach every child at risk. Children are often in the news. Natural

disasters, conflict, food crises have happened more and more frequently in the last few years and children are the most vulnerable to their effects. UNICEF has called 2005 "an unprecedented year of emergencies for children". Alongside this, the AIDS pandemic is affecting an increasing number of people – 40.3 million are now living with HIV, and every minute of every day, a child dies of an AIDS-related illness (source: UNICEF).

In the midst of such apparent hopelessness, God promises to transform lives. Isaiah 61 says:

- 1 The Spirit of the Sovereign Lord is on me, because the Lord has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness for the prisoners,
- 2 to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour and the day of vengeance of our God, to comfort all who mourn,
- 3 and provide for those who grieve in Zion to bestow on them a crown of beauty instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, and a garment of praise instead of a spirit of despair. They will be called oaks of righteousness, a planting of the Lord for the display of his splendour."

Let us pray for God's good news to touch the lives of children at risk worldwide and remove their mourning and despair. As they receive His comfort, freedom, provision and gladness, their lives will display His splendour.

With Love and Best Wishes,
Dupe Makinde
Director, God's Grace Foundation

GGF Fun Day Saturday, 5 August 2006

You are invited to join us for a fun filled day of activities including a sponsored walk (or run!), raffle draw and lots more. All proceeds from the day will go towards the GGF Sponsorship Programme.

For more details call Bukky on 07960 829772

**Prayer Points for the Quarter:
Focusing on children at risk all over
the world.**

JUNE

Malnutrition in West Africa and the horn of Africa. Across West Africa, the countries of the Sahel - including Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania and Niger - are facing dangerously high levels of child malnutrition. Further east, the nomadic peoples of Somalia, Kenya and Ethiopia are also in danger, as drought has caused up to half of their herds to die. With their families' livelihoods so damaged, 40,000 children are now so malnourished that they could well die in the coming months.

- Please pray for enough rain to replenish water supplies, bringing good harvests and revived herds.
- Pray for those supporting these vulnerable communities - for sufficient resources to meet their needs and for long-term solutions preventing food crises in the future.

JULY

Decline in child labour

The number of child labourers has fallen considerably for the first time, according to a new International Labour Organisation report. Some 218 million are classified as child labourers, down 11% from 246 million in 2002. Numbers fell the most in Latin America, but there was little decline in Africa. The biggest reduction was amongst children working in hazardous environments - the number engaged in this work fell by 26%.

- Praise God for this change, and for the millions of children whose quality of life has improved so significantly in the last few years.
- Pray that governments would continue to demand better and safer conditions for young workers, and that poverty which forces children to work would decline.

AUGUST

Polio vaccination in Afghanistan

Afghanistan is one of just four countries in the world still affected by polio. Earlier in the year, Egypt was declared free of polio after successful immunisation campaigns.

- Praise God that a polio eradication drive has taken place in Afghanistan this month. More than two million children have been vaccinated, which should lead to an end to the virus in the country.
- Please pray for polio to be stamped out around the world. Pray that the last few nations would be able to vaccinate their children effectively to achieve this.

Grace Prayer Army

God has given us a mandate to mobilise prayer for children of the nations and He has called us to reach children from every race and background. Grace Prayer Army are a group of Christians from different churches who are committed to praying for children of the nations regularly. We issue prayer points for each month and meet on a quarterly basis to pray about issues affecting children and young people.

It is not for adults or women only because Joel 2: 28 says "And it shall come to pass afterward that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh; your sons and daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, young men shall see visions".

You need to be part of this army if you are called to reach children and young people. Prayer is the foundation for reaching any generation. If the foundation of a building is not well laid, the building will collapse. For further information and to join please email or call us.

Contact details at the back of this newsletter

Christian News

Escalating violence threatens the safety of Sri Lanka's children (May 2006)

Sri Lankan children in areas most affected by recent clashes are paying a high price for the escalating tension in the island. Thousands of children are still displaced from their homes following the recent violence in Trincomalee District, in which six children were killed and others injured or severely traumatized. UNICEF knows of at least nine children in other districts, including Jaffna and Vavuniya, who have been killed or injured in violent incidents. Some were victims of shooting, while others lost their lives from attacks using grenades or claymore mines.

Schools in many areas remain suspended because of insecurity or occupation by families who have fled their homes. Violence and insecurity have also forced hundreds of families to abandon their livelihoods increasing their vulnerability and dependence on humanitarian assistance. (Source: UNICEF)

PARENTING GOD'S WAY

By Pastor Banke Olowoyo

Concluding Part

If parents don't pray watchman prayers over their children, who will? And if we don't, the devil will gain territory in the garden of our children's lives.

We must be loaded with prayer always where our children are concerned. For this, we must

- be filled with the Holy Spirit and able to hear Him clearly (Ephesians 5:15-18)
- have a discerning heart
- know our authority in Christ and what His word says about our children (Col 3:16)
- not be unaware of the devils' strategies and subtleties (2 Corinthians 2:11)

Here are a few things we should pray for our children:

- That they be taught of God (Isaiah 54:13)
- Against the effects of peer pressure (Proverbs 1:10-15; Proverbs 3:7-8; 21-26; 31; Isaiah 59:21)
- That the word of God will dwell in them (Hebrew 8:11; Galatians 4:19)
- That they be sexually pure (Eph 5:3)
- That they will keep the right company (2 Corinthians 5:11; Proverbs 13:20)
- That they be godly (Isaiah 44:3-5)

Remember, if we don't watch and pray, we will lose ground to the enemy.

Communication

One way to ensure the preservation of our children's lives is to develop effective communication with them. We must seek to gain their confidence and trust or else communication will be one way – from the parent only!

There are many things that seek to gain the attention of our children's minds. How can we be aware of what our children know or are exposed to if we cannot communicate effectively with them? To foster good communication with our children, we should note the following points:

- Develop a good relationship with your children; spend quality time with them
- Pray with them and share testimonies of God's power, goodness and faithfulness with them. (Deuteronomy 6:6-9)
- Let your child know that you love them and have their best interest in mind

- Don't let your communication with your child always be negative, i.e. to discipline or rebuke only. Introduce some fun and positive things into your communication with your child.
- Be approachable. Don't be the 'big bad wolf' to your children!
- Do not provoke your children (Ephesians 6:4 AMP)
- Try and show interest in their interests
- Distinguish between childishness and wilful defiance and wickedness
- Learn to listen to your children and encourage them to express their views and feelings (whether you were allowed to do so when you were young or not!)
- Talk to your children about the facts of life, puberty and the changes this may bring.

Set Boundaries / Family Values

Children need boundaries or else they will run wild. As a Christian family, parents should establish rules, values or acceptable behaviour patterns for their home in accordance with the Word of God. These must be communicated effectively to the children and enforced consistently. The children must know where in the Bible these values are supported.

Examples of rules / values:

- Morning personal devotion (including prayer & bible reading)
- Strict bed times (especially for those under 16)
- Administer correction / discipline promptly and help them to know wrongdoing as sin (Proverbs 19:18; 20:30; 22:15; 23:13-14; 29:15,17,18)
- Do not spare your child when they do wrong (Proverbs 13:24; Hebrew 12:9-11)
- Good manners (the use of words like please and thank you)
- Respect of older people including their teachers!
- Not to talk back to parents when rebuked
- Not to tell lies
- Discourage children from borrowing personal items like clothing, caps, and gadgets from friends at school. They must be content with what they have
- No television before and after certain times

“Train up your child in the way that he should go; and when he is old, he will not depart from it.” Proverbs 22:6

Sponsorship Report

Coming to the end of the first academic year of GGF Sponsorship, we can report to all our sponsors (and sponsors to be) that it has been a great success. We have received letters of thanks from parents, teachers and messages from the children themselves of the tremendous change the sponsorship and support has had on their lives.

Many of the children currently been sponsored had already stopped attending school before the sponsorship commenced and it is indeed a testimony that every child matters to God that these children were found and brought back to school. Each child was bought new school uniform, school sandals and socks, school bag with textbooks and stationery needed for their school work. Most of the children also had poor health due to malnutrition, which affected their concentration in class, so the sponsorship also includes a cooked meal at lunchtime for each child.

We have to say a big thank you to GGF's Co-ordinator in Nigeria, Mrs Adeyemo, who oversees the whole sponsorship programme. She knows every child personally and has met with all the parents. She meets with the children's class teachers on a regular basis to get updates on their academic performance and meets with parents to encourage them to support the children at home and ensure that they do not miss school. She also meets with the children and offers them one-to-one counselling and provides any extra support and encouragement they need. For each child the sponsorship has brought to reality the truth that in God there is always hope.



The programme has been such a blessing that we have received reports from our Co-ordinator and the Head Teacher of the school we are currently working in urging and appealing to us to expand the programme to other schools so more children in need can benefit from it. We have students who are coming to the end of their primary school education and who can only progress to secondary education if the sponsorship continues. The Co-ordinator has received requests from Nigerians who are seeing the effects and results of the sponsorship programme so much so that they also want to give. It is indeed a testament of God's unconditional love for all His children and of His wish to see every child given the opportunity they deserve in life.

We pass on every message of gratitude and thanksgiving we have received to you all. We pass on every prayer for God to bless the work of your hands and for Him to enlarge your territory. We want to say from firsthand experience that there are great needs in our immediate community, nation and in the world as a whole. It is our responsibility to be our brothers and sisters keepers regardless of where they live. We, therefore, urge you all to open your heart and open your hands to embrace these children in need.

God's Grace Foundation was established in 2004 with a vision "to reach the children of the nations for Jesus" by meeting their spiritual, physical & social needs so that they can become all that God created them to be. We are an organisation that operates as a ministry in the kingdom of God. Our focus is to PRAY and engage DIVINE approach to tackle challenges that confronts children and young people in the larger society.

REACHING THE CHILDREN OF THE NATIONS FOR JESUS

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