

A GOD WHO CALLS

LIVING THE FAITH

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Following Jesus where the need is greatest

LOVE COMPLETELY

Jesus replied: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind." This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: "Love your neighbor as yourself." – Matthew 22:37-39

Isn't it interesting that God told us to love our neighbours? Why was that? Well, it's easy to dislike our neighbours! They start the lawn mower early on a Saturday morning. They play the music far too loud at night just when I'm about to fall asleep!

To love is not simply a challenge for the people that we like, or our family members. It is a challenge towards those who might be very different and even hard to understand. Jesus linked loving God with loving people.

But what does it mean to love completely? It means you're all in. Jesus said to love God with everything, and to love your neighbour as yourself. Now *that* is difficult. It means that our whole lives should be about love! It means changing our lifestyles, how we spend, and how we allocate our time.

At Tearfund, our calling is to serve people around the world where the need is greatest. To love them, and to love them completely. This is done by engaging in some of the ways highlighted on the adjacent page. Helping to see whole life transformation in the lives of individuals and in the rhythms of communities. Working with churches as they understand the neighbourhoods that God has called them to.

Let's ask God to help us display this profound love, knowing that He has lavished it upon us.

Many blessings and thanks,




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A HOLISTIC RESPONSE TO POVERTY

We believe that poverty is multi-dimensional, resulting from broken relationships with God, with ourselves, other people, and the wider creation. Therefore, our response to poverty is also multi-dimensional. Our "whole-life response" to poverty is comprised of five key areas:



FINANCIAL GIVING

Giving to help others is a biblical command and reflects what we value. God gives us good gifts so that we can bless others (2 Corinthians 9:11). The donations you generously provide are critical to the work we do.



TAKING PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY

But giving alone is only part of the picture. It is important to also take practical action through, for example, volunteering or giving non-financial goods that might help our neighbours – next door or around the world (James 2:14-16).



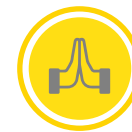
ADVOCACY

Alongside these things, the bible calls us to be advocates: speaking to governments, institutions and businesses to encourage and push for policies and practices that are just and work on behalf of the poor, instead of against them (Proverbs 31:8-9).



MAKING LIFESTYLE CHANGES

Underneath all of this is thinking about our own lifestyles and how to change our daily actions and habits so that they show love for other people and God's creation, and reflect His majesty (Colossians 3:17; Revelation 4:11).



PRAYING FOR THOSE IN NEED

The foundation of all these endeavours is prayer. Prayer is how we grow our relationship with God and make His desires our desires. We rely on God knowing we are incapable of solving these issues by ourselves. At Tearfund, we have seen great things done through prayer (1 John 5:14).

POVERTY, DISASTER AND A WHOLE-LIFE

RESPONSE

By Matthew Schroeder



This April, Cyclone Idai hit the coast of Mozambique causing unprecedented flooding affecting nearly 1 million people and displacing more than 125,000 in Mozambique, Malawi and Tanzania. Continuous heavy rain caused torrents of water that demolished roads and bridges and swallowed up entire communities. Youngson Palibendipo, a church-planter we know in Mozambique, described the scene days after the cyclone Idai hit:

"Most of the houses, businesses and warehouses were destroyed and items stolen. Many people have accumulated in schools and unfinished houses that are empty. In some cases, you will find one house with over 10 families inside. And the people keep coming. I personally have 43 people in my home. We have run out of the food I had – it is finished."

Thanks to generous churches and people like you, we are able to provide people with emergency food and seeds. In partnership with World Renew and our local church partners, we are helping to provide over 2,514 families (approx. 10,258 people) with 50kg of maize flour, 10kg of beans and 2L of cooking oil every month from April to August. We are also providing seeds to help them re-plant their crops.

When natural disasters strike, it's the poor who are hardest hit. Because they do not have the finances or resources that wealthier people have, they don't have anywhere else to go, and no savings to help rebuild. After immediate relief, an important part of helping is to support them with "resilience building" – which helps people restore their livelihoods and be better prepared the next emergency.

But this is becoming more challenging, due to an increase in the number and severity of weather-related disasters. For example, in Ethiopia (where we have been working for over 30 years), drought used to occur, on average, once a decade. Now it is once every four years. Major drought is more common than ever.

SIMPLY PUT, THIS MEANS PEOPLE ARE NOT ABLE TO RECOVER FROM THE LAST DISASTER BEFORE THE NEXT ONE STRIKES.

Four short weeks after Cyclone Idai, Cyclone Kenneth battered Mozambique and Malawi with more rain; causing intense distress on already flooded villages. As I write, Cyclone Feni – the strongest cyclone to hit India within the last 20 years – has just destroyed over 1,000 homes and submerged entire villages.

Thank you for your faithful donations and prayers. They are absolutely critical to helping bring emergency aid and the Good News to the poor.

But what more can we do when considering a "whole-life response" to poverty?

SOME IDEAS FOR A WHOLE LIFE-RESPONSE



Taking Personal Responsibility: whether it is helping fill sandbags in Ontario or calling others to donate, volunteering your time can help in significant ways.



Advocating: Let the government know you care about the poor abroad and want them to provide support to Christian organizations like Tearfund and the Canadian Foodgrains Bank. Push governments to create laws that help the poor instead of hurt them.



LifeStyle Changes: Consider how your personal actions might affect the poor. Does the way you live reflect God's justice, His care for the poor, and steward His creation?



Food distributions to Cylone Idai funded by your generous donations. (Photo: ACT Natalia Jidovanu-Finn Church Aid)

HE WHISPERED, WILL YOU HELP US START A CHURCH HERE?"

By Wayne Johnson

Last month I travelled to Liberia to meet some of our local partners and to see the new church-based community project. We traveled down a paved road for a number of hours, then a dirt road for a few more. At the end of the dirt road and down the narrow path was a small village. In this village there are only 42 families. All Muslims.

There, I saw how difficult life in the village is. The Ebola outbreak which ravaged their community only a few short years ago and – killing 11 people – burns in their memories. I met a nine-year-old boy, Alusine, whose parents were two of those who died. After they died he became the 6th child in his Aunt's house. But now... she died last week. What does the future hold?

But there is hope. For the first time in recent memory, someone has taken an interest in this village. They are not providing handouts. Instead they are training the families on how to grow more vegetables for food and to sell in the market; in contrast to relying on the "slash and burn" method of palm oil harvesting.



For the first time, hope is being restored in this village. Plans are being made to care for orphans like Alusine, whose parents died from Ebola.

I was encouraged because I could literally see hope being restored. With the first harvests there was great joy. Everything they took to market was sold. Plans were being made to care for their community's orphans. Orphans like Alusine.

Then they asked, "Why? Why are you doing this?"

THIS SMALL MUSLIM COMMUNITY HEARD A HUMBLE ANSWER FROM OUR PARTNERS. "WE FOLLOW JESUS."

Then a few hours later the community leader asked quietly, "Will you help us start a church here?"

"Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? 39 When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?' "The King will reply, 'Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.'

- Matthew 25:37- 40

EXPAND GOD'S KINGDOM THROUGH VOLUNTEERING

Are you looking for a way to use your skills and abilities for God's kingdom? Tearfund offers many exciting volunteer opportunities that will make a substantial difference in the lives of the poor.

Visit: tearfund.ca/join-the-team/

LIVES TRANSFORMED E-NEWSLETTER

Many of our supporters have expressed their love of our new email newsletter: *Lives Transformed*. Sent monthly, it features incredible stories, answers to your questions, devotionals and exclusive news. What are you waiting for?

Sign-up today: tearfund.ca/newsletter-signup

A FINAL EXPRESSION OF LOVE

How do you want to be remembered? For many, leaving a legacy gift or bequest is their final way of expressing what is important to them. It is an incredible way to do something life changing for so many living in poverty.

To inquire about legacy giving please call Wayne at: 416-707-9066

PRAY WITH US

Prayer is an incredible privilege. An opportunity to talk intimately to the Creator of the Universe and call Him "Abba" Father. At Tearfund we rely on prayer to accomplish the work that Jesus has called us into; for guidance, wisdom, and resources. But we don't do so alone.

We are thankful for the hundreds of donors, supporters and friends who take the time to pray for us every day. It means so much to us and is critical to what we do.

And we want to pray for you as well. The scriptures tell us repeatedly to pray for each other – to advocate on behalf of one another and collectively go to the Father. In March, we asked you for your prayer requests and got many, and our team prayed for them throughout the month of April. It was such an encouragement that we want to keep it going.



JOIN OUR PRAYER FAMILY

As a member, you will get prayer requests from us on a monthly basis and have a team praying for you. It is the body of Christ, coming together, to our Father.

To join our prayer family, or submit a request
email: pray@tearfund.ca or call 905 - 415 - 8181 ext 209.

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