

May 2004

You may have been quite startled to hear a description Jesus gave to the American or first-world church in the vision of Feed the Hungry. In the vision, Jesus refers to a parable in the bible (Luke 16:19-31), to describe many in the first-world church as characterised as luxurious self-indulgence, indifferent to those around them.

In comparison, people in the third-world can spare little thought for indulgences. They do not dare waste energy on dreams. Each day brings only a slender chance they can endure another. They are locked into a cycle that brings their life spiralling down to a deadly consequence.

Sometimes the comparison to the parable is sadly, very apt for the first-world church. We tend to get sidetracked into detours and the cul-de-sacs of life. We fuss when someone forgets our birthday. We are perturbed over the price of petrol. We fidget when the church service goes longer than expected. We complain, we whine, and we fear anything that might affect any of our little indulgences. And yet our brothers and sisters in the third world often spend every waking moment just trying to survive.

The vision of Feed the Hungry seeks to demonstrate the practical love of God. To remind the third-world church that God hears their prayers. To show the world that true love does exist. Feeding the hungry gives us the opportunity to preach the good news to people who haven't encountered this loving God before. To reach someone Jesus compares to as the beggar, who resorts to relying on the crumbs of others.

Another familiar parable told and retold in many churches is that of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:29-37). We often hear the story and we are exhorted to take every opportunity to help our neighbour and be like the good Samaritan. Imagine the story from another perspective.

Imagine living in a third-world area. Imagine being the traveller in the story. Imagine being brought up in a Muslim home or a Buddhist home or another religion. Imagine finding yourself beaten, robbed and left for dead on the side of the road.

You discover that clerics from your religion are disinterested. You are dismayed to learn that other members from your community are hesitant to get involved or to lend a helping hand. When suddenly one of those hated Christian arrives on the scene.

Instead of spitting and delighting in your plight as you expected – the Christian, with compassion and tenderness, binds your wounds. The detestable foe anoints you with healing balms from their own supply. This symbol of everything you loathe lifts you to their bosom and transports you to a place of rest, provision and safety.

As your world turns upside down, the love of God is able to cut through the fog of distraction around you. It is a life-changing experience because when every natural strength is exhausted, all flesh will turn and acknowledge the Saviour God.



Founder
Lester F Sumrall
1913 – 1996

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It is no wonder that Dr. Sumrall proclaims:

“... millions will see the love of the church and the love of God in the church and they will turn to themselves and say:

We don't want to be Buddhist's any longer;

We don't want to be Shintoists any longer;

We don't want to be Hindus any longer;

We don't want to be Muslims any longer;

We don't want to be Animists any longer;

We want to follow the principles of the savior of the world, the Lord Jesus!

And so you begin to feed the hungry and it ends up with them receiving the bread of life and millions will be in heaven because of the [Feed the Hungry] program...”

We tend to take for granted ordinary things that for many people in the third world would be considered luxuries. Almost every international traveller will remark how blessed we are to live in this nation. Ephesians says that God chose us before the foundation of the world. First Corinthians explains that we all have a part to play. I urge you not take God's blessings for granted and to heed the call of Jesus and share the blessings He has provided.

*“I don't want my church, my people, to die of hunger...
In the first world there is plenty and to spare, and they must share.”*

Words of Jesus, Excerpt from the Vision

Field Report Update

Offerings to LeSEA Global Feed the Hungry have contributed to the current food distribution in Zimbabwe, and shipments are currently enroute to Mozambique and Swaziland. Three 20-foot containers (90'000 pounds of food) will arrive in Mozambique, and three more in Swaziland all arriving in June. These are much needed outreaches. A recent update I received from our International office indicated that 65% of children attending school only receive one meal every other day in Swaziland. Please continue to pray for these outreaches that the shipments will arrive safely, intact and without delays. Upcoming outreaches will be held in the Ukraine, Cambodia and Rwanda.

Up-to-date information can always be found at www.feedthehungry.org. At the time of writing, you can view the 2003 Year End report video online, and read two reports on outreaches we've completed. Take a moment to visit the site and sign up for the email alerts which will become active in the coming weeks.

Please do not hesitate to contact the office, we welcome your feedback, comments, and requests for agreement in prayer.

In His Service,



Benjamin Evans

Operations Manger, Australia & New Zealand

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*Jesus asks “... which of these three do you think proved to be a neighbour to the man who fell into the robber's hands?”
And the lawyer replied, “The one who showed mercy toward him.” And Jesus said to him, “Go and do the same.” **Luke 10:29-37***