



Heartland International Ministries

Winter 2023

NEW STORIES START HERE



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ROCK STANDING



Byron Whetstone
Executive Director

Dear Friends of H.I.M.,
The upcoming Christmas season is always a great time to reflect on the year just ending. This year in 2023 we saw major movement in the mission/ministry around the world. We have also been tragically humbled by the very real geo-political landscape and the biblical foreshadowing of these events that have kept us at prayer for Israel, for Ukraine, for the forced migrations from Pakistan back to Afghanistan, for the conflicts elsewhere where

Christian people are being persecuted at exceptionally high levels. In Matthew 24, that Savior Jesus Christ, whose birth we celebrate at Christmas, is sitting with his Disciples and they begin to ask Jesus about what will happen at the "end of days".

And you will hear of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not alarmed, for this must take place, but the end is not yet. For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, and there will be famines and earthquakes in various places. All these are but the beginning of the birth pains. Matthew 24:6-8

Now more than ever in my life has there been a MORE PROFOUND reason to point to the words of Jesus when I see the world on a global meltdown. The escalation of and the deterioration of human dignity has never been more challenging. As you read these stories about women being raped as they transport water from faraway sources to child exploitation and trafficking, and when we realize that women are being violated for monetary gain, the underbelly of darkness and evil we address is becoming too real. Again, thinking of these amazing, troubling times and the celebration at Christmas, friends our Hope is in the Sovereign Lord Jesus Christ, that is the only HOPE FOR THE WORLD. As we celebrate the Christmas season with the joy of loving families, great food and presents to those we care about, please consider a year-end gift to H.I.M. as we continue to offer solutions that provide human dignity and meet the darkness with the light of the Gospel message, until Jesus returns in majesty. Blessings to you all and as always.

To God Be the Glory

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Byron Whetstone".

Byron Whetstone, Executive Director

***"And the angel
said to them, "Fear
not, for behold,
I bring you good
news of great joy
that will be for all
the people. For
unto you is born
this day in the city
of David a Savior,
who is Christ
the Lord."***

Luke 2:10-11



RICHARD J BRINGS AWARENESS TO INDIA

Most of the villages in our area of northwest India, are located inside the forest and there are so many mountains all around. There is a strong influence of local extremist organizations. Those extremists take the girls and boys from their homes and force them to go with them. They are forced into prostitution and other types of wrong things. They are taken to the metro cities to be sold. That is why so many parents send their children somewhere (like orphanages) to keep them safe. The traffickers prey on poor communities and lure parents by promising them a job for their children. Due to greed and poverty, parents allow their children to go with those people. Most of the villagers here are illiterate and poor and do not have money.

Recently, a young girl named Seema was saved from child traffickers. By the grace of God Seema was saved by our



local police after two weeks of being captive by traffickers. She was found in Siliguri, a tourist city in West Bengal. She is now staying with one of our pastors, Pastor Peter. Seema, like many young girls, has problems within her family. Her mother has passed away and her father, who is a heavy drinker, married another woman who does not want Seema in the house. She became easy prey for the traffickers.

My ministry has an awareness program for the poor and unreached villages. I travel with our church youth to help

them explain to the parents and children what happens to their children when they are taken. We have arranged an anti child trafficking campaign in villages and the village schools. We give them books, handouts, food, and snacks in their school bags. We teach them that they should never go anywhere with anyone. We also give information to the parents about how bad people can do great harm to their children.



We are so encouraged to reach out to the lost people. We have reached 10 more villages, and I am trying to equip more leaders to help. The sewing school that we created to equip the young girls with a skill is going well. They come 3 times a week for training. This livelihood will help pull families out of poverty and prevent children from being taken.

Please pray for my ministry. Please pray for the field where we share the Gospel.



ALBERT AIDS IN PROVIDING SAFE DRINKING

Even though Nigeria is the most populated country in Africa, there are over 70 million people that don't have access to safe drinking water! Despite its growing youthful population and being a leading oil exporting nation, the poverty rate of its citizens is one of the highest in the world. Many families live on less than \$1 a day.

The living conditions in the rural villages are dreadful and the women in those communities are most affected. They are among the extremely poor and face untold hardships due to violent conflicts and the lack of necessities like food, water, clothing, and shelter. They labor many hours farming to produce food and walk long distances to provide water for their families. Girls in these rural



communities are easy targets for human trafficking. As they walk long distances to access water, they are often sexually abused, kidnapped, and sold

into prostitution rings or taken to work in cities as house slaves for the rich. Our church family in Nigeria has started an advocacy program to fight for the rights of women and children. Mobilizing the Christian community, they are creating awareness of the dangers faced by women and girls in rural villages. We are mounting pressure on the authorities to help rescue the girls forcefully taken.

With the help of Heartland International Ministries, we are responding to this basic and fundamental need of providing borehole water wells in urban and rural communities in Nigeria. This year, 11 water wells were dug and/or repaired in villages across seven states in northern Nigeria. This water project has



WATER TO UNDERSERVED AREAS IN NIGERIA

already provided clean water to more than 27,000 people in over 1,000 households. Water was provided to the Bible Heritage School along with the construction of bathrooms for the boys and the girls. Schools, churches, and widow centers have benefited from the clean water project. Entire communities have been transformed! As the news of our work to bring water

to underserved communities spread, other villages and organizations began reaching out to us asking for help to bring water to their communities. With our current funding, we will be able to provide 9 additional wells and boreholes, but more is needed.

H.I.M. is poised to make a significant impact in the lives of thousands by providing safe

drinking water across Nigeria. Our goal is to improve the quality of life and share the love of Jesus through our water well and livelihood projects. We hope to raise money for additional water projects and livelihood/training programs for women. Helping women learn a skill or start a business will provide them the opportunity to rise above poverty.



SURENDRA FIGHTS HUMAN TRAFFICKING

I began my journey of fighting human trafficking after hearing many stories from a Christian friend of mine working in Mumbai, India as a rescue worker. He would always share with me the graphic details of the miserable plight of the girls in the brothels out there and I would be greatly moved. Most of these girls were trafficked into Mumbai, the biggest red-light zone of India, Nepal, and Bangladesh. Since Nepalese girls are naive and gullible, they often fall prey to the traffickers who promise them lucrative job offers in India. Sometimes, these unfortunate girls are even married by the traffickers to be sold into

prostitution. To force these girls into prostitution, they go through untold torture such as gang rape, starvation, brutal beatings etc. until they give in. The stories of the gross injustice and evil perpetrated to these hopeless girls are what inspired me to join Tiny Hands Nepal ten years ago. The organization monitored the India - Nepal borders to intercept the vulnerable girls from being trafficked since India-Nepal is an open border. Any naive girl crossing the border means her world has crumbled. So, intercepting these girls and sending them back home means saving them from the irreparable loss they would end up in. Every

month, we would get the success stories of intercepting many girls from 13 and above.

I heard many in-depth stories of the girls intercepted. Poverty, lack of education, family problems were some of the top reasons the girls found themselves in the situation. The traffickers would go from village to village looking for the poverty-stricken families in which the girls would be burdensome for the parents. The parents in the remote villages consider the girls to be a burden and they are unfairly treated. Taking advantage of this situation, the traffickers allure the parents saying a bright future is awaiting their daughters somewhere. This



IN POVERTY STRICKEN VILLAGES IN NEPAL

is one of the evil strategies of traffickers!

I oversaw the border monitoring work of almost 100 staffers at the India – Nepal border. My responsibility was to visit the borders and encourage, equip, and lead the staff to make them more effective workers. As the years went by, I faced many challenges and hardships including despair and depression at times as the job was extremely overwhelming. There were times when we would receive threat calls from the traffickers. There came a time when I had to take some time off. I prayed to God asking if I should continue in this direction or if there was a different path for me.

Not long after, I received a request to translate the Kingstone Graphic Bible into Nepali Language. This was the beginning of my new direction! I began translating other Christian books into the Nepali language which have impacted many lives. I distribute these books to many people in remote villages for free! They are in continual demand. I realized that a book could go where a preacher can't go! The impact is exponential. Praise God! I travel to the villages to encourage the small flocks and speak to the young girls and



parents about the dangers of traffickers. I am also working as a Sunday School teacher in charge of about 80 students. I feel more like a spiritual father to these children.

I have two co-workers, Lucky and Prakash. Lucky shares the Gospel to hundreds of people each week in the streets of Nepal. Prakash is saving people in a health crisis by reaching them and distributing medicine and necessary health supplies to the far-

flung villages. We have been imagining how we can help save the Nepalese churches from being shut down in the face of growing Hindu hostility against Christians. We have initiated giving them legal counseling on how they can register their churches as a "Religious Trust". This is how the Lord is enabling us to impact the body of Christ we never thought we would be so privileged to do so. All the glory to God alone!





Hope for the World.



Pray for Action.

Pray for Prevention.



Pray for Protection.



Give the Gift of HOPE!



FROM FRED'S HEART

TRUST in 2024

As I leaned out of the side door of a C-141 military jet or hung off the side of a Huey helicopter, the wind would blast my face and body. I had to trust something to jump out...into mid-air! I was trusting a parachute for my life! Trust is a serious thing. The Bible says Trust in the Lord with all your heart...and goes on from there to say trust him with the first fruits of all your increase. *Proverbs 3*

Of the many issues, priorities, and heart concerns that brought Byron Whetstone and I together, there was a trust for the life of H.I.M. and even my own life and family and relationships, it was trust. There were so many keys and realities that I handed over completely to Byron because we had a common heartbeat for the Lord. Trust Trust Trust! Byron and I both have experienced a passionate revelation of giving. Giving. Especially giving our first fruits to the Lord. First fruits, first fruits, first fruits. Yes, you give God the first of everything. I love that about Byron. Like Gods firstborn son, like the first

fruits from our will or estate, salary, bonuses, income, apple trees, tomatoes, insurance settlements, surprise income. The tithing of property is so radical, it is so exciting. Barb and I have on our life insurance, the first beneficiary as H.I.M.. I'm smiling because God loves a hilarious giver. *2 Cor 9:7*

Of course, the devil has abused and perverted these biblical principles with so many wacko churches and preachers. But God forbid we throw the baby out with the bathwater! Trusting in the Lord and giving H.I.M. all our first fruits is always a holy and heavenly thing. I'm smiling again, knowing this is a secret of the greatest intimacy with the Lord Himself. This is never "legalism", but rather love. Love has a motive so much greater, so much higher than legalism. Our relationship with the Lord generates intense love and devotion, amen. Trust in him with all your heart and lean not to your own understanding but in all your ways acknowledge him and he will direct your path. And he will provide. He will

bless, hallelujah, what a Savior! Let's trust him more than ever before in 2024! Trust him more in 2024!

With a strong and growing Board of Directors, a growing number of indigenous partners, growing opportunities to build communities that raise human dignity and prevent exploitation of women and children. Using the biblical thinking to spread the love of God instead of hate. Is that not what we all want to be part of? For over 23 years, we have been laying a solid foundation of administration, organization, and trust for the eternal business of H.I.M.. The infrastructure, accountability, (ECFA) wisdom, relationships, history, experience, systems, etc. etc. provide for all of us one of the greatest places to invest financially and do something that is eternal! Missions are always the sign of a healthy believer and a healthy church. Let me say that again, H.I.M. is one of the greatest places you can invest in eternity.

**Hallelujah – praise the Lord
let's do more in 2024!**



***"Trust in him with all your heart and
lean not to your own understanding
but in all your ways acknowledge him
and he will direct your path."***



GIFTS FROM THE HEART

There are times in this life's journey when words cannot express the feelings of our heart. A gift was made in thoughtful memory of or in honor of the special loved ones & friends. Please contact our office if you would like to honor your loved ones.

In Memory Of



JIM BALES

DON BROWN

TODD GRAHAM

RODD GRAHAM

BOB GERHART



RAY HILDABRAND

RICK MORTENSEN

RAY MURRAY



AUSTIN PHILLIPS

SKIP PHELPS

ERLINDA REYES

TONY REYES

J.C. RIDDLE

RICHARD "DICK" STEPHENS

GEORGE VERWER

WALT WALCOTT



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YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

The Pillar of Promise Fund

This fund was created to ensure the financial stability of Heartland International Ministries. Our goal of \$1,000,000 to sustain the commitment to our pillars of Sharing the Gospel, Building Communities, and Doing Good Work will allow the work of H.I.M. to carry on for decades to come.

Funding Initiatives

We provide immediate and critical funding around the world. Our funding supports orphanages and schools, delivers emergency aid, launches livelihood projects, and helps with mission/church planting. All to make an impact and advocate for human dignity.

Education – Support for education will help schools, orphanages, and scholarships across the globe. It is vital to building better communities.

Livelihood – Support for livelihoods will help start businesses that support ministries, families, and the needs of the global community.

Mission and Church Planting – Support for Mission/Church Planting advances the Gospel in the unreached and impoverished nations around the world.

Disaster Relief – Support for disaster relief helps meet the physical & spiritual needs of others during times of crisis. It is one of our most immediate priorities.



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