

A Christmas Focus

by Dr. Terry Lewis



This Christmas finds the world in turmoil again. The U.S. is embroiled in election issues that could tear the nation apart. A pastor in Steinbach, Manitoba was fined for preaching during a Covid lockdown. While churches are locked down bars and planes are often packed with people. There are conflicting medical opinions by medical experts around the world and media censors any opinions contrary to the Government's narrative removing "free speech" which is a basic requirement for a democracy. It is impossible to have peace without truth. How does one make sense of 4.5 million people in the world that will die of starvation this year that good be saved with food when we worry about a virus that has a 99% survival rate? The number of deaths by Covid is a very small percentage of babies intentionally slaughtered by a taxpayer funded process. It is a known fact that governments can control people by fear and it is working even though the numbers of overall deaths have not been increasing if you compare age groups with previous years. The snitch lines developed in Manitoba are similar to Cuba and if you want to see how fear divides the people against each other try and go into a store without a mask.



That is the bad news—what is the good news. Let us focus on some biblical concepts. The first concept that Jesus exemplified is that He took his eyes off the immediate and looked beyond Hebrews 12:2. The apostle Paul who experienced much suffering for the gospel knew this concept Romans 8:18-23. You can set a camera to focus on either something close of something far and what it is focused on will be clear. So, the first question I have for us is where is our focus. If it is stuck on the present you may be experiencing fear and being overwhelmed. If it is focused beyond the immediate tells you that you have hope—especially if you know Jesus then you will know love. Also, just as the sun is 400x bigger than the moon and yet the moon looks bigger to us because it is 400x closer to us so also, how big your God is depending upon how close you are.

The second concept is to focus on the things that last and endure. "Seek first" (focus) Matthew 6:33 tells us and begs the question as to what are we "seeking first". Paul tells us in 2 Corinthians 4:16-18, "...So we fix our eyes (focus) not on what is seen, but what is unseen, since what is seen is temporal, but what is unseen is eternal". Read the whole passage. When I focused on the news and the restrictions and the losses of freedom even to worship in church my focus was on the temporal which does not last. When I wept over the abortions I realized that each of those children are in heaven with a Father that loves them. When I see freedoms taken away to worship and live as I had I am reminded of those who for generations who have suffered under oppressive governments and still had joy in their hearts. Even this life is so temporary and yet we hang onto it as if it is all there is. Jim Elliot who was martyred by the Auca Indians who he went to share the love of Christ with once said, "He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep to gain what he cannot lose."

The third concept is to invest your life into the eternal that does not perish (Matthew 6:19,20; Mark 8:36). Are you building a legacy that perishes or is consumed after you are gone or a legacy that endures through eternity? Scripture is full of promised rewards for a variety of behaviours, sometimes referred to as "works" that will be tried by fire. That is quite a test. ***The only thing that we can take to heaven are the lives that we have allowed God to reach through us.*** How we doing by that standard? You do not have to be a "professional" missionary to impact the lives of others with your acts of kindness, prayers, encouragement, resources and friendship. To those of us in the northern hemisphere who have been given much of what this world has to offer in education, resources, comforts, and opportunities we must understand the requirements of Luke 12:48.

In a couple of weeks, I hope to send you the results of a project in an area of Cuba. I challenged them to a contest in which each one who participates by writing a 500-word essay would receive \$10. There were two groups. A group of 30 students and graduates of Teen Challenge who would write on a true story of God's amazing grace. A second groups of 20 extremely poor missionary families would write on what they would like for Christmas as a family. There would be 3 winners in each category and I can hardly wait to read them and send them to you. Enclosed is our Missionary Christmas Prayer Card for your fridge with the 2021 Calendar on the back. On the back of this letter I list several areas for prayer and for financial support. Finally, let me express our appreciation for all you are doing with us as God leads. May the Lord fill your hearts and lives with the Joy Christmas gives to all mankind as a gift from God.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Terry Lewis". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping underline.

AFRICA

- Togo:** Lewis was able to complete over 200 cataract surgeries this year. The extra 50 surgeries left them \$6k short and they are praying that God would supply that deficit. Pray for Lewis and Naomi as they lead this ministry and the African team they work with providing physical and spiritual sight.
- Ethiopia:** War in the north with the Communist party and an intense feud with Egypt over a hydro dam and abject poverty with the Ethiopian Jews along with the discipleship of new Muslim converts needs prayer and help. Pray for Berhanu and his Ethiopian team as they seek to work under the restrictions of Covid regulations as people are starving and dying without Christ.
- Rwanda:** Genocide of an entire tribe is systematically being carried out with little to stop them. Every tribe is claiming to be Christian and this shows the difference between religion and relationship. Need prayer and finances. Pray for Joseph as his tribe is facing genocide and no one is seeking to prevent it. Sadness prevails over the losses.



Caribbean

- Haiti:** Our team keeps on growing as the ministry and needs expand. Please pray for Namphy and his team as they seek to feed families that are starving and reach them with the gospel. Alix is recovering from back surgery and experiences a fair amount of pain at times. Giving food or money would create riots so our Haitian team provides a fair amount of work to several families who we pay and then they can feed their families.
- Dominican:** Covid has caused us to take the school to the students and we cycle our teachers to various areas to bring the lessons to smaller components of our student body. We also bring food for the children depend on us.
- Honduras:** Check out the Special Report for your prayer and giving.
- Cuba:** Terry and Brian oversee the work here using several teams in different locations. The teams get food to the elderly, sick, single parents, and the extremely impoverished. They also help rebuild and clean up with the people whose homes and crops have been demolished by hurricanes. Everything now is directed to and through the teams we had already trained on previous trips. Our heart aches for the people.



Behind the European Communist Curtain: I wish I could show you the faces of the children in the orphanage where we were able to provide boots, parkas and other warm clothing. To protect our ability to be able to continue to help them I have to be careful how much I can share. Through some Christian churches in the area we were able to minister to their emotional and spiritual needs.



Canada

Winnipeg: We have two operations with one specifically functioning just in December and the other one all year. John Mark leads the December operations. They provide food and clothing for the homeless. Many of these have mental challenges and fall through the social safety nets. We provide parkas, blankets, long johns, socks, toques, etc. and food hampers according to the needs. Pastor John Philips leads a year-round ministry to the prostitutes and homeless in downtown Winnipeg. The needs are very similar but we focus on a slightly different clientele and take the help to them rather than depending on them to come to us.



SPECIAL HONDURAS REPORT: Hurricane ETA & IOTA Nov 2020



On Nov 5, 2020 brought to my memory of the time recorded in the book, ***The Sound of Hope—the Ernesto Pinto Story***, when I was challenged by what I had just learned in Bible school now had to put in to practice: *When he and some friends from Church heard about how a Hurricane ripped through the Coast of Honduras they decided to bring food and mattresses to help however they could. Going from door to door, he*

approached one of the homes, and noticed water moving in and out. He knocked at the door and a little girl came. Ernesto asked where was her mother. She replied to him "My mother is in bed very sick and can't get up. Ernesto noticing water all over the floor became overwhelmed as he had seen so much hurt and now seeing these little kids with a sick mother and no one to help them he broke down and began to cry. While assisting this family cleaning the water from their home and stopping more from coming in he asked God—you see how these people are suffering. Why aren't you doing anything? Then he heard God speak to his heart, I'm doing something—I sent you. (Chapter 12)

Today, Ernesto had a flashback with all those memories that he's been re-living during the past 3 weeks. It started when Hurricane ETA devastated the North Coast of Honduras on Nov 5, 2020 and while people were trying to recover and start cleaning their homes a second Hurricane IOTA, hit them again on Nov 17. This time it affected most of the country, flooding higher than the first time. Some of the houses where covered in water reaching the roof of the houses.

Our dear city of La Lima; the city we love and saw as we grew up and our parents worked in all their lives until they retired They taught us to love our city, that is demolished as a flood zone. Even though we are not there, our heart hurts to see our people experience such calamity. How can we support these people? We asked God to show us the way. We felt led to contact some of the pastors that are serving by going to shelters, providing food, water, cloth, mattresses, blankets. Our friend Doctor Josue and his wife Doctor Marisela and the clinic team that they lead, have been attending the people and offering medical assistance and medication.



One of the stories that Doctor Josue shares is about Dulce Maria, a little girl that with her mom and siblings are staying on the street under a tarp. This is what he shares; *Yesterday we approached this family to support them since they are sleeping in the open but someone who captivated us, broke our hearts and made a lump in our throats was that this girl with a beautiful smile approached us and said "look we are with my little brothers playing house, look, look, that's my little house ", undoubtedly learning to have a smile like this little girl's teaches us that we have to learn to cope despite adversity ... God bless her ... we pray that we find a place for them. Doctor Josue continue to visit these families making sure they are doing ok and he writes; We visit 3 families that God has put in our hearts to be aware of them, with mattresses, clothes, food, toys, water etc..., they live in a tent at the entrance to Rivera Hernandez, pitifully they have not wanted to move from there to a shelter, even in the midst of their needs always greet us with a smile and gratitude in their hearts.... Dulce that translated means (Sweet Maria) always*



smiles at us and still thinks she's playing house with her new toys... Without a doubt we always come out more blessed by giving than by receiving... GOD BE GLORY.



I am also working together with Pastor Roberto from La Lima providing the essential food Rice and Beans that he's giving to other Pastors that are making meals to take to people in shelters and on the Street and mattresses to give to people that is sleeping on the floor in shelters. Pastor Miguel y Jackie Gaido, from El Progreso Yoro have opened a communal Feeding center to offer everyone who needs food to come and have a warm meal we are supporting him with groceries.



Marina and I would like to thank every one of you that has generously supported us personally, as we also experienced damage in our ministry house in Honduras and to our ministry to enable us to serve the Lord and help our brothers and sisters in need. We appreciate that you continue to pray for our country and our people as it was still raining as of Nov 23 2020. We wish you that the Blessings from the Lord continue to shower on you in abundantly. Blessings. Ernesto & Marina Pinto. Nov 2020

You can donate Shares to CEO Avoid Capital-Gains Tax

C.E.O. Ministries is now able to accept and process "shares". For instance, in a recent transaction someone donated \$20,000 in shares to the ministry. They invested \$10,000 and earned another \$10,000 on their investment. If they were to cash-in and receive the \$20,000 they would have to pay taxes on the interest they gained. But, when they donated their shares to CEO Ministries they received a tax-deductible receipt for \$20,000. In this way they were able to invest in ministry rather than pay taxes on the money. This is good stewardship of the resources God has given us.

Automatic Withdrawals: Saves time, postage, and memory loss???

You do not have to worry about missing a contribution if you are supporting a particular missionary and feeding programme. Using the card provided you can direct your contribution as the Lord leads and stipulate when you want to have it withdrawn from your account. You can stop the process simply by notifying the ministry. As you prayerfully seek God's leading for you and your family in this next year does He want you to make a commitment to a particular ministry to intercede in prayer and financially support. None of us can do everything but we all can do something within the boundaries of what God supplies.

**We are a Team... Empowering Ministries to ...
Reach the Lost, Revive the weak, Rescue the fallen,
Restore the broken, Reconcile the offended, Release the Discipled**

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