

# Southeast Caribbean Dispatch

January 2010

Blessings and prayers for all this New Year. Here are some thoughts for your New Year. I call it, *Almost* doesn't count for Christians.

Sometimes, it's tempting to count the "almost" in life. The missed shots or dropped passes may not tally on sports scoreboards, but as Christians, we like to give ourselves at least partial credit for a number of deeds that never quite make the transition from *thought to action*. James tells us that we must put our faith into actions (James 2).

"I almost stopped to get that homeless person a hot meal."

"I came 'this close' to buying extra school supplies for kids who might not have any."

"I wish we would have remembered Mission Sunday was today."

"Next time, I'll offer to help with child care for that single mom."

Merely noticing the physical, emotional, and spiritual needs of those around us does not accomplish anything. Even passers-by acknowledged the beaten, robbed, and the left-for- dead man on the side of the road between Jerusalem and Jericho. Only the Good Samaritan came to his aid.

In this New Year, let us replace the positive sounding "*almost*" with the more realistic phrase "*not quite*" when it comes to caring in a literal sense for those around us. As we step forward into this second decade of the 21st century, perhaps it's time to take inventory of our good intentions. Write them down. Make a plan, and then let's make 2010 the year we act upon these magnanimous desires God places upon our hearts.

In spite of our best excuses -- the shaky economy, time constraints, and perceived limitations of all kinds -- we cannot call ourselves followers of Christ if we are not willing to serve others. By satisfying only self, we merely succeed in robbing ourselves of profound blessings each day...

Where do we begin? We begin by developing an ever-deepening generosity of spirit. When we commit to putting others first, we not only see them and their needs, but we embrace the opportunity to help. *Phil 2:4* "*Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others.*"

Givers don't accidentally pour themselves into people's lives; they make a conscious choice to see what's happening with those around them, and then they work to make others' circumstances better. For most of us, placing another person's needs -especially, those of individuals outside our inner circles -- may be challenging. Yet with intentional thought and practice, instinctively sharing our time, talent and treasure can become a lifestyle.

Needs are varied, and the responses can range from a well-timed phone call to a handwritten prayer to a folded bill pressed into someone's hand. We must remember that not all giving is monetary. Those who write generous checks often express regret that they don't apply enough of themselves. One challenge for the New Year might be not only to help fund programs, but also to carve out time for people in crisis.

Those of us who lead lives we label as "too busy to help other" might do well to reflect on how much time we devote to gratifying ourselves. Is every half-hour spent in front of a computer screen necessary, or has social networking replace real encounters? Do we prioritize a weekly television show above more meaningful, difference-making endeavors?

On the other hand, money is critical to so many worthy ministries and mission organizations, Southeast Caribe Mission, among them. Church planting, evangelism, leadership training, buying food, providing medicine, printing Bibles in various languages and rebuilding homes and church buildings ravaged by hurricanes takes funding. When many contribute to these efforts, the broad-based support indicates so much about us individually and collectively. In the Southeast Caribe Mission case, we depend on individuals like you and churches. Without you, we could not keep informing, inspiring, uniting, and growing the Kingdom of God...

We need your support, and prayers, **contact us at: Global Church Growth, Southeast Caribe Mission, P.O. Box 157, Nevada, MO 64772, E-mail: sec.mission@yahoo.com.** Our web site is: [www.secaribemission.org](http://www.secaribemission.org).

This much is true: We can't out-give God. Nevertheless, we certainly can use the resources he provides on every level to bless those all around us, with all those who give and receive seeing and feeling his love.

Some of this came from *The Christian Chronicle* editorial, January 2010.

May we as the body of Christ be a catalyst for a generosity revolution in 2010!

Blessings in Christ,

*Orvel Griffith*

## Kandi's Komments

While reading my devotions I came across one on Finding Your Destiny in the book *New Day New You* by Joyce Meyer. I know I have and maybe you to have asked yourself, *What am I to do with my life? Does God have a job for me to do?* God answers these questions through our natural gifts and abilities. Even in our senior years. These gifts are things we do naturally without any formal training. Doesn't God confirm our efforts on His behalf with blessings when we serve his people in any capacity. Be it meals for the sick, driving one to the Doctor, sharing garden bounties, opening our homes, etc. God keeps us in balance by giving us natural talents and pleasures in doing what needs to be done for those around us.

We know we are using our gifts and calling when what we do ministers to others. If what we do makes us miserable, sick or fills us with dread, it is possible we are not in God's will. When we have peace and joy, he lets us know we are fulfilling His call on our life.

I urge you to look at your life and what you enjoy and are good at and what God is giving you the grace to do. Then let God be God in your life. Trust His ability in and through you, and do not be afraid to step out.

Blessings in Abundance in 2010,

*Kandi Griffith*