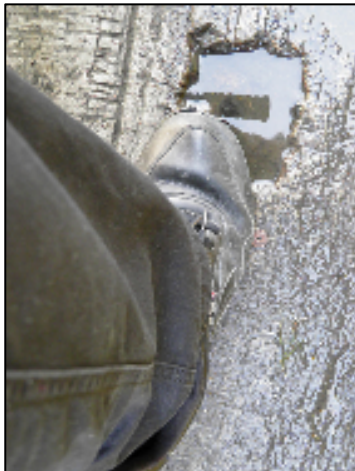




Family Circus Children's Ministry Update
Volume 546 No. 46 November 8, 2010
by Darrell Blatchley - Missionary to Asia's Little Ones
"Habits Die Hard"

Hello again, friends,

Outside McDonald's, I was getting on the motorcycle, ready to head to the Family Circus tent. Next to my shoe, I saw a dirty, wet, small, insignificant coin on the pavement. The thought came to me, "Ignore it, it's



wet and dirty." Even as the thought came, I leaned over and reached down, picked it up, and wiped it off, placing it in my pocket. I thought to myself, "*Habits die hard.*" That's true of all habits in our lives, both the 'good and bad.'

That's a habit we developed years ago:
Prioritizing kids in all that we do.

Example: Fifteen years ago, we agreed with a church to teach them children's ministry skills and to work side by side with them every week for one year so they could creatively reach and minister to the children in their neighborhood. The average attendance during the year before we started helping them was less than 30, but it grew quickly to an average of 250 kids attending each week. The church's adult attendance a year later was still the same. (Note: As a shepherd the lack of growth in the numbers of adults did not bother me. We know it takes time to grow a child into a grownup.)

After the agreed-upon 12 months of training, we released the church to continue on their own. We had supplied them with all the tools and knowledge they needed to continue. But there was only one thing we did not and could not give them. And we did not know their lack until it was too late...

Within two weeks after we left, the church stopped teaching the kids. The pastor had no heart for the kids, and we could not give him what he did not have. The

pastor considered the children *of such little value* that it wasn't worth his time to lean down to speak to them and teach them of Jesus. The kids continued to pass by and stop at the church for the following two years to ask, "When will they start the kids club again?" Fifteen years later they still have NOT restarted kid's ministries.

One of the young children we taught during that year, was a boy named Francis. He was 8 – 9 years old and he remembers that time. During the years after the church stopped teaching them, and without any further encouragement from the church, he drifted from what he had learned and fell into a life controlled by vices. One day as an older teen, God spoke to him and he remembered what he had learned. He responded to the truth that still tugged at his heart, he gave his life back to God. Francis then was married, attended Bible school and became a gifted associate pastor of a church.

A couple months ago he became ill and within two weeks, as his wife stood by his side carrying their unborn child, he entered Heavens door... His words still echo in my heart. "Looking at me Francis said, "I am the fruit of your labors."

Francis died, but he lives forever. As he now lives in Heaven, walking on streets of gold, he waits to be reunited with his family. *(See attached picture.) Our heart and prayers go out to his wife and the child who will only see their father in heaven.



Over the past fifteen years we've developed the habit of leaning over and picking up the little ones. Physically and spiritually, the majority of the children we work with are small, dirty, and considered of little or no value to many...

We've chosen to ignore the habits of others around us, and we continue to lean over and pick up the thousands of kids that normally are not invited anywhere because of their lice, dirty clothes, behavior, and appearance. Every week, we pay the fare, to pick-up thousands of kids and their family members to ride the public transportation, in order to be able to come and hear and receive Jesus' love.

Old habits die hard. Unlike habits, the kids can die easily...

Not ugly - Perspective

Children are often bored with what occurs in traditional churches. Yet magnificent angels announced the arrival of the baby God/King as the advent of Good News and Great Joy that would be for all people, little shoe size and big. It is we who have messed it up, not Him. It is His challenge to us to bring His Joy back to the people and to His message.

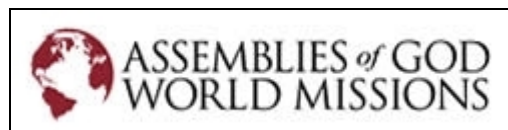
We know of a girl, about 14, who was in our local government hospital. Earlier this year she was in the

middle of a massacre down in Southern Mindanao. Her hands and feet were chopped up, and she saw her immediate family violently killed. Some of the killers were even related to her. They even hacked and disfigured her face. Then she was thrown into a building with others of her murdered family landing on top of her, protecting her from dying in the fire they set. Because she lived, the killers failed in their efforts to eliminate the evidence. What tragedy is written on her body.

Yet after a visit our son D.D. shared with me, "You can look closer and can see she is beautiful, though she no longer thinks so." For many months, she was alone in the hospital, depending upon the government and busy, tired, overworked student nurses to supply virtually her every need.

When DD talked with her, he encouraged her and said, "You are pretty." She disagreed. She can see herself in the mirror. Her self-worth, like the lives of her entire family, has been cut apart and destroyed. It will take time and love to rebuild it, if it is ever to happen, someone must care enough to have a strong habit of doing what it takes *"for the least of these."*

For the King & His Kids,
Darrell & Sandy Blatchley



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Click on the following link if you can help us financially in ministering to the King's Kids:

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