



Loving the Least of These at Home and Abroad

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Tamme Geurts serves vulnerable children in Honduras and her Suffolk community through foster care support and a calling to share Christ's love.

The first time my wife met the more interesting side of my family, a huge crowd of us went out to eat at a nice restaurant. Then, little by little, people started slipping out the door.

I knew these people. I quickly figured out what had happened. One of my notoriously thievish uncles, more concerned with appearing generous than actually being generous, had told everyone he had the bill. My wife was aghast when I explained what was happening. I paid for her and me, and we hurried out before I got stuck with the whole thing.

In groups, it's easy to believe somebody must be coming to pay the bill. But this is a cracked world, and people fall through the cracks all the time. Sometimes I regret not paying the whole bill that day, even though it would have been a tremendous sacrifice.

The ladies in this picture, which I took in Honduras in July, are two women who are always willing to make the sacrifice. They are willing to share the love of Jesus wherever and whenever He calls them. That's my wife, Christina Surber, and our dear friend Tamme Geurts, a board member of our international mission ministry, Supply and Multiply.

That day, we were in Honduras with a mission team from Michigan. Christina and Tamme had arranged for us to share the love and Gospel of Jesus Christ with a group of women and children living in exceptionally vulnerable circumstances. Many of these children have mothers trapped in the sex industry. They live in a part of San Pedro Sula where even strong men wisely feel vulnerable.

Tamme Geurts came into our lives through Haiti. But Tamme's care for vulnerable children does not begin or end there. For Tamme, that calling began nearly 40 years ago, when she was 13 and visited an orphanage while living in Japan. What she remembers most is the silence and the absence of warmth.

"If you've lived a life where you feel love, you may take it for granted," she said. "But I can tell you, the absence of love can be felt so deeply." That experience stayed with her. "I knew clearly that my life would be filled with caring for the least of these," she said.

While it can be easy to look past the marginalized, Tamme not only travels with us to places like Honduras. She also cares for foster children in her own community in Suffolk. Along with the many other ways she and her family serve their community, she has made loving vulnerable children part of the way she lives her life.

That's why she started Fostering Hope. It is a ministry that supports foster parents who often carry the work in isolation. For Tamme, the joy comes from seeing what that care can make possible. "The greatest joy in foster care is helping a child overcome," she said. "It's providing safety and security." Above all, she said, "The biggest joy is showing all involved the love that Christ has for them."

At home and abroad, the calling is the same: see the people others overlook and share the love of Jesus with them. "And the King will say, 'I tell you the truth, when you did it to one of the least of these My brothers and sisters, you were doing it to Me!'" - Matthew 25:40 (NLT)