

The Child's Voice

NITA'S VOICE



"Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of Jehovah is risen upon thee. For, behold, darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the peoples; but Jehovah will arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee" (Isaiah 60:1, 2)

Located 10km from the centre of Cambodia's capital, Phnom Penh, lies one of the most notorious brothel districts in the world comprising of a displaced ethnic community of around 10,000 inhabitants. Poverty thrives with many families surviving on less than \$2 a day. Yet it is through this area that thousands of children, some as young as 4 years old, children are trafficked into the worlds sex industry every year. Children, both boys and girls, are preyed upon by paedophiles from around the globe that turn up intent on wreaking destruction on these young lives.

Walking around the unmade streets and alleys presents the sense of a tangible depth of the prevailing darkness which shrouds the

area. Weaving through the shacks one is constantly aware that inside many of these buildings live children whose lives are subject to almost constant violation.

Children like Nita (name changed to protect identity). Nita was a typical 9 year old with few obvious cares. She grew up in this area amongst the poverty and yet held onto the hopes and dreams of anyone her age. She played simple games in the streets with friends and helped around the home with daily chores. Then one day a woman who she did not know called at her house and spoke to her mother about things she did not understand. That night she was taken to a place where she saw the woman again – she was a pimp. Nita had been sold to be used for sex. Nita was severely beaten, tortured and raped continuously for 5 days until the man had finished. Still fastened in the room she lay battered, bruised, exhausted and absolutely broken. As she thought her ordeal was over it took a grizzly final turn as the female pimp and the man returned carrying a pair of pliers. As the woman held her down he reached down and with a series of violent actions tore away her vagina.



The cost to the man - \$500. The cost for Nita - her future, her dignity, her health – effectively her life.

Regrettably Nita's story is not unique. As we hear the single cries – indeed screams - in the wilderness of the individual children – God hears the cries of the hundreds of thousands of children around the world. What is our reaction to this situation? What can be done?

Will we hear the screams of children like Nita and act or will we simply walk away?

In the face of such vast adversity it is easy to become overwhelmed by the very magnitude of the situation. We have to remember here the age old adage that "A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step." Moses, on being called by God in the midst of the wilderness to return to Egypt, stands in fear of

rejection and failure by his own people. "What if they do not believe me?" he questions God, observing the seemingly insurmountable opposition. And yet God's reply is simple – "What is in your hand?" (Ex 4:2).

As we know, God fulfilled his promises through Moses using only that which was in his hand. In this generation – on our watch – we

are called to be ambassadors on behalf of Christ and co-workers alongside Him. We must not adopt a spirit of timidity which sees an issue as being out of our reach but rather “hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful” (Heb 10:23). Will we then as Gods chosen people opt to be thermometers or thermostats? Will we be a group of people who monitor and respond to the ambient temperature set by those around us or will we be a community who set the temperature?

Martin Luther King is recorded as saying “We will have to repent in this generation not merely for the vitriolic words and actions of the bad people, but for the appalling silence of the good people”.

If more children like Nita are not to suffer and have their futures taken from them then we need to step up to the plate and begin to be the people who God has called us to be. Please consider standing with us as we face up to this terrible situation.

“Is not this the kind of fasting I have chosen: to loose the chains of injustice and untie the cords of the yoke, to set the oppressed free and break every yoke? Is it not to share your food with the hungry and to provide the poor wanderer with shelter - when you see the naked, to clothe him, and not to turn away from your own flesh and blood? Then your light will break forth like the dawn, and your healing will quickly appear;

then your righteousness will go before you, and the glory of the LORD will be your rear guard. Then you will call, and the LORD will answer; you will cry for help, and he will say: Here am I. “If you do away with the yoke of oppression, with the pointing finger and malicious talk, and if you spend yourselves in behalf of the hungry and satisfy the needs of the oppressed, then your light will rise in the darkness, and your night will become like the noonday.” (Isaiah 58:6 - 10)

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