

A PERSISTENT CHALLENGE

BRIGHT HOPE NEWS



The recent "State of the Great Commission" report by the Lausanne Movement is a comprehensive and insightful document that explores the status and future trajectory of global missions. I encourage you to read the report!

Being a Bright Hope World person, I jumped to the section on Global Poverty. The headline read, "Reduction of Poverty". It explains that there has been a remarkable reduction in global extreme poverty, defined as those surviving on less than \$US1.25 per day. The number of people living in extreme poverty has decreased from over two billion people in 1990 to less than one billion in 2019. This is great news...unless you are one of the nearly one billion people still living in poverty. We are making progress in addressing poverty, but the problem remains overwhelming. If we look to regions like Sub-Saharan Africa, extreme poverty has increased not decreased, deviating from the positive global trend.

Global poverty is complex. It is not just a lack of financial resources; it is a multifaceted issue that affects every aspect of life, including health, education, and opportunities for personal and community development. Factors like war, famine, corruption, and pandemics all play a role in perpetuating poverty.

It remains one of the most pressing issues of our time. I am grateful for organisations like Bright Hope World, which takes a strategic approach to poverty alleviation.

This includes holistic development (addressing the root causes of poverty requires a holistic approach that includes economic development, education, healthcare, and spiritual growth), partnership (collaboration between churches, non-governmental organisations, and the private sector to find more effective and sustainable solutions), advocacy and justice (addressing systemic issues that perpetuate poverty including advocating for economic justice, protecting the rights of the poor, and ensuring equitable access to resources), and capacity building (investing in the capacity of local people is essential for sustainable development).

So, what can we do? What is Jesus' challenge to us?

With the parable of the talents in mind (Matthew 25:14-30), we might ask, "What has He given us?" Directly following this parable, Jesus presents a vision of the heavenly throne room, where the Son of Man divides the sheep from the goats. To the sheep, He says:

"For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me." (Matthew 25:35-36).

The actions Jesus honours are seemingly small things, done with love and consistency. If we believe that these acts matter to God, then they should matter to us as well.

Michael Hanson

BHW Partnership Facilitator for Pakistan, Afghanistan and Indonesia

Our hearts are heavy at the moment at the rapid and frightening increase in the conflict between Israel and Lebanon.

Bright Hope World has several partners in Lebanon that are being impacted by the war. We received an update from one of them this week saying: "In just a few days, 700 people were killed, and over 8,000 were injured, many of whom may not survive. We have opened our home to refugees, but living [here] is not safe. The entire country feels lifeless."

We also had a very encouraging visit from one of our Indian partners recently. He spoke about the remarkable expansion of the church and the increasing reach of the Gospel in India, but also about the dreadful increase in all kinds of persecution against Christians there. Sadly, things appear to be getting worse, not better.

Finally, we also recently heard that a partner of ours in Southeast Asia was arrested for preaching the Gospel. This wonderful and dedicated woman has since been released, but will no doubt be under increased scrutiny.

These things remind us that it is a spiritual (and sometimes physical) battlefield out there in the places in which we work.



MD is a young man our partner Samuel works with.

His family was Hindu and three years ago his father was admitted to hospital. Samuel went to pray for him and the doctor, whom he knew, said it was a waste of time; "he will be dead in 30 minutes".

Blood was oozing out of his body and the floor was wet under the bed. Samuel insisted that he had to pray, and he did; the man looked like he was dead on the bed. But he prayed anyway and left asking MD to ring him in 30 minutes.

He rang saying that the father had sat up and asked for food. Then he got worse again, and he was sent to another hospital.

Samuel had friends nearby and asked them to pray and visit. He remained very ill, but the mother came to church and made a vow that the whole community would become believers.

He was three days in a coma and again the family was told he would die. But he woke and began to improve. He is now healed but still quite weak. He has gone back to work on the railway line gang.

Many of the family now come to church and other family and friends have become believers in several other places. They are about to start another church in one of those areas. MD's older brother has been trained and offered himself for fulltime evangelism and church planting.

For security reasons this partnership is not on our website.

1. Pray that Bright Hope World would continue to be consistent and strategic in taking the Gospel to the world through our partners.
2. Pray for Lebanon and our partners there. Pray that those who have escaped from other countries to Lebanon would be safe and not have to flee again. Pray for peace between Lebanon and Israel.
3. Pray for our partners in India who constantly experience all sorts of persecution but are so passionate in sharing their faith and seeing people come to a knowledge of the truth.
4. Pray for our partner in Southeast Asia and for all others facing opposition for sharing the Gospel.
5. Pray for Kevin Honore and Glenn and Sharyn Cant who are currently visiting partners in India.

