

THE HOPE REPORT

We're on the Web!

www.missionofhopehaiti.net

Mission of Hope is an interdenominational Christian Ministry and an outreach of Higher Ground Ministries PO Box 1007 Gardner MA 01440



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Restavèk... The Plight of Child Domestic Servants

The United Nations estimates that there are over 300,000 child domestic servants in Haiti today. These children are known locally as restavèk children or children who stay with people. This is very common in the Haitian culture, but it is also a great danger to the society. It is, in a manner of speaking, a form of slavery.



These are some of the youngsters we hope to help keep from becoming restavèks with your help!

Daily life in Haiti is very demanding physically. Most homes do not have access to

water right in the home or yard. Therefore someone has

to take a bucket and walk to the nearest water source, fill the bucket and carry it home.

Water is used in quantity in the home for cooking, cleaning and bathing. Many other chores need to happen everyday, as well: dusting, sweeping, mopping, cooking, caring for small children, washing clothes (by hand), washing dishes, food shopping, washing the car (if the family is very well off), ironing...the list goes on and on. Restavèks have become the logical solution to the need for help with these chores. (continued on pg. 2)

James, Cephas and John recognized the call of God on the Apostle Paul's life and encouraged him to preach to the gentiles while they themselves preached to the Jews (Gal. 2). They exhorted Paul, as we see in Galatians 2:10 (NIV):

"All they asked was that we should continue to remember the poor, the very thing I was eager to do."

Just like all scripture, this verse holds true for all generations. As we go forth to preach the Gospel we are to also remember the poor. We are to preach the Good News to the poor, but we are also to minister to the physical needs of the poor. We see in James chapter 2 that faith without works is dead and also that we should actually *SHOW* our faith *BY* our works. What a joy for us at Mission of Hope to partner together with so many of you with like-precious faith!!!

Hurricane Dean Aug 18-19



We are grateful that Grand-Goave suffered very little damage from Hurricane Dean. There continue to be issues caused by the lack of a bridge over the river here. Pictured above is the "temporary bridge" that was built just over a year ago. Notice how high the river banks are in comparison to the bridge now. During the hurricane the impatient driver of this bus (below) met his match as the river carried his bus back to the shore. See more photos online at <http://picasaweb.google.com/missionofhope>



Restavèk...

(continued from page 1)

Very often, especially in the big city where most of the country's jobs are found, people will find children to come work in the home to help with these chores. Sometimes they are nieces, nephews or cousins, but often they are not related at all. The parents will often agree to send a child to work in someone else's home because they do not have the means to feed, clothe and educate the child. They believe that life will be better for the child in or near the city. The "masters" usually promise to send the children to school, which is of utmost importance to most parents nowadays.

Sometimes the promises are fulfilled and things do seem better for the child. Unfortunately, most of the time that is not the case. Many children are forced to work from the pre-dawn hours until well into the night. Many are severely beaten and abused mentally for not doing their work quickly enough or as well as their "master" would like it to be done. And very often they do not get to go to school because there is just too much work to be accomplished.

It may seem incredibly difficult to imagine how anyone could willingly put their child into such a situation and yet,

in reality the parents usually do this out of love for the child. Here in Grand-Goave, as is the case in so many of the rural communities in Haiti, the average family has very little to offer their children. And very often the solution is to send the child to Port-au-Prince to live with another family and go to school. The parents don't normally know what the child is really going through in his/her new home.

There are several orphanages in our area that are filled mostly with children who have families right here in Grand-Goave. Families will try to get at least one child into an orphanage because they know that the orphanage will provide food, clothing, healthcare and an education for that child. But what of the mental health of that child? Even in a normal family situation there's usually quite a bit of sibling rivalry and "Mommy likes so and so the best." But in these situations, very often the child feels that they were cast out of the family and thus are not loved and perhaps are even unlovable. They come to totally lack self-esteem and confidence. Often the young girls will turn to men in search of an answer to the emptiness they are feeling and they find themselves becoming young moth-

ers in the same condition as their own mothers. It is indeed a very vicious cycle.

At Mission of Hope we are very aware of the problems associated with restavèk children and are eager to do all that we can to help people avoid the temptation to send their children away. What are some of the ways that we (you together with us!) dissuade parents from choosing this route?

◆ *We emphasize the critical importance of God's Word to our lives and the power it contains to bring about change in our individual lives. We must always put our hope in God, not in any man from anywhere on this planet!*

◆ *We provide families with the opportunity to give their children a high-quality education from age 3 until they graduate from high school, without having to pay the normal monthly costs associated with sending a child to school.*

◆ *We provide for basic health-care needs of these children, which again helps alleviate some of the financial burden of childrearing from the parents.*

◆ *We seek donations of food and goods to share with children in need the most, again helping to lighten the weight of parenthood.*

◆ *We offer counsel to families facing extreme difficulties and are often able to help them with*

food or emergency funds.

◆ *We teach and we teach and we teach. And when we're done, we teach some more.*

◆ *We speak words of encouragement and God's love to and for all members of the family.*

◆ *We meet with our students' parents regularly throughout the school year to emphasize the responsibility that God has given to them personally to raise, train and educate their children in a godly manner.*

Please continue to pray for Mission of Hope as the Lord continues to show us more and more opportunities to reach out to these families facing extremely difficult circumstances in this life. And please, do keep sending in your financial gifts to help us to consistently offer help to those in need. We must always remember that these are people just like you - just like me. They feel joy and they feel pain. Jesus loves them with the same love that He loves us. These moms and dads love their little ones just like you and I do. And these children have the same God-given potential that our children have. So often one person caring can make all the difference in a child's life. I want to be that one! And I believe you do, too!

School Opening

By the time this report arrives in your hands school will have opened. We are looking forward to a great year once again. Many of our students

started coming to school in the month of August, looking to get a jump start on the year.

We are very excited about the amount of food that has

been promised to the mission for this school year. Our students will be well fed and we may even have enough to start a nutrition program for

the really little ones, 6 month—3 year old children.

Working together, we can truly make an impact on the lives of so many!