

The Covenanter

Silverhill Covenant Church

“To work for God, God’s people, and to win souls for His Kingdom”

16094 State Highway 104

Post Office Box 125

251-945-5143 (Office)

251-979-4794 (Pastor’s Cell)

Check us out on the web at: silverhillcovenant.org

Wholesome Thinking

With every year that goes by we draw closer to the coming of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Some will mock His coming. Peter tells us of them, “in the last days scoffers will come...they will say, where is this coming he promised?” (2 Peter 3: 3, 4) others however, look forward expectantly to that coming again. The men who watched intently as Jesus was taken up to heaven were immediately rebuked by two angels who said, “Why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven.” (Acts 1: 9-11) It is as if they were saying: “Quit looking up into the sky you silly men and get busy because soon He’s coming back again.”

Peter tells us that such thinking is wholesome thinking and we all know we could use some more of that (2 Peter 3:1). Wholesome thinking is looking forward to the imminent coming again of Jesus. Again, Peter puts it this way, “You ought to live holy and godly lives as you look forward to the day of God and speed its coming.” (2 Peter 3: 11, 12) Today we are one year closer to the coming again of Jesus. Perhaps he will come today. Such thinking is wholesome thinking. Such thinking helps us. Quit lollygagging around and instead get busy living holy and godly lives as we look for His coming.

Several years ago, a friend of mine and her husband were invited to spend the weekend at the husband's employer's home. My friend, Arlene, was nervous about the weekend. The boss was very wealthy, with a fine home on the waterway, and cars costing more than her house.

The first day and evening went well, and Arlene was delighted to have this rare glimpse into how the very wealthy live. The husband's employer was quite generous as a host, and took them to the finest restaurants. Arlene knew she would never have the opportunity to indulge in this kind of extravagance again, so was enjoying herself immensely.

As the three of them were about to enter an exclusive restaurant that evening, the boss was walking slightly ahead of Arlene and her husband.

He stopped suddenly, looking down on the pavement for a long, silent moment.

Arlene wondered if she was supposed to pass him. There was nothing on the ground except a single darkened penny that someone had dropped, and a few cigarette butts. Still silent, the man reached down and picked up the penny.

He held it up and smiled, then put it in his pocket as if he had found a great treasure. How absurd! What need did this man have for a single penny? Why would he even take the time to stop and pick it up?

Throughout dinner, the entire scene nagged at her. Finally, she could stand it no longer. She casually mentioned that her daughter once had a coin collection, and asked if the penny he had found had been of some value.

A smile crept across the man's face as he reached into his pocket for the penny and held it out for her to see. She had seen many pennies before! What was the point of this?

"Look at it." He said. "Read what it says." She read the words "United States of America"

"No, not that; read further." "One cent?" "No, keep reading." "In God we Trust?" "Yes!" "And?"

"And if I trust in God, the name of God is holy, even on a coin. Whenever I find a coin I see that inscription. It is written on every single United States coin, but we never seem to notice it! God drops a message right in front of me telling me to trust Him? Who am I to pass



it by? When I see a coin, I pray, I stop to see if my trust IS in God at that moment. I pick the coin up as a response to God; that I do trust in Him. For a short time, at least, I cherish it as if it were gold. I think it is God's way of starting a conversation with me. Lucky for me, God is patient and pennies are plentiful!

When I was out shopping today, I found a penny on the sidewalk. I stopped and picked it up, and realized that I had been worrying and fretting in my mind about things I cannot change. I read the words, "In God We Trust," and had to laugh. Yes, God, I get the message.

It seems that I have been finding an inordinate number of pennies in the last few months, but then, pennies are plentiful! And, God is patient...

Congo Project Report 2008



How do you get over a war? What does it take to recover? Especially from a war that killed 4 million people in six years – the deadliest war on the planet since World War II. Even now, the civil war in Congo claims more than a thousand people every day from related causes. “A child dies in Congo almost every two minutes, mostly from preventable causes (New York Times, July 30, 2006).

It takes more than a treaty. The agreement signed in 2002 has reduced the violence but not ended it. The people are still profoundly poor. Infant mortality is high, education levels are low, preventable and treatable diseases kill thousands unchecked. Parents can barely feed their children, and often can do nothing more.

How do you get over a war? What does it take to recover? It takes courage to rebuild when security is shaky. It takes strength to repair a house, carry a sick child to the hospital, and plant a few vegetables for the market. It takes persistence to rebuild a bridge and then rebuild it again after trucks have broken it apart.

And it takes hope. Most of all, it takes hope. And – against all odds and experience – the people in northwest Congo have hope. They are cheerful and generous. They are tough – they are survivors.

It also takes partners to recover from a war. It takes friends who care enough and can help people turn hope into achievement. The Paul Carlson Partnership (PCP) brings resources to empower hope. Inspired by the life and dedication of Dr. Paul Carlson, martyred in Congo more than 40 years ago, the Paul Carlson Partnership brings history, commitment, vision, and ingenuity to the work of helping the people of northwest Congo to rebuild and restore their lives.

Rebuilding a broken medical system...

The Covenant Church in Congo (CEUM), our primary in-country partner, operates four hospitals and more than 80 clinics. This network serves 1.5 million people in the Ubangi-Mongala region of Congo. Its facilities were damaged during the fighting, equipment and supplies stolen, power and water infrastructures crippled. Medical staff continued working without salaries, under extreme conditions. The PCP has renewed its pledge of \$325,000 for basic support for the coming year, as the medical system continues to recover from the war and regain its footing.

Protecting children from HIV/AIDS...

The PCP has set a goal of offering protective medications to pregnant mothers and their infants at every hospital and clinic operated by the CEUM. Since the medication, called nevirapine, must be given at labor and shortly after birth, women who cannot reach one of the hospitals that have are left out – and their children have a significantly higher risk of getting HIV by transmission. We will train nurses who staff the hospitals and clinics in the administration of nevirapine, and will distribute supplies of the drug to the various facilities.

Rehabbing CEUM village clinics...

With the generous help of the Caris Foundation, we have begun an initiative to rehab and upgrade every village clinic in the CEUM System.

Other PCP projects include...

- Delivering goods to Congo; up to \$40,000 to ship a cargo container of medical items
- Restoring malnourished children to health
- Providing solar power and pumps at Wasolo and Bokada hospitals
- Providing agricultural tools and seed for growing food
- Reconstructing bridges that link people to medical care and markets
- Upgrading the water system at Karawa hospital
- Creating a palm plantation at Loko hospital
- Providing parts for maintaining work vehicles
- Giving scholarships to women to study at Karawa Nursing School
- Providing shortwave communications for hospital and staff
- Further training for doctors
- Paying exam fees for girls to advance in school (Educate the Girls program)
- Providing books and supplies for children who have none
- Building housing for students at the Gbado and Gbuda Bible Institutes

If you would like to help or for more information, or to send a contribution to our work in Congo, please contact the Paul Carlson Partnership, info@paulcarlson.org, www.paulcarlson.org, 5101 North Francisco Avenue, Chicago, IL 60625, 773-907-3302.

What does it take to recover from a war? It takes all of us. It takes you!