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CHANGE YOUR LIFE CHANGE YOUR WORLD

GOD'S POSITION ON WAR

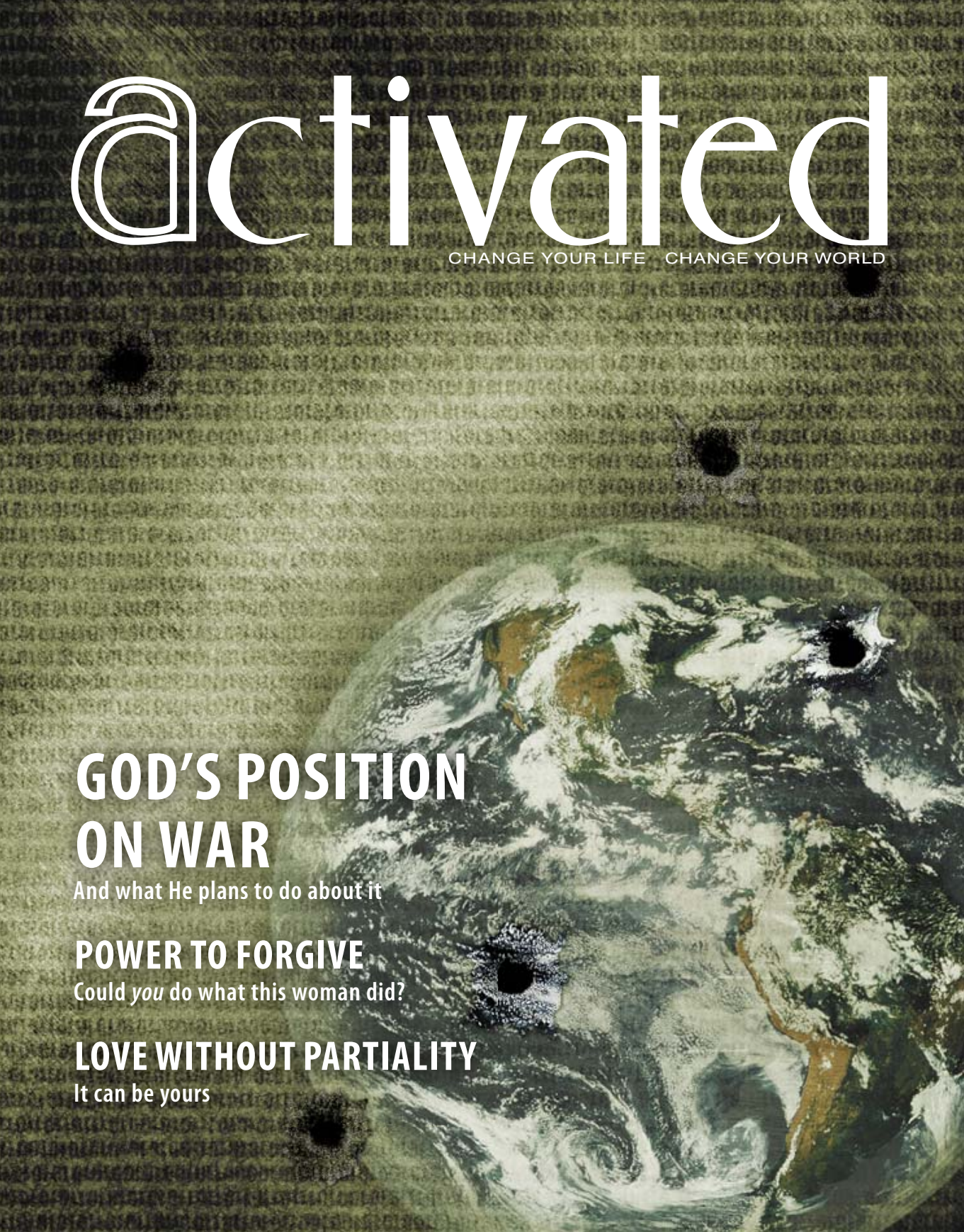
And what He plans to do about it

POWER TO FORGIVE

Could *you* do what this woman did?

LOVE WITHOUT PARTIALITY

It can be yours



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PERSONALLY SPEAKING

Whenever I hear someone bemoaning the state of the world, I'm reminded of something I first heard many years ago: "If you're not part of the solution, you're part of the problem." As an idealistic college student at the time, it was easy enough to identify the problem as "all the injustice and suffering in the world." That quote, which I later learned was by U.S. civil rights activist Eldridge Cleaver, didn't tell me how I could become part of the solution, but it did reinforce my growing conviction that I couldn't turn a blind eye to the problem.

Then I came across a similar quotation: "He who is not with Me is against Me, and he who does not gather with Me scatters abroad" (Matthew 12:30). I was reading the Bible for the first time, and finding answers for the first time. The more I read, the clearer "the solution" became: "Love your neighbor as yourself" (Matthew 22:39). And the more I grew to believe in that solution, the more Jesus challenged me to *do* something about it. "Whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake and the Gospel's will save it" (Mark 8:35). That was quite a challenge! But then the most wonderful thing happened. I discovered that Jesus would empower me to do whatever He asked of me. And He has, in spite of my mistakes and shortcomings.

Jesus needs you too. Will you "gather with Him"? He doesn't expect you to change the whole world—just to do your best, day by day, in your corner of it. Will you give Him a chance to love and help others through you? Will you dare to be part of the solution?

Keith Phillips

For the Activated family

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Your Own Angels

GOD WILL SEND ANGELS just when you need them. You may hear a flutter over your shoulder, or think you see something out of the corner of your eye. Or maybe there will be an old man you meet on your path, who directs you the right way and seems to have a lively light and love in his eyes. Or you may just feel a certain warmth and peace—an assurance that somehow everything is going to be all right.

As things get worse and worse in this old world, you'll need the help of these angelic beings more and more, and He'll send them more and more. The Lord wants you to know that He loves you, that He cares, and sending angels to help you is just one of the many ways He shows it. So don't forget that if you trust in God and His help, you'll have angels watching over you—your own personal angel or angels, sent by the Lord to take care of you!

DAVID BRANDT BERG

SEVERAL YEARS AGO, while I was doing volunteer work in Paraguay with several other members of the Family International, we had an ongoing ministry at a nearby prison. During one visit, an inmate I hadn't met before related the following story.

Two months earlier, he and two other prisoners drugged their guards, took their guns, and escaped. Other police officers quickly realized what was happening and followed the men. One of the escapees died in the ensuing gun battle, the man giving me this account was shot in the leg and surrendered, and the third escapee was captured the next day.


By this point in the story I realized that this had all taken place around the corner from our house. I remembered distinctly that when we had heard gunshots, we had gathered in our house and prayed desperately for our safety and against further bloodshed.

"After I was wounded," the inmate continued, "I turned and was about to shoot the policeman who had shot me, but then I heard a voice say, 'Don't shoot him! He is your brother. Give him your gun.' I obeyed the voice and surrendered. The policeman could have shot and killed me right there, but he didn't. I'm also very thankful now that I didn't shoot him!"

We explained that we had prayed during the gun battle, and that we also pray every day for our safety. "The angel of the Lord encamps all around those who fear Him, and delivers them" (Psalm 34:7). Perhaps it was one of the angels that watch over our house who helped him do the right thing. We are continuing to counsel this man, and hope to help him make a new start. •

GOD'S POSITION ON WAR

A MESSAGE FROM JESUS



THE SKIES ARE BLACK WITH CLOUDS—the clouds of the smoke of war. The ground is red with blood—the blood of innocent lives caught in the inferno and torments of war. Villages, towns, and cities are being destroyed. Poor and innocent civilians, including small children, are being deprived of basic necessities. Families are being torn apart, watching their loved ones die in pain and agony. Is any cause worth so great a cost in human life? Are injustices on the part of one government corrected by the injustices of another? What government is righteous and just and worthy of judging another?

No army can claim to be waging war on the side of “right.” War, killing, death, and destruction are not right. Humanity was placed on this earth to love and care for one another, but because of selfishness and greed, the world has become increasingly corrupt, and fighting and killing have become a way of life. This was never meant to be.

Those who wage war in the name of God, claiming His blessing on their cause, are mistaken. Many are misled by their own sense of right and righteousness, while others act out of hypocrisy. Those who truly know and love God, and those who follow My words and example strive for peace. “Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God” (Matthew 5:9, KJV). I went so far as to say that you should “love your enemies, bless those who curse you, and do good to those who hate you” (Matthew 5:44). Do those who are so intent on waging war heed My words in this? Or do they merely call on God with their lips, but their hearts are far from Him?

Let those who think they stand take heed, for their time is coming, and they will fall. It is a law of God and of nature that you will reap what you sow. Those who wage war, who pursue the domination, destruction, and devastation of other lands will reap sorrow and bloodshed themselves.

I know the hearts of men. I will reward the peacemakers. I will judge the warmongers. Every man will give account before Me in the Day of Judgment. Search your own heart. Determine where you stand—whether on the side of peace or the side of war, on the side of freedom or the side of tyranny.

God is almighty. He could use His power to force humanity to do what is right, but He chose to give man the majesty of choice. He allows each person and each nation to determine their own destiny through the choices they make. He does not impose His will or His plan upon mankind. How much less should mere mortals impose their will and plan upon others? People should never force others to conform to their beliefs or way of life. One government should never force another to operate according to its ideals and desires. This is not God’s way. This is not His plan.

If you stand by when the freedoms of another nation are being violated, do not be surprised if someday you find your own freedoms lost. If you have freedom of speech now but you do not use that freedom and speak out against

oppression and tyranny, one day you will lose it. Do not take your privileges lightly.

Are you a peacemaker and worthy to be called a child of God? Are you personally acquainted with the God who is love? Have you come to Him by praying to receive Me into your life? If you know Me in name only, you can change that here and now. Get to know Me personally and intimately. Receive My spirit of love, peace, and light into your life and heart. Talk to Me. Call on Me. If you don’t know what to say, you can pray this prayer:

Jesus, I want to know You personally. I want to understand the truth. I want to see the world the way You see it. I want to understand Your will, and I want to do my part to fulfill Your will. I want to stand up for truth and justice. Give me strength to do so. Show me what I can do to change the world around me for the better. Show me how to love my fellow man, how to help and care for others as You would help and care for them if You walked on earth today. Show me what I can do to promote peace. Amen.

Take a stand with God, a stand for peace, a stand against war. Take a stand for freedom, and against the hypocrisy, greed, and selfishness of those who are eager to wage war. Pray for peace. Pray for the innocent. Remember, you are accountable to God and will stand before Him one day. Live accordingly. •



building bridges



By Curtis Peter
Van Gorder



"SOMETHING THERE IS THAT DOESN'T LOVE A WALL," wrote Robert Frost (1874–1963) in his well-known poem "Mending Walls." But there is something that loves a bridge. People write songs about bridges, like Simon and Garfunkel's "Bridge over Troubled Waters." People talk about making peace by "bridging their differences." We forgive and forget hurts and wrongs by others because it is "water under the bridge." Bridges are a symbol of reconciliation and human solidarity.

Perhaps nowhere can this symbolism be so clearly seen as in Mostar, Bosnia-Herzegovina. It is Friday, July 23, 2004, and a replica of the Stari Most, or Old Bridge, from which the city takes its name, is about to be opened.

It took ten years to build the original bridge, as each of the over one thousand stones were handcrafted to fit perfectly. It was completed in 1566. For over 400 years it withstood invasions, wars, and even earthquakes. Two days of continuous shelling from artillery brought it down in 1993.

The opening ceremony is about to begin. Church bells and calls to prayer from Mostar's mosques blend in unison.

The weak can never forgive. Forgiveness is the attribute of the strong.
MAHATMA GANDHI

Yes, this is what good is: to forgive evil. There is no other good.
ANTONIO PORCHIA

He who cannot forgive others, breaks the bridge over which he himself must pass; for every man has need to be forgiven.
GEORGE HERBERT

Children's choirs sing a song that is popular throughout the region. The lyrics are a plea for love to survive in good and bad times.

Whirling dervishes from Turkey dance in intoxicating rhythm.

Cheers are heard—a dozen young men from Mostar have just jumped with torches in their hands off the 30-meter high stone arch into the river below.

Speeches are given by important men.

"We must work together to foster a new era in which dialogue, understanding, and reconciliation replace the turbulent past."

"With this bridge we can prove something wonderful—hope triumphs over barbarism."

"Let this bridge guide us in building a better future."

← Fireworks are set off in Mostar to inaugurate a replica of the 16th century bridge destroyed in 1993 during the armed ethnic conflict that tore Yugoslavia apart. The reopening of the Stari Most, or Old Bridge, from which the town of Mostar takes its name, was a major symbol of reconciliation between Mostar's Croats and Muslims, who keep mainly to their respective sides of the Neretva River.

We leave the speeches and mill about the crowd to find out what this bridge means to the Mostaris.

Let's ask this man. A painter by trade, 55-year-old Zarisa Velic is a Muslim. "Do you remember how you felt when the bridge was destroyed?"

"When the bridge went down, it hurt my heart and soul, but it couldn't prevent people from communicating with each other."

And here is Borislav Sukic, a Croat who works for the emergency medical service in Mostar. "How do you feel tonight?"

"I feel like I've been born again, and I think that this feeling is shared by every Mostar resident."

And here is one of the architects of the reconstruction of this bridge, Ivan Demirovic, who is 56 years old. "Tell us why this bridge is so important."

"Mostar was the Florence of the Ottoman Empire. It was a tolerant and open city to different cultures. The Old Bridge was a door between East and West."

"So why was it destroyed?"

"Destroying it was definitely intended to destroy the spirit of the city, but we must show that they didn't succeed."

"How did the war affect you?"

"The war cracked the city in two and came down like a storm on my family. My son Suleiman was seriously wounded in combat, my wife and daughter were deported to Ljubuski concentration camp, and I was in jail for one year. My house, on the other side of the river, was confiscated. But all of that is the past. This bridge is the future. My son and I have worked hard to rebuild this bridge."

Next to him is another architect, Carlo Blasi, who has come from Italy to help on this project.

"Can you tell us more about the original bridge?"

"The technology used to build this bridge was very sophisticated, based on perfect geometry. It is not an exaggeration to compare its builder, Hajruddin, to his contemporary Michelangelo, and the Stari Most to the cupola of St. Peter's Cathedral in Rome. It is a masterpiece!"

Here is a woman waiting to cross the bridge with her four young children. "How do you feel about this bridge reopening?"

"I feel great! Now I know what true happiness is."

"What brought you here?"

"I could not resist bringing the children to the bridge. They were all born after its destruction, and this is their first chance to cross it," she says.

The ceremony is finished. The night sky is exploding in fireworks. The signal is given, and thousands of smiling Mostar residents rush to cross the bridge.

The joy of tonight will remain for a long time to come. We pray the love remains also. As the popular song goes, "May love survive in good and bad times."


True, the wounds of war are still here, but the healing process has begun. A bridge has been built. •

There is no difficulty that enough love will not conquer; no disease that enough love will not heal; no door that enough love will not open; no gulf that enough love will not bridge; no wall that enough love will not throw down; no sin that enough love will not redeem. ... It makes no difference how deeply seated may be the trouble; how hopeless the outlook; how muddled the tangle; how great the mistake. A sufficient realization of love will dissolve it all. EMMET FOX

To forgive is to set a prisoner free and discover that the prisoner was you. LEWIS B. SMEDES

Love without partiality

BY MARIA FONTAINE



God created people to be different, and He loves them *all*. His great love and grace reach out to all of His creations the same.

YOU SEE AND HEAR IT ALL THE TIME—discrimination against minority races, minority religions, and minorities of all kinds, from governmental oppression and persecution to prejudiced individuals with their rude jokes and antagonistic behavior. What a stark contrast that is to the way God is and the way He wants us to be! The Bible tells us that “God shows no partiality” (Acts 10:34).

In just about every country, lines are sharply drawn between the rich and the poor, the educated and the uneducated, the predominant race and the minority races, the predominant religion and the discriminated-against smaller religions. The mainstream majority invariably denigrates and despises the minority.

Racial and religious discrimination and hatred are thriving in the world today. The Bible says that in the Last Days “the love of many shall wax cold” (Matthew 24:12), and this can be clearly seen in an increasingly hate-filled society. The news media is full of more and more headlines of bigotry, cruelty, and crimes against those who are different or hold differing views from the majority.

We must not let ourselves be influenced by or fall into society's way of dealing with differences between people. God has given us a *better* way, and that is to *love* one another.

In our dealings with others we must be very careful to “not judge according to appearance, but judge with righteous judgment” (John 7:24). Making a hasty judgment based on something negative that you hear is not wise, and is usually incorrect. There are at least two sides to every story. If we respond to the first negative word about a situation or people by rejecting any possibility of there being any good in them, then we are certainly guilty of judging a matter before we hear it in its entirety, and it will be “folly and shame” to us (Proverbs 18:13). We can't love or even sympathize with people unless we understand them, and we can't truly understand them without putting ourselves in their place or trying to see things from their perspective.

“Love the sinner—hate the sin!” This is a distinction we need to always make. We must not let the sin negate our love for the sinner. We must not see the sin as all-encompassing, for “love will cover a multitude of sins” (1 Peter 4:8). As the Bible says, “There is none righteous, no, not one” (Romans 3:10). We need to learn to see beyond the sins that are found in each person to the *good* that is found in each person. No one is *all* bad, and nothing is all negative. We need to look for the good and the possibilities in people and situations. Whether someone is black or white or yellow or brown, a Jew or a Gentile, Buddhist or Hindu or whatever, should have nothing to do with it. It's sin that the Lord doesn't like, not people's race or color or social status.

When you start putting more emphasis on damning the sin than loving the sinner, watch out! God does everything possible to *love* us into His Kingdom. What won *you* to Jesus? Was it having your sins exposed one by one and being told you were a “filthy rotten sinner”? Were you belittled and criticized and

condemned for all of the wrong you had done? Or were you told that regardless of what you had done, there was a wonderful loving Father who loved you so much that He was willing to send His beloved Son to die for you, to make a place for you by His side where you could be forever happy and at peace with Him? “God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us” (Romans 5:8).

If people have to be free of their sins before we can love them, who will there be to love? If we start judging people on the basis of their sins, who will ever meet our standard? If the Lord kept a record of sins, who could stand? (Psalm 130:3). We're *all* hopeless without God's love, and that's the only thing that can save us! While God teaches hatred of sin, He shows great love for the individual sinner, just as He did for each of us.

God created people to be different, and He loves them *all*. His great love and grace reach out to all of His creations the same. He didn't make some that He loved less and others that He loved more. He doesn't love people with a certain color of skin any more than He loves people with another color of skin. If we show a prejudicial, belittling, demeaning spirit like that toward others, it must hurt Him very much.

We are supposed to love all people the same. Jesus gave His life for *all* humankind. How could He love one person more than the other, when He has shown the very greatest love possible by dying for each of them?

Like the universal heavenly Father that He is, God loves all people equally. When you're a parent, as your children come along, you love each one to the fullest. You put everything you can into each one according to their particular needs. You give your life over again for each one. And regardless of their differences, you love each one individually with as much love as you have to give.

That's how God loves. Can we love the same?•

D FORGIVE



Stella Sabiti with her husband and daughter about one year after her Makerere University ordeal.

I DISCOVERED THE POWER OF FORGIVENESS on a July afternoon in 1976. It was during the Idi Amin regime, when Uganda had come to a standstill—careers, the economy, the infrastructure, education, everything. I was a student at Makerere University, and also newly married and expecting a baby.

Because the university didn't have any supplies and the lecturers didn't have any fuel to get them to and from the university, they didn't come to teach us. So we students would go to the library every morning and either read there, or get books to study in our rooms. Idi Amin, not having gone to school himself, didn't understand why we were doing that. He thought it was a demonstration against him, so he routinely sent soldiers to the campus to terrorize us students.

At that time my husband was working in the northern part of the country, near the border with Sudan. Every so often he would come to Kampala or I would visit him and we would spend a few days together. He had just come for the weekend, and Monday morning he dropped me at the campus. When I got to my room, my roommate, Judith, and another friend, Brenda,



POWER TO

IT HAPPENED TO ME

BY STELLA SABITI,

AS TOLD TO *ACTIVATED* EAST AFRICA

CORRESPONDENT KATHLEEN MURAWKA

told me that soldiers had been coming and going from another hall of residence on the other side of the campus, and had broken things and beaten up some students.

This wasn't the first time this had happened. Off and on truckloads of soldiers would come and beat some of the boys. We girls would shout at the soldiers from the balconies of our rooms, telling them to stop, and they would yell back that we were stupid women who didn't know anything. We were used to not being attacked by them because we were women.

About noon that Monday there was a knock on our door. We thought it was some friends playing a joke on us, so we shouted, "Go away, you soldiers!" and we laughed. You know how students are. But the knocking got louder and louder until we realized that it *was* soldiers!

Brenda and I ran onto the balcony and crouched down. Judith jumped into her bed and covered herself. Moments later, the soldiers broke down the door with such force that bits and pieces of the lock and door flew across the room and out onto the balcony. Soldiers burst into the room, shouting. Miraculously they never saw Judith in bed, but they did find Brenda and

me on the balcony. I remember thinking, *This is it!* Anytime the soldiers went after someone in particular, that was the end of them.

They pulled us from the balcony and shoved us through the room and into the corridor at gunpoint. One soldier stayed behind and leafed through our papers. Judith could hear him just a few feet away, but he never saw her.

"We found you! We found you!" they kept shouting at me, as though they were sure I was some sort of ringleader. When we got to the top of the stairs, they pushed us down. Each time we would get up, they would push us again. Fall and roll, get up, fall and roll, down one flight of stairs after another. At the top of the last flight of stairs, which was the longest, one of the soldiers hit me from behind so hard that I went flying and didn't stop until I hit the floor. I lost consciousness.

When the others reached the bottom of the stairs with Brenda, they said they were taking us to Makindye, a barracks that at the time was a slaughterhouse. But first they took us next door to Lumumba Hall, a male hall of residence built around a courtyard. There soldiers were torturing the boys—boys we knew, good boys. Apparently this had been going on all morning

without us knowing about it, even though we were in the next building.

The soldiers made Brenda and me join the boys for a while, but soon we were all ordered to go outside, in front of the hall. Brenda and I were separated from the others. I was told I would get special treatment because I was the ringleader.

More soldiers arrived—hundreds of them. They brought many more girls outside and made them join the boys, crawling half-naked back and forth at gunpoint on the tarmac, their knees bare and bloody. When Judith saw what was happening outside, she felt so bad for the rest of us that she voluntarily came and joined that group. I don't know that I would have been strong enough to do that!

I have no idea why they thought I was the ringleader. They didn't have any reason. But surprisingly, that was the thing that gave me strength—knowing that the accusations they kept shouting at me were baseless. They beat and whipped and trampled Brenda and me, but their main attention was on me. This went on nonstop for hours—one cruel form of torture after another. I won't go into all the details here, but it got worse, especially for some of the women found hiding in their rooms. The soldiers had a field day on us! Remember, I was also about one month pregnant at the time. It was a miracle that the baby survived. Rita is 27 now.

By the end of the afternoon, the soldiers apparently decided they had tortured me enough and said they were taking me to Makindye, the slaughterhouse. But before I died, I wanted to find out why they were doing this to me. Why, out of the hundreds of girls at my hall of residence, had they picked me as the ringleader?

All day I hadn't said anything. I hadn't cried. I hadn't screamed. I hadn't done anything to resist. I had been like a piece of wood. Now part of me wanted to ask them why they were doing this to me, but another part said that if I did, it would only make them come down harder on me. Then a voice inside said, *Just look into their eyes. That's where you will find the reason for this.*

So I looked them in the eye, and I was so surprised at what I saw there! Despite all their



Stella Sabiti today.

curses and bravado, they were hurting inside! They didn't like what they were doing, contrary to what I had thought all along.

I was so overwhelmed with compassion for them that I wanted to tell them before I died that I understood, that it was okay. But how could I tell them that? I was still being beaten and tortured, but between blows the thought came to me, *Maybe if I talk about something we have in common, that will help them understand.* It was a crazy idea, but I didn't care. I had nothing to lose.

But what did I have in common with those soldiers? They were strong men—I was a pregnant woman. They had guns, boots, whips—I was just a simple girl and helpless. Then it dawned on me. *You've just been married, you're expecting a baby. These men must have families too.*

"What did your wives cook for you last night?" I asked.

"What!?" they asked in disbelief. And then they said something in Kiswahili. Whenever Idi Amin's soldiers tortured people, they spoke in Kiswahili. That's why most Ugandans today don't speak Kiswahili—they associate it with torture and bad things. "What a stupid woman!" they yelled, and they kicked me some more.

When they stopped, I took a deep breath and asked them again, “What did your wife cook for you last night?” They hit me again. That continued until they must have thought, *Let’s humor this dying thing*. And they started answering, “I ate this,” and, “I ate that.”

Then I asked, “Where do your children go to school? Did you take your children to school this morning?”

My simple questions led to a conversation, and the soldiers eventually sat down with me under a tree, where we talked and laughed. Yes, we actually laughed together! Brenda told me later that when she saw that scene, the fear and pain left her.

It turned out that the soldiers who had been with me the whole day were the leaders. They made a signal, and the whole thing stopped, just like that! By this time it was around 6:30, so some of the boys had been tortured all day long and the rest of us for about six hours.

Trucks came and collected the soldiers, and ambulances came for us who were the most severely injured. All the gates to the university had been locked and guarded all day, but the ambulances must have been waiting outside because they arrived immediately, while the soldiers were still leaving.

The university cooks and kitchen staff, who the soldiers hadn’t harassed, brought us students tea and bread, then sat with us on the ground and cried for us. That’s when I finally broke down. I couldn’t imagine what it had been like for *them*, having to witness all this but being unable to do anything to stop it.

Looking back, I can honestly say that I forgave those soldiers the moment I looked them in the eye, because that’s when I realized that all of us—students and soldiers alike—were victims of something we didn’t understand. And when I asked them about their homes and families, they got the message that I realized that and forgave them.

I also owe a lot to my upbringing. My parents taught me that there is some goodness in everyone, no matter what. There has to be, because the Bible tells us that God created us in His own image.

That experience gave me so much strength and showed me that I should never fear another human being—never! That’s how I can do the work I do today. I’m at ease even with armed soldiers, and will even go into areas where there are landmines. I fear the landmines and the guns, but I don’t fear those soldiers or rebels holding the guns or planting the landmines. I know that they are human, just like me, and we share a deep commonality that can never be taken away.

Having gone through that experience at Makerere University gives legitimacy to the talks I now give about forgiveness. When I tell my own story of how I was able to forgive and the wonderful things that happened as a result, people listen.

“Why should I forgive anyone who doesn’t say they are sorry?” people often ask me. And I tell them, “Life is too short for me to hang around waiting for someone to say sorry to me.” My saying, “It’s okay—I forgive you,” does not depend on others saying they are sorry. For me that’s not a precondition. The Our Father doesn’t say, “Please forgive me so I can go and forgive others.” Jesus taught us that we need to forgive others before we can ask to be forgiven.

So much good has come from that horrible experience. Best of all, I discovered that, like everyone else, I was born with a wonderful something—the power to love people! I didn’t have to earn it. It’s just there. And it doesn’t run out. The more I use it, the more I get! •

Stella Sabiti is the executive director of the Center for Conflict Resolution (CECORE), a Uganda-based not-for-profit NGO founded in 1995 by women aspiring to promote alternative and creative means of preventing, managing, and resolving conflict. She has taken her message of forgiveness and reconciliation to Northern Ireland, the Asia-Pacific Region, North America, Central America, South America, and various African countries, and has been instrumental in helping to resolve bloody conflicts in Uganda, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Liberia, the Sudan, Rwanda, Burundi, and elsewhere.

COMFORT IN SORROW

No matter what loss we may suffer, we'll always have Jesus.

Deuteronomy 33:27a
Psalm 142:4–5
Isaiah 54:10
Matthew 28:20b
John 14:18
Hebrews 13:5b

Trust God through your sorrow, like King David.

Psalm 13:2,5
Psalm 38:6,9,15,17–18,21–22
Psalm 42:9,11
Psalm 55:2,4,6–8,22
Psalm 69:29–31

God understands exactly what you're going through.

Exodus 3:7
Psalm 103:13–14
Isaiah 53:3a,4a
Isaiah 63:9
Hebrews 4:15

Earth has no sorrow that Heaven cannot heal.

Isaiah 25:8a
Isaiah 60:20
Luke 12:32
Luke 16:19–22a,25
John 16:21–22
Romans 8:18
2 Corinthians 1:7
2 Corinthians 4:17
2 Timothy 2:12a
Revelation 7:17
Revelation 21:4

The Lord knows every tear you've shed.

2 Kings 20:5b
Psalm 6:6,9
Psalm 39:12a
Psalm 56:8b

God always has a good reason for allowing sorrow in our lives...

To make us wiser: Ecclesiastes 7:3–4
To bring about good: Romans 8:28
To drive us to His Word: Psalm 119:50,67
To teach us compassion: 2 Corinthians 1:4
To bring us to repentance: 2 Corinthians 7:9–11
To prepare us for greater service: 2 Timothy 2:12a
To teach us patience: James 1:2–4
To draw us closer to Jesus: 1 Peter 1:6–8
To strengthen us: 1 Peter 5:10

love ENOUGH

You may feel that what you've suffered is unpardonable, beyond forgiveness, but God can lift that burden and give you a change of heart. The miracle-working love of God is love enough to forgive—and to help *you* forgive.

—GABRIEL SARMIENTO



NEVER TOO LATE FOR LOVE

The simple love of God and each other can solve all of our problems. His love is the answer to everything: It saves souls, forgives sins, satisfies hearts, purifies minds, redeems bodies, wins friends, and makes life worth living. It can survive almost any difficulty, difference, weakness, shortcoming, failure, fault, sin, or obstacle. It's the only truth, the only way, and the only peace. ☞ Love even has creative power, because God is love and He is the Creator (1 John 4:8). His love can change wrecks of lives into wonderful, productive, happy, warm, glowing sons and daughters of God. It can do *anything*. Nothing can resist the power of God's love. Whatever it touches, it changes. It's so beautiful! There's nothing like it. It can heal every disease and cleanse every stain. It's all-powerful. ☞ Love knows no hours or days. Love is *always*, for love is God and God is always. It's like a stream, a river, that just keeps flowing no matter what.

—DAVID BRANDT BERG

[WISDOM FROM ABOVE]

“The wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy. Now the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace” (James 3:17–18).

THANK GOD FOR HEAVEN!

BY DAVID BRANDT BERG

Wouldn't you just love to enjoy all the blessings you have right now without any pain, sickness, death, weariness, or any of the other difficulties of this present life? We will never get to truly enjoy life to the full as long as sin and its results are in the world, but in Heaven there will be none of these (Revelation 21:4). There all of our heart's desires will be fulfilled.

It's going to be a sinless new world where everything will be a joy and a pleasure and perfect, with peace and harmony and cooperation and love for all. Everything there will be true—the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth! Everybody there will be like Jesus—good and honest and loving and caring and kind. It will be the perfect society, where everyone will be in perfect fellowship with each other and the Lord. Isn't that beautiful?

God's plan is not going to be defeated. He's going to bring us through to final perfection the way He originally intended. We will have eternal, wonderful happiness, joy, and paradise, similar to what we who love the Lord have now, only it will be far better and it will be forever! Thank God for the hope of such wonderful things to come!

REMEMBER THIS...

When the concentration camp at Ravensbrück, Germany, was liberated by the Allies after World War II, a piece of torn wrapping paper was found, on which an unknown prisoner had scribbled these lines:

“Oh Lord, remember not only the men and women of good will, but also those of ill will. But do not remember all the suffering they have inflicted on us; remember the fruits we have brought forth, thanks to this suffering—our comradeship, our loyalty, our humility, our courage, our generosity, the greatness of heart which has grown out of all this. And when they come to judgment, let all the fruits which we have borne be their forgiveness.”

—AUTHOR UNKNOWN

AN INSTRUMENT OF THY PEACE

Lord, make me an
instrument of Thy peace.

Where there is hatred,
let me sow love;

Where there is injury,
pardon;

Where there is doubt, faith;
Where there is despair, hope;

Where there is darkness,
light;

Where there is sadness, joy.

O divine Master, grant that

I may not so much seek

To be consoled as to console,

To be understood
as to understand,

To be loved as to love;

For it is in giving
that we receive;

It is in pardoning
that we are pardoned;

It is in dying that we are
born to eternal life.

—AUTHOR UNKNOWN,
OFTEN ATTRIBUTED TO
SAINT FRANCIS OF ASSISI



FROM JESUS WITH LOVE



PRINCE OF *Peace*

Once, when I was crossing the Sea of Galilee with My disciples, a storm arose and threatened to sink our small boat. My disciples were frightened, but I commanded the storm to cease—“Peace! Be still!”—and the wind and waves obeyed Me. So shall it be one day soon when I say, “Enough!” and cause the storms of wars and strife to cease.

All of the problems of today’s world prove that people can’t solve their own problems. The world cannot survive without its Savior; it needs Me. Universal, lasting peace is not possible without Me, the Prince of Peace, but the time will come when the whole world will submit to My loving and righteous rule. Just a little longer and I will dry the eyes of the downtrodden and those who have been cruelly tormented by the horrors of war. One day, war will be a thing of the past—a concept only scarcely understood by those living then.

In the meantime, you can have real and lasting peace in your heart—peace that can withstand anything—by receiving Me as your personal Savior and turning to Me, the Prince of Peace, in your time of need. I will always be there for you.