

Spring Newsletter

2018

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Zibel's Miraculous Recovery

It was a hot, dusty day in Cameroon and our Program Director, Pastor Kai, had just arrived in a remote village on a routine visit to some of the Shaping Destiny children living in that area. As he approached one of the houses, he couldn't help but notice two figures waiting for him. The closer he got, the more concerned he became. One of the children in our program, Zibel, was seriously sick. His entire body was swollen from his face all the way to down his feet. His aunt told Pastor Kai that he had fallen sick and while she kept hoping his condition would improve, he continued to grow worse and worse each day. Pastor Kai and Zibel's aunt rushed him to the closest hospital. The doctors realized that more serious attention was needed for proper diagnosis and so he was admitted to a larger region hospital for further treatment and testing.



Zibel, swollen and sick at the hospital.

Despite being moved to another hospital, his condition only worsened as his body was not responding to treatment. Our Cameroon team knew that this was serious. They started sending word out to local pastors, asking them to come and pray over the child and console his distraught aunt, who sat weeping at his bedside. The U.S. team was informed and began praying for Zibel's healing and for a miracle to happen.

🗨️ Zibel could have died from his illness had it not been for his sponsors who faithfully give each month to ensure he is well cared for.

And that's exactly what our God did! Just a few days later, Zibel was on the road to recovery. Shocked doctors reported good news to his aunt and Pastor Kai – Zibel's body had suddenly started responding to treatment and, although they were unsure why the sudden change, he was going to recover! After about another week, he was released from the hospital and able to go back home with his aunt – healed and happy. We are so grateful to report these wonderful stories to you because they not only show how powerful our God is, but they illustrate how important each one of our roles are to the shaping of these children's lives and destinies. Whether it's donations to purchase the motorcycle needed to navigate the narrow dirt roads or sponsorships to cover medical bills in situations like this, you all are contributing to change and save lives!



Staff, Pastor Kai and Auntie Henrietta, off to visit children in our program

Zibel could have died from his illness had it not been for sponsors and donors who faithfully give to ensure children like him are well cared for. Who knows what God has planned for Zibel, or how many days he has on this earth, but one thing we

know for certain is that his time is not up yet, and God used people like you to provide for him in his time of need. His story is not over yet and we thank you for that; Pastor Kai thanks you for that, Zibel's auntie thanks you for that, and the many lives that will be touched by this young man as he grows and matures and is used by the Lord for mighty things...they thank you as well.



Zibel, weeks after his recovery.

Committing to God's Call

One Family's 10-Year Sponsorship Story

"We feel so inspired by Shaping Destiny and what we are able to do through this ministry. We know we are making a difference and we pray that God will give our own children the same desire to help others in selfless ways."


Sometimes you meet people and they make a lasting mark on your life. It may be just for a short season or a brief encounter, but when they come into your life you can't help but feel a deep inner connection. That is true in many ways for the Hurtado family. Early in their dating relationship, Dabid was deployed with the Marine Corp to serve in Rwanda. "Looking back, we can see how that's where the path that led us to Shaping Destiny

really started", his wife, Cesibel, recall. "We wouldn't know it until years later, but I think that's when God planted a seed in our hearts that would eventually lead us to begin sponsoring children from Africa. We wanted to honor the time and the people he met during his time there." After Dabid's service, he returned to the States and they got married.



Dabid and Cesibel Hurtado with their two children.

Over the years, they have started their own businesses, had two beautiful children, and moved to Texas from Colorado. Their passion for helping others has led them to regularly serving at their church every week by translating sermons from English to Spanish, administering communion, and leading Spanish-speaking Bible study groups. They have been incredible child sponsors with Shaping Destiny for 10 years now, but before ever hearing about our ministry, God had already moved in their hearts to sponsor children. Just a couple days before partnering with us, Cesibel and Dabid had agreed to start sponsoring children in need. "We had begun looking around at some organizations in Guatemala where Cesibel is from, but just didn't feel the peace from God yet so we were just going to wait. The very next day Dr. Kenneth came and spoke at our church about Shaping Destiny and we


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Young Evena when she was first in our program.

knew this was for us!"

Even though they had just started their 2nd business and were already tight on finances, they felt God confirming what was already in their hearts. "I realized that we have been so blessed by God and He has given us too much here in the States....why would we not give to those in need?" They currently sponsor three young girls and their giving has been used to provide these children hope for the future, a loving family, caregivers, and desperately needed care. Evena is one of the children whose life has been changed because of the Hurtado's committed sponsorship.

 Obey what God is putting on your heart. He will take care of the rest.

Evena lost her mother to HIV/AIDS when she was just a baby. Her father was irresponsible and uncaring towards her and neglected her for many years. He eventually abandoned her -- she was malnourished, unclothed, and longing for love. She was emotionally damaged and needed immediate attention to nurse her back to health. She was taken into our program and has been living at our Transition Home for many years, receiving specialized guidance, love, and care. She has grown a lot emotionally and physically thanks to sponsors like the Hurtados. She is now healthy and strong! She loves playing, eating, and dancing. God has given her a tenacious spirit and we are confident that she will continue to grow into a mighty woman of God who will be used as a source of encouragement and strength

for others.

None of this would have been possible without the commitment and generous support of the Hurtado family and other Child Sponsors just like them. Children just like Evena are having their lives changed in drastic ways and they will never be the same again! They experience the love and hope of our Heavenly Father through their sponsors and we think Cesibel said it best: "Jesus may not have a physical body on earth, but we are His body. We are supposed to provide for and care for what He cares for. If there is any little voice in your heart telling you to give a donation or sponsor a child, He will provide the means even if you don't know how you're going to afford it. Obey what God is putting on your heart. He will take care of the rest."



Recent photo of Evena, growing strong and full of joy.

How Will People Remember and Evaluate You?

This article written by our Founder and Executive Director, Dr. Kenneth Acha, was original posted on his blog site KennethMD.com

I just went through completing over 20 different evaluations for faculty members that have taught me on medical rotations for the last several months. I was a little late in getting to some of these evaluations and so it had been many months since I worked with some of these physicians. That means I had to stop and think about how my experience was like with them. How did I remember them? How will I evaluate them now? I learned some lessons as I completed these evaluations.

The first lesson is that being excellent at something doesn't mean people will remember you or evaluate you well. Most of these physicians were specialists in their fields and had an outstanding breadth of knowledge. They were all board certified and were good doctors by all accounts.



But being good, being knowledgeable, and being board certified isn't impressive. That didn't make me want to score them highly.

We are impacted by leaders who care first and then teach second.

The second lesson I learned was that I saw the physicians who had shown me that they cared about me as a person, as great physicians. It's almost as if the fact that they touched my heart made me see them in a new and more favorable light. I saw everything about them as great. I ended up realizing that the physicians who had impacted me the most through their caring were the ones I remembered most fondly and wanted to give great evaluations, even in areas that they might not have been as great in! This epiphany moment was very important for me because I tend to be the kind of person who finds it easy to focus on excellence and not as easy to focus on the caring aspect of a relationship when I am working with people like doctors and other colleagues who I expect to be at the top of their game. Sure, it's easy to focus on caring when I am working with orphans. I've done that for over a decade now. But I think it's equally important to make caring for people first place and excellence second when working with colleagues and others that are highly successful because, at the end of the day, we are all human. We are impacted by leaders who care first and then teach second. "People don't care how much you know until they know how much you care." Have you heard that quote before? It's so true.

Did You Know?



In Cameroon, most adults who are Friends of the family and caregivers are called "Uncle" and "Auntie" as a show of respect. It is mostly considered rude for a child to address an adult friend of the family by their first name. And if the adult is an acquaintance, teacher, or a person without an earned title such as grandmother, pastor, judge, etc., then they are referred to by Mr. or Mrs. So now you know why we call our female Cameroon staff "Aunties".



Cameroon is between 5-9 hours ahead of the U.S. depending on time zone (EST, CST, PST and daylight savings time - Cameroon does not observe daylight savings time). As you pray for the children, families, and SD staff or think of them throughout your day, remember they are almost halfway through their day when we are just waking up here in the States.



Cameroon has 2 seasons: dry during the winter and rainy during the summer. The dry season typically lasts from October until April. So, when we in the U.S. are battling snow or storms, Cameroonians are pretty dry. While our springtime weather tends to be cooler, their warmest months are March through May. The rainy season starts around May and lasts until September. So, when we're soaking up the sun, they are soaking up the heaviest rains in July and August.

Prayer Requests



Because of you, we have seen a lot of amazing growth in our ministry which means we can reach out and help more children! Our team in Cameroon is again selecting new orphaned or vulnerable children to care for, so please pray for wisdom and God's direction in this process.



Please pray for safety and protection for our team, children, and adoptive/foster families in Cameroon during this unstable time. Pray that God will raise up strong godly leaders to be peacemakers within the land and that justice will prevail. To join us in prayer and get regular updates about what's happening within our ministry in Cameroon, don't forget to sign up for our monthly eNewsletters!

What's the meaning behind our logo?

Maybe you've seen it around – this little S and D encased by two brackets. Sure, it's simple and cute, but this little logo holds great meaning. And not just for us, but for you as well. It's not only a symbol of our heart and vision, but also how we see every person who is involved with us whether they are a child sponsor, staff members, children, donors, developing leaders, or volunteers.

The S is shaped like a winding road that is ascending upward. This represents the path of life we're all on, with its twists and turns. Regardless of where you are on your journey, Shaping Destiny wants to be a tool used by God to enrich your life and raise you up. Because of you, we're able to come alongside many children, families, and emerging leaders to empower and strengthen them as they walk on their path.

🗨️ **You are part of our light, you reflect hope, love, and grace from God and because of you, our light grows brighter and brighter.**

The D is shaped to look like a half moon, a source of light in the darkness that illuminates the path of those on their journey. Just as the moon reflects the light of the sun to a world in darkness, Shaping Destiny strives to reflect God's light to those walking in darkness. You are part of our light, you reflect hope, love, and grace from God and because of you, our light grows brighter and brighter.

The square brackets represent inclusion: inclusion of all the people in the Shaping Destiny family, the family of God; inclusion for the children we serve who are not overlooked but who are desired and accepted into families; and inclusion for the leaders who we pour into and develop, lifting them up and sending them out to do more than we ever could alone. Each time you look at our logo, we hope you remember what it stands for and how it represents not only who we are, but who you are as well.

