



# OUTREACH CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP

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## THE ANDERSON'S NEWS

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### NOT MANY FATHERS

*Even though you have ten thousand guardians in Christ, you do not have many fathers, for in Christ Jesus I became your father through the gospel. (1 Cor 4:15)*

The 10<sup>th</sup> of September is children's day here in Honduras. It is celebrated as a giant holiday day party, but all over the city. As usual, we purchase gifts for the 300 plus children at the day care centers and from the church.

Being a "father" to so many children and teens is becoming a serious problem. It is to the point that even as I walk down the streets of the city or through a shopping area and hear a child say, "PAPI," I find myself turning in the direction of the voice to respond "SI HIJO (A)" (Yes son/daughter)!!!

It has been a long time since I have been as burdened by the words of any of the kids we work with as I have by those recently spoken by Pahola. She is the sixteen year old who was imprisoned at age thirteen for mutilating the body of a girl she had fought with a week before the homicide. This past July, she was released from the girls juvenile detention center and two weeks later moved to Tegucigalpa to be with our congregation. At the time she spoke her words, I was talking to her about some of her unacceptable conduct. My heart was struck when she said, "But Papi you are not around any more for me to talk to you when I am going through difficult times". All at once I remembered that there had been at least twelve other teens that have told me the same thing within the past two months. Each one of them, boy or girl, had grown up without a father.

It seems this is just the beginning for my family and me. Many of the adolescents are being released from the juvenile centers and, because of our work among them, they are coming from cities as far as 250 miles away to be with us. One example happened just a few hours ago. I stopped in at the church to pick up some keys. Sixteen year old Merlyn found her way from a town five hours away to the door of our church/trade school. She came to the capitol looking for work but ended up with no money, no family, and no where to go. But even greater than the responsibility of being a physical father figure, there are not many willing to take on the role of being a spiritual father, a mentor!! In our churches we talk about and plan for prayer meetings, discipleship classes, Sunday School programs and world-wide outreaches, but so many times fail to hear the cry of the hurting person standing right next to us. My prayer to God has been to make me available, sensible, and acceptable to be used by him to help the lost, the hurting, the hungry, and the lonely. I did not say hopeless, because I have yet to be convinced that any living person is a hopeless case. I firmly believe that many teens like Pahola needs someone who will believe in and stand with them in their time of struggles to provide loving but firm guidance and discipline.

### EQUIPING THE SAINTS FOR THE WORK OF THE MINISTRY

The visitors I mentioned from Arkansas in our last letter taught a children workers seminar. More than six churches and ministries were present for the training. This translates into effectively reaching more than 2,000 children from the poorest neighborhoods around the city. Our thanks to Sister Hettie Lou Brooks (78 years old) and her team for spending those four days equipping our staff and so many others in the body of Christ from other congregations!!

The Honduran school year is about to end. Nelly and our staff from the trade school and the day care centers are diligently preparing for our graduation ceremony scheduled for next month. We are privileged to contribute physically, spiritually and emotionally into the lives of so many children and teens among us here. We will have twenty-eight girls graduating from our two trade schools. (The one at the day care center and from the school down town.)

Your efforts, prayers and financial support has been and shall always be vitally important in continuing to bring forth the saints prepared for every good work. Thank you eternally!!!!

*The Anderson's in Honduras*

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*"a helping hand to the missionary"*