

PURE RELIGION

Our Children Can't Stop Talking about Us

Graham and Colleen Misbach loved small town life. They loved it so much that, when retired, they bought a home in Levan, Utah—a “sparkle” of a town in central Utah—population 450. They planned to live out the rest of their lives there in quiet peace. But it wasn't long before Graham, a retired school and clinical psychologist, and Colleen felt a yearning to do something to benefit others. That simple yearning grew until it bore fruit—a letter from the First Presidency, calling them to serve a humanitarian mission for the Church in Hyderabad, India. When they arrived in the city of more than four million people, they were alone—the only Church humanitarian service couple in the city. And there was so much need—poverty, hunger, sickness, disability, desperation . . . how could they even begin? Where could they begin?

Elder and Sister Misbach discovered a school for the blind. The children had so little. A rope led outside to the one toilet that all the children used. Through the contacts they made within the city, the Misbachs built six new toilets. They acquired and installed Braille typewriters. Sister Misbach noticed how beautifully the children sang and organized a choir made up of students from the school. The children entered a talent competition sponsored by a television station and won first, second, and third place. The Misbachs worked with the mentally challenged. Elder Misbach organized parent groups and taught parenting skills.

The Misbachs felt so blessed by their labors in India that they submitted their names for a second mission, this time packing their bags for Nepal (a small country bordered by China on the north and India on the south). There, they discovered a leper hospital founded by Mother Theresa that had

fallen into disrepair after she had left. The Misbachs went to work once again, binding up wounds, providing bandages, bringing in blankets, clothing, baskets of fruit, and nourishing food. Sister Misbach taught music at local schools. With the help of Church humanitarian resources, they provided books for schools and water in villages where there was none to drink, and Elder Misbach assisted local teachers with additional training.



“We could have stayed home and been content,” Elder Misbach says, “but we know we are needed so much more here. As a consequence, we feel much closer to the prophet and to our Savior. I wanted our children to understand more than their little world. I wanted them to understand better the example of the Savior and how He walked among the

poor and ministered to them.”

The Misbachs speak not so much of the difficulties as they do of blessings. They speak of Graham who, once diagnosed with cancer, now has a clean bill of health. They speak of two children who became active in the Church. And they speak of how their lives are filled with meaning, joy, and a sense of accomplishment.

“One of our children wrote us a letter,” Elder Misbach says. “In it they said they couldn't stop talking about us to their friends.”

Elder and Sister Misbach hope their example will inspire their children and grandchildren to go and do the same. They look forward to talking with them in person, but won't be able to do that for another year and a half—when they return home from serving a third mission, this time working with the homeless, the elderly, and the street children who live in the city of

Bangkok, Thailand.