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The Masked Generation

Dr. T. D. Worthington

“Give ear, O my people, to my law: incline your ears to the words of my mouth. I will open my mouth in a parable: I will utter dark sayings of old: Which we have heard and known, and our fathers have told us. We will not hide them from their children, shewing to the generation to come the praises of the LORD, and his strength, and his wonderful works that he hath done.

For he established a testimony in Jacob, and appointed a law in Israel, which he commanded our fathers, that they should make them known to their children: That the generation to come might know them, even the children which should be born; who should arise and declare them to their children: That they might set their hope in God, and not forget the works of God, but keep his commandments.”

Psalms 78:1-7

It has been said that God has no grandchildren. What they mean is that it isn't enough to be born into a Christian home or a Bible-believing church. Every child has to choose to follow Christ. It has also been said that Christianity is always one generation away from extinction. What they mean is that unless we intentionally pass the faith on to our children, it could be lost. So, we need to be diligent about passing our faith and heritage on from generation to generation. In Psalm 78 we learn that the entire Christian community shares the responsibility for raising up children in the faith.

Recently, during the Coronavirus pandemic we had a wonderful opportunity to teach our children some powerful lessons. Parents always need to be on the look-out for teaching moments. We have to learn how to take everyday situations and turn them into lifelong learning experiences for our children.

Consider this: If you were in a museum with your child you would have two choices as to how to conduct the visit. First you could make it all fun. The object would not be about education but about having a good time. Sure, the child may learn a few things, but that would not be the primary reason for the visit. The second option would be to make it an educational trip. Make sure you teach your child all about the various exhibits. You might even do a little personal research before the trip so you could help insure your child might glean as much knowledge as possible from the excursion.

Most parents would probably try to hit a balance between the two extremes. We would try to make learning fun or even hope our kids have so much fun they might not even realize how much they are learning. Of course, the type of museum you are visiting might make a huge difference also. Visiting

a site dedicated to antique toys would certainly convey a different approach than visiting the Holocaust Museum.

We have just endured one of the most life changing events to happen in recent memory. Unemployment has been higher than at any time since the Great Depression. The school year has been interrupted for several weeks; for most of us that has never happened in our lifetime. There have been shortages of vital goods. Some of us may remember the gasoline shortage back in the 1970's, but it is unlikely that since the Second World War have we seen grocery store shelves as empty as they have been recently. Graduations and hospital visits were canceled. Visits to the nursing home have been curtailed for weeks. Folks isolated themselves, often afraid to venture outside. We will all breathe a sigh of relief when this thing is over; totally over.

But, as we have begun to loosen the coronavirus-related restrictions, some of us are beginning to look up from where we are, to look ahead. I can't help but wonder; in this pandemic inspired museum of life, have we used the learning opportunities it presented to teach our children? *For example:*

Have you used this crisis to teach your children to accept change?

Have you reminded them that daily norms can change overnight? Just like during the world wars, or the Great Depression, this pandemic re-emphasizes the ways in which global tragedy can change things. Children living now will have real-life proof that just because parts of life are routine, it doesn't mean it will stay that way. Every generation eventually learns that few things remain unchanged for a lifetime. But

this generation can learn it quicker. They don't have to wait for the wisdom of old age or for some future tragedy to unfold. Of course, such knowledge has to be taught carefully so as not to disrupt their sense of security. But, with patience and prayer it can be taught...*and it should be taught.*

Have you taught them that deep and sustaining relationships can be achieved without face to face contact?

Most young people cannot fathom being close to someone they never see. It is very likely the Coronavirus will modify some social circles. Their "best friend" at school may not be the same when they return to class. Some boyfriend-girlfriend relationships likely will not survive either. Years ago we might send cards or letters to our special friends, but today meaningful connections can be made virtually. Teach your kids they can be close to a grandparent or friend that might be down the street or across the country by using social media. That text message they send to their school chums, can also be used to brighten the

day of an aging grandparent who may live miles away.

Have you taught your children that "learning" can happen anywhere—and with anyone who will put forth the effort to teach?

No longer is learning confined to the classroom under the professional leadership of a trained and credentialed educator. This is a wonderful time to turn everyday life into a learning experience for your child. Quite often my Dad would ask: What have you learned from this?

Have you had opportunity to teach them how to celebrate, show compassion, or mourn with someone, without physically gathering?

Let's use our inability to attend weddings, graduations, or funerals as a learning experience. Teach them to pray for those in the hospital or in the nursing home that we cannot visit. Sometimes you simply cannot "be there."

Have you helped them understand the reality of having and having not?

Although your family might not have



traveled the journey from “riches-to-rags,” most of us have endured some financial cutbacks and shortages due to the pandemic. Teach them that sometimes they simply cannot have everything they want. Suddenly, they may be playing on a level playing field with the poor kid down the street, and that may be a good thing.

Have you instilled within them a heightened comfort with, and respect for, solitude? Teach them that higher rates of innovative problem-solving and heightened emotional and spiritual awareness usually comes from being alone. Following the example of Christ, teach them that being alone is often when they will enjoy their greatest fellowship with the Lord. Teach them that being alone and being lonely is not the same thing.

Have you taught them a new respect for the “blue collar” professional? Many parents have hopes that their kids will grow up to be great leaders in business or industry. But, now is a good time to teach them that it is no longer just the executives and white collar workers that make the real contributions to society. Teach them that being an honorable truck driver commands the same respect as a lawyer or politician.

Have you taught them that blaming someone else for our problems should not be our first reaction? Sure, there is a place for assigning responsibility, but it always comes after implementing a plan to deal with the problems we face. It is possible that someone may be held accountable for this outbreak, but first we must clean up the life-threatening mess, then we can deal with those at fault.

Have you discussed various constitutional compromises that some of our politicians may have taken? Protection and security often come at the price of freedom. Although in some cases intentions may have been good, we can all think of instances where our Constitution has been violated over these past few weeks, especially by governors and local politicians.

Have you taught them about our responsibility to one another? There have been many opportunities to serve other members of our community. If we have done so, then we have helped our kids understand the connection between their actions and the well-being of members of their communities. It’s now undeniable that we are all connected to each other, that actions matter, and that we can have a dramatic influence on the health and well-being of others.

Of course, the instruction you give your children will be influenced by their age and maturity. However, if we will use this as a teaching opportunity, we might go a long way to prepare our kids for the future. Maybe this new generation will have an appreciation for accepting sacrifice and making adjustments. They may even learn how to wash their own socks and cut their own hair. And while social-distancing might spawn a comfort with solitude, the distance from each other might also create a generation that appreciates the value of community, more than any other.

Often the generation that children grow up in is given a special name. We have all heard of the depression era kids, or the war kids, or children of the baby boom. Perhaps our kids will be known as the “Masked

Generation” for the fabric that they strap to their faces and for the ways they will have to protect themselves from a range of a new generation’s unknowns. Or maybe they will be called the “Corona Kids” for the ways in which they might be lauded for finding solutions to new viruses or older issues that have plagued society for centuries. Or, perhaps these kids might be known as members of the “Distanced Generation,” because of the social-distancing reality, but also for the ways in which they will learn to distance themselves from the mistakes of past generations. Whatever label history may assign to them, let’s use this opportunity to teach them principles of life that can best be taught in the classroom of a pandemic.

We should not go back to life as usual, living a life unconnected to anything other than our own well-being. We can move forward knowing the value of living a life engaged with the needs of society and seeing a bigger picture of what’s possible when we work together.

In the end, the lessons we learn and teach our children is up to every individual family. It will be easy to slip back into old practices, especially for those whom the old system was serving well. But we have a once-in-a-lifetime chance to course-correct, to take what we have experienced and learned and create a vision for our family and our children that is more inclusive, responsive, and purposeful than it has ever been before.



Dr. Worthington has been in the ministry over forty years and serves as President of Pathway Ministries.



Rev. Michael Williams

“Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets.”

Matthew 7:12

Here is a simple rule-of-thumb guide for behavior: Ask yourself what you want people to do for you, then grab the initiative and do it for them. Add up God’s Law and the Prophets and this is what you get.

I recently saw a post on Facebook that said there are something like 17,000 pages of laws because we can’t follow ten. This remark was obviously citing The Ten Commandments. That post stuck in my mind for several weeks, and I just wanted to share my feelings in this regard. How sad it is when our governing bodies must continually write new laws to restrain an ever increasingly lawless society. How futile it is for our culture to expect government to enact laws to protect us when we live in a society that rejects God and dismisses His Laws of basic decency!

Following God’s Word regarding civility for humanity may seem antiquated to many, but if society followed the The Ten Commandments or even just the one verse of **Matthew 7:12** there would be such an improvement within our culture.

Christians, we can make a difference within our culture. Let’s begin today by treating those we encounter as we would desire them to treat us. In all of our interactions with people, treat them with kindness, honesty, and fairness. Let’s share the love of Christ that is in us with the world around us. It will make a DIFFERENCE!



Rev. Michael Williams has been in the ministry for twenty years. You can see more information about his ministry on his Facebook outreach, “Be Encouraged”.



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Back to Work, Back to Worship

For over 20 years now, the wonderful listeners of **GoMix Christian Radio** have stood with us through hurricanes, tornados, and floods. Now, our **Faith Partners** have once again proved faithful by standing with us during the Coronavirus pandemic. Although our **Spring Share-A-Thon** had to be postponed, hundreds mailed in their **Pre-Share-A-Thon Contribution Cards**, giving nearly

\$50,000 to help keep us going. But now, as things are ever so slowly getting back to normal, we need to raise additional funds to get through the rest of the summer. So, we've scheduled some **Mini-Share-A-Thons** over the next couple of months.

As many of you are already aware, our first drive was successfully held for several days in June, and we have also scheduled another **Mini-Drive** that will begin **July 7th**. We're calling it "**Back to Work, Back to Worship**."

Please, if you have not already given, consider doing so. We know things are tight on all of us, but any size contribution would help

us tremendously. Visit our special contribution website at www.givegomix.org to give on-line, or you can call in your gift at **1-877-747-8887**.

As always, thank you for your understanding and prayerful support.



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Standing the Test of Time

In 1998, the cost of a US Postage stamp was \$0.32. It was the year Windows 98 was released and the search engine Google was founded. Titanic and The Mask of Zoro were in movie theaters that year, and Former President Bill Clinton was involved in scandals leading to impeachment. There were also some sounds you may remember hearing around that time that you seldom hear anymore.

Do you remember the sound of your VHS tape rewinding? Do you remember the long dance of beeps and bongs of the dial-up modem handshake when you went on-line? Do you recall when "You've Got Mail" was a sound you actually wanted to hear? Although many of the sounds from yesteryear have now gone, when our first station signed on the air in 1998, many of these sounds were commonplace. So much has changed in the past 22 years. However, one thing remains the same; the music and message of GoMix Christian Radio. Some of the artists we originally aired have

moved on to glory, but their music is still alive and being heard every day.

Something else also remains the same; the appreciation we have for our loyal listeners. Some have recently joined the team while others have supported us from day-one. Regardless of the duration of your partnership, your words of encouragement are always a sound we long to hear.



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The Joy of the Lord

Dr. Glenn Mills

“The Lord is my strength and my shield; my heart trusted in him, and I am helped: therefore my heart greatly rejoiceth; and with my song will I praise him.”

Psalm 28:7

As I have visited many churches and watched many Christians, there is one thing that seems to stand out; many Believers have a seriousness about their religion, but little joy in their relationship with God. Some serve God simply because they fear Hell. Some serve Him because it is the right thing to do even though they have little joy in doing it. Some serve God only for what they can get out of it. One thing is evident with all of these people and that is the absence of joy.

To truly have joy, one must first understand what joy is. Webster says that joy is “*a feeling of great pleasure and happiness*,” but that is not God’s definition. God’s joy is in His presence. In His presence we find His provision, protection, promises and promotion. Therefore, God’s joy is not a feeling, but more so a state of mind. It is truly knowing who He is, what He says, and what He is able to do in our lives.

The world can only steal our joy when we allow it. They cannot take away our God. They are not that powerful. But they can distract us from focusing on Him and His ability to help and deliver us. Peter walked on the water toward Jesus until he took his eyes off of Him and started looking at the world around him (**Mathew 14:25-32**). The very moment we take our eyes off God and His Word, we start sinking as well as losing our joy.

God has shown me the power that influence has over His people. Influence can be good and bad. Anything that is of God’s Spirit will be a positive influence. The things of this world (*the lust of the eyes, the lust of the flesh, and the pride of life*) are negative influences and will only bring destruction to our lives. The decision to have true joy is up to us, not God. He has already provided all we need to walk in His joy. The world offers pleasures, but the Bible warns of the world’s pleasure.

“But she that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth.”

I Timothy 5:6

God invites us to know Him and the fullness of His joy. His joy is available to all who are willing to come into His presence and love Him. We cannot keep one foot in the world and the other in God's presence. He offers us joy unspeakable and full of glory along with a peace that surpasses all understanding. God's joy is special! It is so special that He will not mix it with the pleasures of this world. To come into His joy, we must come out of the influence of this world.

As I said earlier, joy is not a feeling but a state of mind. **Romans 12** teaches us to renew our minds with the Word and presence of God so that we can prove that which is good, acceptable, and the complete will of God. Nothing reaches our hearts that does not first enter our minds. **Philippians 4:8** tells us to think on the things that are true, honest, just, pure, lovely, and a good report along with things of virtue and praise. These are things that will influence us daily and bring great joy.

Great joy is available to each one of us if we will seek the only true source of joy; God our Father. Allow the



Holy Spirit to lead you to the things that will influence you in a godly way. Not only will you find real joy, but you will show the world Who can give them joy as well. I pray that you not only have joy, but that your joy may be full in Christ.

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Dr. Glenn Mills is a full-time Evangelist with the Open Arms Evangelistic Ministry. He can be heard each weekday morning on GoMix.

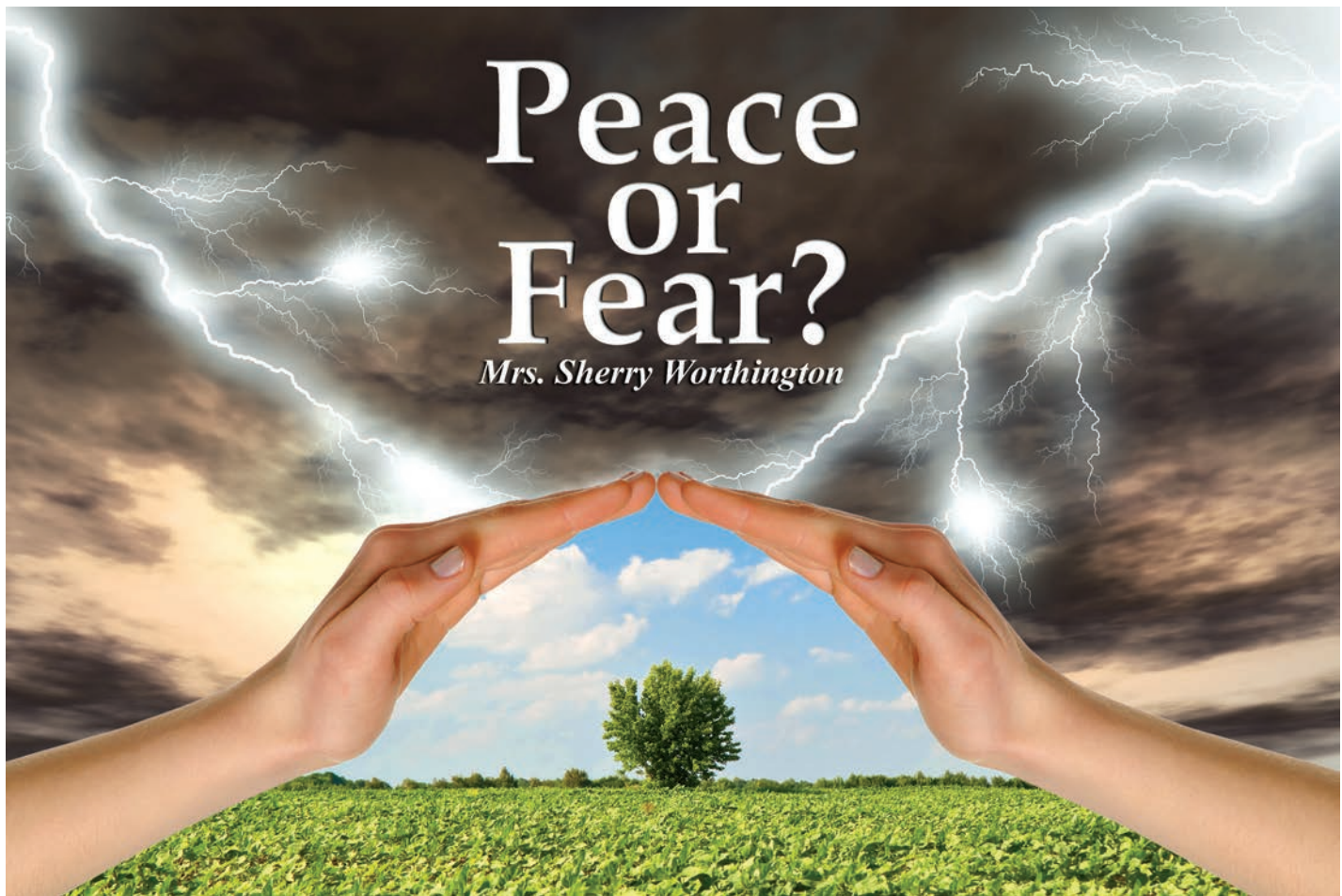
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Peace Or Fear?

Mrs. Sherry Worthington

I know that I am supposed to keep up with the news and what is going on around me. I understand we cannot make an informed decision if we don't keep up with current events. But sometimes I just want to draw a circle around my little world and shut everything else out.

I am weary of not knowing what the truth is. When I watch the news or turn on the radio, I hear a different story depending on who is talking. Our country is hurting and a lot of bad things are happening. My heart aches. I am not sure which is worse—the actual events our country is going through or the people who are trying to profit from others' pain. Who knows?

We cannot trust the media or our politicians. There are a few that appear to have our country's best

interest at heart, but they are hard to find. What is going to happen to our country? What is going to happen to our children and grandchildren? What about our churches?

If I let myself, I can become fearful. In my lifetime, I have seen so many changes. The issues in today's world cause me great concern. If I am not careful, I can become fretful. I don't like what I see.

People have always had concerns about America, but they seemed to love her. No, she is not perfect, but I would not want to live anywhere else. I have seen so much hate and disrespect towards her. It seems if we say something good about her, we are the ones that are hated. There was a time it was okay to discuss differing opinions, shake hands afterward, and go home. You could disagree with

someone and still have respect for them. It is called living in the land of the free. That privilege seems to be in jeopardy today.

When I watch my grandchildren playing, all seems to be well. My children are around the table having a meal, and my husband is by my side. In my little bubble, I can forget about the coronavirus, the political unrest, and the racial tension in America. I can forget about hurricanes, floods, and tornadoes for just a little while. I can pretend the sin that runs rampant is not a threat to my precious family and friends. But that is not reality, is it? I really think the only safe place would be on a mountaintop somewhere away from civilization. I remember when I was a child, I would ride a bicycle all over the neighborhood and walk home from school. Now, I would be afraid to

let my child ride his bike all over the neighborhood or walk home from school. Maybe that is why parents have their children inside on their electronics. But that is not safe either. Perhaps the greatest danger for any family is the different screens in our lives. Screen time has been shown to be harmful to children and adults. Besides the damage to our brains, the temptation is rampant.

Well, churches have had a hard time the last few months, too. But I do know one thing, it has been good to be back in church. We have had to cut back for now, but hopefully, we will be in full force before too long. When I look back in time, there were so many churches that were true to the Gospel. They are not so easy to find now. Pastors preached on things that pricked your hearts and stepped on your toes. I am afraid that many times in today's services our hearts are tickled and our toes are padded. A love for the lost was prevalent everywhere. There was a concern for an individual's eternity. I am not saying that there are not any good churches in 2020; however, the message just seems watered down. The lack of insight of some believers surprises me. I have so much to learn, but I am fed the Gospel every time I step into church. I am taught lessons of life. I really need to study my Bible more, but I am thankful for a pastor who teaches the Word.

I caught myself pacing the floor the other night. I was concerned about the unrest and the people that were hurting in our community. I was thinking about our ministry and how hard it had been hit over the last four years. I was asking myself how much more we could endure,...but what was the problem.



All the anxiety can be attributed to one thing. As a Christian, I should know better. See, I told you I had a lot to learn. When we take our eyes off of Christ and try to look to ourselves for answers, we become fearful. The Scriptures tell us to fear not! **Isaiah 41:10** says *“Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness.”*

What a promise! The God who created the universe will hold me up with His hand of righteousness. He is not going to leave me or forsake me. **Deuteronomy 31:6** says *“Be strong and of a good courage, fear not, nor be afraid of them: for the LORD thy God, he [it is] that doth go with thee; he will not fail thee, nor forsake thee.”*

My God is going to hold me with His hands, and He is never going to leave me. Notice the Scripture says

that God is holding my hand. It is the same as when I was a child. When I crossed the street, my daddy held my hand. He wasn't counting on me holding his hand. His grip was much stronger. God is holding on to me. He is not going to let me go.

God is Someone we can trust. Whatever happens around us, He is dependable and strong. We must keep our eyes focused on Him in order to have confidence as we go through life. What is the goal? No, it is not to live on a mountain top. It is to share God's love with everyone around us and tell them about His Son Jesus who died for our sins. God is the only One Who can give us true peace and safety. Tell someone about Him today!



Mrs. Worthington has five children and eleven grandchildren. She serves as Principal of Pathway Christian Academy in Goldsboro.

And Finally...



Blessings During Lockdown Continued From Anonymous Contributors...

We have experienced so many good things during lockdown. I have had more time with my children, whom I was missing so much. I got to teach them myself and learn what they were struggling with or doing well with first hand. We have been able to begin new family devotions each night with the extra time to get baths and school work done before supper instead of the mad rush of getting home late after work and picking up the children. The slower pace of life has prompted family walks which we now look forward to very much. This has also been a time of rest and recovery, both physically, emotionally, and spiritually. Our church family has shown our love for one another in many ways. All in all, it has been a time of rest and peace for us.

I know this time has been a time of hardship for many, but my family has only benefited from the slowing down from regular life. We have had more time together, family worship together, and a learning to trust our Heavenly Father more. It has been a time of sweetness once we handed our anxieties over to Him and placed our trust in His capable and loving hands.

The lockdown has given me opportunities to share my faith in God (and also my peace) to my neighbors and to others during any necessary trips from home. The anxiety around me was obvious, and I tried to share about my big God by showing others the peace and calm I could have because of Him. I tried to lift His name high any time I got a chance.

Blessings? We were facing a financial crunch before COVID-19 hit. As the crisis began to mount, my husband and I began to wonder what lay ahead of us. If things were tight before, what would they be now? We grew closer as we weathered this storm together, supporting each other and affirming one another. We kept saying, "I am glad we are in this together." Then, we also began to see God's provision in many various ways, ways that could only be described as coming from Him. Coincidence was not an option. We found ourselves still tight financially, but nowhere near the desperation we should have been in had things gone as they "should have."

"My Hometown"

We'd like your help for an upcoming edition of "And Finally..."

Write to us in 150 words or less and tell us about your hometown.

The deadline for submission is July 31, 2020.

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As you know, we were unable to have our Spring Share-A-Thon, so we scheduled a successful MINI-Fund-Drive in June. Now, to help complete our original goal we will be holding another MINI-Fund-Drive in July. The event will be held July 7-9. If you have not already given, please prayerfully consider a special gift to help in our work.



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