



Capstone Ministries



Restoring Children! Strengthening Families!

"The stone the builders rejected has become the capstone" Psalm 118:22

A prayer letter from Dan and Patty Schmelzer, Kisumu, Kenya

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The number of
street boys
reconciled with
family by
Capstone
Ministries to date:

433

10 went home January



Check out Capstone
on Facebook.



"SHARES" CARD HOLDERS

For those in California who use the
"Shares Card" with Savemart
supermarket, the program has
changed to an E-Scrip Program.

"Reassurance: Key to Reconciliation"

"And he reassured them and spoke kindly to them" Genesis 50:21

They were guilty and they knew it! They had bullied him when father was not in earshot; called him names: "Baby!" "Father's Pet" "Dreamer"! Sin begat sin! Betrayal begat violence! Envy begat hatred!

And then the cover up ensued. Clothes dipped in blood with the intent of deceiving and shifting blame. How would father ever know?! But guilt cannot be buried in deception. They knew all too well what they had done. More than a decade passed and the guilt remained, unconfessed,... rumbling like an ulcer!

Then the nightmare became reality. The one they had abused was now the second most powerful man in the world with the authority to seek revenge. They fell on their faces before him, hearts racing in fear. What would he do?! They could only imagine the worst.

But Joseph forgave his brothers, wept with joy in seeing them after all these years. He embraced them and blessed them with the best Egypt had to offer. But in the corner of their hearts, guilt still whispered its threats: You don't deserve this! One day...Joseph will get his pound of flesh!

Then father died, and instead of mourning the brothers give audience to the whispering guilt of the past. Surely now Joseph will punish us! Oh, how self-oriented we become when guilt fills our hearts instead of grace!

**Johannes
counsels with
a boy and his
mother in the
Capstone
office.**



Many Biblical scholars see Joseph as a type of Christ. Certainly in these closing verses of Genesis we see the comparison. Grace and forgiveness had been spoken sincerely to Joseph's 10 brothers. They were undeserving, yet it was given. And now a highly charged emotional event demonstrates just how fragile a grip they have on forgiveness. It seems to slip through their fingers when they most need it. And Joseph responds with kindness, understanding and reassurance. He seems to know just what his brothers need and he willingly humbles himself and gently reassures them.

(Cont. p. 2 left column)

In almost every case we have encountered, sin has spoiled a relationship between a child and his family. It isn't always as serious as it was between Joseph and his brothers but it is the most significant factor that led them to run to the street. Simply repatriating them only allows the sin and guilt to fester and grow. It must be addressed.

Just like with the brothers, guilt often rears its ugly head even after repentance has been spoken and forgiveness applied. It is extremely challenging to reassure someone of forgiveness when you have struggled with the pain of betrayal and broken trust to speak a word of forgiveness only to have that forgiveness doubted later on. It is often true that the key to a long lasting relationship rests with the offended party. It is often the guilt ridden person who acts out, attempting to punish himself/herself just like the 10 brothers did. Only grace can assuage the guilty conscience. It is the balm of Gilead, the salve on the open wound.



Brian Poi with his guardian just before starting H.S.

Developing spiritually mature families that forgive again and again is challenging for our staff. They encounter circumstances in homes that would leave most of us mumbling to ourselves about how to proceed. But God is always able. He is the author of change and reconciliation. The spiritual toolkit we have developed for staff use in homes allows the Capstone staff to tell a story from the Word that allows a family to see themselves in God's plan. Each Biblical story in the toolkit addresses real events in the lives of God's people. This story of Joseph is the one the staff have just completed. Pray that the Spirit brings to mind the tools needed as our staff work to bring reconciliation and perhaps even more importantly reassurance to those attacked by the guilt of the past. And God bless you for your support of this work of God's grace among the families of reconciled street boys.

TIK – This is Kenya

This is a new column and I hope you enjoy it. It will focus on our unique experiences in Kenya that just become part of living here.

FOOD

Unlike the western world where diversity of food choices is the norm, Kenya has “staple” foods. A maize based food is served at least once a day in almost every home. Ugali is maize flour added to boiling water and cooked until solid. It is eaten usually with some greens or stewed meat and consumed normally without utensils as pictured. Urban areas like Nairobi, where there is more international influence have all the choices one could imagine. IMO, Kenya has some of the best Indian food anywhere.



DRIVING

Kenyans drive on the left side of the road, which takes some adjustment for Americans. Road conditions have improved dramatically in the last 15 years but potholes still abound. Watch out for road bumps that slow traffic next to schools and near intersections. You can spoil your transmission if you hit one too hard. And watch out for police stops. They use spiked road barriers to encourage you to stop and be inspected.

You can, of course choose to use public transport—called matatu—but you may have to share your seat with a chicken or a goat and getting there will take you twice as long. The joke is: Matatu in Swahili means: “always room for one more.”



Do you use the “Shares” Savemart card when shopping?

Attention: Program Change

The Shares card is being changed to an e-scrip program. Savemart has made it easy for you to make this change from scanning your card. Here are the easy steps the next time you are shopping in Savemart in California or Nevada:

It's as simple as providing your phone number at checkout:

1. Sign up for the NEW* Shares program by registering your phone number or Save Smart Rewards Card with eScrip.
2. *You will no longer use your S.H.A.R.E.S. card (effective April 1, 2016). Register your phone or your Save Smart Rewards card number (this will not be your S.H.A.R.E.S. card)
3. Shop at Save Mart Supermarkets and provide your registered phone number or card at checkout.

You can also go to the following web address to make the switch:

<http://www.escrip.com/merchants/identity/savemart/index.jsp>

Donation: For Capstone and support for Dan & Patty

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

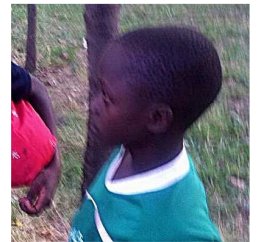
Email _____

Donation Amount _____

Designation? _____

New Rescues

Capstone has rescued and reconciled at home ten boys in January 2018. They are pictured below. Please excuse the less than perfect pictures. Sometimes newly rescued boys are not the most trusting when it comes to photos. L-R beginning at the top: Derek, Tom, Basil, Malvine, Collins, Evans, Hassan, Paul, Joseph, Moses.



The Face of Reconciliation

Reconciliation between us and God is an event. It took place once and for all time on Calvary. However reconciliation between people is a process and takes patience, persistence and faith.

I am sure if you have listened to us present Capstone at your church or function, you have heard us say those three sentences. The lead article dealt with the complicated nature of reconciliation and its spiritual components. Reconciliation also has what one might call sociological components.

Capstone is involved in enhancing stability for boys reconciled with their families with specific projects. In this article I wanted to highlight some of those supplementary projects.

High Flyer Project

A child who is in school is automatically removed from temptations that can lure him into the street. Succeeding in school enhances self-esteem and brings hope for a brighter future. Once a child reaches Grade 7, Capstone provides a study aid called a “High Flyer.” It is a book that gives overview lessons on the subjects tested in school. Preparation for the KCPE exam in 8th grade is a long process and already in 7th grade, serious pupils are preparing for this 3 day exam. The High Flyer prepares pupils for this exam. Currently Capstone provides the “High Flyer” for eight 7th grade pupils and ten 8th grade pupils. We have seen a significant improvement in exam results since we have started this project.

D’Warren receives his High Flyer as he begins Grade 7. Pray he prepares well.



Lunch Project

Food insecurity can be a push factor for some boys who come from poor rural homes. Tales of white people handing out food in Kisumu can fill a child’s mind with all sorts of ideas when his stomach is empty. It is a reality that in some rural families, daily bread is not always automatic. For this reason Capstone does assist in exceptional situations where self-reliance may take time to develop. Currently 10 families are helped by this project. Food is always given in kind directly to the school to remove any temptation by the family to spend the cash on something else. The idea is: if a child knows he will get food every day in school, he will be less tempted to run away from home for lack of food.

School Uniform Project

The sooner a child can be enrolled in school, the more stable he will be at home. The phrase: “*Idle hands are the devil’s workshop*,” is really true when it comes to a child in a rural home, especially when there are tempting distractions. Normally we encourage parents to provide a school uniform for their child in order to enroll him in school. In some circumstances where financial issue will delay a child’s enrollment, Capstone will provide the basic uniform and ask the parents to buy the extras like a “sport kit” as they are able. Currently 23 children have received a uniform this year.



Lameck dressed in his school uniform.