

*CRIBB<S>NOTE – January 17, 2010*

Sometimes things get worse before they get better. We may look up and see only clouds hovering above our heads. Violent storms bring beating rains and torrential floods. Disasters strike without warning and everything changes in a flash. There are times when we feel absolutely helpless. We don't know what to do or where to turn. Life is no longer as we have known it.

For many of us, such scenarios are beyond comprehension. We have never experienced profound transformation and devastating loss. We have no reference point or personal knowledge that connects us to the vast unknown existence of despair and depravation. Yet, more than half the people who live on our planet are deeply and perpetually aware of what it means to eke out a life on the margins. They pray for change. They desperately desire radical shifts that will release them from the jarring grips of injustice and the nightmare of prolonged agony.

Who truly cares about families, children, and persons who survive in the under belly of an immoral society? They are rendered invisible, unmentionable non-beings whose daily regimen is reduced to scraping for meager morsels and slow drips of unsafe water. Their faces are hidden. Their names go unrecorded. They creep along the corridors of out-of-the-way crevices in the shadows of towering structures. They are not noticed. They wonder will things change for them.

In the rush of daily commerce, many of us are too busy to see, hear, feel, or know the depths of dangerous dens dangling repetitious dramas of inhumane conditions just steps in front of us.

Our iPods mute the din of silent screams shouting through the airwaves of disconnected social networks as we search for purpose in a meaningless stream of constant nonsense. The blare of disjointed rhythmic pulsation deadens our sensitivity to the needs of others and deafens our ability to listen to the cries of survivors. Our souls have been sold to peddlers of temporal, privatized pleasure for fleeting sensations of extreme ecstasy without caring about human reality. Who really cares?

Does it matter that our very existence depends on the unfamiliar sweat oozing out of the bodies of laborers who dig in the dirt to deliver dinner to our tables? Have we considered the toil exerted by displaced relatives who traveled great distances to provide a living for loved ones left behind in sun-scorched fields now barren; where unemployment is routine and a way of life is dying in the loneliness of forgotten locations?

In the midst of sophisticated systems and advanced technological achievements, our humanity still lags behind the potential of true greatness and sensitive caring. We have taken a turn away from building a "more perfect union." We have broken the bonds of being together in the beautiful mosaic of God's imagination in which every person lives fully, simply, and cheerfully. A change is coming that will require us to reassess our priorities and decide which course we will take to correct our mistakes. We cannot escape the urgent need to open our hearts, minds, eyes, ears, and souls to receive a passionate plea for compassion to prevail in these days. God made us intentionally to address the issues that divide us and to heal the seared scars of a hurting world. It is time to act appropriately and immediately to make the change that is called for right now.