

PERPSECTIVES OF CHRISTMAS

It's that wonderful time of year again where we are able to celebrate with those we love. I pray for each one of you, that God will show you His presence in a very real way this Christmas.

Christmas in Ethiopia revolves around God, church and family. Unlike many other countries these are the preferred and cherished gifts for Ethiopians. Sadly for many even these non-material gifts are not attainable as survival is the only focus.

This Christmas, imagine if the only gift you wanted was to merely survive.

That was the case for this mother, Habtam shown in the photo above when she came to Grace Center. Habtam's mother died when she was very young and by the time she was 15, she found herself living alone in a very difficult situation. She became a servant in someone's house. Later met a man and was married. At this time her life was better. They were blessed with a son and twins soon followed. Her husband didn't want to have any more children and left the family when Habtam, although using birth control, became pregnant again. In addition to having multiple children to care for, her health was also failing and her twins had medical problems. When Habtam came to Grace Center all she had left was this mat she was sitting on in this photo.



Ethiopia has one of the highest rates of twin births out of anywhere in the world. Grace Center currently cares for nine sets of twins! In many cases in Ethiopia, twins are not seen as a blessing – but at Grace Center, they truly are!

Grace Center is always about seeing how each individual can be helped in the best way. We pray with the families and also pray about what God is calling us to do for them. We then, help them to reach the goals God has in mind for them.

At the same time Habtam came to Grace Center, so did several other families, including Selam and her two children. Selam fled to Bahir Dar to escape an abusive marriage just after her oldest son was born. After some time, she married again. But the moment she became pregnant her husband left her. For her livelihood she collects and sells cow dung. But she didn't even make enough money to even buy food. The clothes this family is wearing in this photo are the best clothes they had.

They had nothing... Until Grace...



This is true for most of us. We have nothing without **His Grace**. In Selam's situation there was not only spiritual poverty, but intense physical poverty. We are very blessed at Grace Center in Ethiopia that we see such amazing transformation when we reach out to help those in need. It is unusual for someone in Ethiopia to blame God for what they are going through. Instead they praise God for the positive outcome saying things like, *I knew God wouldn't let us starve for another day.*

Since coming to Grace Center Selam and Habtam and their children have received food, medical care, necessary items for their house as well as clothing. The children are in school and day care through Grace Center and these mothers are able to work and provide for their children. You can see the amazing difference in the photos here, the top photo of Habtam and the bottom photo of Selam.

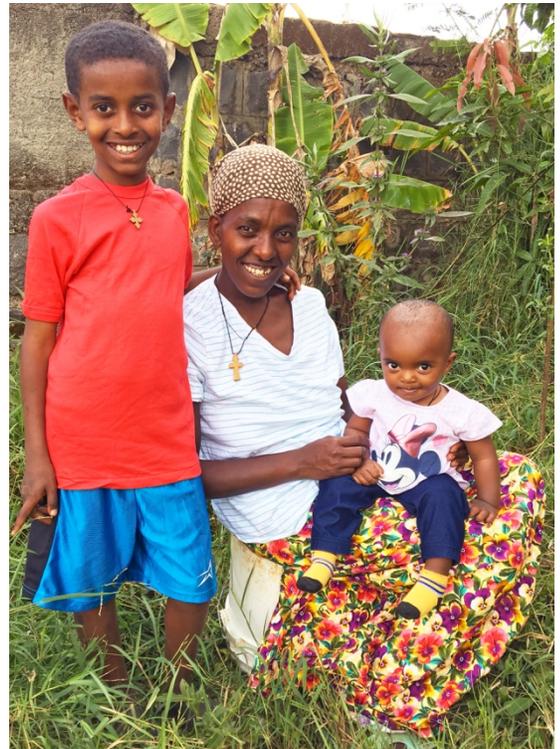


Praise God for His restoration.

New families come all the time. Unlike at other programs, our staff love working at Grace Center; they can say YES to those who are truly in need unlike many other places who turn people away because the program is full. At Grace Center, we never want to limit what God can do!

Because we are exceptional at what we do, the Ethiopian government has asked us to expand. We need your help so that we can always be used by God to say YES to those in need.

I would also ask you to please give monthly. Consider giving \$60 monthly that will cover the cost for one child or \$175 that will provide for a child that lives at Grace Center full time. You can easily set up automatic credit card or bank transfer payments through our website, www.GraceCenterFoundation.org. The change in the lives of Habtam and Selam and so many others only comes through you. If you already give monthly, I would ask you to consider increasing this amount. In the last few months, the cost of food has skyrocketed due to political conflict and food shortages. **We have also been informed that before the end of the year the current cost of food will double!**



I greatly appreciate you! Thank you for your willingness to save and transform lives!

God bless you and Merry Christmas!

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