

GOD'S STORY

The Foundation for FH's Work in Relief and Development



**FOOD FOR
THE HUNGRY**

GOD'S STORY

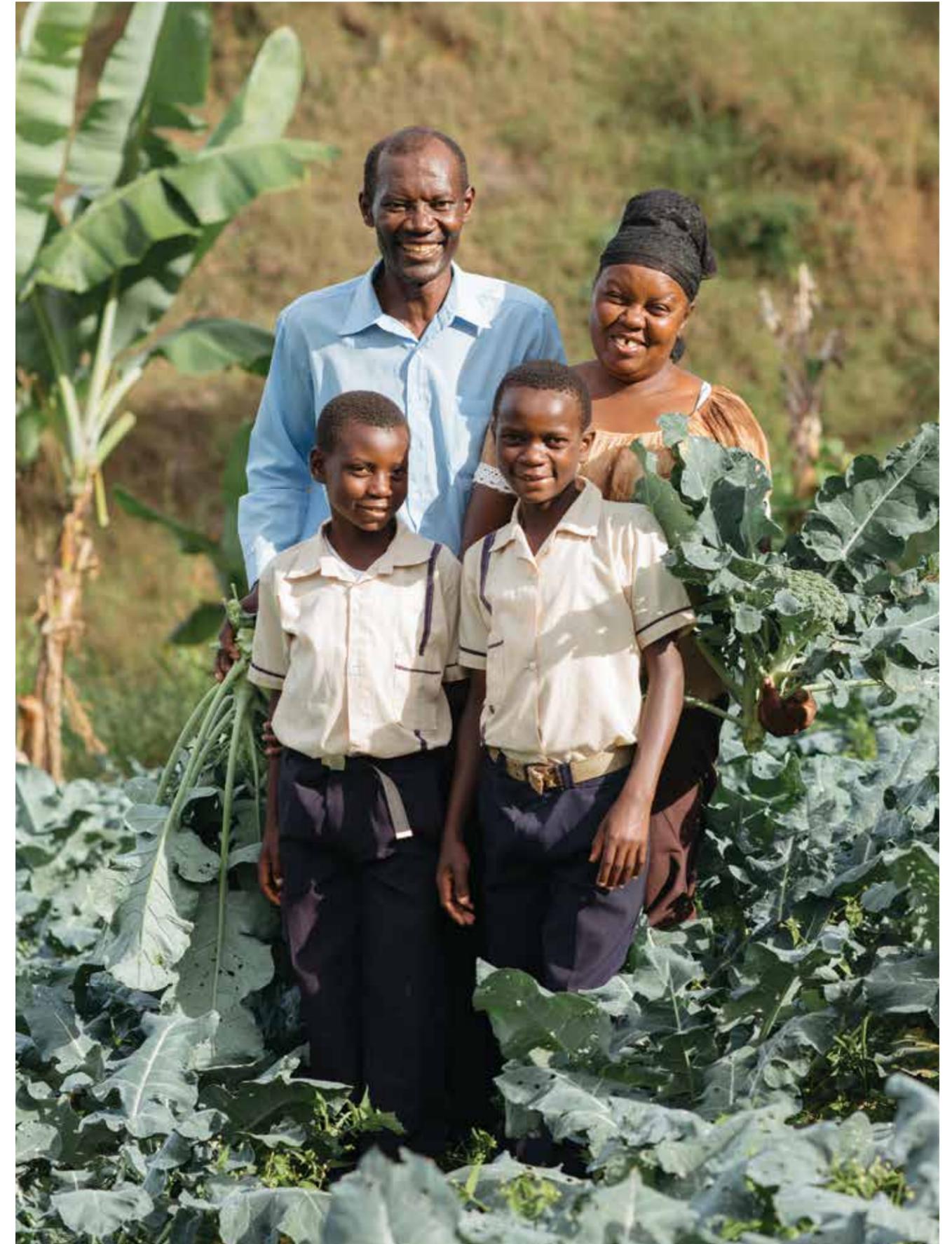
The Foundation for FH's Work in Relief and Development

The following theological assertions are drawn from and stand upon Scripture, to which we are committed as God's Word and authority for our lives, as we seek to bear His image in ourselves and identify His image in others.

"All Scripture is God-breathed and useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness."
– 2 Tim 3:16

Contributors:

Andy Barnes, Task Force
Sarah Berger, Task Force
Peter Howard, Task Force
Subodh Kumar, Task Force
Mike Meyers, Task Force
Ryan Smedes, Task Force
Rev. William Haley, Executive Director of
CORACLE, External Advisor and Review
Anna Bret Allen, Editing and Research Assistant
Luis Noda, Lead Writer and Task Force Convener



PREFACE

Since 1971, Food for the Hungry (FH) has been responding internationally to human suffering through a Christian approach in relief and development. For nearly five decades, FH has embraced several schools of thought that have shaped its theology and vocation to serve the most vulnerable in the world. Starting with the Lausanne Covenant, FH has been inspired and enriched by ideas such as symbiotic ministries, integral mission, biblical worldview, transformational development, and recently the Christian social justice movement. Unfortunately, all of these theological and corporate identity elements have been scattered in many documents over time. Therefore, we have recognized the need to review, recount, and put them together in one written document.

In the past five years, FH took the initiative to specify and document its programmatic model based on the mandate to effectuate transformational development. Child Focused Community Transformation (CFCT) emerged from this process with the purpose of graduating communities and people from extreme poverty. As of May 2017, FH has updated its vision, purpose, and values (The Heartbeat) and its global strategic plan that will lead the organization into the future.

These developments have heightened the need to review and document the theological foundation of FH's work around the world. Luis Noda, Vice President for Transformational Engagement, has been appointed to lead this initiative and to convene a task force for this purpose.

Thus, the objective of this current document has been to specify the theological assertions that inspire, guide, and support FH's work in international relief and development. The document is written in the most concise way possible, using common language, that it might be easily understood and even translated into multiple languages. We aim to strengthen and encourage FH's staff as transformational agents so that they might better facilitate transformation in the context in which they work. We also hope this document is applied by the different components of FH's global ministry (programs, finance, marketing, etc.) in order to consistently communicate our Christian calling, and to develop partnerships with like-minded organizations and ministries. To keep things simple, we have named this document *God's Story, The Foundation for FH's Work in Relief and Development*, as the foundation for our collective work in relief and development.

OUTLINE

INTRODUCTION

God's Story: Creation, Fall, Redemption, and Restoration

I. Creation: God's Design

1. God's Character
 - A. Glory
 - B. Trinity
 - C. Love and Goodness
2. The Image of God in Human Beings
 - A. Self: The Imago Dei and Our God-Given Potential
 - B. Relationship to Others
3. The Natural World
 - A. All Creation
 - B. Stewardship of Creation
 - C. The Kingdom of God: Shalom, Flourishing, and Development

II. The Fall: Broken Relations

1. Broken Relationship with God
2. Broken Relationships with Self and Others
3. Broken Creation: Suffering, Sickness, and Futility
 - A. Futility
 - B. Suffering and Sickness
 - C. God's Common Grace
4. Jesus: The Coming of the Kingdom of God

III. Redemption: Reconciliation

1. The Way of God
 - A. Incarnation
 - B. Humility
 - C. Suffering
 - D. Reconciliation of All Things
 - E. Love
2. The People of God
 - A. The Role of the Church
 - B. Agents of the Kingdom: Vocation and Calling
3. The Work with God
 - A. Scripture Engagement
 - B. Prayer and Contemplation
 - C. Church Participation
 - D. Following Jesus

IV. Restoration: All Hungers End Worldwide

1. The Hope of God
 - A. Transformation
 - B. Reconciled Relationships
 - C. New Creation
 - D. The Kingdom of God

INTRODUCTION

God's Story: Creation, Fall, Redemption, and Restoration

Everything proceeds from and is sustained by God. He created this world and put human beings in it with the purpose of flourishing and taking care of all things created. Unfortunately, we disobeyed God and sin marred our relationships and the rest of God's creation, opening the door for violence, injustice, suffering, and death to enter in.

The good news is that God hasn't abandoned us in our need. Right after Adam and Eve's disobedience, God provided a path of redemption, out of love for us, through the coming of Jesus Christ to live and die for us. The Bible tells us that God is reconciling everything through Jesus so that the entirety of creation could come back to perfect communion with God. In this regard we can say that God is the first relief and development worker in the universe. One day, all things will be transformed under His Kingdom and there will be no more suffering, poverty, injustice, violence, and death.

Meanwhile, we as Jesus' followers have been called to work for God and His Kingdom, responding to human suffering, advocating for reconciliation, and walking with people and communities to facilitate transformation¹ so that we all move forward to achieve God's given potential.

¹ Please see Appendix 2 for the definition of *transformation* and *transformational development*.

God's story can be summarized through four concepts: Creation, the Fall, Redemption, and Restoration. As in any story, the identity and characteristics of those involved matter: God, humans, and the rest of creation. Our individual lives matter for eternity when our personal stories fit into God's story. God and His plan are at the center of Food for the Hungry's attention, and we focus on God even before we focus on the poor, based on the conviction that by doing this we will be better able to serve the most vulnerable in the world.

The following theological assertions follow the logic of God's story and are organized in a way that reflects the reconciliation mandate in the four key relations we have as humans: with God, with self, with others, and with the rest of creation.

There is, of course, more to the mystery of God than we can know or articulate. Still God has revealed Himself through Scripture and through His Son Jesus Christ, and has given us enough to be able to chart a long story with key themes. However, the following is incomplete, as God is infinite (Rom 11:33-34).



I. CREATION: GOD'S DESIGN

We start with God's creation to try to understand God's intended design for His creation and our role in it. To perform well in our work in relief and development, we must return to God's design for the world and exercise our Christian imagination for peace, justice, and abundant life (John 10:10).

1. GOD'S CHARACTER

Everything starts and ends with God (Rev 22:13). The universe and the planet we live in is God's (Ps 24:1; Deut 10:14), and He sustains all things (Col 1:16-17). It is important to understand some key characteristics of God in order to posture ourselves as we work in relief and development.

A. Glory

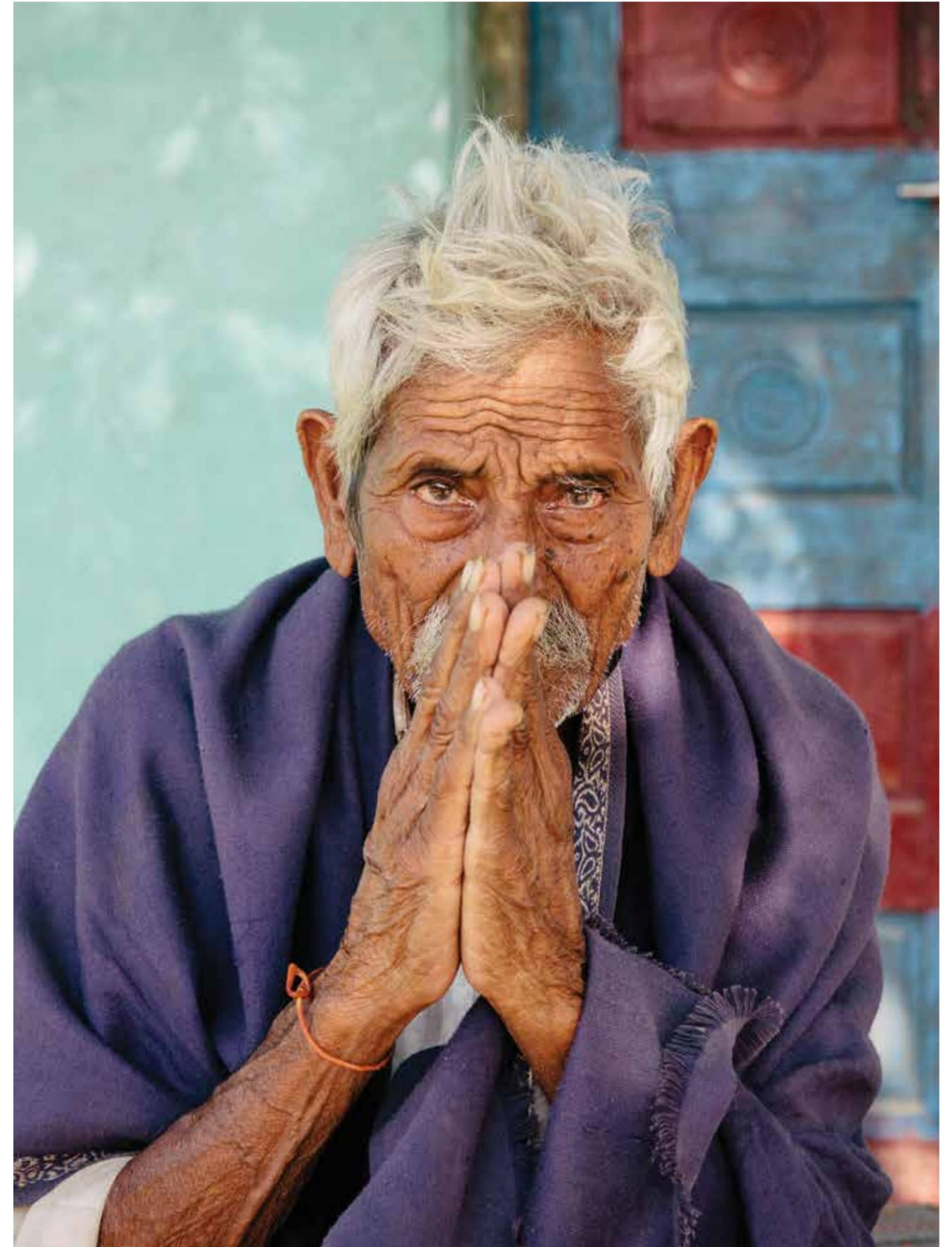
God best described Himself when He told Moses, "I am who I am" (Ex 3:14), meaning that God cannot be described better than by referring to Himself. There is no comparison or reference that we can apply to God (Is 46:9). He is unique, and He is sublime without words possible to describe. Moreover, God has no causal relation to His being. Nobody created God or contributes to His

existence. He simply exists. Because of His sublime uniqueness, God is constantly worshipped by the words "holy, holy, holy, is the Lord Almighty" (Is 6:3; Rev 4:8). In His generous and loving character, God has created beings and things out of His own imagination and power in order to share His existence with them. God cares for His creation and made it to reflect His glory.

B. Trinity

The Bible teaches us that God is three persons with distinctive characteristics, but one being at the end. This Christian mystery is contained in the theology of the Trinity. God exists in three persons: the Father, the Son (Jesus), and the Holy Spirit.* In the Trinity, the Son honors the Father and the Holy Spirit, the Father honors the Son and the Holy Spirit, and the Holy Spirit honors the Father and the Son. We can replace the word "honor" by the word "love" (John 5:20). God's love in the Godhead is perfect and sufficient. God doesn't need anyone outside of the Trinity to love Him for God to experience being loved more.

*A reference to the Trinity can be found in the declaration of the Apostles' Creed.



Jesus always reached out to the needy with compassion and care.

At the same time, God's love in the Trinity overflows and extends to His creation, wrapping it in a symphony of love (1 Cor 13:13). The Trinity is the starting point of the concept of community. As the Trinity lives in harmony and love for each other, we, being created in the image of God, are made to live in the same way (John 15:9). This applies to families, churches, communities, and all of humanity. God, who is community in His core being, wants us to promote and live in healthy functional communities.

C. Love and Goodness

The essence of God is love, as seen in the Trinity and throughout His words and actions in the Bible. The Bible also tells us that God is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger, and abounding in love and faithfulness (Ex 34:6). The most significant demonstration of God's love to us and to the rest of His creation is the coming of His Son, Jesus Christ (1 Jn 4:9). Jesus came to live, to teach, and to die for us. He came to reconcile all things to Himself (Col 1:20) despite the fact that we have disobeyed God. God extends His mercy and love lavishly (Ps 36:5). We can even say that

God delights by loving His creatures abundantly. We can hope for the best because God is deeply invested in our lives.

The Apostle John says that God is love (1 John 4:8). Therefore, as God is love within Himself and extends that love to all of His creation, He commands us to also be love. Jesus summarized The Law (including the Ten Commandments) and the prophets in two simple instructions: love God with all of your being, and love your neighbor as yourself (Mat 22:37-40). The commandment to love our neighbor means to love any human being irrespective of her or his race, sex, age, social condition, or any other difference. In a similar fashion, God compels us to love the most vulnerable. Throughout the Bible we see that God is deeply concerned about the poor, the sick, the excluded, the suffering (Ps 146:7-10; Is 1:17; Deut 10:18; Matt 25:35-40). Jesus always reached out to the needy with compassion and care (Matt 9:36). Therefore, we also need to have a special place in our hearts for the most vulnerable and treat people accordingly.



Human beings have been created to live in relationship with others.

2. THE IMAGE OF GOD IN HUMAN BEINGS

A. Self: Imago Dei and Our God-Given Potential

When God lovingly created Adam and Eve, He didn't only shape their bodies from dust, but He blew the breath of life into their beings (Gen 2:7). Therefore, the Bible teaches us that God created humankind in His own image (Gen 1:27). We are image bearers, set apart from the rest of God's creation. This is the foundation of the intrinsic value of every human life irrespective of sex, race, age, abilities, or social condition. Every person on Earth is precious and uniquely created and loved by God.

We reflect God's image by thinking abstractly and logically, following morals, being spiritual, having a sense of eternity, and engaging in relationships. As relational beings, we engage in four key relationships: with God, with ourselves, with others, and with the rest of God's creation. Being in the image of God also means that we have potential for development and transformation.

B. Relationship to Others

Human beings are created to live in relationship with others. Through the biblical narrative, we learn that God created the first man and the first woman

to live in a lifelong relationship through the bond of marriage (Matt 19:4-6). Thus, marriage and family became the basic structure of society and the means by which we populate the Earth. As part of the image of God through the Trinity, humans have been created to be community in order to live in harmony, respect, and love. Thus, human beings reflect the image of God, not only individually but also collectively. Marriage, brotherhood, friendship, and institutional arrangements, when functioning rightly, communicate the image of God.

3. THE NATURAL WORLD

A. All Creation

When God finished creating all things, He declared they were very good (Gen 1:31). Moreover, all creation reflects some of God's invisible qualities such as His eternal power and divine nature (Rom 1:20). God also gave us the capacity to discover and understand creation and to relate to it. Therefore, God's creation is precious and valuable. Humans were created from the dust of the earth (Gen 2:7) and God entrusted the cultivation of His creation to humankind (Gen 1:26-28). Our life and flourishing depend on the conditions on this Earth.



As image bearers, humans reflect God in their capacity to create and to innovate.

B. Stewardship of Creation

We have been created with the responsibility to care for, cultivate, and advance God's creation (Gen 2:15). In order to do this, human beings have been given power and dominion over the rest of the creation (Ps 8:4-8). The stewardship mandate is a sacred role that means that we use God's creation carefully and lovingly. God gave us work. God entrusted us with creation to provide for our needs, engage our worship to God by admiring the creation's beauty and power, and further the overall development of things, including us. We have not been placed on this Earth to deplete the natural resources or to cause the destruction of His creation. Our very subsistence depends on how well we steward what God has provided to us on this Earth.

C. The Kingdom of God: Shalom, Flourishing and Development

God is not absent from His creation. Rather, He is immanently and intimately connected to and operates throughout creation (Ps 19, 65). God is the ruler of the universe, and through His love and compassion, exercises a government of justice, peace, and unity (Is 33:5). This is the Kingdom of

God. Jesus Christ talked about God's Kingdom multiple times (e.g., Matt 6:10, 31-34; Luke 4:43, 6:20) and through His redemptive deed on the cross, established His Kingdom to move forward until its completion.

Shalom is a word in Hebrew that essentially means peace, but the concept of shalom goes deeper. According to Cornelius Plantinga, Jr., president of Calvin Theological Seminary (2002), "Shalom means universal flourishing, wholeness and delight. It is a rich state of affairs in which natural needs are satisfied and natural gifts fruitfully employed, all under the arch of God's love." Shalom is a state in which the four relationships we have as humans are healthy and functional. This is the goal of God's Kingdom (Is 9:7).

God created human beings to be good stewards of creation and to prosper and advance the status of all things. This means creating things for the benefit and flourishing of life on this Earth. As image bearers, humans reflect God in their capacity to create and to innovate. This concept of development and flourishing is at the core of FH's work in relief and development.



II. FALL: BROKEN RELATIONSHIPS

The Fall is the second major event in God's story, beginning with the disobedience of Adam and Eve (Gen 3). This event has terrible individual and cosmological consequences. Because of sin, death has entered into our existence (Rom 5:12). The Fall has marred human beings and the rest of God's creation (Gen 3:16-19).

1. BROKEN RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD

Adam and Eve both lived in the presence of God and in a state of innocence and trust (Gen 2:25). Both had unimpeded communion with God. The Fall broke this relationship and alienated humans from God (Gen 3:8; Col 1:21; Eph 4:18). We have turned away from God and are constantly seeking to set ourselves or other parts of creation up as gods (Is 53:6; Rom 1:25). Our minds and hearts are lost in darkness without the guidance of God's light. We stand under the judgment and wrath of God because of our disobedience (John 3:19; Rom 3:23). We forfeit the purpose of our creation and experience death instead of abundant life. Despite the desperate situation of the Fall, hope remains. God hasn't abandoned us (Deut 4:31) but enacted His eternal plan to bring back all of God's creation (including, but not limited to, us) to function according to its original design (John 10:10).

2. BROKEN RELATIONSHIPS WITH SELF AND OTHERS

The Fall also has affected our own identity. Sin has marred our self-perception and left us with a gamut of feelings and convictions such as guilt, shame, inferiority, and pride that deeply impact our thinking and behavior. Without a re-established relationship with God, we cannot answer with confidence the question of who we are. Thanks be to God that He didn't abandon us, for through Jesus Christ we are called children of God (1 Jn 3:1).

The Fall also has tragically impacted our interpersonal relations, for through it humans not only decay and die, but also become agents of death. In the Bible, we sadly read about the first homicide. It occurs among sons of Adam and Eve when Cain kills Abel (Gen 4:8). This pattern of one human harming another repeats itself throughout history. Jesus said that one who hates another in her/his heart has sinned already, and what comes from someone's heart defiles this person (Matt 5:21-22; Mark 7:21-23). This reveals the deep relational problem we have in ourselves. Thanks be to God that He didn't abandon us. Jesus came to reunite us and restore peace with God and also with one another (Rom 5:1; Eph 2:14-15).



Poverty is much deeper than the lack of material things.

3. BROKEN CREATION: SUFFERING, SICKNESS, AND FUTILITY

A. Futility

The Fall not only affected human beings but also the rest of creation, provoking it to be less productive and responsive to human effort (Gen 3:17-19; Rom 8:20-21). It is important to mention here that human work is not part of the curse. Work has been established before the Fall (Gen 2:15). We as humans have not lost complete dominion over creation, for God's grace and mercy allows humans to exercise some element of dominion over creation. God in His mercy has not allowed the effects of sin to completely ruin creation or our relationship with it (Ps 65:5-13).

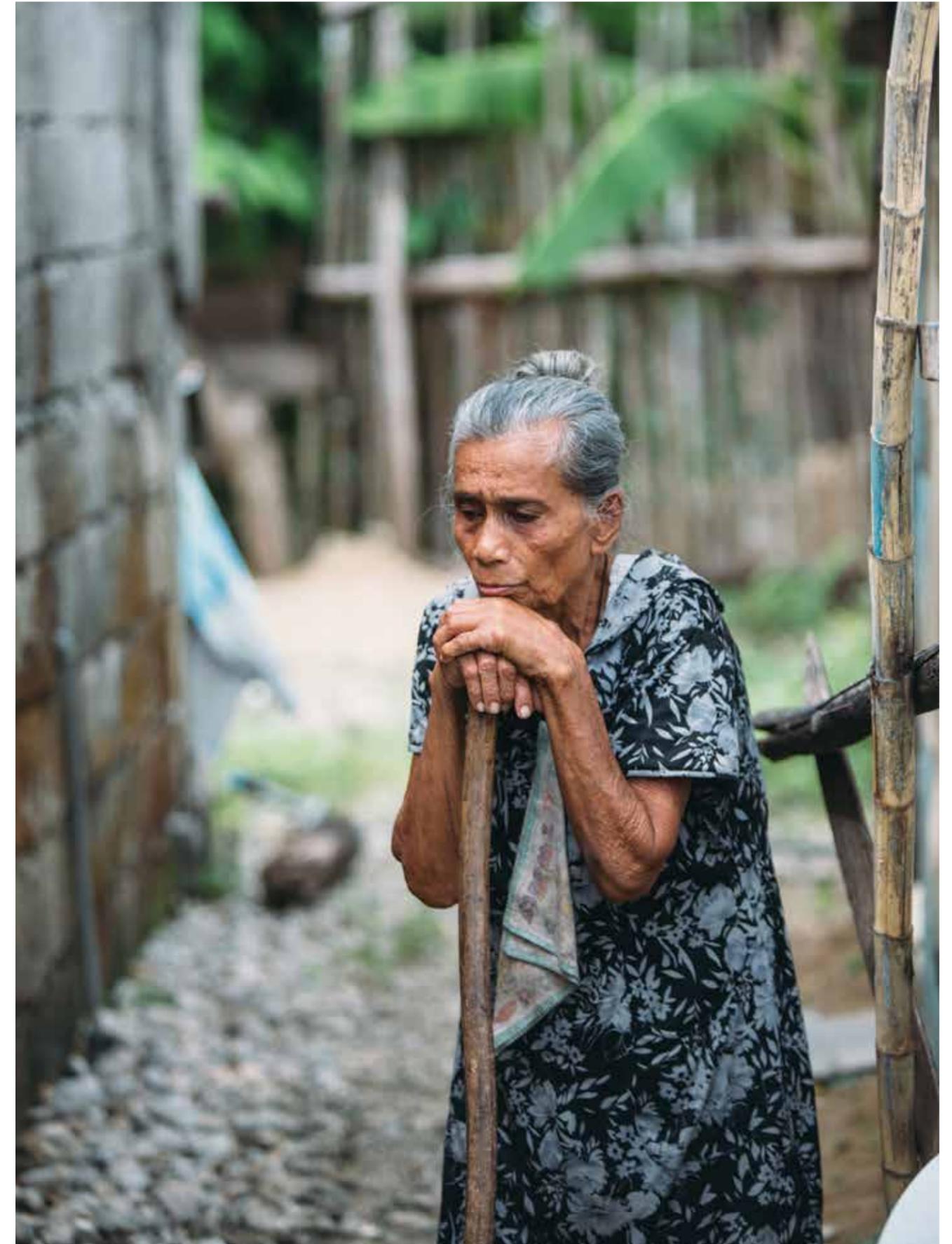
B. Suffering and Sickness

The Fall has introduced evil into God's creation, marring God's Kingdom with suffering which is manifested in injustice, violence, exclusion, exploitation, abuse, and – of course – poverty. We have become poor on multiple levels (spiritual, social, emotional, material, etc.). Sickness and corruption have entered into our existence, leading to death (Rom 6:23). This is the opposite of shalom (well-being and wholeness).

C. God's Common Grace

In the context of the Fall, it is important to include a note about God's common grace. This concept contains the idea that despite the Fall, God, in His mercy, still gives good gifts to all, regardless of faith. Despite sinful total depravity, we do not suffer utter depravity. This means that while every part of creation is affected by sin and evil, not every part of creation is hopelessly debilitated by sin and evil. By God's generous mercy we continue enjoying rain from the heavens, consistency in seasons, delicious fruits and vegetables, and marvelous sunsets (Matt 5:45). Because of the Fall, humans and the rest of creation cannot be as good as they could be. At the same time, because of God's common grace and the strength of God's creation, things in this world are much better than what they could be.

In conclusion, poverty is much deeper than just the lack of material things. It is a status provoked by the four key relationships: with God, self, others and creation being broken. An excellent, though not exhaustive, list of the ways sin impacts these four relationships is found in Galatians 5:19-21. In consequence, we as humans suffer poverty on multiple levels, whether it is spiritual, material, physical, or emotional. In order to overcome poverty, we need God's intervention and the reconciliation of the key relations that characterize human life.



We cannot hope to do the work of God until we allow ourselves to be conformed to the image of His Son.

4. JESUS: THE COMING OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD

In Luke 4, Jesus proclaims, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because He has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to set the oppressed free, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor" (Luke 4:18-19; Is 61:1-2). This message proclaims God's grace for all people, and good news for the vulnerable. Jesus concluded by boldly claiming, "Today, this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing" (Luke 4:21). Proving His identity, authority, and power as the Son of God, Jesus goes directly from the synagogue and heals the sick, casts out demons, enters homes, and raises family members from fever.

Why does Jesus do this? Because the Kingdom of God restores all people and all things to function the way God designed them to, in wholeness and harmony, with God, creation, and one another. Therefore, sickness, blindness, death, and demons have no place in the Kingdom of God. Jesus' mission was to bring God's Kingdom to earth, "I must preach the good news of the Kingdom of God to other towns

as well, for I was sent for this purpose" (Luke 4:43). Indeed, this is God's mission throughout Scripture, to restore what has been broken by the fall to the fullness of what it was created to be. While Jesus' death and resurrection secure the ultimate consummation of this Kingdom, we as His disciples continue to bring in His Kingdom until that day, by seeking shalom for the oppressed, the captives, the sick and the hungry, one person at a time.

Jesus' proclamation and action for the Kingdom of God in Luke 4 begins and ends with Jesus withdrawing to spiritual retreat, to a "solitary place" (Luke 4:42). Jesus anchored His ministry in His identity as the beloved Son of the Father, often through the practice of withdrawing to be alone with His Father. As children of God (Rom 8:16), we too must seek spiritual renewal through contemplative and prayerful time with God, individually and collectively, that we might be effective in proclaiming the Kingdom of God. We cannot hope to do the work of God until we allow ourselves to be conformed to the image of His Son. In this way, shalom begins to be restored in us, and we receive the power of the Spirit to bring the good news of it to others.



III. REDEMPTION: RECONCILIATION

Right after Adam and Eve disobeyed, God in His wonderful mercy and love set a plan to rescue and restore His creation from the bondage of sin, suffering, and death. God declared that a descendant of Eve would triumph over the evil one (Gen 3:15). This descendant, Jesus, is the maximum expression of God's love and redemption for our world (1 Jn 4:9). Jesus' life, death on the cross, and resurrection started the rescue and restoration of all things (Luke 4:18-21). The Bible tells us that God was reconciling everything on earth and heaven through Jesus' blood on the cross (Col 1:20) in order to bring everything back to shalom. Jesus is the central person to implement God's relief and development plan for humanity and this planet.

I. THE WAY OF GOD

A. Incarnation

Jesus is the incarnate God among us. God didn't only design a rescue plan for humanity to bring us back to shalom, but He decided to send Himself to implement this plan (John 1:14; Phil 2:5-7). He lived and walked among us, and He is now with us. This is a wonderful and compelling principle to consider as we do our work in relief and development. When Jesus was on this Earth,

He spent time with the outcast and excluded, the people on the periphery of society (Matt 9:10; Mk 2:16). The incarnation principle teaches us to send people and ourselves to help the vulnerable and poor in the world. The Kingdom of God is implemented through personal relations. As God decided to come and live among us, we also are compelled to reach out and spend time with people, to walk with others, especially with the most vulnerable of this world.

B. Humility

We recognize the dignity of others and put their interests above our own. We believe that this is foundational to our work. Jesus humbled himself in obedience throughout His life (Phil 2:1-11). He didn't cling to His deity status to claim deference and service, but He chose to serve sincerely and humbly. In the same way, we demonstrate humility by adopting a posture to serve others and consider them equally as valuable as we are. When we meet a person in need, we encounter another fellow image bearer.



We are called to follow Jesus' life of compassion and love.

C. Suffering

Jesus redeemed God's creation and achieved the forgiveness of sins by sacrifice (John 10:14-15; Eph 1:7; Col 1:19-20). The Lamb of God laid down His life to bring us up from the dead. Although Jesus Christ has died and risen, the Kingdom of God is not yet fully realized (1 John 3:2). We are still waiting for the overall consummation of God's redeeming plan. This means that we still see injustice, sickness, violence, death, and evil in this world. However, we suffer in hope, knowing that one day there will be a new world under God's kingship where justice and peace will have no end (1 Pet 1:3-6). In the meantime, we suffer in solidarity with our brothers and sisters who are in pain (1 Cor 12:26-27). As Jesus voluntarily sacrificed and suffered for us, we also need to serve others sacrificially. The Bible tells us that by following Jesus and pursuing justice and truth, we might be opposed and persecuted just as Jesus was (1 John 3:13; 1 Pet 4:12). The disciple cannot be above the Master (Matt 10:24).

D. Reconciliation of All Things

God has appointed us, as followers of Jesus, to be agents of reconciliation and to facilitate transformation. This is part of God's redemption of all things. He has entrusted us with the ministry of reconciliation (2 Cor 5:16-20). Through our work in relief and development, we have the responsibility to promote and facilitate the reconciliation of the four key relations of human life (with God, with ourselves, with others and with the rest of creation).

E. Love

As Jesus was motivated by love to live among us and to die for us, we also need to be motivated by love to work and carry on the reconciliation ministry in relief and development (2 Cor 5:14). We are compelled by the great commandments: love God with all your being and love your neighbor as yourself (Mat 22:37-39). We are called to follow Jesus' life of compassion and love.



We are committed to live out our professional life for the honor and glory of God.

2. THE PEOPLE OF GOD

A. The Role of the Church

The Church is the community and institution of people who believe in and follow Jesus Christ, who is the head of the Church (Eph 1:22-23), and must not be identified with any particular culture, social or political system, or human ideology. As the Father sent Jesus into the world to lay down His life for the love of people, so the Son sends His followers into the world to do the same (John 20:21; 1 John 3:16-17). The Church is at the very center of God's cosmic purpose as His means of spreading the Good News (Matt 28:19-20; Eph 3:10). The Church has an organic nature, meaning that any believer and follower of Jesus Christ is part of it, and an institutional nature, meaning that groups of believers are organized under institutional arrangements. We who work at FH and that have responded to God's call are part of the universal Church. FH is an extension of God's universal Church, helping the most vulnerable in the world. We look to see churches growing in their capacity to serve their communities and to live according to God's Kingdom.

B. Agents of the Kingdom: Vocation and Calling

God's Kingdom is bigger than the Church and embraces the whole Earth. God generously calls us into His redeeming plan for His creation (1 Thess 2:12). Therefore, we all have a role to play in that Kingdom based on our talents and passions. Based on God's call and invitation to follow Jesus, we employ our skills, preferences, passion, service, and profession as part of our faith and response (Tit 3:14). What we do in FH becomes part of our Christian vocation to serve God and fellow human beings. Therefore, we are social workers, accountants, agronomists, communicators, nutritionists, teachers, etc., for God. We consider our role in FH as sacred and deeply ingrained into our life of faith as any other roles in the church. We are committed to live out our professional life for the honor and glory of God (Col 3:23). We even believe that the disciplines we work in (health, social service, finance, etc.) are God's, and we work in them as part of the reconciliation mandate we have received from God. The things that we do in this world according to God's Kingdom will have everlasting existence (Col 3:17). We are sowing seeds of eternity by our actions when acting in love and according to God's purpose.



God's revelation in Christ and in Scripture is unchangeable.

3. THE WORK WITH GOD

We believe that the quality of our participation in God's plan is determined by the quality of our life in Jesus Christ. We at FH seek to be continually transformed by God for us to become a transformational influence to others (Rom 12:2). Our journey following Jesus starts with the conviction of repentance of our disobedience and believing that His sacrifice is sufficient, in this way receiving forgiveness and becoming an usher of the Kingdom of God (Mark 1:15). The continual growth in our faith and vocation is possible by the spiritual formation of our character and life through the reflective reading of Scripture, the continual practice of prayer and contemplation, active participation at a local church and sincerely following Jesus in example and life (Acts 2:42). This deep commitment to character formation and maturity strengthens our vocation and rigorous professional practice by developing a holistic perspective of faith and service in our lives.

A. Scripture Engagement

Quoting from the Lausanne Covenant (1974):
 "We affirm the divine inspiration, truthfulness and authority of both the Old and New Testament Scriptures in their entirety as the only written word of God, without error in all that it affirms, and the only infallible rule of faith and practice. We also affirm the power of God's word to accomplish His purpose of salvation. The message of the Bible is addressed to all men and women. For God's revelation in Christ and in Scripture is unchangeable. Through it the Holy Spirit still speaks today. He illuminates the minds of God's people in every culture to perceive its truth freshly through their own eyes, and thus discloses to the whole Church ever more of the many-colored wisdom of God."

With this in perspective, we commit ourselves to read, meditate, and apply biblical teaching in our lives and work on a daily basis. The biblical narrative in its full content provides us the background and direction for our work in relief and development. "All Scripture is God-breathed and useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness" (2 Tim 3:16).



Prayer is a conversation with God in which we cultivate deepening intimacy with Him.

B. Prayer and Contemplation

Throughout the Bible, God's people are called to pray at all times, regularly, genuinely, and in faith. (Eph 6:18; Phil 4:6-7; 1 Thess 5:17). Prayer is a conversation with God in which we cultivate deepening intimacy with Him. God answers prayer and is with us as we pray. Jesus sums this up when He says simply, "Abide in Me, and I in you" (John 15:4). Moreover, Jesus is our model for prayer. Through the reading of the Gospels we learn that Jesus was constantly in prayer and communion with the Father (Mark 1:35; Matt 26:36; Luke 11:1). Through prayer and contemplation we are strengthened internally, in order to perform the Kingdom work that God has for us.

C. Church Participation

We encourage FH's staff to participate and be active members of a local church if there is one where they live. Participation at a local church helps believers to partake of the Body of Christ that is constituted by all the believers around the world and those that have passed away and are now with the Lord. God doesn't only reveal Himself to each of us individually but He also does collectively. Therefore, our spiritual

strength depends on our individual and collective commitment to be with God, participating as members in the Body of Christ, for that is what we are (1 Cor 12:27; Eph 4:15-16). FH does not adhere to a particular Christian denomination or tradition.

D. Following Jesus

As the Bible teaches us, Jesus is alive (Acts 1:3), and He invites us to follow Him in our lives and through our work in relief and development. This means that He provides us with guidance and wisdom in our jobs, in challenging circumstances and our everyday lives. This also means that we are Jesus' disciples learning how to live a godly life by looking and listening to Jesus' teachings, life and guidance (Jn 15:14). We believe that God communicates with His children through Scripture, prayer, fellowship with other believers, revelation, and our commitment to follow Him. This is an intrinsic characteristic of our life of faith. We follow Him.



IV. RESTORATION: ALL HUNGERS END WORLDWIDE

The Bible teaches us that through the redemptive work of Jesus Christ, God will one day restore everything to its perfection. We call this the consummation of God's promise and the fulfillment of our faith, hope, and longing. One day, His Kingdom will be fully displayed and His will be perfectly done on Earth as it is in Heaven (Matt 6:10). When that time comes, all suffering will cease and there will no longer be poverty, injustice, violence, or death (Rev 21:3-4). Moreover, the Bible tells us that even our bodies will be transformed and will not get sick and die (Phil 3:20-21). Jesus will literally be King of all the Earth and we will live under His gentle rule. The current work on relief and elimination of poverty will cease in that day. This is our personal, organizational, and cosmological hope. There will be a good end.

1. THE HOPE OF GOD

A. Transformation

On the day when Jesus returns, He will establish His Kingdom on this earth and the transformation that He started through Redemption will take place in full (Mark 14:62; Rev 11:15). Our relationship with God will be perfected, we will be completely cleansed from the influence of sin in our individual and collective lives, our bodies will be glorified and never die, and the rest of creation will be set free from the curse of sin. Until that day, we are encouraged by the knowledge that everything that we have done on this Earth prior to the Restoration and according to God's Kingdom values is not in vain, and will in fact have positive repercussions throughout eternity (1 Cor 15:58).

When the work of God's redemption is completed, development will achieve its highest potential and humanity will flourish like it was designed to. At this point, the communities of this world will graduate and achieve their full God-given potential.



The world and all creation will work in harmony for the first time in a long time.

B. Reconciled Relationships

On the day the Kingdom of God will be consummated, reconciliation of all four key relationships will be perfected and concluded. From then on we will live in perfect communion with God, with ourselves, with others, and with the rest of God's creation (Is 11:4-9). God's relief and development project on this earth will achieve its goal. This also means that FH's role will conclude on this glorious day. From then on, we will join other development and creative projects that God has in mind for us, His beloved.

C. New Creation

Human beings are not the only beneficiaries of the Restoration. Nature and every other created thing will work according to its original design, and will no longer be subject to futility and decay (Romans 8:21). "All things new" (Rev 21:5) is not limited to the human sphere, but the very globe will be made new, and become the dwelling of God's resurrected humankind. The world and all creation will work in harmony for the first time in a long time.

D. The Kingdom of God

When the Kingdom of God will be fully consummated on this earth, shalom will find its fullest expression for the good of all things and all people, and all of creation will flourish according to its original design (Rev 21). God will rule and reign and God's glory will be seen and known by all (Hab 2:14).

RESOURCE RECOMMENDATIONS

The following list of resources are recommended for further reference on the topics discussed. This list is not exhaustive and can be expanded.

- The Holy Bible*
- Walking with the Poor* by Bryant Myers
- Discipling Nations* by Darrow Miller
- Engaging God's World* by Cornelius Plantinga Jr.
- One at a Time: The Life, Passion and Ongoing Global Impact of Larry Ward* by Norman Rohrer
- When Helping Hurts* by Steve Corbett and Brian Fikkert
- Life with God* by Richard Foster



APPENDIX 1

GOD'S STORY		RESTORATION	REDEMPTION	THE FALL	CREATION
<p>The Hope of God:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transformation Reconciled Relationships New Creation Kingdom of God 	<p>The Way of God:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Incarnation Humility Suffering Reconciliation Love 	<p>Broken Relationship with God</p>	<p>God's Character:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Glory Trinity Love and Goodness 		
<p>The People of God:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Role of the Church Agents of the Kingdom: Vocation and Calling 	<p>Human Broken Relations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> With Self With Others 	<p>Human Broken Relations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> With Self With Others 	<p>The Image of God in Human Beings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Self identity Love to Others 		
<p>The Work With God:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scripture Engagement Prayer and Contemplation Church Participation Following Jesus 	<p>Broken Creation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Futility Suffering and Sickness God's Common Grace 	<p>Broken Creation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Futility Suffering and Sickness God's Common Grace 	<p>The Natural World</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All Creation Stewardship God's Kingdom: Shalom, Flourishing, and Development 		
		<p>Jesus: The Coming of God's Kingdom</p>			

APPENDIX 2

DEFINING TRANSFORMATION AND TRANSFORMATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

A team of leaders was assembled to guide the process of defining transformation and transformational development for FH. These definitions are based on our current work around the world and will become a critical element to develop the ministry's strategy for the coming years. The objective was to work toward a definition that is balanced between the philosophical implications of these words and their practical application for our work.

TRANSFORMATION

The Spirit-driven process of radical change in the behaviors, attitudes, and worldviews of individuals, communities, or cultures towards living in healthy relationship¹ with God, others and God's creation.

Spirit-driven – the process of change is dependent on God's power, will, and intervention.²

Process – transformation may be relatively slow or fast but it is never complete in a single moment in time. It is a process with steps on a journey.³

Radical – the change itself is a metamorphosis⁴; "Dramatic, all-encompassing and lasting change. Transformation is not minor, incremental, small scale, linear or transitory. It is to let our past die in order to let our present and future live."⁵

Entails changes in behaviors, attitudes, and worldview.

Behaviors – not only a change of mind (repentance) but a change in lifestyle.

Attitudes – beliefs and values applied to life circumstances should be aligned to God's truth.

Worldview – a set of assumptions held consciously or unconsciously about reality – that is transformed as an internal change of the heart – affecting beliefs, values, perceptions, and behavior. We acknowledge that behavior change can contribute to worldview change and vice versa.

¹ Colossians 1:20

² John 3:3; 2 Cor. 5:17

³ Romans 12:1-2 translates the Greek word for transformation using the passive tense as in "being transformed (by the renewing of your mind)"

⁴ Metamorphosis - "a change of the form or nature of a thing or person into a completely different one, by natural or supernatural means."

⁵ Cloke and Goldsmith Resolving Conflicts at Work. 2005

APPENDIX 2 (CONTINUED)

TRANSFORMATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Relief and Development work that promotes and facilitates mutual transformation to advance and accelerate measurable well-being improvements of the most vulnerable and the graduation of communities from extreme poverty.

FH will accomplish transformational development by rigorously applying the following principles in all of our relief and development work:

- *Following Jesus in His redemptive plan for this world:* God is the source of life and transformation and He has revealed His plan through Jesus (Luke 4:18-19). We follow Jesus to emulate His life, love, and dedication to people and to join God's redemptive plan described through the Biblical narrative of Creation, the Fall, Redemption, and Restoration.
- *We serve and reach out to the most vulnerable in the world:* We strategically target to serve people by developing plans and using tools that would help us assess the levels of poverty and vulnerability around the world, and reach out to people in remote locations where life conditions are harder. We see the poor, the vulnerable, the forgotten, and the needy through God's eyes and strive to respond as God does to alleviate suffering and severe poverty.
- *Our goal is community graduation:* This means that we aim to see communities emerge from extreme poverty circumstances through the support of FH in order to

continue their own development without further help from FH. We perform our work from the perspective of supporting people to achieve their God-given potential in order to see parents, families, churches, and leaders increasingly play the role God intended them to play in their own communities.

- *Sustainability:* All development should be sustainable, yet often it is not. For development to be truly transformational, change must be sustainable. In the environment, economic system, social structures, technological advances, and religious systems, changes must benefit communities over time into the next generation.
- *Our work is relational:* God's work of transformation occurs through interaction between people because God is relational and people are created in His image. At the same time, our work is an extension of God's invitation for people to reconcile in all of the four main relationships: with God, with themselves, with others, and with creation.
- *Our response to poverty needs to be holistic and integrated:* With the biblical perspective that broken relationships and ultimately man's sin are the root causes of poverty, we know that the "whole" of life is affected and as a result, there are many forms, expressions, and layers of poverty. Therefore, we tackle the invisible and visible causes of poverty. Because poverty is complex, our interventions are designed to be programmatically integrated, inclusive, and comprehensive.

APPENDIX 2 (CONTINUED)

- *Our work needs to be supportive of facilitation:* This means doing things with people for the benefit of people as a catalyst of change using the spread of ideas, instead of doing things *for* people. We walk with churches, leaders, and families.
- *Supportive of mutual transformation:* This means that we as FH staff do not exclude ourselves from the process of transformation. We are transformational agents and at the same time God is transforming us as we serve the most vulnerable in the world no matter what role we occupy in the organization. It is also implied that we need to pay attention and facilitate the transformation of our supporters and partners (donors, volunteers, etc.)
- *Well-being changes need to be measured:* Although transformation itself cannot be measured directly, we can monitor and evaluate the following elements of transformational development:
 - the "input" activities FH performs as a transformational change agent, and
 - the "outcomes" and impact experienced by the most vulnerable. Between inputs and outcomes is the transforming power of God that produces incremental improvements in the lives of the most vulnerable.
 Because our work is holistic, our measurement must also be holistic (visible and invisible) and multidisciplinary as far as this could be done, including measuring changes in relationships.

A NOTE ON MEASUREMENT OF TRANSFORMATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Measurement of transformational development requires cracking the evidence conundrum about shalom (the presence of the Kingdom of God). The secular development perspective, with its focus on non-spiritual factors, draws heavily on expansive data gathered by well-developed research programs to produce persuasive arguments. Unfortunately, hard data and researched evidence that might support the validity of transformational development and practice are rarely available. Here lies the opportunity for FH to develop tools, approaches, and methods that gather credible evidences regarding transcendent perspective of our work, a story that captures the journey of graduating communities – a temporal nature of our work to ending poverty worldwide – a concept of shalom and the eternal nature of our work.

Measurement using global KPIs⁶ and other specific indicators at the project level will focus on CFCT programmatic domains of change such as reduction in stunting, improvement in school performance, transformed leadership, etc. These are evidences of flourishing, the original intent of the creation. However, these evidences need to be supplemented by measuring the transcendent nature of our work such as

⁶ KPIs: Key Performance Indicators

APPENDIX 2 (CONTINUED)

change in inadequacies in worldview, restoring marred identity (imago dei), counteracting the deception by principalities and powers, and evidence of restoring all four broken relationships. This would thus incorporate all the elements of God's story into the measurement processes, practices, tools and strategies. This would do demand interweaving spiritual disciplines as discussed in this God's story into typical M&E⁷ approach and deliberately setting apart time for deep reflections and learning around God's story. Measurement of transformation development requires indicators too.

It is no longer appropriate for organizations like FH to refrain from rigorous evaluation because "spiritual outcomes are immeasurable." Empirically evaluating spiritual change is possible, albeit in an approximate manner. However, the key elements of measurement of transformational development are not simply data collection but renewing of our minds in the light of God's story and not being conformed to the pattern of this world (Rom.12:2).

⁷ M&E: Monitoring and Evaluation

THE TEAM THAT DEVELOPED THIS DOCUMENT

A 2010 task force was composed by Dwight Vogt, Victor Cortez, Tom Davis, John Marsden, and led by Luis Noda. Marty Martin and Luis Noda reviewed the document in 2012.

This document was a precursor and a reference for the development of E2020 and CFCT in 2010.

The section on measurement of transformational development was reviewed by Subodh Kumar in 2017.



**FOOD FOR
THE HUNGRY**