

Standing Tall

The table was set, the food prepared and all the guests invited. Everything had been placed in order as their Master had commanded. Yet there was one small forgotten detail. Now, this was crucial since the servant was to follow the Master's custom of washing the dirty feet of the guest at the door. The disciples arrived at the Last Supper with Jesus. It is amazing that in this story none of the disciples came to serve but rather to be served. None of the disciples volunteered to wash the feet of their fellow brethren or other attending guests at the meal. Instead of volunteering to do the dirty job, they began arguing over who was the greatest. Jesus watched his followers and listened to their discussions as he bent over into a lowly crouched position. As he ties a cloth around his waist, then takes a basin of water and a towel in hand, he begins to wash the feet of the disciples. In the midst of the group sat John the beloved, Peter who later betrayed Christ, Thomas the doubter and Judas the thief. These disciples were tainted with imperfection, yet the Master, the Son of God humbled himself to the level of their feet, acting in love and true servant-hood as he began to wash.



Why did Jesus do this humble act of serving? What is the significance of this today? There is a new love awakening embracing God's servants today, to make a difference on the streets of Los Angeles. It is called the Adopt-A-Block Outreach Ministry at the Dream Center. This outreach has been in existence for eight years and continues to impact people daily on our streets and neighborhoods. The Dream Center, Adopt-A-Block Outreach was not birthed

our streets looking for their prey. Our streets have become the playgrounds for abused children trying to survive neighborhood crack houses and shelters. Gang members and drug dealers transform our streets into killing fields. Government and community leaders are limited in resources and solutions to these mounting needs. This is the fear and agony that is prevalent in a city that never sleeps. These are the street blocks, a small

As followers of Christ, when we see a need, meet it. We believe that in a city with so much pain and suffering, places such as Hollywood give us a glimpse of the reality of the amount of change needed. We first encountered the need as an outreach ministry supplying food, clothes, diapers and toiletries. But this was not enough, because people need hope, love, hugs, encouragement, friendship and a clear reflection of what took place in that upper room almost two thousand years ago as twelve dirty pairs of feet were washed.

windows. Spirits remained high as closed doors eventually opened and resistant neighbors became friendly.

Today and nine years later, this little outreach has multiplied from between five to eight hundred servants, passionate about serving their city on Saturday mornings. The Windex has been replaced with meeting other needs, but the passionate spirit of servant-hood still drives hundreds of committed people to go out into gang-infested neighborhoods, crack houses and cardboard houses to love and serve people. Children, families, addicts, and prostitutes are being changed in our neighborhoods. **The foundation of community is being restored where crime and homicides have dropped 75% in the last four years.** The gangs are dissolving because the kids in the neighborhoods have a new found freedom and positive role models, unharassed by gang influence to ride their bicycles and play games on the streets. The language on the street has also changed, as kids praising God is not uncommon. This has resulted in an explosion of church growth as buses bring 1500 people every Sunday to church to hear the Word of God as it is preached. Just think, this may not have been possible if those seven committed people had thrown in the towel and listened to the opinions of others. They simply followed their heart to serve and now they are reaping great fruit.

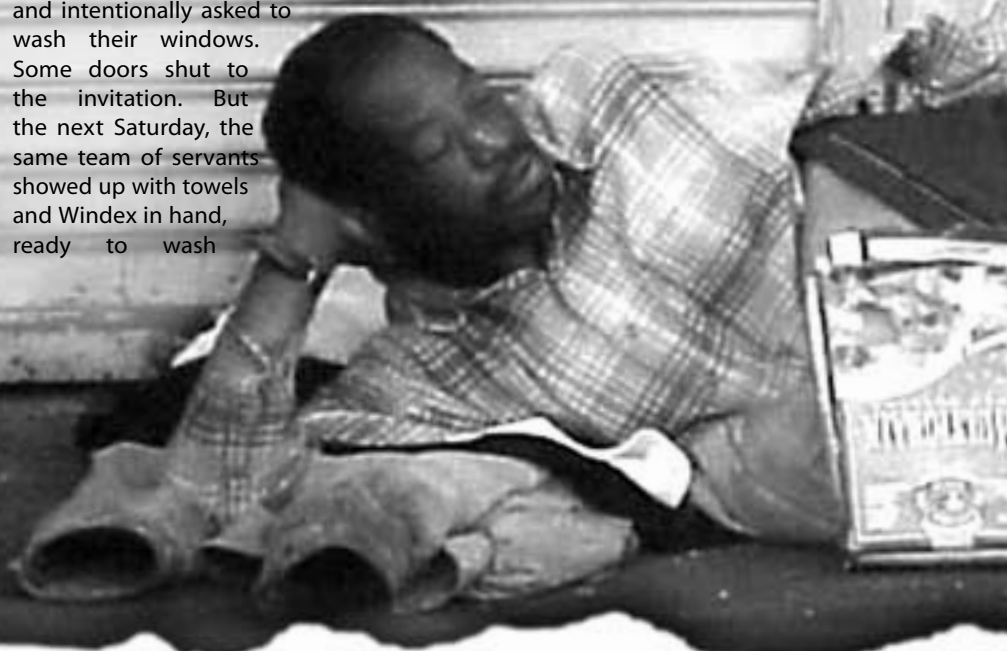


in a board meeting. It was not the result of some abstract vision statement inscribed on a piece of paper. It was born on the streets. While, the streets of Los Angeles are dedicated to the angels, they are overrun by evil everyday. Every week, dirt and filth remain where tents and cardboard boxes are erected as shelter by the homeless. Runaway teen prostitutes and pimps roam

church in Los Angeles has adopted.

No great prophetic word mobilized this action into being. However, there was a simple truth which gave it just cause. Jesus said, Give your life away to others.

In the beginning, the Adopt-A-Block Outreach successes were modest. Participants gave up what others call their only free morning to kick back and sleep in. They could have slept in and rested those Saturday mornings with a hot cup of coffee and a newspaper. However, a passionate conviction to serve others and not give a blind eye to the tremendous need kept them going. For a while, there were only seven committed people, yet there was never a word to quit, or what's the use. Instead, when the going got tough, the tough got going. Armed with Windex and paper towels they began to form teams and equipped themselves to serve. These people visited neighbors and intentionally asked to wash their windows. Some doors shut to the invitation. But the next Saturday, the same team of servants showed up with towels and Windex in hand, ready to wash



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on Your Knees

Today, every believer needs to be more concerned about the towel ministry rather than the title ministry. We need our hands to be Christ's extended hands to others, even



when they get dirty. Jesus lowered himself as a servant preferring the need of others above his own.

If we could just grasp this concept, it could literally change the look of Christianity. It does not matter if you are rich or poor. People all have one common thread, the need for Jesus Christ. A church filled with hurting people, is a place you would have found Jesus. And that is where you will find him today. The revolutionary concept



of Adopt-A-Block has never been to get attention, but rather to serve others.

Come out some Saturday morning and expect to become a part of an army of compassion. Expect to have your

heart broken as you see through the eyes of Jesus bring healing to others through a gift of love. Discover personal transformation washing the feet of the homeless and meeting the needs of the needy in your neighborhood. Every neighborhood needs Jesus. What is totally amazing is that the lives changed and the people reached are people who live right next to you.

Instead of being enslaved by sin, their lives will become an awesome reflection of the glory of our creator. And the joy that you will experience will be a great reward.

by *The Dream Center*

About the Dream Center

**God speaks...
in dreams...
and gives them wisdom"**

God gave PASTOR TOMMY BARNETT, pastor of Phoenix First Assembly of God, a DREAM to go to Los Angeles and raise up an inner-city church. The Los Angeles International Church, also known as the L.A. DREAM CENTER, reaches out to the poor, the homeless, gang members, and those not being reached by MOST churches! Watch THE DREAM CENTER, hosted by



one of America's fastest growing churches, is one of the most dynamic voices God is using in Christianity today. At the age of 29, he is fulfilling the roles of people who have been in the ministry for years.

Son of Pastor Tommy Barnett, Best-Selling Author, Church Growth Pioneer, and Pastor of what Time Magazine considers one of the three largest churches in America, he has learned powerful principles of ministry which have gifted him in founding the Dream Center in Los Angeles. The Dream Center began as a typical local church. But with the fresh vision and desire to impact an entire city that God birthed in Matthew's heart, the church grew from 39 members at its conception in September of 1994, to reaching more than 30,000 people each week in the Center's 40 services and nearly two hundred ministries today.

The Dream Center houses close to 500 people who are being rehabilitated for the glory of God. Over 35,000 people a week receive food and many other services are offered to meet the spiritual and physical needs of the local community. As of April 2002, there have been over 130 Dream Centers launched around the world.

2001 was a historic year for the Center. Pastor Matthew Barnett and the International Church of the Foursquare Gospel united the famous Angelus Temple with the Dream Center. Through a process of two great denominations working together the unification was possible and as of November 1, 2001, Pastor Matthew Barnett became the Senior Pastor over Angelus Temple and the Dream Center. Matthew now has a congregation in excess of 6,000 attending weekly.

Matthew has spoken in some of the largest and

most prestigious conventions, conferences, camp-meetings, and churches throughout America and the world including Promise Keepers and Hillsongs. He hosts a weekly television program called "The Church That Never Sleeps," which airs nationally and internationally. He has consulted leading businessmen, celebrities, and athletes. President George W. Bush has endorsed him with highest regards to his achievements and his church has been recognized several times in the New York Times and the Los Angeles Times for its contribution to the community. The Los Angeles Times Magazine did a feature story on Matthew Barnett in their July 21, 2002, issue placing him on the cover. Pastor Matthew has also won numerous awards including the Religious Heritage Award in 1999.

Pastor Barnett was married to Caroline Olsson in September of 1999, and they serve together in Los Angeles and are expecting their first child.



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