



Loving, Healing, and Rescuing... This is RAPHA HOUSE

Photo from: www.facebook.com/raphahouse

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We cannot see the eyes behind these beautiful children's faces and we do not know their story. However, we do know one thing, their lives have been changed forever. They have been victims of or affected by the sin of human trafficking.

Before you continue reading this I ask that you do something. If it is possible gather your family, friends, or whomever you are with and read this article together. Whether you have been affected by human trafficking or not it is an issue that we can no longer thumb our nose at or sweep under the rug. It is a growing problem that is happening all over the world.

In fact, there are 27 million people working as slaves this very minute. What is even more heart breaking is that every year one million children are being trafficked as well.

However, Rapha House, a nonprofit Christian ministry founded in 2003, is fighting to end human trafficking, and they see these statistics in a different light. They believe stats like these dehumanize this issue, "In our work with trafficked and exploited children, we've never met a statistic. We've only met children-children who have suffered needlessly."

The vision for Rapha House came from a group of Cambodian Christian leaders after years of witnessing girls disappearing from their villages. They knew the young ladies were being sold and exploited.

Ozark Bible College graduate and Joplin, Missouri native, Joe Garman, was one day working with this group of leaders. As they were working they saw a young woman being sold as a slave by her parents. Joe and the other leaders decided to intercede and stop the traffickers from taking her.

This near detrimental experience rattled Joe's emotions and it also brought the issue of human trafficking to his attention. This horrific, fast-growing problem laid on the hearts of Joe and the Christian leaders. Instead of shrugging off this burden they were determined to do something about it.

Joe returned back to the United States and shared his new passion with his daughter, Stephanie Garman Freed. Together they starting building a ministry called Rapha House.

This amazing ministry acts a bridge leading sexual abused and exploited victims to freedom. There are four components to this bridge; rescue, shelter/safe houses, equipping/vocational training, and reintegration. In rescuing, Rapha House works with law enforcement authorities in the certain nations to bring helpless victims to their places of shelter. These shelters, otherwise known as safe houses, are places of safety were the victims can start a new life.

You read the statistics we mentioned earlier and if you are thinking “how can they even compete with that huge number?” The truth is that Rapha House cannot by themselves, but they can with the help of our Father. They are combatting against human trafficking and sharing the message of Jesus one person at a time. Only God can truly love, heal, and restore us.

If you would like to give, get involved, or become more informed about Rapha house, visit www.raphahouse.org.