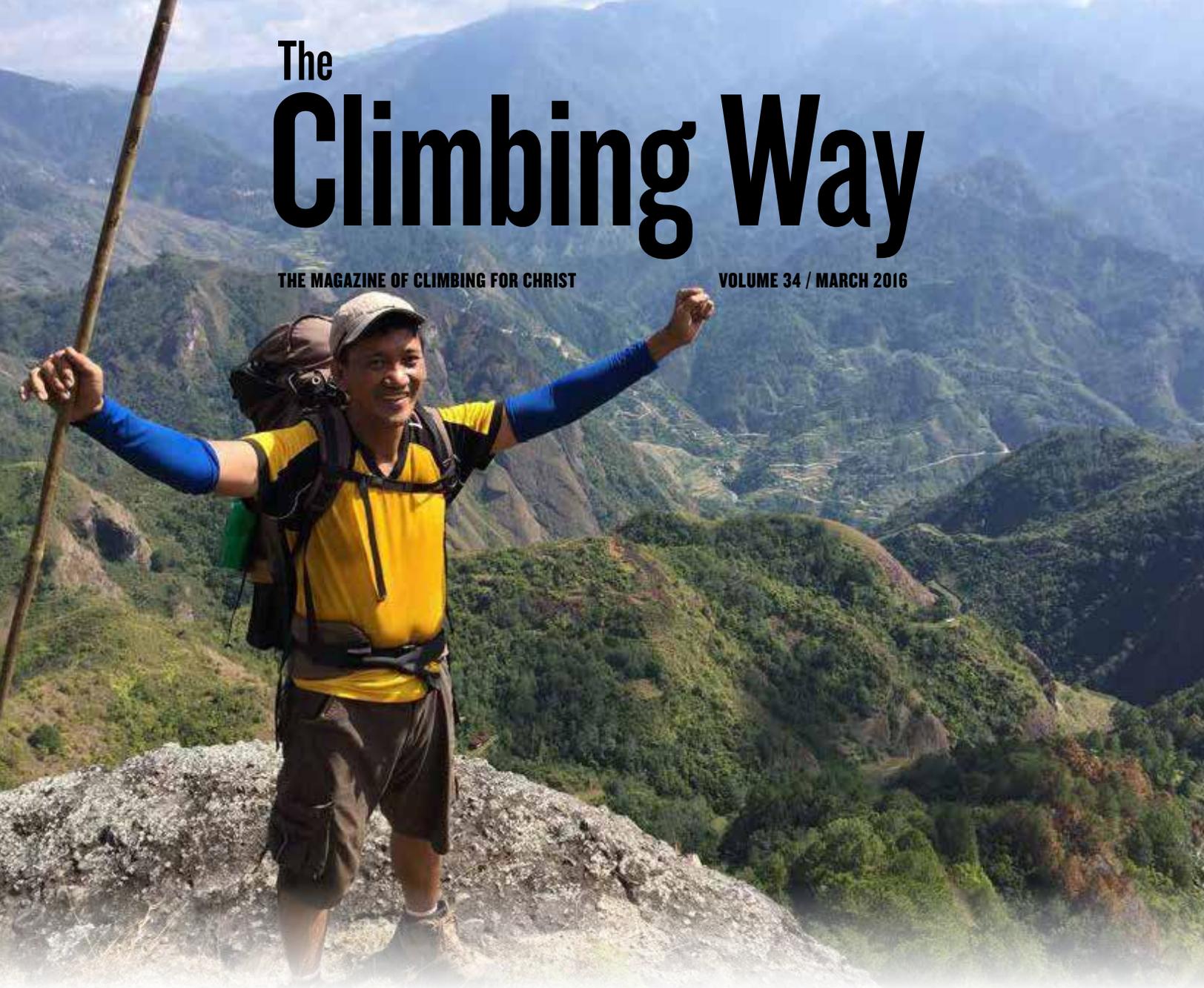


# The Climbing Way

THE MAGAZINE OF CLIMBING FOR CHRIST

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## A comeback story BY ACE CONCORDIA | C4C Philippines coordinator

It was April 27, 2013 when I received one of the worst phone calls of my life. “There’s been an accident. Joel fell!” Spencer Ng said.

I was not with the team holding a fundraising event for C4C Philippines. Several members were rock climbing on a wall called the Veranda. As Joel Syyp reached the 30-foot mark his carabiner opened and he dropped to the ground. He was rushed to the hospital with deep cuts, bruises, and a shattered right leg.

I raced to the hospital and saw how badly he was hurt. When I came to his bed to ask him how he was doing, he just raised his thumb up and smiled. Typical Joel.

Joel Syyp is an accomplished climber and has been serving as a missionary in the mountains of the

Philippines for many years, even before he joined Climbing For Christ. He joined C4C in 2011 and has been an active member, participating in many events and mission climbs in Kibungan.

Joel lives a modest life. He does not have bountiful resources at his disposal, and yet it doesn’t take much to motivate him when it comes to serving God. The mere hint of a Climbing For Christ activity sends him packing his gear, ready to go. His passion for the mountains and serving the Lord became a huge inspiration for other members.

That is why we all had heavy hearts when Joel’s accident happened. The C4C community responded by helping him out with his surgery and rehabilitation. Joel was family and we take care of our own.

**Philippines**

Continues on page 3



# Climbing For Christ

The primary purpose of Climbing For Christ is to GO and deliver the Gospel of Jesus Christ in the mountains of the world, where other missionaries cannot or will not go.

## Mission Statement

Members of Climbing For Christ agree that we are called to:

- Bring praise, honor and glory to God — the Creator of all things, including the mountains we love — and to our Redeemer, His beloved Son.
- Inspire believers to achieve greater spiritual and physical heights in this world.
- Introduce the Lord Jesus Christ, our Savior, to those living in or visiting mountainous areas who don't know Him personally in a new, exciting and everlasting way.

To join Climbing For Christ, visit [www.climbingforchrist.org/Contact/MembershipApplication.aspx](http://www.climbingforchrist.org/Contact/MembershipApplication.aspx)

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For more information on Climbing For Christ, go online at:  
[www.ClimbingForChrist.org](http://www.ClimbingForChrist.org)

To contribute to *The Climbing Way* or [ClimbingForChrist.org](http://ClimbingForChrist.org) send an inquiry to [info@ClimbingForChrist.org](mailto:info@ClimbingForChrist.org).

**“Publish his glorious deeds among the nations.**

**Tell everyone about the amazing things he does.”**

**– 1 Chronicles 16:24  
(NLT)**

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# The passion for the Christ

BY ELAINE AND GARY FALLESEN | C4C staff

Step by painful step I (Gary) followed Joel Syypap up and over three mountains one day and then back over and down those same mountains another day. Step, step, stop. Step, step, stop.

It was agonizing to watch. Ten hours one way. Eight hours the other.

As Joel took the final steps of Mission: Philippines 2016, ascending a long series of steps from rice fields to the jump-off point of our trek, I was humbled to hear him speaking to our LORD.

“Thank You, Jesus,” he said aloud, but in a quiet voice. “Thank You. Thank You.”

I was honored to witness this. Somewhere farther up the trail C4C Philippines coordinator Ace Concordia and I had talked about Joel and sharing his story in *The Climbing Way* (“A comeback story” on the cover). We agreed it was worth telling.

There are so many stories worth telling and re-telling. That’s what *The Climbing Way* is for: to “publish His glorious deeds among the nations.” And to “tell everyone about the amazing things He does” (1 Chronicles 16:24, NLT).

This issue captures some of what has occurred from December 2015 through February 2016. There is more on our Web site ([www.ClimbingForChrist.org](http://www.ClimbingForChrist.org)) and still more communicated to members and supporters via E-News, Alerts and Updates.

God is at work through Climbing For Christ.

Just ask Joel Syypap.

Ace captured the heart of this man; a child of God who bravely worked his way back from a 2013 rock climbing accident in which he broke in half the femur in his right leg. The climb in January marked his return to the mission field.

Welcome back, Joel! We’re glad we were there, and pleased we’re able to tell everyone about the amazing things He has done. †



Joel Syyp, far right, joins our Mission: Philippines team in a drama about Zacchaeus acted out for schoolchildren in Tacadang. Other team members include, left to right, Gutch Gutierrez (second from left), Marvin Parayno, Andrea Alorro, Ace Concordia, and Asiel de la Fuente. (Photo by Gary Fallesen)

It was not easy taking him to therapy, as I personally experienced. He had to literally crawl to my car dragging himself, because he wouldn't let us touch him due to the pain. It was unreal to see my brother, who used to tackle steep and long ascents, reduced to crawling one painful move at a time.

We all wondered how much damage the accident had inflicted on him. More than just bones had been shattered. He talked about fearing heights and a loss of confidence. We were all uncertain if Joel would ever climb alongside us again.

But God has a way of healing. The most evident part of Joel's life is his love for Jesus and serving others. This has defined him as a person. This has pushed him to walk through a scorching sun and drenching storms, just to reach a village so he can share the love of God.

On the road to his healing he would repeat one profound statement to me: "I want to go on a mission climb again when I'm ready!"

Serving in Climbing For Christ was not a pastime, not a sideline activity, not a passive part of his life. It was – and is – his passion.

To Joel, nothing in life can compare to the experience of being able to serve God. To see the smiles of the people he reaches out to, to be able to pray for them, to laugh with them and to share their tears are the things that burn in his heart.

This passion gave him the determination to once more return to the mission field – one painful step at a time.

Mission: Philippines 2016 in January will always be one of my most memorable climbs to Kibungan. Nearly three years after his accident Joel Syyp became part of an eight-person Filipino team that accompanied Climbing For Christ president Gary Fallesen back to the village of Tacadang in Kibungan. Supported only by wooden trekking poles, Joel made the 10-hour hike to Tacadang and the eight-hour hike back.

Once again he got to play with the children, have a part in our Gospel presentation, and minister to the

Kankanaey people. And once more I got to see that smile of joy on his face.

Joel's painful journey to return to serving God through Climbing For Christ reminds me of the journey that Jesus had to go through during His time here on earth. From the beginning of His ministry Jesus endured persecution, rejection, and injustice. As He neared the end, He was whipped, crowned with thorns and had to carry a criminal's cross. Finally, He was nailed to that cross and left to perish.

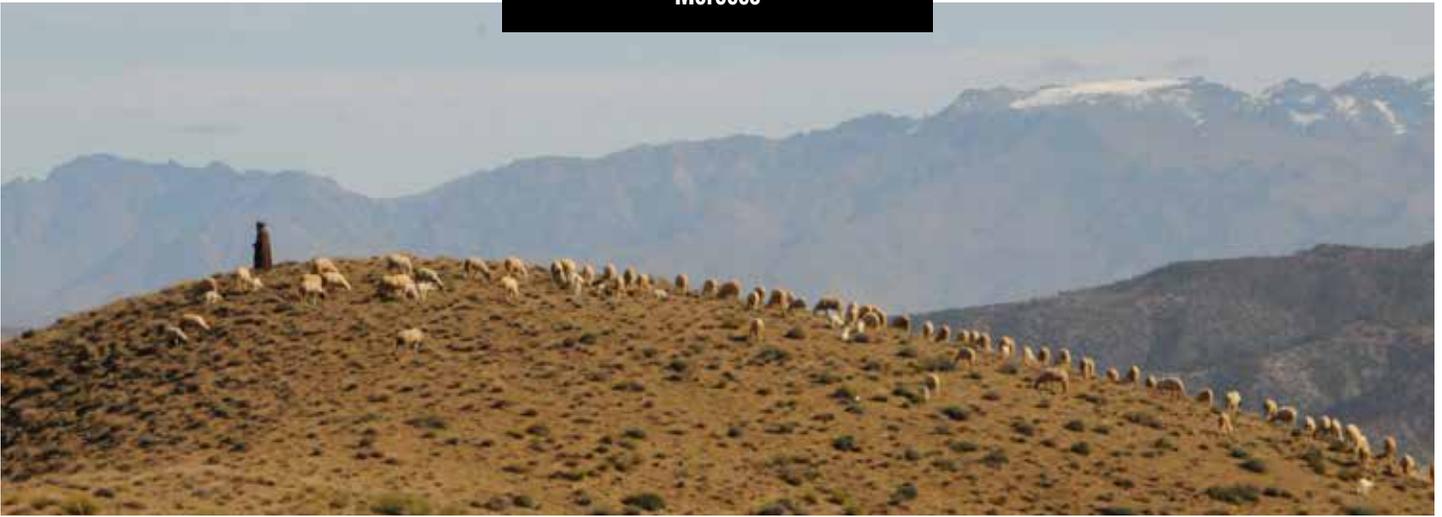
Lesser men would have given up. But Jesus was no ordinary man. He was driven by a passion even greater than His pain. He took every painful step because He wanted to save someone so precious to Him that nothing could stop Him from fulfilling what He needed to do. Jesus was a man driven by love and a passion, and that passion is you and me.

As I wrote this article I was exchanging text messages with Joel. His last text to me said, "By the way, what are the plans for the rest of 2016?" Joel continues to be an inspiration to me and many C4C Philippine members.

I pray that his story will fan a flame in all of our hearts as we serve in this ministry. I pray that we don't serve just because we can; I pray that we serve with a deeper conviction. I pray that we serve because we are overwhelmed with God's love. I pray that we are determined that no mountain is too big, no obstacle too great, no challenge too immense that it stops us from fulfilling our great calling and destiny in Jesus Christ. †



Joel giving thumbs-up in spite of serious injuries suffered in a 2013 rock climbing fall. (Photo provided by Ace Concordia)



"My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me" (John 10:27). A Berber shepherd with his flock in the Atlas Mountains. (Photos by Gary Fallesen)

## Surprise endings

BY GARY FALLESEN | C4C president

Many who are first will be last, and the last first? It's easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich person to enter the kingdom of God? Unless you become like a child, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven?

Imagine not knowing the teachings of Jesus, of hearing parables for the first time.

Sitting on the floor in the corner of our friend's "winter" room, wrapped in blankets over our down jackets and hats to fend off a December night in an unheated home in the Atlas Mountains, the story of The Pharisee and the Tax Collector was being shared. We were on Mission: Morocco 2015.

*"He also told this parable to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and treated others with contempt: 'Two men went up into the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. The Pharisee, standing by himself, prayed thus: 'God, I thank you that I am not like other men, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even like this tax collector. I fast twice a week; I give tithes of all I get.' But the tax collector, standing far off, would not even lift up his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, 'God, be merciful to me, a sinner!' I tell you, this man went down to his house justified, rather than the other. For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but the one who humbles himself will be exalted.'" – Luke 18:9-14*

When the Berber man heard the prayer of the Pharisee – the "religious man" – he thought it was good. He nodded approval. He thought the tax collector was bad. But then our brother Kris reached the conclusion.

"When they hear the end of stories about Jesus, they are surprised," Kris said, looking across the room at me, with a knowing grin. "It's the opposite of what they expect."

After the Berber man heard this story, he and our host – one of a half-dozen or so Berber believers in this part of the Atlas – started to discuss it. The believer then told him the story of the adulterous woman.

*"The scribes and the Pharisees brought a woman who had been caught in adultery, and placing her in the midst they said to him, 'Teacher, this woman has been caught in the act of adultery. Now in the Law Moses commanded us to stone such women. So what do you say?' This they said to test him, that they might have some charge to bring against him. Jesus bent down and wrote with his finger on the ground. And as they continued to ask him, he stood up and said to them, 'Let him who is without sin among you be the first to throw a stone at her.' And once more he bent down and wrote on the ground. But when they heard it, they went away one by one, beginning with the older ones, and Jesus was left alone with the woman standing before him. Jesus stood up and said to her, 'Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?' She said, 'No one, Lord.' And Jesus said, 'Neither do I condemn you; go, and from now on sin no more.'" – John 8:3-11*

As the believer shared this, the Berber man's eyes grew wide. Expecting to hear how the woman was stoned, he instead heard about forgiveness because all fall short. Another surprise ending.

"In Islam, the religious (seemingly) do no wrong and are held in high esteem," Kris explained. "They build themselves up, which is OK in their religion.

"Christ calls us to be humble. That's the opposite of the world."

It is counter-cultural, especially in a culture where getting caught (shamed) is the only problem with doing something wrong. The sin is only real if it's found out, in the mind of the Muslim.

We were on an eight-day trek, covering about 50 miles with full backpacks up and down a series of mountain valleys, visiting new believers or those who were close to calling Jesus their Savior and Lord. We were in the first house, where we'd visited in 2013 with another brother and Climbing For Christ member who worked in Morocco. In 2013, the believer was like the other Berber man – on the outside looking in with wondering eyes. He watched the *Jesus* film on an iPad with us and a few months later he confessed that he believed in this Jesus.

Now he was evangelizing with us.



The Berber man (left), brother Kris, and our host – one of the few Berber believers in the Atlas Mountains of Morocco.

### THE PARABLE OF THE PRODIGAL SON

*“There was a man who had two sons. And the younger of them said to his father, ‘Father, give me the share of property that is coming to me.’ And he divided his property between them. Not many days later, the younger son gathered all he had and took a journey into a far country, and there he squandered his property in reckless living. And when he had spent everything, a severe famine arose in that country, and he began to be in need. So he went and hired himself out to one of the citizens of that country, who sent him into his fields to feed pigs. And he was longing to be fed with the pods that the pigs ate, and no one gave him anything. But when he came to himself, he said, ‘How many of my father’s hired servants have more than enough bread, but I perish here with hunger! I will arise and go to my father, and I will say to him, Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son. Treat me as one of your hired servants.’ And he arose and came to his father. But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and felt compassion, and ran and embraced him and kissed him. And the son said to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son.’ But the father said to his servants, ‘Bring quickly the best robe, and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet. And bring the fattened calf and kill it, and let us eat and celebrate. For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found.’ And they began to celebrate. Now his older son was in the field, and as he came and drew near to the house, he heard*

*music and dancing. And he called one of the servants and asked what these things meant. And he said to him, ‘Your brother has come, and your father has killed the fattened calf, because he has received him back safe and sound.’ But he was angry and refused to go in. His father came out and entreated him, but he answered his father, ‘Look, these many years I have served you, and I never disobeyed your command, yet you never gave me a young goat, that I might celebrate with my friends. But when this son of yours came, who has devoured your property with prostitutes, you killed the fattened calf for him!’ And he said to him, ‘Son, you are always with me, and all that is mine is yours. It was fitting to celebrate and be glad, for this your brother was dead, and is alive; he was lost, and is found.’” – Luke 15:11-32*

The Berber man loved this story when Kris shared it with him. It unfolded into yet another surprise ending.

“He saw how the son who went away came back and lowered himself and his father forgave him,” Kris said. “The son who did everything right turned out bad. He didn’t show love for the father or his brother.

“They (the Berbers) see the religious people doing the same thing.”

### THE PARABLE OF THE GOOD SAMARITAN

*“And behold, a lawyer stood up to put him to the test, saying, ‘Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?’ He said to him, ‘What is written in the Law? How do you read it?’ And he answered, ‘You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind, and your neighbor as yourself.’” – Luke 10:25-27*

“Religious people in Islam don't show love; they beat everyone down and elevate themselves,” Kris said.

But the God of the Bible, the Father of Jesus, the One Who sent His Son to die for us, is the Creator of love. He defines love.

Even Jesus’s crucifixion has a surprise ending to those who have not heard. Like the witnesses at the cross, they are waiting for Christ to save himself. Muslims will tell you that Jesus did not actually die that day. He **could not** have perished. It’s impossible.

Surprise! He did die, but then He rose again. He is victorious over death.

We had been with this Berber man in another village earlier that day. He followed us back to the believer’s home. “He wants in,” Kris said, meaning that the man was close to becoming a brother in Christ.

The Author was writing yet another ending that might surprise more than a few. The God of the impossible was striking again. †

# Helping to grow the church



Earthquake relief rebuilt this church at Kabrasthali, north of Kathmandu. (Photo by Tej Rokka)

Climbing For Christ was featured in an NPR story in February, “Why Nepal Has One of the World’s Fastest Growing Christian Populations.”

“Much of this growth can be attributed to Nepal’s internal changes,” writer Danielle Preiss reported. “Before 1950, Nepal was closed to foreigners. Mountain climbing changed that. And starting with the Maoist Civil War of the 1990s and culminating with the end of the monarchy in 2008, the country has transitioned from a Hindu kingdom to a communist-led secular republic with greater freedom of religion.

“Churches now mushroom throughout the Kathmandu Valley and across the terraced hills. Proselytizing remains illegal, but with political instability and weak law enforcement, that doesn’t stop it from happening.

“Meanwhile, the earthquake last year may have strengthened the Christian surge. Where the government — long mired in political instability — has failed to help poor villagers, aid groups have trickled in to fill gaps, some of them carrying a message of salvation.

“Climbing for Christ (C4C), an evangelical group based in Rochester, N.Y., is one.”

We were blessed to provide nearly \$30,000 for earthquake relief and recovery. This money helped rebuild five churches for partner ministry SARA

(Savior Alone Redeems Asians) and another three for the Milap Church, as well as the orphanage supported by our Project 1:27 and numerous homes of C4C friends.

Nepal is made for Climbing For Christ. As *Operation World*, an encyclopedic prayer guide to every nation, said in lifting the “less reached” of this Himalayan country: “Pray for: The Mountain peoples, almost entirely

Tibetan-related. Most are lamaistic Buddhists living in isolated mountain communities. Most groups are small in number, and Christians are few. Climbing For Christ seeks to reach them with the Gospel.”

The NPR story added:

“Pledging to bring the Gospel ‘where others cannot or will not go,’ the group began its Mission: Nepal in 2008. In 2011, it dedicated the first church in the village of Dapcha, 25 miles east of Kathmandu. Today, Dapcha — with a population of just 1,000 families — is home to three churches.

“‘They found some sick people and broken families and talked to them and prayed for them, and miraculously these people were convinced and began to follow Christ,’ said Tej Rokka, pastor of the C4C partner ministry, Savior Alone Redeems Asians. ‘They distributed some food for the people, and clothes. Because of that, people began to listen to them.’

“After the earthquake, C4C sent relief materials such as tents and money for food and first-aid items to congregants in Dapcha and other affected areas.”

Climbing For Christ has two Evangelic Expeditions to Nepal scheduled in 2016 — in April and September. We hope to include a dedication of the church at Simikot (in the Far West district of Humla) during the latter. Land has been purchased and funding provided by C4C Canada for construction of the church building. It will be C4C’s fourth church built in Nepal. †

# Privileged to be part of the journey

BY ANNE SCHULTZ | C4C supporter



Kashaf, second from left, with her brothers Mubisher and Asher, and Evangelist Haseeb and Haseeb's wife Roma, after the children were freed from slavery in a Pakistan brick factory. Funding provided by Phil and Anne Schultz through Climbing For Christ's Project 8:36 (based on John 8:36) allowed these children to escape a system that forces children to work 14-to-16 hours a day every day to pay off family debt. (Photo by Save Pakistan)

As I took in Gary Fallesen's email introducing Project 8:36, my heart started racing. I got so wound up about this ministry opportunity I found it difficult to focus on anything else. My mind kept circling back to these precious little ones enslaved in the Pakistan brick factory, and my heart ached for them.

I wondered, "What are they doing and thinking about right now? Is there anything they're looking forward to or hoping for? How often do they feel happy? Or at peace? Do they know that they have a Creator and Savior who loves them so deeply that He died for them?" I wondered if they had ever even heard Jesus Christ's name.

Spurred on by the Holy Spirit, my husband Phil and I quickly decided to join the Project 8:36 team. A short time later, I received an email that left me utterly giddy. Phil says that I was like a little kid on Christmas morning. Three young siblings had been released from the bonds of slavery when their parents' debt was paid in full through this project!

Kashaf, Asher and Mubisher are now being raised in Climbing For Christ's Save Pakistan orphanage, where they can experience the love, joy, and hope found only in Christ. They can know that they are genuinely loved and that their lives are brimming with purpose and meaning. As I gaze at the photo of these three

beautiful children, each one having been knit together in their Maker's image, I am so very thankful for the privilege to be a part of their journey.

Phil and I realize that our lives here on earth are just a tiny blip on the continuum of eternity. Everything that is "ours" – our time, our spiritual gifts, our money – has been loaned to us for this short time by our Heavenly Father. It brings us such great joy to use our temporary resources to fulfill His everlasting and perfect purposes. Investing in the earthly and eternal lives of the least of these is a top priority for us.

We have found time and time again that Climbing For Christ is a vehicle through which Jesus meets the physical needs of the sick, the poor, and the orphan, and breathes His life into the spiritually dead. Time and time again, we are thrilled to see the tangible results of our investments as lives are transformed and lost lambs fall in love with their Creator.

C4C does not simply have great ministry ideas with good intentions to carry them out. Our Lord is making possible that which would be impossible without His abundant blessings. Slaves have been freed, individuals without hope have found life and joy in Christ, the zip code of hell has been depopulated. God is continuing to use C4C to accomplish His will, and it is a true blessing to be a part of His glorious plan. †

*Anne and Pastor Phil Schultz are Climbing For Christ supporters from Buffalo, NY, USA. They are blessed parents of two young children.*

## PLEASE GIVE

As a 501(c)3 non-profit ministry, U.S. donations are tax-deductible. Please consider sending a one-time gift or becoming a monthly contributor to Climbing For Christ. Send it to Climbing For Christ, P.O. Box 16290, Rochester, NY 14616-0290 USA. Or give via PayPal at [www.climbingforchrist.org/Contact/Donate.aspx](http://www.climbingforchrist.org/Contact/Donate.aspx).

In Canada, donations also are tax-deductible. Make checks payable to The Great Commission Foundation, and on the memo line add "Climbing For Christ CANADA." Mail your support to: The Great Commission Foundation, #3 – 1335 Trans Canada Way SE, Medicine Hat, AB T1B 1J1. Or give online at <http://tgcfcanada.org/donate>. Mark your contribution: "Climbing For Christ CANADA."



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## A View



Pastor Henry and his wife inside the old United Church of Christ in the Philippines (UCCP) structure in the remote mountain village of Tacadang, where we first preached on Mission: Philippines 2008. Pastor Henry has been building a new church (adjoining the old) since 2010. He solicited the help of C4C Philippines in 2013. The church, home to about 15 families, remains unfinished. We prayed on Mission: Philippines 2016 in January about the opportunity to help with the completion of the building. (Photo by Gary Fallesen)