



James ^{1:27}
Fund



a Family
Christian Stores
Foundation

FAMILY  Christian Stores®

2008 annual report



James Fund^{1:27}
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who **we** are

Founded in 2003, Family Christian Stores' Foundation The James Fund, partners with customers and vendors in a shared mission: reaching out to orphans and widows to show them the love of our Heavenly Father. The James Fund serves orphans and widows in three primary ways:

- Adoption assistance programs
- Hands-on orphan care and widow care work
- Quality of life improvements for orphans and widows

Taking our name and mission from James 1:27 *"Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress..."* (NIV), The James Fund heeds God's call on His church to maintain the cause of the orphan and widow, to hear them, to lift them up, to be their helpers, etc.

FAMILY  Christian Stores[®]

We are privileged to serve the needs of orphans and widows both here in the United States and abroad. We're blessed by the partnership of volunteers and donors who join with us while we serve. It is an abundance of blessing.

We present this 2008 Annual Report to inform and encourage you. Serving orphans and widows in distress is the passion of The James Fund. Thank you for going beyond caring *about* orphans and widows to caring *for* orphans and widows.

Steve Biondo
President, James Fund





what **we** do

Adoption assistance programs

There are 148 million orphans in the world yearning to someday have a mommy and a daddy to love them unconditionally. The love they dream of is the same love our Heavenly Father lavishes on His adopted children. Adoption is God's heart

Adoption is very expensive. Costs can range from \$20,000-\$22,000 for international adoptions, \$15,000 for domestic infant adoptions and less than \$500 for older special needs adoptions. The James Fund strives to live out the command in James 1:27 by blessing families who want to open up their homes to these waiting children. Because of God's grace and favor, in 2008 The James Fund donated \$156,000 for waiting children to be united with their "forever families." With an average adoption scholarship running \$2,500, this donation helped fulfill the dreams of 62 orphans now at home with their forever mommies, daddies and families. We praise God!



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Meet Mark and Aditi ...

Mark and Aditi Aromi had been married nine years and yearned for children. After participating in a James Fund mission trip, Aditi's heart was broken by love for orphans. This is how their journey to pursue the adoption of three abandoned sisters in Guatemala began. The James Fund adoption scholarships they received, along with other donations, helped them adopt these precious young girls. But they had to wait 30 months before they could bring Beatriz, Gabriela and Griselda home.

"Everything that could go wrong, went wrong," says Aditi. In addition to excessive paperwork and fees, Guatemalan government changes nearly ended their chances for completing the adoption process. Aditi didn't give up as she bought a one way airline ticket to Guatemala, vowing not to return without their girls. Once there, she camped out in the legal liaison office day after day. Finally on the fourth day there was a breakthrough. On April 7, 2008, the girls were theirs. "Those little girls were saved for us," shares Aditi. "It's like we were a family the whole time."





what **we** do

Hands-on orphan and widow care work

Together with the help of our donors and volunteers, The James Fund facilitates mission trips in the United States and Latin America providing hands-on orphan and widow care.

In Orange, Texas we saw hope return to widows as we helped gut their homes after Hurricane Ike ripped their lives apart. We marveled at the strength of these women as they faced the total ruin of their homes, their churches, their communities. We were honored to look after these widows in their distress by helping them rebuild their futures.

In Monterrey, Mexico we're seeing orphans transformed from street children to committed followers of Jesus Christ who have the skills and ability to survive in society. We're seeing the desperate cycle of orphans creating more orphans being broken as responsible young adults emerge from the Hope Program to enter society with a passion for Jesus and character to make a difference in their communities as independent young adults.



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Also in Monterrey, Mexico, we've come along side a dear widow by helping to build a ministry center where she can feed her neighbors both physically and spiritually. Her eyes are not on her poor estate or her loneliness but on her heavenly home and Father.

In the Dominican Republic, we're just beginning to impact orphans who are steeped in poverty. We've been able to assist them in their Christian education by buying a school bus to ensure they have reliable transportation to get them to and from school. We purchased fifteen laptops to help further their education. We've also begun work to improve their living conditions. Our teams have been energized by the strong faith of these young children and their gratefulness as we work along side to provide essentials for daily living. There is still so much more to do and greater things are yet to come in the Dominican Republic.





what **we** do

Quality of life improvements for orphans and widows

We provide financial resources to assist in quality-of-life improvements for orphans and widows. We're able to build or expand living quarters, buy food, clothing and provide essential daily living needs. We dig wells, pour cement, paint rooms, install plumbing, and the list goes on—all to improve quality of life and to let these precious ones know that they are loved and being pursued by the awesome God of the Universe. Often these physical improvements stand as a marker in the life of an orphan or a widow and as a testimony that there is a God in heaven who loves them and wants a forever relationship with them as Father and Savior.



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Meet Jonathan...

Eight-year-old Jonathan and his younger brother, Josue, were living at Casa Hogar Rayitos de Luz, a poor orphanage in Monterrey, Mexico. Jonathan always looked forlorn as he kept a watchful eye over Josue. He appeared burdened, and given their feeble surroundings, life was not easy. The children's home was so small that multiple children shared beds and all of the boys slept in a room that was exposed to the weather. Their "bedroom," meant for storage, only had three walls.

During this time, The James Fund joined forces with others to secure new property for Rayitos. James Fund donors helped purchase a beautiful two-acre walled compound with a bigger, better house, shade trees, fruit trees, and a yard big enough for all of the children to run and play. They call their new home "God's Promised Land."

Now when we visit Rayitos de Luz, Jonathan's sorrowful look has been replaced with a radiant smile and bright shining eyes. Jonathan still lives in an orphanage, but he is joyful as his quality of life improved beyond belief. Thank you, Lord!





what **we** do

The James Fund's Day of Sharing...

Tuesday, July 8 was our massive 2nd Annual "Day of Sharing" event that benefited nearly 6,000 orphans, foster children and widows in all of the communities served by Family Christian Stores.

Local orphans, foster children and widows were invited to each store's event. Stores creatively entertained their guests with music, games, food and gifts like the adorable Little Lamb plush toys or store gift certificates. Some stores held tea parties for their widowed guests and others asked local fire departments to bring fire engines for the children to explore. Our guests felt special as the store teams showered them with love and attention.

"As Christians, we have a responsibility to help those in need," said Cliff Bartow, President and CEO of Family Christian Stores. "The Day of Sharing allows us to share God's love with a large number of orphans and foster children that might not otherwise have such an opportunity."

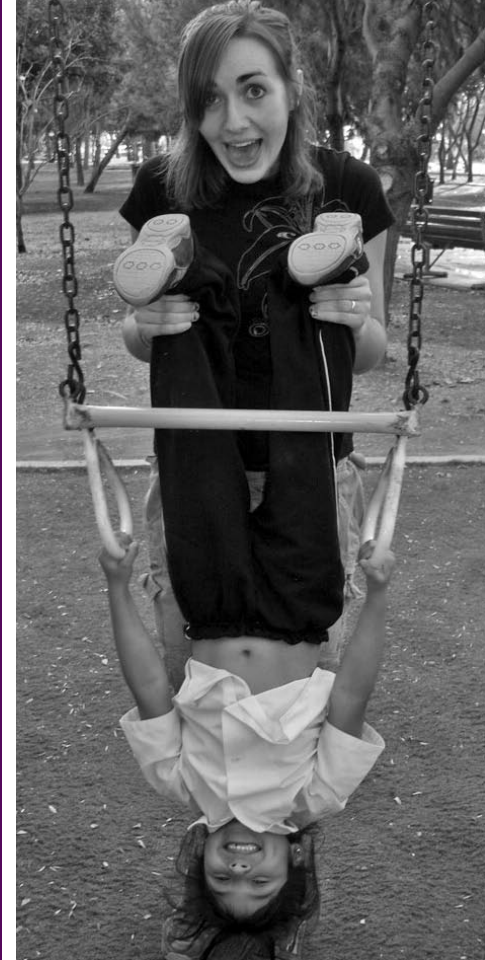


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Christian summer camp where faith and fun come together...

Christian camps are uniquely positioned to offer comfortable settings where children can play, relax, build relationships and soak in the truth of God's Word and the glories of His creation. The James Fund and Family Christian Stores, through a round-up campaign with their customers, donated \$59,012 so orphans and foster kids could go to Christian camps. Fifteen of these kids dedicated their lives to Christ last summer. These fun-filled, life-changing experiences for kids that normally would never get such a faith-building experience were truly quality-of-life improvements.

Bob Kobielush, President of Christian Camp and Conference Association said, "For more than a century Christian Camps and Conference Centers have been the places where millions of boys, girls, young people, men and women have come to know Jesus Christ as their Savior and life is never the same. Now, through your gift, boys and girls who could never afford this opportunity will be able to attend a Christian camp this summer and hope can be restored to their young lives. A Christian camp is a safe, temporary community surrounded 24/7 with the open arms of trained and loving adults, who are filled with the living message of Jesus. Thank you for your part in this life-changing ministry!"





how **you** can help

We want to help faith become action. We intend to be a voice for the orphans and widows who often have no voice. God has shown His grace and favor over The James Fund this past year by allowing us to serve in more countries and touch more lives than ever before. But much remains to be done. Here are a few ways you can help:

Mobilize your church to minister to orphans

Churches all over the country are launching orphan care ministries in an attempt to unite orphans with their forever families. To learn more about how your church can be a catalyst for sustaining an orphan care ministry, visit ShowHope.org or HopeForOrphans.com.

Mobilize your church to minister to widows

Every day 800,000 women join the ranks of being a widow. Widows move from singing and serving, to solitude and silent sobbing, and then on to find a place where they belong. Approximately 50% of them leave the church they attended as a couple. To learn more about how your church can "look after widows in their distress," visit WidowConnection.com.



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Through Family Christian Stores' James Fund, you have the opportunity to share the miracle of love with orphans and widows. Please consider making a tax deductible donation to The James Fund.

Checks should be made payable to "The James Fund." Mail to:

The James Fund
Family Christian Stores
5300 Patterson Avenue SE
Grand Rapids, MI 49530

Or, you may make a credit card contribution online by visiting JamesFund.org.

The James Fund is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization and your donation is tax deductible.

*lives are being changed for eternity
thank you for serving the fatherless*





why it matters

Our Heavenly Father desires to lavish love on all of His adopted children. That's why in the Bible, He made promises to orphans and widows that though they felt alone in this world, He would be with them. Some of His assurances were to hear them, to defend them, to lift them up, to maintain their cause, to come to them, to be their father, to give them a home, to give them food, to give them clothing, etc. God's plan to fulfill these promises lies with His church; He wants us, His church, to be His hands and feet to deliver these promises as we "look after orphans and widows in their distress..."

2008 events

Customer Involvement-Hands-on Delivery

- Barnabas Bears - 126,000 adopted
- Contributions from donors & FCS employees - \$491,000
- Christian Summer Camp for Foster kids / Orphans - \$59,000 gift from The James Fund & FCS

Other Events - Hands-on Delivery

- Home Office Fundraising - \$37,487
- Mission Trips - Sent 190 people on 9 mission trips
- Children of Fallen Soldiers Relief Fund - \$49,600 donated from The James Fund & FCS

Adoption Funding

- Show Hope - \$30,000
- Lifesong for Orphans - \$71,000
- Bethany Christian Services - \$55,000

Other Investments

- Capital Investments - \$3,000 for well at Imperio de Amor
 - \$2,700 for new tables & chairs for Imperio de Amor
 - \$8,000 for 2nd Hope House furniture
- People Investments - \$1,500 p/mo for Manantial de Amor
 - Food/clothing baskets for Rio
 - \$500 for food/care for widow at Rio
 - \$3,200 gift for Meme, widow
 - Donated thousands of hours of hands-on labor

Lives Touched - 224,000



The James Fund Board

Steve Biondo, President
 Dave Browne, Trustee
 Cliff Bartow, Trustee
 Hal Bailey, Trustee
 Ruth Witte, Treasurer
 Amy Anderson, Secretary

The James Fund Mission Trip Leaders

Chris Lienesch
 Steve Biondo
 Dave Browne
 Mike Bowles
 Casey Bailey
 Gus Savoca
 Curt Tackmann



*Religion that God our Father
accepts as pure and faultless is this:
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The James Fund is a non-profit organization dedicated to meeting the needs of orphans and widows around the world.

To learn more, visit JamesFund.org