DAY 3: ECONOMIC REST

Click the picture above, or visit https://tinyurl.com/yclpg5zv to watch the "Day 3 Greeting" from Sweet Sleep.

The third pillar of Sweet Sleep's True Rest is economic rest. This week, we've been talking about how God has called us to care for the orphan. In James 1:27, the Bible reads:

Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress.

In your own words, talk about what an orphan is.

Not only are "orphans" kids who have lost one or both of their parents, but they are also kids whose parents or caretakers simply cannot provide for them. This could be food, a home, or school fees.

There are about 140 million orphans in the world today. Did you know that 80 to 90 percent of the world's orphans have living parents? That number jumps to as high as 98% in countries where war or epidemics have not taken the lives of parents. This means the vast majority of children are social or economic orphans. Poverty makes orphans!

Did you notice that in the same verse that God tells us to look after orphans, He also tells us to look after widows? Uganda is a very community-based culture. This means a neighbor, aunt, or grandmother will often take in, and care for, vulnerable children in their village -- even if they don't have enough money to feed themselves. Much of the time, these caretakers are the widows in the community. Now, let's look at one more verse to tie it all together.

God places the lonely in families.
Psalm 68:6

Do you see what God's doing here? He has a plan, and a design for His children. That's why Sweet Sleep created CO•OPs.

Click the video below, or visit https://tinyurl.com/yclpg5zv to watch the "How Poverty Affects Families" video.

CO•OP

CO•OP: An autonomous association of people UNITED voluntarily TO MEET their common ECONOMIC, SOCIAL, AND SPIRITUAL NEEDS and ASPIRATIONS through a jointly owned and democratically controlled enterprise.

Said another way, CO•OPs are businesses that help mamas, aunts, and grandmas earn money so that they can take care of the orphans and vulnerable kids in their own communities!

The CO•OPs are made of about eight to 10 members, many of whom are widows, single mothers, and grandmothers of the vulnerable children. They receive business training and start-up capital that allows them to start a group business, together. Some of the most popular businesses are pig farms, goat rearing, sewing, and soap making.

Before they were part of a CO•OP, these women did very hard, dangerous manual labor, and still could not pay for food or school fees. The children then couldn't go to school, and so they would help their mamas with the dangerous work.

A common job for these women is "breaking rocks." They go to a rock quarry and mine heavy stones that they smash into smaller stones. It's extremely hard, dangerous work, and they are paid about $0.02 per 100 pound bucket they collect. They work hard, all day long, and earn one dollar per day.

VIDEO: BREAKING ROCKS

It's hard to imagine what it's like to work so hard, for so little. Or to not be able to go to school. Or to not have a bed of your own! As often as we can, we try to experience what it's like for our friends in Uganda. By doing so, we become better advocates for them! That's what today's activity is all about -- allowing you to experience what it might be like to be an orphan in Uganda, so that you can become an advocate too!

Click the video above, or visit https://tinyurl.com/yclpg5zv to watch the "Breaking Rocks" video of our opportunity to experience what this kind of work is like.

VIDEO AND ACTIVITY: A DOLLAR A DAY

It was so hard to lift that bucket of rocks and carry it out of the quarry, but our friend Veronica did that day in and day out before she joined a sewing CO•OP. It was hot and she was hungry and had no water. Veronica earned two cents for every bucket she filled and carried. She was able to earn one dollar per day.

Take a minute and talk as a family about what you can buy for one dollar.

We wondered the same thing, so we took $1 to market in Uganda, to experience what we could buy. Watch this video to see!

Click the photo below or visit https://tinyurl.com/yclpg5zv to watch the "A Dollar a Day" video.

THE EXPERIENCE

Tonight we're going to sleep "Under the Stars", and experience what life might be like if we were an orphan living in Uganda. Imagine that you and your parents worked all day breaking rocks, making bricks, or carrying heavy cans of water to wash other people's clothes. Usually, at the end of each day, you walk to the market and purchase one kilogram of millet. But today is a special occasion -- like Easter -- so yesterday you "went to bed hungry," so that today you could spend two dollars at the market, and buy rice and beans! You'll have a feast tonight and go to bed with a full belly!

Hurry home, and use the following recipe to help your parents cook this typical "fancy" Ugandan meal of rice and beans.

After you finish your dinner, it is time to go to sleep. You don't have a Sweet Sleep bed, so you and your family sleep on the ground of your mud hut. The ground is cold, hard pressed clay dirt, and you're aware of the danger of mosquitoes. To get more comfortable, you gather up clothes, or a straw mat, or maybe a burlap sack, and make a little sleeping pad.

The next pages will guide you through your Under the Stars Sweet Sleep experience.

EAT

The following recipe was provided by our Ugandan Sweet Sleep staff women and is a traditional way to prepare beans and rice. Bon appetit!

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 kilo (2 cups) dried beans
- 1 kilo (2 cups) white rice
- 10 cups water, divided (remember, you walked a mile to the well to collect this)
- 1 onion
- pinch of flour
- vegetable cooking oil
- 1 tomato
- half a carrot
- 2 cloves of garlic
- season to liking with choice of seasonings like salt, cinnamon, or curry powder

DIRECTIONS:

1. Wash the dried beans by covering with water. Remove any debris that floats in the water.
2. Boil 2 cup dried beans in 6 cups water for 1 to 3 hours on a hot fire (your kitchen range), checking every 30 minutes after first hour, until beans are very soft. Add more boiling water as necessary so beans will not burn or stick to the bottom of the pan.
3. Add a pinch of flour.
4. After beans have softened, pan fry chopped onions in vegetable oil until softened. Add chopped carrots and minced garlic. Once browned, add chopped tomato.
5. Add boiled beans to the onion mixture, stir to combine, and heat through for 5 minutes.
6. Bring 4 cups water to a boil and add 2 cups rice. Reduce heat to low and simmer until all water is absorbed.

SLEEP

Choose the sleep experience that is best for your family:

CONDITIONS

In Kampala, children who have been rescued from dangerous living conditions or who had been living on the street, sleep on a pile of clothes, a blanket, or on a shared mattress on the dormitory floor.

CHALLENGE

Sleep, rest, or take a nap for as long as you can inside on your living room floor. This will simulate kids who live in an orphanage, but don't have a bed.

BED SUPPLIES TO CHOOSE FROM

- Flattened cardboard box
- Towel
- Blanket
- A pile of laundry

CONDITIONS

In northern Uganda, children sleep on the cold, hard, pressed clay floor of their mud hut. They often live in child-headed households or have been orphaned due to a civil war and disease in the area.

CHALLENGE

Sleep, rest, or take a nap for as long as you can outside in your yard, driveway, front porch, or deck. This will simulate kids who sleep on clay floors in mud huts.

BED SUPPLIES TO CHOOSE FROM

- Flattened cardboard box
- Towel
- Blanket
- Cloth bags

THE NEXT MORNING

Good morning friends! How was your sleep? Was it what you expected? How was your beans and rice feast? Did one kilo of each go very far? Did anyone get any mosquito bites? It sure is a good thing we don't have malaria in the United States!

Watch the "Next Morning" video by clicking the photo above or by visiting https://tinyurl.com/yclpg5zv. Then, take a few minutes with your family to share about your experience. Use these questions to help start the conversation.

1) What did it physically feel like to sleep on the floor, outside on the ground, or without a soft bed to comfort and protect you?

2) What have you learned about God and his love for all kinds of children, and for what He wants us to do, to care for orphans?

3) How will this experience change the way you live, love, and serve?

Congratulations! You completed the Sweet Sleep family experience! Now that you have learned and experienced what some of the needs of vulnerable children in Uganda are, you can be an advocate too!

Click the photo above or visit https://tinyurl.com/yclpg5zv for a "Thank You" video.

NEXT STEPS

- PRAY: Continue to pray for Sweet Sleep and the vulnerable children we serve
- ADVOCATE: Tell others about Sweet Sleep and the kids in Uganda and how they need beds. Share the Gospel in ten words with your friends. Perform the malaria skit to teach others about how important mosquito nets are.
- GIVE: The need is great! A mosquito net costs $8. A Bible costs $10. A bed in northern Uganda costs $50. A bed in Kampala costs $140. This summer, we need to give beds, Bibles, and mosquito nets to 1640 kids in Uganda and we need your help!

CLOSING PRAYER

Father God, thank you. Thank you for giving us this opportunity to experience what life is like for many kids in Uganda. And thank you for loving those kids, and for loving us, so much that You would invite us into this work. We pray for each child who is waiting for a bed, Bible, and mosquito net. Keep each of those children safe and comfortable until they can receive a bed. We pray for each mama, grandmother, and widow who is working so hard to provide for vulnerable kids in their villages. Provide for them until they can be a part of a CO•OP. We pray for our church, and each family who participated in the Sweet Sleep family experience, that we will all be advocates for vulnerable children around the world. May You continue to soften our hearts for caring for the orphan. And we pray that resources are abundant, so more beds can be given to children in Uganda.

If you would like to help Sweet Sleep provide beds, Bibles, and mosquito nets to children in Uganda, you can help us by giving at http://sweetsleep.org/familygive, or by clicking the button:

DONATE

Sweet Sleep exists to demonstrate God's love and hope in Christ to the world's orphaned and vulnerable children, improving their quality of life.

Sweet Sleep is a registered 501(c)3. All donations are tax deductible to the extent allowable by law. All gifts will be used to further the mission of Sweet Sleep. For more information about Sweet Sleep, visit https://sweetsleep.org.

Sweet Sleep™