

Our World's Condition      Did you know?

**Hunger**

- More than **16 million** children, nearly one in five children in America can't count on having enough to eat.
- In the world the percentage is higher. Hunger is the **world's number one health risk** and kills more people every year than AIDS, Malaria and Tuberculosis combined.

**Water**

- **884 million** people lack access to safe water supplies; approximately one in eight people.
- **3.5 million** people die each year from water-related disease.
- The water and sanitation crisis claims more lives through disease than any war claims through guns.

**Housing**

- There were **744,000 homeless** people in the United States in 2005. A little more than half were living in shelters, and nearly a quarter were chronically homeless. A majority of the homeless were single adults, but about **41% were in families**. According to USA today there were 1.6 million in 2009.
- When considering the world housing shortage it is important to also consider the number of people living in inadequate conditions around the world. A recent report estimated a world **slum population of approximately 900 million**.

**Prison Reform**

- Harvard University report: Since 1980, America's prison population has more than tripled. The number of females in prison has quadrupled. Although blacks only make up 12% of the total population, they represent nearly half of the prison population. We've outgrown even our most ambitious prison-building programs, resulting in overcrowding, disease, and a general failure to help and reform prisoners. And fueled by the cry for a "war on crime" (and a failed war on drugs)--including tougher sentencing, misuse of the three strikes provision, fewer parole opportunities, and more police--the prison epidemic grows like a plague.
- Pew Center report states: "One in 100- Americans Behind Bars 2008-- With more than 2.3 million people behind bars, the United States leads the world in its prison population, well ahead of China (1.5 million) and leaving Russia in the dust (890,000).

The numbers are so staggering that it is hard, if not impossible, to get our heads around them, much less our hearts. Because most of us live in relative comfort, we tend to put these concerns in the far reaches of our minds.

And so a great man once said, "**for I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, <sup>43</sup>I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not give me clothing, sick and in prison and you did not visit me.**" "

In our final judgment, we shall be judged not by how many restrictive laws we have passed but on how well we have reached out and provided comfort to those in need.

*D. Hojins*