

When I was in 10th Grade the neighbor in our duplex fell asleep while cooking hamburgers. I was called out class and upon arriving home realized that while most our home was untouched, the damage to the structure forced the city to immediately condemn our home. Because our family lived in poverty and had no financial resources to draw upon, we were suddenly homeless. I was formally part of a disaster.

I was also formally part of a disaster relief effort. While I cannot remember a single personality or face that was part of the relief effort, I do remember being helped. I remember moving into transitional housing, I remember opening a fridge full of groceries, I remember receiving a “real” Christmas Tree and shiny wrapped presents and I remember receiving my homework delivered to my doorstep while I was away from school. All of these acts included the generosity of dozens of people, from those who donated food, money, clothing, presents and a Christmas Tree to those that stayed past working hours to secure housing for my family or deliver my homework. In looking back at that time, I did not see God’s grace through the acts of a few visible individuals but rather I saw God’s grace through the generosity of many, many unseen hands. When I have been asked how I was able to move out of poverty or my family was able to overcome this situation, I can not

give credit to just one person or situation but owe most of the praise to the collection of faceless individuals that quietly provided assistance.

The thread of these acts extends far beyond the time frame of these individual generous acts. Almost two weeks ago my wife did an awesome job in giving birth to our second child, baby Nina Rose. We brought her home to a loving extended family to sleep in a cute little room that is purple and pink and green, now looking more like an Easter candy exploded. There were flowers and prepared food from this congregation that sat before our door. With that new baby smell, I carried her around our home in a very slow and nearly motionless pace so as not to break her. The life that Nina has been brought into has been indirectly affected by the generosity of many whom I never met many years ago. The generosity given to me during my youth has created a thread that I will acknowledge and respect for all my days.

Today's offering asks us to give to those whom we will probably never see or meet. We have the ability to collectively be their unseen hand of generosity. Providing winterized tents for families in Pakistan, schools being built for tsunami families near the Indian Ocean, young women

learning to make clothing in Central America and new homes in New Orleans. There is a family now “out there” that will be affected by a disaster and we will be now part of their relief and their lives. On behalf of those unseen faces, I thank you in advance for your help. From this One Great Hour of Sharing, a thread will be created, a relationship formed and great results that will carry on for many years. And if we’re lucky maybe a future Easter-egg colored room will be created.