

Concluding Comments

Engaging a people group is worthy of a celebration, no doubt, but much hard work remains. A person and a plan have emerged among the fictional Jaro people, but a church is not yet planted that is healthy enough to reach its people with the gospel. In this story, the “person” was actually two people, Jay and Keeja; and they had an entire mission agency and a band of prayer warriors behind them to make a plan. The first part of the plan had taken shape in God’s timing, and a metaphorical pearl had been discovered that would become a foundational story, with God’s help, to lead many Jaro to Jesus.

With this book, I joyfully join Don Richardson with the call to this generation to “Get out there and discover the God-stories and redemptive metaphors that our Father has planted around the world.” His book *Peace Child* has inspired many, including me. The story of the elder at the end of this book is based on a true account that I witnessed among the Sukuma people of Tanzania in the year 2000.

I am thankful for the course “Perspectives on the World Christian Movement,” taught around the world and also available online. This course is instrumental in developing the concept of a “people group” and possible strategies to take the gospel to them. Many churches offer the course, including the church where I serve, Bethlehem Baptist Church in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Additional information on the “Perspectives Course” can be gained at www.perspectives.org.

I add my voice to [Paul Eshleman](#)’s and the many others who have taken up the call to Finish the Task by engaging the unengaged people groups around the world. For more information, visit the website, www.finishingthetask.com. Valuable research is underway to determine unengaged peoples which can be accessed from the Joshua Project (www.joshuaproject.net) and the International Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Church (www.imb.org).

In so many parts of the world, orphans are thrown into a world with so few resources. Sometimes another family member makes room for the orphan, but often that child is treated like a servant, not a child. Large orphanages have shown to be inadequate for the long term. Since the large orphanages are often managed and funded by people of another culture, children are unlikely to retain the culture of their birth, and they struggle when they graduate back into society. Orphans may have been given so much by donors who mean well, but they can grow dependent, expecting to have things given to them when times get hard. Many countries are moving to family-based care instead of the larger orphanages.

An encouraging trend is growing where a mom and dad agree to raise an orphan—or a few orphans—as part of their family with the support of a local church and generous donors inside and outside the community to help with housing, food, school fees, and more. Many orphaned children have been helped when the local church is actively involved in teaching their people about God’s heart for orphans and how to raise all children in the Lord, recognizing the special emotional healing needs of children who have been abandoned. For more information on Christian orphan care, please go online to CAFO (www.cafo.org) and Orphan’s Joy (www.orphansjoy.org), where I am honored to serve as a board member.

This is a work of fiction based on truth and realities. The word of God is its foundation, and that is a bedrock of faithful truth. My own imagination has pondered God’s truth, especially in relationship to heaven and the spiritual realm, and I encourage others to be regular Bible readers and to imagine heavenly realities with joy, grounded in the Word. I pray that my creative moments will not lead anyone astray from God. Instead, may this story draw many closer to our Father through Jesus who is preparing a place in heaven for all who believe. Jesus tells us, “Let not your hearts be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in me. In my Father’s house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also” (John 14:1–3).

“The horse is made ready for the day of battle, but the victory belongs to the LORD.”
—Proverbs 21:31

All Bible verses are from the English Standard Version (ESV).