

MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR:

REAP is a manual especially written for leaders who find themselves dealing with the issues surrounding HIV and AIDS, particularly in Africa. It is designed as a resource tool with the Christian leader in mind. The information contained is useful for educational purposes in churches, public schools, small and large group studies, by community leaders, parents, and support groups.

In the early 1990s, Belva, as a principal of a large Christian school in California, became increasingly frustrated trying to find suitable resource material with a moral perspective for 'Human Development' classes. In desperation, the formulation of a morally-based educational curriculum on HIV and AIDS began to take form. We could never have imagined that in 1995 we would return to Africa, where we raised our two children, to head up a whole strategy of ministry dealing with HIV and AIDS.

For several more years we have traveled the length and breadth of the Southern Region of Africa utilizing our fragmented ideas on simple handout sheets. Continually the cry came, *"Please write a comprehensive manual as a 'model' for those who would see the needs surrounding HIV and AIDS with compassion, as Jesus sees it."* From there this manual evolved.

Finally, after four years of work in writing, once losing everything to a computer crash, REAP took shape. Yet, this was not without the help of our dear friend, Esther Steelberg Pearlman, who paid her own way a number of times from the USA to volunteer to work with every word on the final manuscript. Without her encouragement and help this manual would never have been completed. Thank you Esther!

Many others have contributed to the experience we have gained and shared in this manual by inviting us to sundry groups, big and small, older and younger, totaling approximately 175,000 people per year who have heard OPERATION WHOLE'S AIDS awareness teaching. Without the incredible team effort of many African believers, with whom we are privileged to work, our message of God's answers to the AIDS crises would not have gone out.

REAP has been birthed out of practical, hands-on experience in developing ministry that works. It is to give understanding about the HIV and AIDS pandemic in 'lay' terms and with sufficient graphic effect, that will be user-friendly for Christian leaders. This material can be adapted for presentation in rural Africa with the simple use of flip charts. It also can be utilised in presentations using overhead transparencies or computer technology with the accompanying CD. However it is packaged, those receiving this teaching about HIV and AIDS have experienced change...change in life-style, change in attitude, and positive change about involvement.

Our prayer is that REAP will further equip the Church of Jesus Christ to confidently “do His deeds” with boldness and confidence in the crises of HIV and AIDS. For too long, the Christian Church has remained silent. It is now time to work “for the night is coming when no man can work”.

(John 9:4). AIDS waits for no one. The Lord will help us!

In His love and ours,

**Vern Tisdalle, Director
Africa...Operation Whole**