

Evangelist Purchases Modern-Day Slaves

Imagine children as young as 4 and 5 years old being forced to work 14- to 16-hour days making bricks, cigarettes, rope and textiles, then being forced to beg strangers for food in order to eat. This is the picture of slavery in many Asian and Middle Eastern countries.

It seems a pretty harsh and brutal environment, says evangelist Bruce Ladebu, founder of the Children's Rescue Initiative (CRI), which has been purchasing the freedom of these victims. The children never have any time off. They worked from sun up to sun down.

Many have been enslaved because of debts accrued by their parents. Armed with guns and money, Ladebu and the CRI team go into these slave areas to purchase children and sometimes entire families for anywhere between \$200 and \$1,000 per child or family.

"We freed a family recently of seven," Ladebu says. "The debt originally was \$500 and three generations of people had to work to pay it off." CRI bought the entire family from the slave owners for \$1,000.

After the team rescues these children and families, they provide them with shelter, food and an education. The organization has funded three orphanages and seven Christian schools. They are raising money to buy farmland, cows and chickens to feed the victims.

Ladebu, who also travels the world as a revivalist and founder of Forerunner Global Ministries, says his main objective is to show the love of Christ to as many as possible. "In reaching out to help child slaves, hungry orphans or street kids, we are reaching out with the love of God," he says.

