



**What  
about**

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# What About Socialization?

by Art Dappen

Educators talk a lot about “socialization”. But how much social contact do the average children have with severely malformed or retarded people? Little if any. Our society discards such people, and if it can, it aborts them before they are even born. Jesus has called us to reach out and love those in need, even as he reached out and helped us. You all know what the Lord says about loving others.

Let’s put away our vain pastimes, and dedicate our lives to being real Christians. Let’s make a difference in the lives of others whom the world has rejected.

Let me tell you about Arnulfo.

Are you thankful for what God has given you? God has given you life, and he gives you air, water, food, and all the things you need to live. But sometimes God doesn’t give us everything we want. Sometimes we don’t have what other people have. We see others who have bigger houses, better clothes, more money, and better health. We see others who are stronger and better looking. Do you give thanks to God even though it seems that you have less than others have? Do you thank God for your small house? Do you thank God for your clothes? To be THANKFUL means to give thanks to God for what you have, and not to look at what others have. To be THANKFUL means you don’t feel envious of others because you know that God is taking care of you.

Arnulfo is a young man who was raised here in Guayameo, Mexico. When he was born, there was a problem because his body was not properly formed. His hands did not work to hold things, and his legs did not work to crawl or walk. Neither could he talk. When Arnulfo was born, he weighed less than one pound. He was born very prematurely and was never taken to the hospital.

His mother told me that Arnulfo was as long as her open hand. He was so small that his shirt could be folded to fit inside a small box of matches (2 inches long). He could not breast feed, nor would the nipple of a bottle fit into his tiny mouth. So his mother fed him with milk on the end of her finger. When she went to the market, she would carry him in the pocket of her skirt.

During the days Arnulfo would sit inside a washtub lined with pillows. One day when he was 14 years old, some children were playing with matches, and Arnulfo's clothes caught on fire. He could not put the fire out, and he couldn't run away. His legs burned like wood in the fireplace. Immediately he was taken to Mexico City, and his legs were amputated. His mother cried and told him, "My son, you are going to die." But Arnulfo said in the mumbles that only his mother could understand, "No, I'm not going to die." God had a plan for this boy, and it wasn't possible for him to die of those burns.

In Mexico City, Arnulfo and his mother stayed with a Christian family whom they had not known before, but who opened up their home to them. These Christians prayed much for Arnulfo. When his mother saw their love for her son, her heart broke open, and she began to believe in Jesus Christ.

She saw how the Lord healed her son's burns. Arnulfo also believed, and they were both baptized in water in accordance with the Lord's command. In this way Arnulfo's mother was brought to the Lord through her son's sufferings.

Now they are both very THANKFUL for their new life in Christ. All that Arnulfo has suffered has not been in vain. It has resulted in the salvation of his mother. Therefore we should not be envious of other people. God has created us with a purpose. God knows why things happen. We shouldn't complain or murmur, but be THANKFUL.

There will be a big turn around in eternity, where the first will be last, and the last will be first. On that day it will finally dawn upon people that the severely disadvantaged were more "meaningful" than touchdowns, goals, and Olympic gold medals.

"Too boring," some say? Can we get excited about ten thousand dollars, but be bored by a poor soul? Perhaps with an attitude like that, WE are boring to God!

Let us not be so ignorant of eternal things. Let's get our Bibles out and educate ourselves. Let's study our Bibles until the things that matter to God, matter to us. Waste time watching famous phonies on the tube? No! Let's go out and meet some REAL people that the world has discarded. "Light from the Cross makes our dreams seem small", and enables us to "see a treasure in one soul which far outshines the brightest gold".

**Art Dappen** (1946-2006) was a leader in the homeschool movement in Mexico. He served for over 30 years as a missionary with his wife of 35 years, Linn. Art's ministry included the creation and free distribution of a Spanish reading program for homeschoolers. About two years before his home-going, he and Linn added seven Mexican orphans to their family, making them the parents of seventeen. Two married daughters in the U.S. have blessed them with 13 grandchildren (so far). Linn and the rest of the family continue to live and minister in Mexico.

Art received his high school education at an elite boarding school in Connecticut, and continued on to university. One day, as a new Christian in a graduate-level chemistry class, he came to a realization. As he studied the equations on the blackboard, the thought came to him: "Jesus Christ did not dedicate his life to what is written on that blackboard." He left school and purposed to serve the Lord.

A daughter said, "He always felt it was a privilege to throw it all away."

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