

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

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## Can Christians Assist with Urgent Global Needs?

*Hope Lives* encourages people with grace, not guilt to engage global issues, to answer the biblical mandate to love and serve the poor

**Colorado Springs, CO** – Worldwide poverty. HIV/AIDS. Sex trafficking. Disease. War. Unrest. Hope?

“Each morning, I browse through the news and the stories I read make it hard to believe in hope. Stories of staggering poverty, of overwhelming AIDS victims, of communities gutted and raw from war, of children exploited and hungry and discarded,” humanitarian advocate **Amber Van Schooneveld** says.

“But hope is still very much alive,” says Van Schooneveld, the author of *Hope Lives* (Group Publishing), a challenging book urging readers toward compassion and action, responding to urgent worldwide crises with God’s love. In *Hope Lives*, Van Schooneveld takes readers on a five-week journey of restoration, including:

- **Understanding Poverty of the Heart:** Why do Christians often feel paralyzed to act?
- **God Is Not Silent:** Uncovering truths about the Bible, revealing God’s love for the poor.
- **Understanding Poverty:** Exploring the causes, effects and heart of poverty.
- **Prayer:** Discovering the power of prayer in a world of need and in our own lives.
- **Be the Change:** Allowing God to use people’s passions, gifts and skills to love the needy.

She examines American values like individualism and materialism, the “‘isms’ that keep us from caring about poverty,” she says, contrasting America’s lifestyle with the struggles in the majority world. “It hurts to look at ourselves raw and exposed, but God will use this self-scrutiny to heal.”

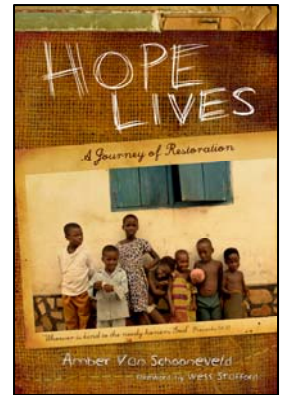
However, Van Schooneveld’s theme of hope rings throughout. “It’s not a journey of guilt or obligation. It’s a journey of God’s grace restoring us to the people he created us to be, and a journey of serving God to bring his grace and love to those in need,” she says. Van Schooneveld has traveled in the developing world, and shares real stories of suffering *and* hope in *Hope Lives*, opening readers’ eyes to the human reality behind statistics. Each daily entry asks readers deep questions, challenging them to journal thoughts and aspirations.

Wess Stafford, the president of Compassion International, a worldwide Christian nonprofit organization, writes, “This book demands that you interrupt your busy life and embark on a spiritual journey to know the poor through God’s eyes, through his words.” Van Schooneveld’s hope is that this journey would transform readers’ hearts and perspectives, that they would begin a journey to love the poor, to fight urgent global issues—to be the change.

**Amber Van Schooneveld** has contributed to numerous ministry resources and coaches an international team of writers and photographers for Compassion International. Her daily exposure to the needs and hope in the developing world compels her to continue to speak out for those who have no voice of their own. She and her husband, Michael, live in Colorado Springs, Colorado.

### **About *Hope Lives*:**

*Hope Lives: A Journey of Restoration* by Amber Van Schooneveld. Published by Group Publishing. March 2008. Paperback, 192 pages. \$12.99. ISBN: 978-0764437885.



# Facts/Stats about Global Issues

Adapted from *Hope Lives* by Amber Van Schooneveld

- “There are 1.2 billion people in the world living in extreme poverty on less than a dollar a day.” (12)
- “There are 38.6 million people diagnosed with HIV worldwide.” (12)
- “There are nearly 30,000 children under the age of 5 dying each day of hunger and preventable diseases.” (12)
- “The average person in the United States gives only 2.1 percent to all charitable causes. The average Christian in America tithes 2.66 percent of his or her income to the church. If we assume that Christians are also giving the additional 2.1 percent of their income to charitable causes, that’s still only 4.76 percent of their income—not even half of the biblical tithe (Leviticus 27:30-32).”
- “1.2 million children are trafficked each year as slaves.” (33)
- “854 million people are hungry today.” (33)
- “A lack of clean water is killing almost 2 million people a year.” (86)
- “15.2 million children have lost one or both parents to AIDS.” (86)
- “Malaria kills 1 million children each year, even though a bed net treated with insecticide that costs just \$10 could save them.” (92)
- “Each year, over 5 million children die from illnesses and other conditions caused by their environments.” (92)

## Interview Topics: *Hope Lives*

Adapted from *Hope Lives* by Amber Van Schooneveld

- **American Values?** How materialism and individualism stifle compassion.
- **What Does the Bible Say?** An in-depth look into God’s heart for the poor.
- **The Power of Prayer and Alleviating Poverty:** How people around the world can come together and pray for those in need.
- **The Nature of Poverty:** What are the causes and effects of poverty? How bad is poverty around the world?
- **What We Can Do:** How Christians can respond to the crises around the world.

**For an interview with Amber Van Schooneveld, contact Ben Laurro at Pure Publicity at 818.753.4056 or [Ben@purepublicity.com](mailto:Ben@purepublicity.com).**

# Quotes from *Hope Lives*

By Amber Van Schooneveld

“I stuck my nose in the corners of the world and peeked into crannies, and found that hope is very much alive. Our God of hope is on the move to bring restoration to me and to you and to this world full of hurt. He’s calling each of us on a journey of restoration with him. Hope lives, and God is on the move.” (6)

“Above all, this is a journey toward Christ, a journey compelled and enabled by grace. It’s not a journey of guilt or obligation. It’s a journey of God’s grace restoring us to the people he created us to be, and a journey of serving God to bring his grace and love to those in need.” (7)

“The stories I see on TV stay in that little box—they don’t invade my world. My section of the world is living through unprecedented prosperity, safety, and opportunity. Advances in technology, industry, trade, education, and law have created a bastion of opportunity.” (12)

“The standard of living in America is constantly on the rise. On and on we march in an unending quest for material achievement, driven by possessions.” (12)

“The *love* of money is evil, but money itself isn’t.” (74)

“The most notable thing about Jesus in regard to the poor isn’t necessarily what he said. It’s what he did. He had only a handful of years of ministry, and he chose to spend a large amount of that time in relative obscurity helping people in need. That was of utmost importance to him.” (61)

“Poverty is about people, and I want to experience their humanity. I want to look into the faces of poverty. The impoverished are just like me—no less intelligent, no less feeling. They have dreams. They make jokes. They love. They are people like my aunt. People like my neighbor. When I read their stories, I remember how very like me they are. I realize that this is what poverty is about. And I realize that hope lives.” (95)

“*To come awake and to remain awake.* That’s the real challenge. Praying constantly is remaining awake to God’s presence. My prayers are awakening me to the truth of God’s infinite presence. As I develop an organic, flowing prayer life with God, praying for the needs of others becomes more like breathing—something that just happens naturally.” (127)

“Each person has been given different passions from God. Many times, our passions derive from our personal experiences—something that has affected us deeply in the past or something we’ve suffered through or watched someone else suffer through.” (175)

“I don’t want to be part of a fad. It’s so hot right now to be in Africa...into a cause...into the poor. What’ll it be five years from now? I don’t know, but I don’t want a phase—I want Christ. I want to be on this road of serving Christ and walking beside him for the rest of my life—with his grace at the center, to keep me from growing ‘weary in doing good.’” (181)

“Hope lives in me. Not because I’ve found some new strategy or organization for changing the world. Hope lives because the Lord is my hope.” (182)

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# Suggested Interview Questions

For Amber Van Schooneveld, author of *Hope Lives*

1. What is “the poverty of the heart”?
2. How are things like materialism and individualism stifling compassion? Has America’s wealth become our god?
3. Have we drifted away from the original “American dream”? Why or why not?
4. Have Christians often offered assistance to the poor out of guilt rather than grace?
5. The Scriptures are full of words about loving others. What does the Bible say about serving the poor, the widows and the orphans?
6. Many misconceptions exist about the nature of poverty. What are some of the common misconceptions people have about poverty? What are some primary causes and effects?
7. One section in *Hope Lives* focuses on the importance and effectiveness of prayer to serve those in need. What is the power of prayer in helping to alleviate poverty?
8. Each person is wired differently. Are there ways that all people can “be the change,” regardless of their passions and talents?
9. Many people hesitate to do something to fight poverty because they don’t think their efforts will have any affect, but that poverty is an inevitability. What is your response to this?
10. You say, “Above all, this is a journey toward Christ.” What do you mean by this?
11. Statistics are often overwhelming. How can we develop a heart for the needs of the world and not become numb by all the statistics?
12. Does God have a special heart for the poor? Why or why not?
13. What is “downward mobility?” How do we implement that in our lives?
14. How can you make sure your love for the poor is rooted in the love of God, not in guilt or obligation?
15. Finding a cause is a popular trend in America today. How can people who get involved ensure that they don’t get burned out or just follow a trend?

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