

Perspectives from the Bible:

"Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows . . ."

—James 1:27a

"For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat . . . I was sick and you looked after me . . ."

—Matthew 25:35-40

"The Lord watches over the alien and sustains the fatherless and the widow . . ."

—Psalms 146:9

"If you spend yourselves on behalf of the hungry and satisfy the needs of the oppressed, then your light will rise in the darkness . . ."

—Isaiah 58:10

First-Hand Perspectives from Those Affected in Malawi:

"I always thought I would live a happy life with my beautiful wife, working hard on my land for my children's future. But the story has come out differently because of this sickness."

—Vincent Friday cares for two orphans and his own two children, and he likely has AIDS.

"There are three people a week from the congregation who die, on average. I conduct the funerals myself, and I try to visit all those who are seriously sick, though that keeps me busy until late at night every day."

—Pastor Mchewere Banda, whose church and its members care for 300 orphans (about one child in every 10 in the church) left by church members who have died of AIDS.

"Hard times never kill... If God wasn't working here, we would have died long ago."

—16-year-old orphan Gaumuchirai Gawi tries to focus on the positive, despite the challenges of raising herself and her three younger siblings alone since her parents died of AIDS.

"AIDS, my friend, AIDS is very dangerous.

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Look how naked the world has become—empty houses all around, children without parents, crying day and night, but with no answer.

AIDS, my friend, AIDS is very dangerous.

People with good papers have gone completely.

Please teachers, government officials, church clergies, teach the nation about AIDS.

AIDS, my friend, AIDS is very dangerous."

—8-year-old poet Edward Thomson lost his father to AIDS.

Perspectives from Christian Leaders:

"Think of the impact if the first thing the homosexual community thought of when someone mentioned evangelicals was that they were the people who lovingly ran the AIDS shelters and tenderly cared for them down to the last gasp."

—Ron Sider, quoted by Philip Yancey in his book, *What's So Amazing About Grace?*

“The crisis of AIDS orphans cries out for the kind of response only Christians can deliver: one that combines compassion with a respect for the truth.”

—*Chuck Colson, president of Prison Fellowship Ministries*

“The virus has an emotional and spiritual effect, not only on those who suffer with AIDS, but also on their families and friends. In their suffering and their dignity, these men remind me of Mother Theresa’s observation that the person living with AIDS is ‘the person of Jesus, often in distressing disguise.’”

—*Pope John Paul II*

Perspectives from Governmental and Organizational Leaders:

“The ordinary people of the continent and the world. . . if anyone cared to ask their opinion, wish that the dispute about the primary of politics or science be put on the back burner and that we proceed to address the needs and concerns of those suffering and dying . . . History will judge us harshly if we fail to do so now, and right now.”

—*Nelson Mandela, at the 13th International AIDS Conference*

“It’s as though the Black Death were going on in Europe in the 14th century, and China were sitting on the cure and saying, ‘Why should we help?’ We would consider that the crime of the millennium if that happened, and yet we seem to be able to accommodate this without much trouble.”

—*Jeffrey Sachs, Harvard economist and head of the World Health Organization advisory commission on macroeconomics and health*

“We are at the beginning of a pandemic, not the middle, not the end. We certainly know before we’re able to stop this pandemic we’ll have hundreds of millions of people infected and dead, and that’s the best case scenario.”

—*Sandra Thurman, director of the White House Office of National AIDS Policy*

“HIV/AIDS is growing and it is knocking down so many of the gains that have been made over the past several decades. It’s virtually putting not only communities, but whole nations at risk.”

—*Carol Bellamy, executive director of UNICEF*

Perspectives from the Medical Community:

“By any criterion, AIDS must be considered the great plague of the 20th century.”

—*Dr. Neal Nathanson, director of the Office of AIDS Research*

“The good news is the U.S. government is mobilizing. The bad news is that it took so long. This is not a catastrophe that came out of the blue. It has been coming for at least 10 years.”

—*Peter Piot, virologist and head of the UNAIDS efforts in Geneva*

“The first reaction is, ‘That’s impossible. We could never spend those kind of resources.’ Then you have to remember, that’s how much we spend on health care in the United States every day. It makes you wonder what’s wrong with us, and how history will judge our response.”

—*William H. Foege, former director of the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention on 1990s estimates of \$3 billion per year to fund global AIDS prevention*