

July 2009

Dear Friends and Supporters of Rahab's Rope,

I have just returned home from India. The team (Sally, Cate and Cheryl) did a great job! Sally, 16, brought her guitar and the girls loved singing along and Susan, (RR Staff) enjoyed playing the guitar. Sally played games with the younger residents and it was so nice to see them laughing and playing, so many of them never experienced childhood. Cate taught Gowamma how to bake a chocolate cake from scratch. Gowamma was excited and the cake was so good! Cheryl was such an encouragement as she loved on and talked with the girls.

As usual, I returned with a renewed awe of our Great God! The transformations that are taking place at the center are truly the Joy that give me strength for this journey. If you will remember in April I told you the story of Gaithri, our youngest resident, 13 years old. In April Gaithri shared her story with me and we spoke with her about Jesus. She said she did not know who He was and had never heard of Him. Well, last Thursday, I sat on the floor beside Gaithri during devotion time and we sang the song "Change My Heart Oh God". I looked over at Gaithri and could barely contain my emotions. The change in her was so visible! I have never seen anyone sing that song with more conviction and belief, only a True and Living God can make that happen.

While it is wonderful to walk into Rahab's Rope and see the smiling faces and get hugs and see and feel the joy and peace that exist it is the reality of the darkness that brought each one there that drives me and compels me to move forward in this journey. The story I am about to share with you is very difficult, impossible to get our minds around and even harder to accept that this is a daily story in the realm in which we work at Rahab's Rope. Sometimes it takes a while for a girl to open up and trust and share her true story, she brings with her so much pain. Monday I sat and listened to a sobbing Lakshmi tell her story. Lakshmi is 17 and she came to us last December, in labor! She had a beautiful baby girl. Lakshmi

had been working in a farmer's field as a child laborer with her family. One day, some of the men in charge told Lakshmi's aunt to stay late the next day with Lakshmi and they would give the aunt a large sum of money. The next day the men gave the aunt the money and got her drunk, to the point the aunt passed out. Then the men forcibly took Lakshmi (age 16) tied her up and repeatedly raped her so many times that she lost count of how many men and how many times. They left her lying there bound and naked. We can't begin to imagine the pain and horror she must have felt as she lay there wondering if they would be back for more or did they leave her there to die. Then an old man came along and saw her and cut her loose and she ran home. However, when she returned home there was no love or sympathy as both her parents are alcoholics and did not care. That is, they didn't care until they found out she was pregnant from the rape and then her parents kicked her out on the street, disowned her and told her she had brought shame upon their family. How can this be? We can't begin to imagine the range of emotions Lakshmi was experiencing; sixteen, bound, beaten, raped, left for dead, pregnant, disowned by family, alone on the street and thinking it was her fault. How can a world be so cruel? Praise God, a girl that had been to Rahab's Rope found her and brought her to the center. Lakshmi said, "No one has ever cared for me and loved me the way that the people of Rahab's Rope does, not even my own parents". She continued and said she believes there is one true God, in Jesus, because of the love of God that has been extended to her at Rahab's Rope. However, the spiritual battle continues. Reality continues! Lakshmi's aunt keeps calling her and telling her that she can make more money being a sex worker than she can make at Rahab's Rope. The aunt tells her she has a baby to feed and clothe. She needs to buy clothes for herself and because Lakshmi is now 17 and beautiful she can make a lot of money if she goes with her aunt. For us, we think the choice is simple, for Lakshmi, this is the ugly truth and the spiritual battle!

This is Lakshmi's story, but we receive many girls like her throughout the year. When the girls come to us pregnant and have a baby it is a long time before they

are able to participate in any of the educational and vocational training classes. Honestly, many times we loose the mom and baby. They leave the center and later we hear horrible stories of what has happened to them. Will you help Lakshmi and the many others like her? Will you pray for them and ask God to show you what you can do to help?

The task is before us. The time is now! Please partner with us. Email me with any detailed questions. You can send a tax-deductible donation to P.O. Box 907308 Gainesville, Ga. 30501 or you can go on-line and click Donate Now.

Thank you for your support!

Vicki

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