

# IN FOCUS: Living the dream or dream-maker?

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Are you living the American dream? We have been told if we study diligently and make good grades, we can then get into the right schools. If we do well in a prestigious school, we are assured of getting a job with great benefits and a big salary. If we make a lot of money, we can provide for an early retirement that offers fun, travel and leisure.

Of course, the American dream is not the truth, and there are plenty of unemployed Ph.D.s to prove it. Yet the foundation of the American dream truly reflects our perception that we are entitled to certain privileges. We believe we should have good jobs, houses, incomes and robust health. Each generation should be healthier, wealthier and more content than the previous.

Randel Everett

The standard of living in our country almost is unequaled in other places. Most Americans have an income multiple times that of the average person in the world. We enjoy security, freedoms, health care and luxuries millions around the world can't imagine.

Why are we so blessed? Does God love us more than the 6,000 people who have been killed in Juarez in drug-related violence since January of 2008? Are we more valuable than the men, women and children of Afghanistan or Iraq who have experienced tyranny, war and terrorism? Has God abandoned the people in Pakistan whose lives were devastated by recent floods? Is God apathetic about the 38 people in Guatemala and their families whose lives were lost in the mudslides that destroyed their already substandard housing?

I recently heard a message by John Witte, teaching pastor at [First Baptist Church of Midland](#), comparing God's blessing of Abraham with God's blessings for the church today. God didn't bless Abraham and his descendants to the exclusion of all the other people of the earth. God chose Abraham as a vehicle through whom all the families of the earth might be blessed (Genesis 12:3). Witte reminded us God's blessings are to be shared with people all over the world, and it is more important to be dream makers than to be living the dream ourselves.

When I was a pastor in northern Virginia, a small group from our church visited a partner church in Russia in mid-1990. Our team included a physician and a dentist, who met with Baptist doctors in Moscow. The Russian doctors shared how they had very limited supplies and how difficult it was to get basic materials, such as sutures.

Barry Byer, the physician from Columbia Baptist Church in Falls Church, realized how many unused medical supplies were thrown away in America. He became passionate about collecting supplies, medicine and equipment to send to doctors in Russia. His passion resulted in [CrossLink International](#), a ministry that provides millions of dollars in medical relief for some of the world's neediest people.

How has God blessed you?

How can God use you to make dreams a reality for some of the world's most needy?

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