# final thoughts ... from Paulo

From Widow To Winner is interested in partnering with other agencies that are passionate and proactive in making a difference in the lives of our most vulnerable. In 2012, more than 23,000 children in Foster Care aged out of the system They have no family to support them, no education, no skills, no medical care, no housing. They are being set up for failure; resorting to drugs, gangs, being exploited through sex trafficking, prison or death...the alarm has sounded and we must RESPOND!

ovely and unexpected moments happen in my life quite often. One happened to me on Wednesday, October 1, 2014.

date, our neighbors next door moved suddenly and then we heard the elder gentleman, husband and father, died a few days after the move. I thought about them and prayed for them. I relationship. We didn't speak the same language, they were Iranians and neither of us had learned each other's language. Our greetings As she raised her head and looked at were limited to hello and nodding with a smile. The mother and I somewhat frustrated that I couldn't really express in words how sorry I was for her loss.

But the unexpected happened one day when she was walking through our court where she once lived next

door to us. I happened to look out of my door as I was fixing something on the door, I looked up and I was delightfully surprised to see her. Recently, about 3 weeks before that Compassion has no language barrier and our eyes and our hearts met as I reached for her to let her know how sorry I was about her husband's passing. No words were spoken, but she fell into my arms and cried on my was so moved with compassion for shoulder, one widow to another and this family that lost their loved one, she knew I cared without speaking a even though we didn't have a close single word. It was a lovely and unexpected moment of God connecting widows through His love and compassion.

me, she smiled with tears flowing down her cheeks, she smiled through would always smile big as we passed the tears and bowed graciously and each other and slightly bow. I was kissed my hand. Wow, what a God moment! As she walked away, I prayed for her and truly once again, I felt God's lovely calling on my life to use me as a vessel to help ease the distress of the widow! I feel I made God smile that day and I live to do that!



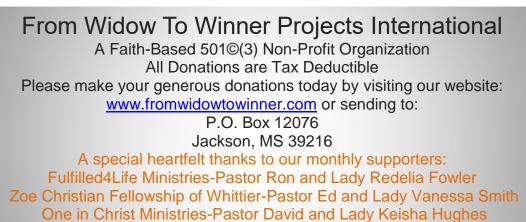
coming soon >>>

## In The Next Issue

A Widow's Story

An Emancipated Youth Story The Strengthening Families' Conference What's Happening in 2015? Final Thoughts from Paula

I'm thrilled to tell the world that I surpassed my goal for winning 65 people to Jesus Christ to celebrate my 65<sup>th</sup> birthday! 116 and counting...



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in this issue >>> Oct-Dec 2014 Volume 1 **Issue 4** 

A Widow's Story-Pastor Christine Holmes Update on Souls For 65<sup>th</sup>Birthday Let Me Tell My Story-Marcellia Goodrich Walk-A-Thon Results! Final Thoughts – from Paula



A Quarterly Insight into the Current Issues of Orphans and Widows

### From Widow To Winner Projects International Joyfully advocating on behalf of the Orphans and Widows

"Learn to do right! Seek justice. Encourage the oppressed, Defend the cause of the fatherless, plead the case of the widow". Isaiah 1:17(NIV)

A Widow's Story - Pastor Christine Holmes "What Do You Do When the Bottom Falls Out"?

This is not happening to me I thought. I remembered every detail of the night before but it still seemed like I was dreaming. Over and over again it felt like a dream that I would wake out of, but I was awake. Shocked out of my mind, bewildered, and trying to keep it together at the same time. There is work to do, prayers to pray, despite the fact the county examiner just picked up my husband and he was on his way to the morgue. After I got over the initial shock I kept moving in the direction I always move in "faith". On the first day I woke up without him by my side I was determined to do everything in my ability to make it possible for him to come back in case he chose to, and in case the Lord allowed him to. remembered the prophetic word he received a year prior to passing. That word was given by a guest speaker he had arranged to speak at our church. She had a horrid childhood filled with the most extreme trauma I had ever heard of. As a result of the trauma she endured; when she was born again, Jesus took her on a

visit to heaven. When she ministers home and pray for her husband's many of the people in attendance resurrection. We did, along with a guest, experience visitations to heaven. She a minister who was visiting us from spoke to my late husband prophetically Malaysia. The event was unlike any I that he would also experience a had ever attended, faith was electric and visitation to heaven. He reminded me filled the atmosphere. There was throughout the year and I was always definitely resurrection power flowing quick to tell him "You just make sure through the building. We laid hands on you come back"! He would always the body and released our faith, we smile and chuckle. I never would have prayed for hours, we went back day after thought it would have happened like day. Then there were the bigger this. I would believe until the end. I meetings when more intercessors and would release every ounce of faith I praying believers were invited in. I had could. I would put feet to my faith. I never seen such a move like this in our would actively participate with my city or in the nations of the world where faith. I determined not to sit in a corner I had traveled, so much faith was somewhere and just accept what had released in these meeting and there was happened. There was too much fight great expectation. People rose to the and faith in me to let it all just happen occasion and we were so blessed to see without fighting back. It would be the so many exercising their faith. Little did fight of my life, and everything I ever I know or realize this was preparation learned, studied, heard would be tested and a rehearsal for what I would be in me. Just five months before my repeating five months down the road. As husband's passing we were stunned by my husband lay on the floor near our the death of a good friend. He was a friend's coffin in intense prayer for his Apostle, a Pastor and a close friend of resurrection I never imagined I would be my husbands. My husband had just looking at him in a coffin and praying talked to him a few days earlier. Then over him in less than 5 month. God has he received a call, his wife was a way of preparing us for the future that requesting us to join in a select group only He could know. In both cases along with her to go to the funeral neither my friend's husband nor mine were raised from the dead. continued on



#### Updates on Community Outreaches

From Widow To Winner Projects International makes a determined effort to connect with the church and the community to help expand the Kingdom of God. The following results from 2014 reflect the heart of our ministry to obey God and His direction for being a blessing to the families of the world.

#### **SALVATIONS - 116**

#### **TRACTS PASSED OUT - 558**

**COMMUNITY OUTREACHES - 10** 

#### WIDOWS SERVICED - 5

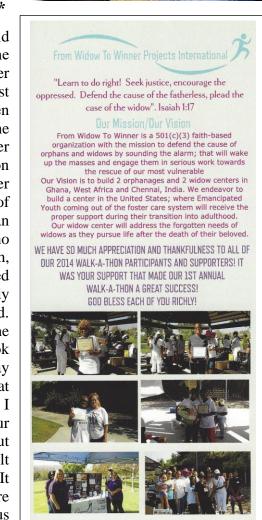
#### **ORPHAN SUPPORT - 14**

...continued from page 1,

A Widow's Story, Pastor Christine Holmes

That's another story. I will simply say that most believers that go to heaven don't want to come back. My late husband and I learned that in a interview we did for our television program 9 months before he went home to be with the Lord. We interviewed a man that died and went to heaven for over 1 hour. He has a wonderful testimony his name is Dean Braxton and his testimony can be viewed on Sid Roth's program "Its Supernatural". I can truly say the resurrection service I had was an awesome service that provided opportunity for many that had lost love ones the opportunity to exercise their faith. ". I can truly say the resurrection service I had was an awesome service that provided opportunity for many that had lost love ones the opportunity to exercise their faith. It provided closure for many and created expectation and a hunger by many to be used by the Lord. There are many testimonies that have come out of this period of exercising of faith and what I call simply believing the word

of God and doing what Jesus said "raise the dead". One is that one of the members of our church after hearing teaching on being a first responder responded when someone knocked on her door one day. She received a knock on her door that someone was dying on the side of her house, she put her shoes on and went to the side of her house to find a young man who was stiff, blue and had no heartbeat. She laid hands on him, rebuked death and commanded life to come back into his body and He came back from the dead. The paramedics arrived after he came back from the dead and took him to the hospital. The next day our church member found out that he had overdosed on heroin. I thank God for Charlesetta, our church member and that she put action to her faith and as a result the young man is alive. today. It is my prayer that many more believers will believe what Jesus said. For these signs and more will follow those that believe.



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## Let Me Tell My Story – *Destined For More* Marcellia Goodrich - Emancipated Youth



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Growing up I did not have what you would call an ideal childhood. My mother was on drugs from the time I was a baby and she was not in her right mind to take care of herself, let alone a child. I felt like my mother did not want me when she left me with anyone who would take

care of me, usually a family member. One day, when I was 10 years old, my family could not care for me anymore, so they called the Department of Social Services and I was placed in foster care. I stayed there until I aged out at 19. Life in foster care was very hard. I felt like the world was against me. I asked myself, "Why did this have to happen to me?" I would beat myself up and say that it was my fault I had to be there". I was separated from my brother and moved seven times. It was challenging because I never knew what new foster parents would think of me. I was living with strangers, and some of them acted like they cared when they did not. Some just saw me as a paycheck. There was no love.

One of my worst memories was coming out as a lesbian to my foster mom. I have been attracted to women since I was 11, but growing up, I was in denial about sexuality because I felt like my peers would judge me. When I was 17, I had my first relationship with a woman, and my foster mom at that time talked bad about me to her own family because of my preference. When I was a high school senior she said, "I am not going to pay for a gay prom". I took a job at a pizza place, so I could save and buy my own prom dress.

I had another foster mother who told me I would not amount to anything. I wanted to prove her wrong, so I set out to do well in school. That was the best revenge I could have. I also did not want to end up like my mother. I knew that I had to do something better for myself and that I was destined for something bigger.

I graduated from high school, and went onto college. It wasn't easy. Transitioning into adulthood from foster care was tough. I felt like I was left on my own. But I am making it. I have a fulltime job and I am going to be the first generation in my family to graduate from college. That is a big accomplishment for me.

I also joined California Youth Connection (CYC). We advocate for current and former foster youth, working to make a better future for them. My hope is that when it comes time for other foster youth to attend college, they will not have the same struggles and worries I did. Since I have the opportunity to make a change for the better, I will. It is all about empowerment. I believe that in order for foster care to be a better place, social workers should not have heavy caseloads, and should do surprise visits. Foster parents should be evaluated quarterly, and children should be able to visit their siblings. Youth should also be informed of all of their rights. People need to know that foster youth need love and care just like other children. We may need a little more guidance, but we are still human.

To the youth who are in care now, I would tell them to continue your education. It will take you far in life. No matter what, life will have its ups and downs, but it is about the way you deal with those encounters that make you the person you are. Believe me, life does come back around. Hang in there. You are going to love the person you become.

The sky is not the limit – go past that. Always have an open mind and be open to experience new things. In the end, everything you have gone through will make you that much stronger.

When I was younger, I always wondered why my mother acted like she didn't want me. But as I got older, I came to realize that it was not that she did not want to be there for me – she just could not. She was an addict, and incapable of being the mother I needed. Once I understood this, I took responsibility for myself and my future, and it has made a big difference in my life.

> "People need to know that foster youth need love and care just like other children".

