

Kim

The Napalm Photo Girl

PART ONE

She is known around the world as the girl covered in burning flames as she ran from the terror of a Napalm Bomb. This is her story:

The American's were fighting some Vietcong soldiers near her village, and decided to bomb the area rather than engage in combat. By the time the area was marked and American troops withdrawn, there was no longer any sign of the enemy, but the order to bomb remained and reporters nearby told of watching the village being decimated. Soon the surviving locals came running down the road out of the village and as they ran towards the reporters vehicles the famous photo was taken of Phan Thi Kim Phuc, her clothes blown off and the jellied napalm searing her skin. The photo (which later won a Pulitzer Prize and helped turn the heart of a nation against war) shows the little girl's arms stretched out as though in supplication, her face contorted in a scream of pain and horror.

The photographer rushed her to hospital where she was treated for 3rd degree burns. Her wounds were so severe that every time they were cleaned and dressed the pain caused her to lose consciousness.

Later the Communist Vietnamese government discovered she was the girl in the picture and paraded her endlessly in anti-American propaganda.



PART TWO

Then as an adult her life changed dramatically. A group of believers introduced her to the joy of new life in Christ. She married a young man who shared her faith and on their honeymoon they defected to Canada. "God guide me, I go by faith" she told a reporter.

Since then her name has been used to promote peace. She was named a goodwill ambassador for the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization three years ago, and she has established the Kim Foundation, which trains doctors and supplies artificial limbs to help child victims of land mines in Cambodia.

The more recent photos of Ms Kim Phuc in the media show her extending forgiveness to those who had once bombed her family and countrymen. I have suffered a lot from both physical and emotional pain, Kim said "sometimes I thought I could not live, but God saved my life and gave me faith and hope."

Describing the terror she felt seeing the American uniforms and the memories they brought back, she says she prayed for strength to offer words of grace and hope.

"We have to move on to help each other," she said. "I really want to say, 'Thank God I'm alive.' I want to forgive the people who caused my suffering. I did. And so I am free from hatred and bitterness."

