



TURN ON THOSE LIGHTS OF COMPASSION!

HELPING CHILDREN SEE THE NEEDS OF OTHERS

The recent earthquake and tsunami disasters of Southeast Asia have shocked the world. Death toll runs past the 160,000 mark, with thousands of children left as orphans and are homeless. Such global suffering came through the television screen day after day for a month. Thousands of children have seen the suffering and hurt. Some may even have lost family members. Others are asking, "Why does God send earthquakes and floods to kill innocent people?" This is a good time to help them understand that it is not because God overlooked them. It is because we live in a broken world; we have suffering and death because of sin.

In times like these, it is also an excellent "teachable moment" to turn on the light of compassion in children. It is the most appropriate time to help children learn to be compassionate Christians. The word compassion comes from two Latin words which together they mean to suffer with. This is far greater than to feel sorry for someone.

Jesus was deeply moved by the needs of others while He was on earth. He had compassion on the man with leprosy and He healed him. Even though many feared this contagious disease, Jesus still stretched out His hands to touch him. He had compassion on the blind and on a widow who lost her only son.

Jesus' example inspired heroes like George Mueller who cared for hundreds of orphans, Corrie ten Boom who hid Jews during the Holocaust and Mother Theresa who cared for the poor and sick in Calcutta.

What can children do to show compassion for others?

1. Have them write letters and draw pictures for families who have lost their loved ones in the disaster.
 2. Form prayer groups and have children pray for those families who lost children and homes. They can pray for the children who have lost their parents.
 3. Donate their allowances to help buy food and other necessities for victims.
 4. Get children to organize a "Used clothes drive" and have them collect used clothes for the disaster victims.
 5. Work with NGO's like ADRA and have children help prepare packages to be shipped to disaster areas.
- Jesus said, "Ye are the light of the world" (Matthew 5:14). Light does not shine on itself but illuminates the path of others. In the same way, children will bring glory to God and reflect His light when they learn to care for the needs of those who are suffering. So turn on those lights of compassion! They will light up a hill.

INTER-AMERICA DIVISION

Columbia Union Conference—Children's Sabbath Celebration

A total of 360 children gathered for an exciting Sabbath of worship, fellowship, and activities at the Columbia Adventist University campus at Medellin on February 5, 2005. The children led out in worship with 6 children preaching short sermons. In the afternoon the children participated in small group study of Bible characters, drama and other activities. The day of celebration ended with the children going home with gifts, Bibles, and feelings of joy, knowing that they are important to the church and to the community of faith believers.



SOUTH AMERICAN DIVISION

South Brazilian Union Conference—Project Child Evangelist

This project aims to train children in leading small groups and in participating in evangelistic campaigns. This will promote their spiritual growth and establish a pattern of service for the rest of their lives. Children go through a thorough training course for evangelism when they learn how to share their faith, conduct Bible studies and preach God's word. In 2004, about 500 children in the union were involved in evangelistic outreach. We praise the Lord for Children's Ministries leaders who have this vision.



SOUTH PACIFIC DIVISION

Papua New Guinea Union Mission—Children's Evangelism

A successful children's program was run during the meeting held in Port Moresby. At the end of the children's program 3000 children made a decision to follow Jesus.

