



Looking Up...

The *MISSION TO CHILDREN*

Reaching Out

www.MissionToChildren.org

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“He tends His flock like a shepherd: He gathers the lambs in His arms and carries them close to His heart; He gently leads those that have young” (Isaiah 40:11).

Bible-based Principles Hit the Streets of India

This past Easter 1,200 street children in and around Rajahmundry, India, enjoyed a delicious MTC dinner, heard the Gospel story, and learned transforming principles of Godly character through CSI stories presented by our local ministry team. Despite temperatures of 45 degrees Celsius/113 degrees Fahrenheit, the street children and 250 senior citizens attended this MTC outreach. In a large open tent that provided some shade, many street children chose to accept Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior.

During these rough economic times in North America numerous companies in India are also going bankrupt. This makes life harder for the lower working class. Vulnerable street children probably suffer the most. Because of their growing numbers and dire need, this year’s Easter dinner was especially meaningful for our team as they witnessed the great excitement of these hungry, neglected children. Those who could read received a copy of God’s Word. An invitation was also extended for true orphans to come and live at this Christian orphanage.

Our Character Solutions ministry is training many adults and children throughout India, and we are delighted the outreach includes street children. Will you join us in praying that the Lord of the harvest will send out future workers from this generation of India youth? “The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into His harvest field” (Luke 10:2).



Street kids hear Bible-based principles

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Training Trainers

Dr. John Garmo – President

Timothy had his hands full as the young minister in a challenging church. Inside the church, the Ephesian congregation was weakened by the dual infections of deception and dissention. Outside the church, Nero was on a rampage from Rome, turning governmental and popular opinion against Christians. The ripple effects had already put Timothy's beloved mentor into prison, preventing Paul from coming alongside him during this difficult time.

Our prayer-filled goal is that this ripple effect will create waves of Christlikeness in churches and homes which generate ripples of character in surrounding communities. That is how Christians can be salt and light.

Despite these circumstances, prisoner Paul is able to get a letter to Timothy. After expressing his fatherly love and brotherly encouragement, Paul gives him practical advice as a coach and colleague. Included in his advice is a strategy for impact, one that would create its own God-honoring ripple effect: ". . . And the things you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also" (2 Timothy 2:2). "Timothy, teach what you have learned to reliable colleagues who you can count on to teach others. Multiply your individual impact for the glory of God."

As our MTC prayer and financial partners know, God has opened wide and unusual doors for MTC ministry in India through our Character Solutions program. India is a vast land in which Christians—like those in the Roman Empire during the days of Timothy—are sometimes persecuted and even martyred for their faith in Jesus Christ. We are beginning our second year of a three-year ripple effect in India. During these three years we intend to train more than one million youth and adults to teach and exemplify basic character principles and practices to those they influence in their families, schools, businesses, and churches.



Character training session for master teachers in India

Our goal is a ripple effect far greater than the one million trainers. Our prayer-filled goal is that this ripple effect will create waves of Christlikeness in churches and homes which generate ripples of character in surrounding communities. That is how Christians can be salt and light.

How can we accomplish this? We can begin by applying Paul's advice on creating Christlike ripple effects—training reliable colleagues on whom we can count to teach others. Last September we trained about 1,250 master trainers. Since then, this group has trained about 8,000 more master trainers. These are now training 30 to 50 more trainers apiece, and so on. Character Solutions materials have now been translated and printed not only in English but also in 14 regional Indian languages.

"So what?" I recently asked our national project director, Dr. David Dass, how this Character Solutions emphasis is impacting children and youth during the first year of training. He estimates conservatively that 100,700 children and youth have put their faith in Jesus Christ alone. Almost 101,000! "That's what."

This is an excellent tool in the hands of creative parents, grandparents, teachers, pastors, and Bible study leaders. We would love to hear how it works for you.

LOYALTY

Faithfully obeying my authorities and committing to significant relationships

Ruth (Ruth 1-4)



Stomachs were growling in homes throughout Judah. A famine had struck the land. The food crisis was so severe that even children had little to eat.

Naomi and her husband lived in Bethlehem and had two sons. Desperate to find food, they left their friends and relatives and moved to Moab, a nearby country across the Jordan River. Sadly, Naomi's husband died soon after arriving in Moab. Eventually her sons married women from Moab named Ruth and Orpah. About 10 years after moving to Moab, death visited the family again: Both sons died, leaving Naomi alone except for two Moabite daughters-in-law.

The land of Judah had now recovered from the famine, so Naomi decided to return to Bethlehem and live near her own family again. She told Orpah and Ruth to return to their families and marry new husbands.

Orpah returned home, but Ruth was devoted to God and to Naomi. She said, "I will go wherever you go and live wherever you live. Your people will be my people, and your God will be my God. I will die where you die and will be buried there."

So Naomi and Ruth journeyed to Judah. Ruth continued to take care of Naomi in Bethlehem. Soon a compassionate relative of Naomi married Ruth and gave Naomi a grandson. God saw Ruth's devotion to Him, her husband, and her mother-in-law. He crowned her with the distinction of becoming the great-grandmother of David, King of Israel, and with the honor of being an ancestor to Jesus of Nazareth.

What Jesus Said About "Loyalty"

"See that you do not look down on one of these little ones. For I tell you that their angels in heaven always see the face of my Father in heaven.

"What do you think? If a man owns a hundred sheep, and one of them wanders away, will he not leave the ninety-nine on the hills and go to look for the one that wandered off? And if he finds it, I tell you the truth, he is happier about that one sheep than about the ninety-nine that did not wander off. In the same way your Father in heaven is not willing that any of these little ones should be lost."

(Matthew 18:10-14)

Memory Verse: "Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right."
(Ephesians 6:1)

Loyalty in Action

List and discuss the similarities and differences between "blind loyalty" such as sheep that blindly follow their leader, and commendable loyalty such as Ruth's.

Other Biblical Examples

Jonathan (1 Samuel 18:1-4; Ch. 20)

Samuel (1 Samuel 3)

Mordecai (Esther 2:5-7, 21-23)

Scripture References

- **Loyalty**
Genesis 21:22-24
1 Chronicles 12:33
1 Chronicles 29:18
2 Chronicles 16:9
Daniel 3:17-18

Loyalty Inspires:

- **Obedience**
John 14:15
Acts 5:29
Romans 13:1
Hebrews 13:17
- **Dependability**
Psalm 62:7
Psalm 104:27
Jeremiah 49:11
Lamentations 3:25
- **Supportiveness**
Ezra 10:4
- **Commitment**
1 Kings 8:61
Psalm 37:5

Lack of Loyalty

- **Disobedience**
Nehemiah 9:29
Ephesians 5:6
Ephesians 6:1-3
2 Timothy 3:1-5

Bearing the Fruit of Character – Part 2

Last month we shared several testimonials with you, which we recently received from MTC-supported teenagers in southern India, regarding the character qualities of Kindness and Thankfulness. God continues to transform the lives of these youth as they embrace Character Solutions training and learn the importance of Christlikeness. This month we share more of these inspiring stories that reveal valuable lessons about Self-Discipline and Wisdom . . .

SELF-DISCIPLINE

“I really thank God for giving me this opportunity to learn [through] Character Solutions . . . Wilma Rudolph, even though she could not walk . . . was not discouraged. She showed self-discipline by struggling hard to accomplish what she wanted to be and she became a famous athlete. She inspired me to have self-confidence in my life in order to achieve my goal. I put my whole trust and faith in Jesus Christ. I gave Jesus first place in my life and I believe He is always there with me to focus on worthy goals.”

– Naomi, 13 years old

WISDOM

“Cultivating character . . . has brought many changes in my life. Especially I learned from the ants, they are hard workers and have unity. They don’t have any commander or leader to lead them, but they know their own responsibility. I have learned a great deal from this small toiler, who shows such . . . amazing wisdom. Why can’t I?”

“As I look back to my past . . . I compare my life with the foolish builder who did not listen to God. Now I realize that God is pleased with the person who keeps His Word in

mind and does [it] in action. God gave me His good wisdom to be a responsible person and to make a good decision in my life. I came . . . closer to God. Jesus Christ is my greatest Teacher.”

– Pongchai, 16 years old



Bangalore youth in MTC Home seek God’s wisdom

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