

Let There Be Light



Let There Be Light





**“Your kingdom come, your
will be done, on earth as it
is in heaven” - Matthew 6:10**

Foreword

By Dr. Lloyd Kim

At Mission to the World, our hearts beat to see the gospel of the kingdom of God advance throughout the world. We long to see Jesus' name known and worshiped in every nation. We long to see the people of God bearing witness to the lordship of Christ in every tribe, by every tongue, and in every nation. We know that kingdom advance happens when a follower of Jesus makes another follower (or disciple) of Jesus. Our mission is clear. We have been called by our King to make disciples among the nations (Matt. 28:18–20).

This simple vision and mission is what lies behind this collection of devotions. And so it is with great enthusiasm and joy that we present this book to you for the purpose of making disciples among those closest to the kingdom of God: our children.

“But Jesus said, ‘Let the little children come to me and do not hinder them, for to such belongs the kingdom of heaven’” (Matt. 19:14).

There are three sections to this book. The first is “Unity in Diversity.” Through these reflections, we want our children to see the beauty of God’s intention for the world in all its diversity, focusing on God as Creator. This section will help foster discussion with our children about how God has formed and created each of them uniquely for His purposes and glory.

In the second section, “Broken but Beautiful,” we want them to understand the source of all the brokenness, sadness, and sin in this world. This section will help create dialogue about the things that make our children sad as they experience the effects of the Fall.

In the final section, “Called to Love,” we want them to meet Jesus, the One who has come to fix the brokenness,

wipe away every tear, and cleanse us from our sin and shame. We want them to experience God’s love and then with His love to begin to develop a heart for others, both here and across the globe. In this section, there will be opportunities to solidify our children’s relationship with Jesus and discuss how God may be calling them to His kingdom service.

Our hope is that through these devotions, discussions, and discipleship with our children, we will all draw closer to the One who has redeemed us, be strengthened by His Holy Spirit, and be empowered to love others with the very love we have received from Him, not only in our own neighborhoods, but across the world.

“Train up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old he will not depart from it” (Prov. 22:6).

Acknowledgments

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We also thank the generous involvement of our theological reviewers across the Presbyterian Church in America as well as families who were willing to review the material. Your invaluable insights, suggestions, and encouragement have made this project possible.

Finally, we would like to thank our authors and illustrator who worked tirelessly to bring together such a great tapestry. Your dedication to furthering the kingdom of God has spurred this project on to completion.





Parent Guide

This devotional arose out of the desire to disciple the next generation of missionaries. When should that begin? As early as possible! And so we created this learning tool for you and your family. It is designed to have devotionals five days per week and stories from our overseas mission fields on weekends.

This book is written for families with kids in grades 1–5. But we purposely created a devotional that speaks to a broad audience, which allows flexibility in how each family interacts with the material. We recommend you preview the devotionals before reading them together so that you will be ready to adapt them to your children's needs. We hope that this will bring about great discussions for growing, inquisitive minds, and becomes a fun learning exercise for the whole family.

Finally, a hands-on activity increases learning and retention so we have included one for each of the daily readings by presenting a new color each day. We encourage you to use a prism to further encourage learning! This simple experiment is fun and illustrates how there is unity in diversity: one Church, one people, and one God expressed in three persons, all beautifully expressing the amazing artistry and intentional design of our Creator.

Our prayer is that each day our children will grow in God's grace and a love for Jesus; and that they will begin to develop a cross-cultural awareness that helps them grow in their love for the many, diverse, beautiful people of God. Ultimately, we pray that God will give the next generation a passion to make disciples of all nations.





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Unity in Diversity



Section 2

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Let There Be Light

By Yohan Shin, Editor

“And God said ‘Let there be light,’ and there was light. And God saw that the light was good. And God separated the light from the darkness.”

—Genesis 1:3-4

I vividly remember the time I walked into a dark classroom for my school science class. Unlike most other days, the windows were covered up and the room was dark. That day's lesson was on the subject of light.

The entire class eagerly listened as the science teacher explained that when light shines through a glass-like object called a prism, it would curve the light rays and show the thousands of colors that our eyes could see. I couldn't wait to see it with my own eyes! Soon after the explanation, the teacher demonstrated it. She shined a beam of light from her flashlight into a prism that had many sides. Just as the teacher had explained, a wonderful banner of colors filled the once dark classroom.

In Genesis 1:2, we see that there was a much greater darkness and emptiness before Creation than there was in my science class. It was into that darkness that God said, "Let there be light." Just imagine, at the very command when God spoke light into everything that was dark, the world started to take shape. God brought together thousands of different shades and colors to be the beginning of Creation. We can still see and enjoy this work of God even today! But it doesn't stop there. God shows us His greatness as He shows us really neat patterns that make up light. Even if we see one color, it is really made of many different colors that work together to show the beautiful color that we see. The "one" color that is seen is actually made from "many" different shades of colors working together to shine. Isn't this amazing?

In the same way as God created light with all these shades of color coming together as one, He did the same with the rest of

creation. All people from everywhere were created in the reflection of our one God. Though we may all seem very different, we were all created the same in our worth and value. No two persons are the same in this world. For example, we have different looks, likes, dislikes, hobbies that we love, favorite snacks ... you get the picture. The list can go on and on! Each person is unique and different, yet there are many things that we share in common—which is great!

Unfortunately, one of the big things we also share is sin. None of us are perfect. We all make mistakes and share moments when we turn away from God and are weak or broken. We choose to forget our Creator and walk away from God with no hope. But thankfully, our story does not end there. Just like the darkness was filled with light at Creation, our hopeless situation is given new life. It is a hope and life in Jesus!

In this collection of devotionals, you will discover a new color each day. My suggestion is that you and your family read this book together—after dinner, or before bedtime—and use a prism to try to find the color for that day before you begin reading. Each time you do this fun activity, you can celebrate the wonderful creation of God's light and be reminded of our hope in Christ!

The devotionals in this book are shared through the eyes of different authors from their unique cultures, backgrounds, and experiences. Though they are different, they each celebrate the light of Christ. As you spend time with each devotional, I pray that God will shine His light into your home and fill your hearts with the many colors of His beauty.

DAY 2

Unity in
Diversity



One Family

By Rev. Juan Carlos Martinez

**“The grace of the Lord
Jesus Christ and the
love of God and the
fellowship of the Holy
Spirit be with you all.”**

-2 Corinthians 13:14

BLUSH

Can you find
the color
of the day?

My family is big. I have thirty-six first cousins, and thirty-three of us grew up together in my hometown in Mexico. In fact, eleven of them lived on the same street where I grew up!

Grandparents, uncles, aunts, and cousins were constantly coming in and out of my house. As you can imagine, my extended family wasn't just big, they were a big part of my life.

Leaving home to attend college brought many changes to my life, but nothing was scarier than the idea of being far away from family. I couldn't imagine what life would be like apart from the people who were closest to me.

Thank God those fears disappeared after attending church on my first Sunday away from home. The prayers we said, the songs we sang, and the scriptures we read were all so familiar that it felt like home. In the following weeks, I continued to attend church and built deep relationships with other church members. I realized that, despite coming from different cultures, we had so much in common. You see, we loved the same God, and trusted in the same Savior. This meant we were family!

The blessing of 2 Corinthians 13:14 talks about the diversity yet oneness of God: Father, Son, and Spirit. Our sin separates us from God, and from one another. But in love, God sent His

Son to save us by grace. The Holy Spirit makes us members of the same family: God's family. Christians come from many countries, speak different languages, and enjoy different foods. But we are part of one family. So, no matter where we are, we are never alone. Because of the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, we can experience the fellowship of the Holy Spirit!

Let's Pray Together

God, thank You for adopting us into Your family! May we always remember, that we are never alone. May we be encouraged by the fact that people from every country, and every language, and every race, love You and worship You. And may that help us treat others, including those who look different from us, or who have different backgrounds, with the love of family. This we pray in Jesus' name, amen!

Let's Discuss These Questions

What are the things you love most about your family? Why can we say that all Christians are part of one family? Is there someone who doesn't know Jesus who you'd like to tell about God's family?

Let's Read More

Isaiah 25:6–9; Galatians 3:27–4:7; Revelation 7:9–12

DAY 3

Unity in
Diversity



All God's Creation

By Sarah Lim

PERIWINKLE

Can you find
the color
of the day?

"But now, O Lord, you are our Father; we are the clay, and you are our potter; we are all the work of your hand." -Isaiah 64:8

Anna lived in a town where everyone had big floppy ears, itty bitty eyes, and a long narrow nose. Interestingly, they did not like anyone who was different.

One day Anna was skipping along and as she rounded the corner she ran right into someone! Anna took one look and started to scream, “Ahhhhh!” This person was so different. The stranger had small ears, large eyes, and a short chubby nose. As Anna quickly backed away, not wanting to be near the person, she fell right on her bottom. Anna scrambled to get up but she couldn’t.

The strange person tiptoed over and gently offered a hand with a friendly smile and asked, “Can I help you?” But Anna was afraid of someone so different from her!

But as hard as she tried, Anna just couldn’t get up. She thought for a moment. Although this person was different, the stranger was kind and gentle, so Anna carefully reached out and accepted the help.

Like Anna in this story, many of us are uncomfortable and sometimes afraid of people who are different from us. We may avoid them and even choose not to play with those we are not familiar with. However, the Bible says God created all of us differently. God, in His amazing wisdom and creativity, made everyone different, unique, and special! There are no two people who are the same. Floppy ears or

small ears; itty bitty eyes or big round eyes; long narrow nose or a short button nose; God created all of us in His image. Despite our differences we are all God’s creation, made for His glory, by His grace, for His purpose. For this reason, we are called to love and accept one another as God loves and accepts us, no matter how different we may be. And when we truly understand God as Creator, we will be kind to one another, help each other, learn to get along, and be friends.

Let’s Pray Together

Heavenly Father, we thank You for creating us. We thank You that You are a loving and creative God who made each of us different, unique, and special. Help us to understand that we are all Your beautiful creation and help us to love and accept one another as You have loved and accepted us. In Jesus’ name we pray, amen.

Let’s Discuss These Questions

Have you ever been treated unkindly because others thought you were different? How did you handle it? How do you think God wants us to handle it? What would you do differently next time?

Let’s Read More

Genesis 1:26–27; Psalms 139:13–14; Jeremiah 1:5

A Deep Voice

By Rev. Confex Makhalira



**“I praise you, for I am fearfully
and wonderfully made. Wonderful
are your works; my soul knows
it very well.” –Psalm 139:14**

SHAMROCK

Can you find
the color
of the day?

Growing up in my teenage years, I was a bit different from my friends. My voice always seemed a lot deeper than everyone else. I especially didn't like it when my friends nicknamed me "boy with a deep voice."

Although it wasn't exactly bullying, it made me uncomfortable to hear such comments from close friends.

Years later, when I finished high school, I went for a job interview as a radio play actor. I was given a script to read and as soon as the producer heard me read, he was excited and said, "That's the voice I need! You are hired!" My eyes were filled with tears of joy. My deep voice was exactly what he was looking for.

In college, I decided to study radio communications. When I went in for interviews, one of the professors in the Communications Department made a comment similar to what I heard two years before, "You have a radio voice."

Looking back, I thank the Lord for granting me a deep voice. He had a good purpose. While my voice was something that was different from many of my friends, it did not mean that I was abnormal. At school or church, you

might meet individuals who are unlike many people you know. Their skin color might be different. Their accent might be different. It doesn't mean that they are abnormal. They are just different. The Lord loves them and they are fearfully and wonderfully made.

Let's Pray Together

Our heavenly Father, thank You for each and every person You have made. Help us to love them as we love ourselves. Keep us from the sin of despising those who are different. In Jesus' name, amen!

Let's Discuss These Questions

Name some different things about people around you. For example, who has a loud voice? Who has a soft voice? Who has dark skin? Who has light skin? What color eyes do they have? What type of hair do they have? What is one way that you are different from others? Do you think God made you special in that way?

Let's Read More

1 Samuel 16:1–13; 1 Corinthians 12:12–30

Made for God's Glory

By Sharon Lopez



“As he passed by, he saw a man blind from birth. And his disciples asked him, “Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?” Jesus answered, “It was not that this man sinned, or his parents, but that the works of God might be displayed in him.” –John 9:1-3

FERN

Can you find
the color
of the day?

Maria stared out the window of her hospital room. She watched the waves of the Caribbean crashing on the beach outside as her Honduran doctora said gently to her, “Maria, Dios da niños especiales a padres especiales.” Or, “God gives special kids to special parents.”

It was a typical thing to say to parents who have children with special needs. The *doctora* had just shared with her that her newborn baby was different and had a unique condition. Four of his fingers were connected together like a tiny mitten. His tiny toes and some other certain bones were also stuck together. He had a rare condition called Apert Syndrome, and he would need to have many surgeries.

“What will his life be like? I don’t want him to suffer!” Maria thought. “This situation is so hard to understand.” Despite his mother’s worry, Daniel slept soundly in his Pack-n-Play. Fearfully and wonderfully made, he preciousely bore the image of his Creator.

It’s hard to understand why some people are born with a sickness or look different like Daniel. Jesus’ disciples struggled with this very question when they came upon a man born blind. “What had this blind man or his parents done wrong to be punished with this life of suffering?” they wondered. Jesus’ response must have surprised them! He said that the blindness

had been planned “that the works of God might be displayed in him.” What does that mean? It means that God uses even rare conditions to show how great He is! And He did! He showed His glory by healing not only this man’s body, but also his heart! Did you know that we are all created for this same purpose—to bring God glory?

Let’s Pray Together

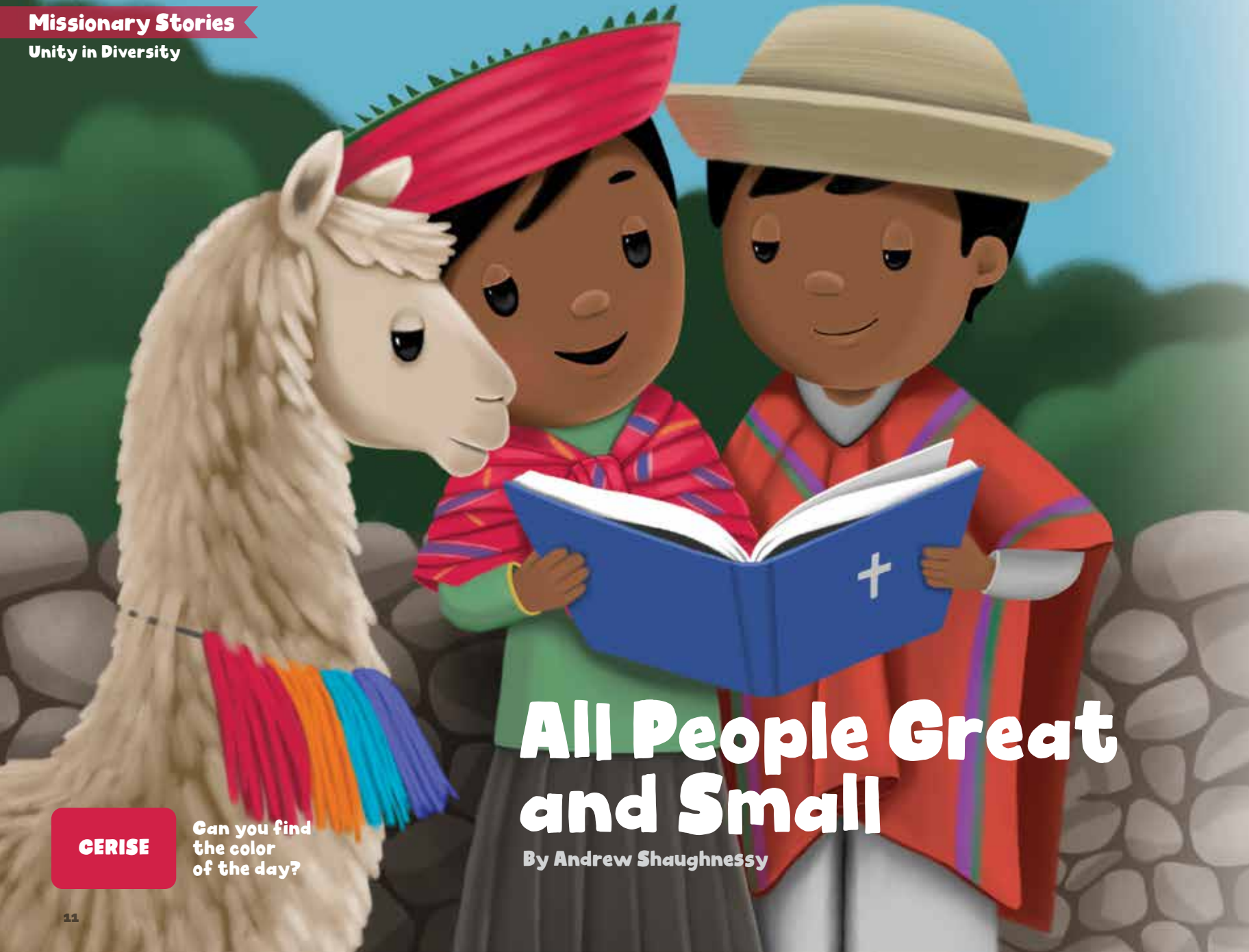
Lord, You are powerful and marvelous, and Your creation brings You glory! Help me to worship You and trust in Your goodness at all times, even when I don’t understand Your ways. Help me to see all people, even those different than me, as people made in Your image for Your glory. In Jesus’ name, amen.

Let’s Discuss These Questions

Have you met someone who was born with a sickness or looked different from what you are used to? How can you show God’s love to them even though they’re different from you? Can you think of a struggle in your own life that is hard for you to understand? How is God using even that difficulty to show His Love?

Let’s Read More

John 9



All People Great and Small

By Andrew Shaughnessy

CERISE

Can you find
the color
of the day?

Within the hills and riverside villages are the Quichua, who are a people who have lived in Ecuador for a very long time. They have their own special culture and identity, and speak eight separate languages.

Many Quichua churches do not have Bibles in their own language and they cannot read the Bible in Spanish like most Ecuadorians. For hundreds of years, the Quichua were not seen as important as the Spanish-speaking people. Because of this, people also viewed the Quechuan languages as less valuable than the Spanish.

Rick and Betty Aschmann serve as missionaries in Ecuador and work with the Quichua. They are hard at work putting together the Bible in the languages of the Quichua. But more importantly, Rick and Betty want the people to know that the Bible teaches that we are all equal. The Aschmanns have seen the Quichua come alive as they study God's Word together and be able to read the Bible in their own language.

For the thousands of little Quichua churches scattered across Ecuador, it is very important to have the Bible printed and ready to be read in their own language.

It helps the churches with members who have had a hard time understanding it in a different language. The Quichua Christians understand that they too have a place in God's kingdom. Jesus' message of hope is for the Quichua speakers and Spanish speakers alike; they are all children of God.

Prayer Requests

Pray for Ecuador and the Quichua people, that they will continue to learn about Jesus and His love for them. Pray for Rick and Betty Aschmann and their ministry as they continue to serve the people in Ecuador.



It Started With a Song

By Andrew Shaughnessy



WISTERIA

Can you find the color of the day?

Harauki Odate, also known as O-Chan, is Japanese and did not grow up hearing or having a way to hear about Jesus. In his country of Japan, more than 98 percent of people have not heard about Jesus.

Roger and Abi Lowther are MTW missionaries. Through music ministry, they have helped plant churches in Tokyo, Japan, for many years. They brought black gospel music from Memphis, Tennessee, about fifteen years ago. Could music from a different people and language group be used to reach a nation halfway across the globe?

As gospel music grew more popular in Japan, O-Chan started singing with Tokyo Voices of Praise, a gospel choir in central Tokyo. O-Chan came to know Jesus through the lyrics of black gospel songs which led him to get connected to the nearby MTW church in Chiba.

When a tsunami hit the northeastern part of Japan in March 2011, O-Chan worked with a disaster response team. He started working more closely with the church as he saw what the church was doing for people that needed help. He soon became one of the leaders at the church in Chiba, helping put together relief teams and helping them with their work. Later on, O-Chan had the opportunity to

attend seminary and get further Bible training. He now plans to start a church to help tell the Good News to the 98 percent of people in Japan who live without knowing Jesus.

O-Chan's connection to the gospel and the church was different than most people. He was drawn to Jesus by hearing the gospel through the music of African Americans influenced by a different culture, language, and history than his own. This is the power of the gospel. It goes beyond all boundaries!

Prayer Requests

Pray for O-Chan and his ministry to his people, that the Japanese would receive Jesus into their hearts. Pray for Roger and Abi Lowther's ministry, that God would continue to bless them in their work to see the Japanese people reached.

Noticed

By Heidi Suh

“There is a boy here who has five barley loaves and two fish, but what are they for so many?” –John 6:9



VIOLET

Can you find
the color
of the day?

“Umma, where are we going?” I asked as we weaved through the crowds of people at the airport.

“We’re moving from Korea to our new home far away. Isn’t this exciting?” I guess it was. I wasn’t sure. I was only five years old. All I knew was that we were packing all of our belongings, gathering with family and friends for the last time, and hearing well wishes for our new life across the ocean in the United States. I was just a child. I didn’t know what would await me. I was just following where I was led.

In the Bible, a boy had heard everyone talking about a man named Jesus and all the miracles He did to help the needy. “Could He be the One sent from God?” Thousands were following Him. One day, the boy’s parents told him to grab some bread and fish because they were going to join a crowd that was listening to Jesus. He was just a child. He didn’t know what would happen. He was just following where he was led.

During these times, a child would often go unnoticed. But not to Jesus. In the sea of people, Jesus saw the boy and invited him to come. There was something about Jesus that drew the boy to Him so he grabbed what little he had, five loaves and two fish, and gave it to Jesus. What would He do? The boy couldn’t have imagined what happened next: Jesus not only fed the thousands of people with his little gift, but even more miraculously, many came to believe that Jesus was the Savior the people of God were waiting for.

As a child, you may just be following where you are led, not knowing what will happen. But just like the boy, Jesus notices you and invites you to know Him. He notices you because He loves you and even died for you, if you trust Him as your Savior. Isn’t that amazing news! Share this news with other friends so they can know that Jesus notices them too.

Let’s Pray Together

Dear God, thank You for being my wonderful Savior! Thank You for noticing me and loving me, that You would even die on the cross for my sins. That is such good news! I may be young but I want to follow You and give all that I have so I can share this news about You with others too. Amen.

Let’s Discuss These Questions

How do you feel when you are not noticed? How does Jesus show you that you matter and that He notices you? God created each of us with our own gifts and strengths. What are the many ways that God uniquely made you? Share your thoughts with someone you love. Then, ask them to share what they see in you and how you can use the special way God made you to make Jesus known.

Let’s Read More

1 Timothy 4:12

Xin
Chào

Hello

Hola

Bonjour

Back Porch Melodies

By Keith Riddle

**YELLOW
ORANGE**

Can you find
the color
of the day?

“Now the whole earth had one language and the same words.” –Genesis. 11:1

From my back porch, you can hear many different languages: Mexican mariachi music sung in Spanish; families speaking Haitian Creole over dinner; children shouting in Portuguese as they play tag; grandmothers chatting in Vietnamese on the sidewalk. Have you ever wondered why people speak so many languages?

The Bible tells us about a time when “the whole earth had one language” (Gen. 11:1). Everyone could understand each other, and so they began working together on a project. But instead of using their creativity and unity to make God look awesome, they tried to build a huge tower to show that they were more awesome than God.

So God put a stop to their big project in a creative way: by causing them to speak different languages. In doing this, God Himself created many different ways for people to talk about and experience everything. This is what we call culture. I have a culture. You have a culture. Your neighbor that may speak another language has a culture too. Culture is simply a way of doing things based on how we see the world.

In this story God did not say that one culture was better than all the others. In a way, every unique culture reflects God’s own image that was there from the very beginning.

But the best part is that one day, when God makes everything perfect once again, the Bible says that we will see *and hear* people praising Jesus “from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages” (Rev. 7:9). We won’t all speak one language! Our creative God will receive praise in every language, from every culture around the world. I may not understand all the shouts, songs, and spoken words I hear from my back porch, but God does, and He delights in the creative expression of His glory in each one.

Let's Pray Together

God, thank You for Your creativity! Thank You for making many different languages and cultures around the world. Please help me learn more about who You are through each person and each culture that I see and hear.

Let's Discuss These Questions

What language do you use to worship God? Have you ever heard someone worship God in a language different than yours? If so, what was that like? If not, where could you go to do this? What do you think it will sound like in heaven when everyone is praising God in different languages?

Let's Read More

Genesis 1:26–27; Revelation 7:9–12

DAY 8

**Broken but
Beautiful**

The Saddest Day

By Mwai Makhaira

**“Then the LORD God said to the woman,
‘What is this that you have done?’ The
woman said, ‘The serpent deceived me,
and I ate.’” –Genesis 3:13**

CANARY

**Can you find
the color
of the day?**

July 20, 2011, is considered one of the saddest days in the history of a small, southern African country called Malawi. On this day, many precious lives were lost.

The people were asking for fairness and freedom, but the government was not willing to listen and responded in a way that hurt many people. Every year Malawians hold a prayer service in memory of the pain and to remember those who were hurt and who lost loved ones.

Just like Malawi, we all have our own saddest days that we remember very clearly. When was the last time that you were very sad or heartbroken? Do you remember the day? Do you remember the time? Often these are details we never forget. Today, I would like us to talk about another sad day for all people of the world. Though there have been many sad days in the past, this was the saddest day of them all.

A long time ago, Adam and Eve were the first people that God created and they enjoyed a good relationship with their Maker. Then the serpent came and told them a lie. So both Adam and Eve ate the fruit that God had commanded them not to eat, and the good relationship with God was broken. This was the saddest day, when sin entered the world and this special relationship between God and His people was broken.

Ever since that day, pain and sorrow have been a part of this world. We see this all around us when we look at our lives, our communities, and the world we live in. Thankfully, that's not where the story

ends. Though there is much sadness in our world, it is only the middle part of God's greater story.

Our God is a God of mercy. This saddest day in history ended up also being a day of greatest hope. That is because God on that very day promised to send a Savior who will end our separation with God and repair the broken relationship. Sadness will remain for a time, but there will be joy at the end. That is why Jesus came. He is our hope and our reason for joy.

We will continue to see and experience much sadness in our lifetime, but the reason we find hope in the most difficult times is because of the truth that the story doesn't end with sadness. Our great God promises that He will heal His people and turn our sorrow into joy.

Let's Pray Together

Our heavenly Father, we thank You for Your mercy and grace. Thank You that in Jesus we who were broken by sin are now being remade and we are beautiful again. Forgive us for our many wrongdoings and help us to live a life that finds hope in You always. In Jesus' name we pray, amen!

Let's Discuss These Questions

Can you remember a time when something made you sad?
What character or promise of God helps you in your sadness?

Let's Read More

Psalm 51; Romans 5:1–11

DAY 9

**Broken but
Beautiful**

♥
HOPE

Tears to Joy

By Heidi Suh



SKY BLUE

**Can you find
the color
of the day?**

“Jesus wept.” –John 11:35

Rrring! Rrring! The phone rang with the news about my sweet grandmother who lived near me in Washington, D.C.

Rrring! Rrring! Almost 4,000 miles away in the country of Bolivia, my friend got the same news of her beloved aunt.

We didn't know that these phone calls would lead to broken hearts and unstoppable tears. Both of our loved ones got sick with a virus and both of them died. Losing a loved one happens to all people in the world. But no matter how strong we want to be, it is so painful. Would anyone else know what that is like? Jesus knew.

Jesus' friend Lazarus had just died. He saw Lazarus' sisters, Mary and Martha, in deep pain over losing their brother. Jesus was also sad that those He loved experienced such aching pain. In His deep sadness, the Bible tells us that He was "deeply moved" and says, "Jesus wept."

Death came into the world because of sin (Rom. 5:12). Jesus wanted to show Mary, Martha, and others with them that He came to conquer death. What better way to do this than to bring His friend back to life? And so He did. He commanded, "Lazarus, come out!" And do you know what happened? Lazarus came walking out alive! Jesus showed that He had the power to turn death to life and give them hope.

What is this hope? The hope of heaven! Everyone, including Lazarus, would eventually face death, but God didn't let death be the end. He had a rescue plan! He sent His only Son, Jesus, to take the sins of the whole world upon Himself, to face death,

only to rise to life again! Heaven, a forever home with God, is now ours to have because of Jesus Christ!

Have you ever cried tears of sadness because of a loss? Jesus was with you. He knows exactly what you are going through and feels your deep pain. But you know what? You can put your hope in Jesus who brought heaven to you—a place where every tear will be wiped away and only joy will forever remain.

"He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away" (Rev. 21:4).

Let's Pray Together

Dear God, thank You for knowing when I am hurt and that You cry tears with me in my sadness. In these times, help me remember that You made sure this is only for a short time while on this earth. Thank You for winning over death and sin on the cross for me so that I can now look forward to heaven with You where there will no longer be death, tears, and pain. There will only be tears of joy with you! In Jesus' name, amen.

Let's Discuss These Questions

Can you share a time when you lost something or someone you loved so much? How does it make you feel to know that Jesus cried too? What do you think heaven will be like?

Let's Read More

Revelation 21:4; I Corinthians 15:55–57



When the World Makes Me Sad

By Keith Riddle



**“How long, O Lord? Will you forget me forever?
How long will you hide your face from me?
How long must I take counsel in my soul and
have sorrow in my heart all the day? How
long shall my enemy be exalted over me?**

—Psalm 13:1-2

GOLDENROD

**Can you find
the color
of the day?**

Did you know there are sad songs in the Bible? These songs are called psalms of lament. Lament means to be sad and even to cry. One good example of a lament is Psalm 13, which was written by David when he was afraid for his life.

While it might seem unusual to read or sing sad songs, they can teach us about how to respond when difficult, hurtful, or unfair things happen in our own lives and in the world around us.

First, psalms of lament teach us that everything is not okay. The world really is broken by sin—including you, me, our families, communities, churches, and nations. This sin breaks God’s heart, and it should break ours: when life is disrupted by sickness and disease; when people are treated unfairly because of the color of their skin; when someone we love dies and we are separated from them. Everything is not okay, and sometimes it seems like it will never get better. In this psalm, David says, “How long, O Lord? Will you forget me forever?” God had not forgotten David, but it sure felt that way.

Second, psalms of lament teach us that it’s okay to be sad. Rather than ignore our sorrow and pretend it’s not there, we can express it. We can honestly share how we are feeling—no faking necessary. Like David, we can cry out when we have “sorrow in [our] heart all the day.”

Third, psalms of lament teach us where to bring our sadness—we bring it to God. God understands what it is like to be sad. Jesus, who is God Himself, wept when a close friend died. He felt physical pain in His body. And He was unjustly accused and murdered. God knows our sadness because He experienced it, too.

When we cry out to God with our lament, He hears us, He knows us, and He is with us. What good news! David knew this, too, when he said to God, “I will trust in Your steadfast love.”

Let’s Pray Together

Lord, thank You that You care about the things that make me sad. You hear me when I cry, and I know that I can come to You when there are difficult, hurtful, and unfair things that happen. [You can take a minute to call out some of these things to God.] Thank You, God, that You hear our prayers, and that You are with us.

Let’s Discuss These Questions

What are some things that make you sad right now? Why do you think it is helpful to bring our sadness to God?

Let’s Read More

Psalm 13; Isaiah 3:3; John 11:32–35

Beauty in Ashes

By Andrew Shaughnessy



AMBER

Can you find
the color
of the day?

In 2018, the country's worst wildfire in 100 years burned through the city of Mati, Greece. Sadly, the fire took the lives of many people and destroyed many cars, homes, and businesses.

From the ashes, God made good come out of this terrible tragedy. A Greek pastor and missionaries brought people and churches together to help from a nearby city called Athens. Soon, people were traveling from Athens to Mati three days a week to help move broken things and help clean up twenty homes of families in Mati. A church went further to help the people harmed by the fire by finding new schools for children and new jobs for adults.

For the first month or two, the people of Mati were not sure what to think of the help. The help kept coming and the church never asked for anything in return. Soon, the people who received help began to ask in surprise: "Why are you helping us?" The Greek pastor and missionaries told them that the church was showing love by serving because Christ has shown love. Through these conversations, God connected sixty families to the church. People began inviting missionaries into their homes. They wanted to know more about Jesus. People began to meet in these homes to study the Bible.

Now, people in Mati trust the churches that have been helping them because of the good that they have done in the name of Jesus. Pastors have started going from door to door telling people about Jesus and offering care. Families who have been helped by the church began reaching out for prayer. Missionaries have even started talking about planting a new church in Mati.

Even in the wake of disaster, God is working through His Church to build something beautiful.

Prayer Requests

Pray for the people of Mati, Greece, that they will also share about Jesus to others. Pray for the pastors and missionaries in Greece, that their ministry to the Greeks would prosper and more Greeks would come to Jesus.

Maria's New Family

By Rodney Davila



CORAL

**Can you find
the color
of the day?**

Maria never knew her father. When she was only four years old, her mother took her to live with her grandparents. Maria's mother visited a few times a year, but never stayed long. Her grandparents gave her a place to live, but she didn't have a place in their hearts.

Whenever Maria got in trouble at school, they would punish her and tell her that she was not good. Before long, Maria started to believe that she was bad, just like her grandparents had said. No one really loved her. She felt alone and scared.

One day, some visitors came to help at Maria's church. Even though they didn't speak Spanish like Maria, they wanted to spend time with her. When she asked them why, they told her that they had come so that people could know about Jesus. They told her that Jesus loved her, that what Jesus had done by His life, death, and coming alive again was the way that He showed His love. She could know Jesus personally, not just know *about* Him like someone in a storybook.

Maria was excited. She had never heard people talk about Jesus this way. Because of what Jesus had done, she had become part of another family—the family of God! She was so happy to know that Jesus accepted her, not because of anything she could do, but because of what He had done.

Today, Maria still lives with her grandparents, and her mother still just comes a couple of times a year. But something is different inside of Maria. She knows that she is not alone. She is part of the family of God.

Prayer Requests

Pray that Maria may keep on growing in faith in Jesus Christ as she learns more about the Scriptures and as she serves the Lord in the church. Pray for Maria's church and the missionary family, the Davilas, who serve her community in Costa Rica.

DAY 11

**Broken but
Beautiful**



Stand Firm in God's Love

By Sarah Lim

CERULEAN

**Can you find
the color
of the day?**

“Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.” –Romans 12:2, NIV

One Sunday we were playing Bible trivia at church. I read the question and each student wrote down the answers on their boards. One boy wrote his answer, then looked around to see what the other kids were writing.

When he saw that the others' answers were different than his, he changed it to match what the other kids wrote. On the count of three, the kids raised their boards to reveal their answers. Sadly, everyone got it wrong and the boy realized that he had the right answer before he changed it.

There are times when we also doubt what we know to be true and are tempted to change our positions so we can be like others. We know what God's Word says and what God wants us to do, but sometimes we are tempted to follow what others in the world do, or want us to do, because we don't want to stand out or stand alone. This is a struggle everyone faces whether we are young or old, no matter where we live. God understands these struggles and guides us not to "conform to the pattern of this world," but to stand firm on His Word, knowing that God loves us and gives us courage to do so.

It is through the Bible that God teaches us how much He loves us in Jesus. This means that even when we lack the strength to remain strong, His Spirit guides us to have courage and to

stand firm upon His promises. God's Word reminds us of the unchanging truth of who God is and His unconditional love for us. We learn of His loving plans for our lives and how He wants us to live. God's love through His Spirit gives us the strength and courage to live our lives in a way that is pleasing to Him.

It's not easy obeying God. But that's why knowing that God loves us and is always with us gives us the courage to follow Him.

Let's Pray Together

Heavenly Father, we thank You for loving us and always being with us. Help us to be rooted in Your Word so we know how You want us to live. Give us wisdom and courage to stand up for truth, even if it means being uncomfortable and standing alone. In Jesus' name we pray, amen.

Let's Discuss These Questions

Was there a time when you changed your mind because you wanted to fit in with others? How or why did you make those choices? How would you handle things differently knowing God loves you and is always with you?

Let's Read More


Daniel 3:8–30; 6:1–28

DAY 12

**Broken but
Beautiful**

Longing for Home

By Sharon Lopez



“Do not let your hearts be troubled. You believe in God; believe also in me. My Father’s house has many rooms; if that were not so, would I have told you that I am going there to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am. You know the way to the place where I am going.” –John 14:1-4, NIV

**CARNATION
PINK**

**Can you find
the color
of the day?**

I looked over my shoulder one last time at the small crowd of friends gathered to say goodbye. A lump formed in my throat and tears threatened to escape my eyes.

I fought back the tears, forcing one leg in front of the other as I pulled my suitcase along, walking toward the security checkout. I have no home anymore.

A memory flashed through my mind. It didn't seem that long ago that my family had moved here—to Honduras. We had said goodbye to our loved ones in the United States. My parents and their five daughters, plus a lot of luggage, had left everything behind to become missionaries in the jungle. What we didn't understand was how God would change us in the jungle.

Now here we were again at the airport, moving back to what had once been home, although it no longer felt like it. Goodbye green mountains and rainforest. I breathed in the smell of sweat and heat mixed with earthy red clay—a smell I would miss. I subconsciously heard the beat of the reggaeton music in the background and the busy chatter of voices in Spanish. It was time to board the plane.

Today, even as an adult, I still feel like a stranger in the world at times. Have you ever felt like you didn't belong somewhere?

The Bible tells us that all Christ-followers are strangers here. This world is not our final home. Jesus is preparing “a place for us” and coming back to take us there. The Apostle Paul said that “our citizenship is in heaven” (Phil. 3:20). That means that heaven is our real home, the place where we belong for eternity, and where our hearts will finally be full! So the next time you don't feel comfortable in this world, look to heaven, “where Christ is seated at the right hand of God” (Col. 3:1).

Let's Pray Together

Thank You, God, for preparing a place for me in heaven, a place where everything will be made right, a place where I will belong. Help me to think about my real home and long to be with You there. Strengthen my faith and give me peace as I wait for You to come for me or call me home. In Jesus' name, amen.

Let's Discuss These Questions

Have you ever felt like a stranger, like you didn't fit in? How can these sad feelings help to remind us about heaven, our real home?

Let's Read More

Hebrews 11:1–16; Colossians 3:1–4

Invited

By Heidi Suh



COPPER

Can you find
the color
of the day?

**“But when you
give a feast, invite
the poor, the crippled,
the lame, the blind.”
—Luke 14:13**

Streamers. Check. Balloons. Check. Invitations. Check. I was having my very first birthday party since I moved to the United States from Korea and I was beyond excited!

I picked out everything: matching tablecloth, plates and forks, the party favors, and, of course, the cake. My mom was busy cooking in the kitchen, making all my favorite Korean dishes. It was going to be a feast!

All those invited soon arrived and laughter quickly filled the air. The food was set: soy sauce-marinated beef, seaweed wrapped rolls of rice with colorful radishes, and fishcake. Some of my guests awkwardly picked at their plates with looks of uncertainty, while audible “yums” could be heard across the table. In the middle of those hesitant to try Korean food for the first time there was Scottie, a neighborhood boy my mom had invited. He hungrily joined in and wholeheartedly enjoyed the feast before him!

Jesus told a similar story of a master who planned and held a grand banquet. All was prepared and the master excitedly sent out his servant to gather the guests he invited. Instead of enthusiasm, the servant was met with cold shoulders and excuses why each guest could not come. “Fine! Then I will invite those who would be happy to join.” So that’s what the master did. He had his servant invite “the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind:” until every seat at the banquet table was filled and his house was full.

When Jesus told this parable, He was making an announcement: God is inviting everyone to His grand banquet and anyone who would accept His invitation could participate in the celebration. “For God so loved the world that he gave His only Son that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life.” Anyone who believes in Jesus is welcome.

What about you? Would you like to come to God’s feast and celebrate what Jesus did for you? What if I told you that not only are you invited, but you could invite anyone you would like! Who knows, maybe someone you invite will also accept the invitation and join you in the banquet in heaven?

Let’s Pray Together

Dear God, thank You for inviting me to Your banquet table to celebrate Jesus’ win over sin on the cross for me. This is such good news! Help me now to have faith to love and follow You. Just as You invited me, please help me to be a friend to another person and give me a chance to invite them to be friends with You too. Amen.

Let’s Discuss These Questions

How would it feel if no one came to your party? Through this story, what is Jesus inviting everyone to? Do you know a friend or neighbor who might need a friend? Talk about how you would invite and introduce him or her to Jesus.

Let’s Read More

Luke 14:15b, 23



The Bridge

By Rev. Juan Carlos Martinez

“The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.”

- 2 Corinthians 13:14

**RED
ORANGE**

Can you find
the color
of the day?

Growing up on the Mexican border with the United States was a unique experience. Only a narrow river separated my hometown in Mexico from Texas.

Yet, when my parents would drive our family across the bridge from Mexico to Texas, we wouldn't just cross a river, we would enter a whole new world. In Mexico we spoke Spanish. Across the river, everyone spoke English. In Mexico, we ate *tacos*, *barbacoa*, and *pan dulce*. Across the river, people ate hamburgers, pizza, and peanut butter and jelly sandwiches. In Mexico, we played *futbol* (soccer). Across the bridge, kids played football. When we crossed the bridge, life instantly changed.

Our family crossed the bridge all the time. You see, my parents wanted to give us the best education possible. So, even though we lived in Mexico, they decided to send us to school in Texas so we could learn English. “¿Por qué?” I asked my dad.

“Because he who speaks two languages is twice as valuable,” he answered.

So, my parents worked very hard to make this possible. Every day, they worked from the break of dawn until late in the evening—even on weekends. They wanted to give my sisters and me a gift that would change our lives: the

gift of being bilingual. Our parents did the hard work, but we were the ones who received the benefits of their work.

In Corinthians 13:14 you can read a blessing that begins with the “grace of the Lord Jesus Christ.” Grace is a gift that we don't deserve. Our sin is like a river we cannot cross that separates us from God. Jesus did the hard work and lived a sinless life so we could receive the benefit of being able to go to God. He also became the bridge so that we can overcome the separation of sin and have access to God. Now everyone who trusts in Him can cross that bridge and enjoy God's love and be connected with God. That's grace!

Let's Pray Together

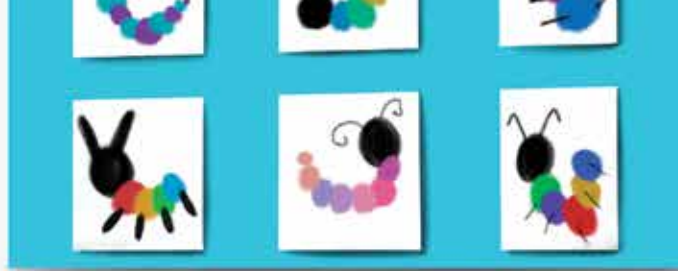
God, thank You for sending Your Son, Jesus, to live a perfect life on our behalf. Thank You that our sins are forgiven through Your grace, and we pray that the Holy Spirit will give us the wisdom and courage to show grace to those around us. This we pray in Jesus' name, amen!

Let's Discuss These Questions

How would it feel to be separated from someone or something that you love? Why does sin separate us from God? How is Jesus like a bridge that connects us to God?

Let's Read More

Isaiah 40:1–5; Romans 8:1–4; Hebrews 10:19–22



God Is My Strength

By Sarah Lim


“I will love You, O LORD, my strength. The LORD is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer; my God, my strength, in whom I will trust; my shield and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold.”

—Psalm 18:1-2, NKJV



TURQUOISE

Can you find
the color
of the day?



When I was six years old, my family immigrated to America and my life as I knew it turned upside down. My life of bliss and comfort came to a sudden end.

We left our family, friends, and everything we knew and came to a place where everything was new and foreign. Soon after we arrived, my sister and I had to go to school where no one looked like us.

Not knowing a word of English, I was so nervous and scared my body shook as I entered class on the first day. I didn't even know how to ask to go to the bathroom! Even though my teachers were very nice, I lacked confidence and felt out of place. I felt so alone and frustrated. I hated going to school!

I asked God why He brought me there. I complained, "No one looks like me here. They make fun of me. I can't speak English!" What made it worse was that it felt like I had to face all of these fears alone and I didn't have the strength to face it.

Then one day in Sunday school I learned that God is our strength. God not only knows all about our troubles, He also cares about our pain and sees us when we cry. More importantly, He becomes our strength in our moments of weakness and helps us face each day and overcome our fears as we trust Jesus.

I didn't look like anyone near me and felt like I did not fit in, but God accepted me for who I am and reminded me that I fit into His picture. Some children made fun of me, but God

reminded me that I am His beloved and that He takes delight in me. I lacked the ability to speak English, but God provided me with teachers and people around me who were patient so that they could teach me English. I learned English and grew up to write this devotional in the very language I struggled in!

As Psalm 8:1 says, the Lord is our strength. We experience His strength in the most amazing way in the low moments of our weakness. Most of the time, our problems don't change. But knowing that God loves me, that God is always with me and is my strength, gives me confidence to face anything.

Let's Pray Together

Heavenly Father, thank You for loving us. Sometimes we go through hard times and we don't understand why and feel scared and alone. Help us to trust You even in these times, knowing that You are our strength, will give us strength to endure, and will deliver us. In Jesus' name, amen.

Let's Discuss These Questions

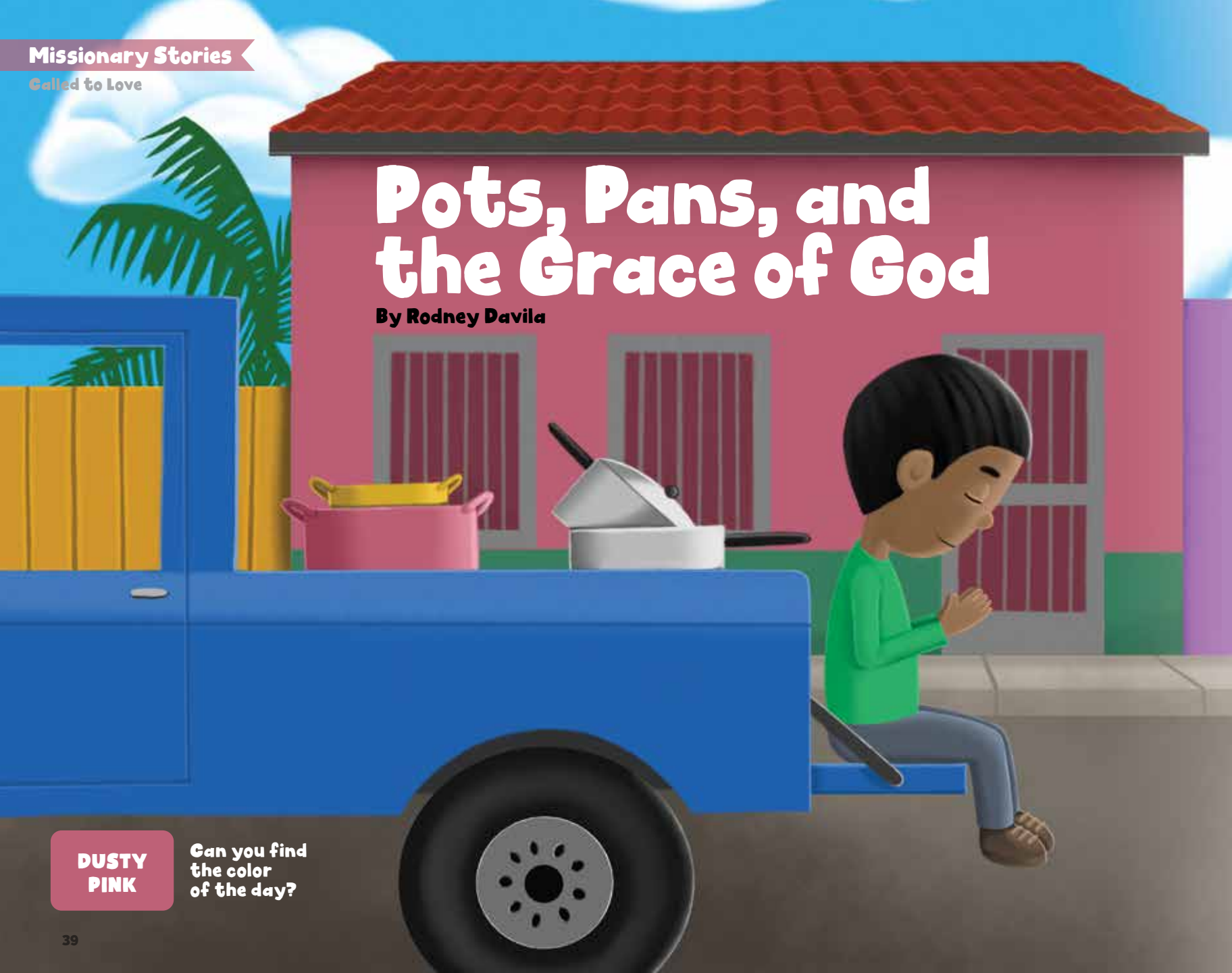
What is the heaviest thing you have ever carried or lifted?
What is the most difficult task you had to do this past year?
How does knowing that "God is our strength" change the way we face our greatest challenges?

Let's Read More

Exodus 2; 1 Kings 19:9–18; Jonah 2:1–10

Pots, Pans, and the Grace of God

By Rodney Davila



**DUSTY
PINK**

Can you find
the color
of the day?

Freddy was a traveling salesman in a city in Costa Rica. Every day, he walked the streets, calling out to people to come buy pots and pans. One day, he was walking by a church when he saw a man standing outside.

“Do you want to buy any pots and pans?” Freddy called out.

The man, a missionary named Rodney Davila, said yes. After he bought a few things, they sat down together on the porch of the church, each with a cup of cold water in their hands.

Freddy told Rodney his story: about his old job as a construction worker; about how proud he was of his two kids; and then he told him about how he was so tired of selling pots and pans, and did not feel very hopeful about the future.

Rodney told Freddy about Jesus, and the hope He had for each one of us.

“That can’t be true for me,” Freddy said. “I’ve done some bad things. God can’t forgive me.”

The weight of his sin was so heavy that Freddy felt like he was carrying around a bag of heavy stones on top of all the pots and

pans! But Rodney explained that there was no sin so big that Jesus’ love could not cover it. Jesus had lived a perfect life and died on the cross for our sins, and when you believe in Him, He will forgive you!

Freddy prayed and asked Jesus to forgive him for all that he had done. When Freddy left, calling out again for people to buy his pots and pans, he didn’t seem to be carrying a big bag of stones anymore. He had given his burden to Jesus.

Prayer Requests

Pray that Freddy may keep on growing in his new faith in Christ and find opportunities to share Christ with others. Pray for Rodney and his family in their ministry in Costa Rica and that the Lord will continue to introduce them to people who need to know Jesus.

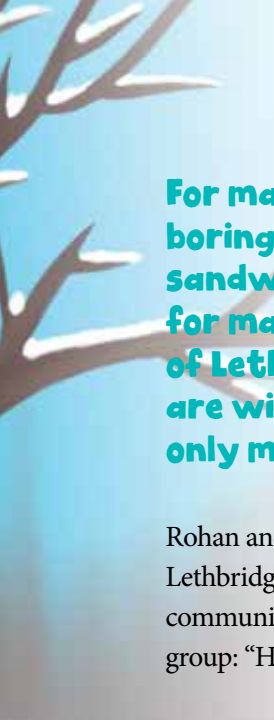


A Smile, a Sandwich, and the Bread of Life

By Rev. Rohan Crown

TEAL

Can you find
the color
of the day?



For many of us, a sandwich is a common, boring meal. Our parents can make us a sandwich whenever we want! However, for many in the First Nations community of Lethbridge, Canada—many of whom are without a home—a sandwich is the only meal they will eat in a day.

Rohan and Rebecca Crown serve as church planters in Lethbridge. When the Crowns heard about the houseless community's needs, they asked the leader of a First Nations group: "How can we help?"

The leader responded: "We need sandwiches, but not just any sandwich. We need a sandwich that can be a whole meal—big enough to last through the cold winter nights."

And so, Rohan's church started making sandwiches for the houseless community. Once a week, the Crown family gets to share the sandwiches and see the joy in the communities they serve. But why does the Crown family give in this way?

Jesus said in John 6, "I am the bread of life." As people loved by our Savior, Jesus Christ, we have the responsibility to share with others how Jesus can bring them life too. A small sandwich can have a large impact when given with a smile

and words of grace, and Rohan's prayer is that all who eat will find Jesus, the Bread of Life. One day—he hopes—they will all come together for the greatest and fullest meal in heaven with Jesus.

Prayer Requests

Pray that God will continue to allow ministry within the First Nations people in and around Lethbridge. Give thanks for the many opportunities He has already given the Crowns. Pray for others to come and join them in ministry to love and share the hope of Jesus. Pray for wisdom, direction, and open doors as the Crowns share the love of Jesus to many in the city of Lethbridge.

The Gift

By Rev. Juan Carlos Martinez



Can you find
the color
of the day?

SCARLET

**“The grace of the Lord
Jesus Christ and the
love of God and the
fellowship of the Holy
Spirit be with you all.”**

-2 Corinthians 13:14

“It’s time to cut the *rosca*,” announced my grandmother. The guests around her dinner table lowered their voices. Their faces reflected an excitement in the air that you could almost touch.

Dia de Reyes (The Day of Kings) is celebrated in Mexico on January 6. Children wake up to find their shoes filled with goodies and gifts under the Christmas tree, celebrating the gifts delivered by *los reyes magos*, the wise men who brought gifts to Jesus when He was born. That evening, friends and family gather to share a meal that ends with the cutting (and eating) of the *rosca de reyes*, a wreath-shaped cake decorated with candied fruit. Each person cuts a piece and inspects it, for it may have a surprise: a plastic figurine representing the baby Jesus. Whoever gets the figurine in their piece of cake gets the honor of hosting a dinner on February 2, in which the main course is delicious tamales!

After inspecting her piece, a smile came across my mom’s face: She had found the figurine! Everyone cheered. I asked my mom, “Why are you smiling? Isn’t making tamales a lot of work?”

“Yes,” she answered, “but I will gladly prepare them, because they will be enjoyed by the people I love.”

At God’s expense, He gives us the ultimate gift: His one and only Son, Jesus. It is through the gift of Jesus that God removes our sin. It is through Jesus that we are called sons and daughters and made part of God’s family. In 2 Corinthians 13:14 the Bible says we are blessed with “the love of God.” The love of God is shown most clearly to us through Jesus.

When we’ve been given this precious gift, it is not just for our own enjoyment. We are called to love others and share the gift of Jesus by telling them about it! Sharing the gift of Jesus is not an easy mission, but when people receive this gift, they, like us, get to taste heaven!

Let’s Pray Together

God, thank You for loving us by giving us Your Son! Give us courage to tell others about Jesus, so they also can experience Your love, and receive the greatest gift. This we pray in Jesus’ name, amen!

Let’s Discuss These Questions


What is the greatest gift you have received from your family?
How did you feel when you received an unexpected and undeserved gift? Why is Jesus the greatest gift?

Let’s Read More

John 3:16; Ephesians. 2:8–9; 1 John 4:9–11

Dance!

By Keith Riddle



“Then shall the young women rejoice in the dance, and the young men and the old shall be merry. I will turn their mourning into joy; I will comfort them, and give them gladness for sorrow.”

—Jeremiah 31:13

**MIDNIGHT
BLUE**

Can you find
the color
of the day?

“... Ev-ery-bod-y, clap your hands! ... GLAP GLAP GLAP GLAP GLAP GLAP GLAP GLAP ...”

The music blared from the speakers. The smell of hot dogs filled the air. The warm summer breeze blew across the pavement and grass. And the dancers ... they danced!

Our neighborhood was throwing a party in the park! Neighbors, young and old, were dancing, eating, chatting, laughing, singing, and having a great time at our yearly end-of-summer “Big Event.” We celebrated God’s goodness in our community programs and projects, but most of all in our friendships with each other.

I think the prophet Jeremiah in the Old Testament might have had nights like this in mind when he wrote about God’s promises to restore true peace. In Jeremiah’s day, there was no peace. God’s people of Israel were suffering, mostly because their own hearts had turned away from God. But the prophet Jeremiah gave them messages of hope for a time when things would be better. They would be restored. People would live in peace and wholeness once again—with God and with each other.

But how could this happen, when we are all sinners? We would need a whole new heart—a whole new way of being in relationship with God and with each other. And that’s just what Jeremiah writes about later in the chapter—he says that God would

make a new covenant, or a promise, with His people, and write His own law on their hearts.

Many years after Jeremiah, that promise of giving us new hearts was fulfilled in Jesus. “Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come” (2 Cor. 5:17).

Although we know that God still has work to do, we still get glimpses of what peace in this new covenant looks like, even today. When you see it, make sure you dance!

Let’s Pray Together

Lord, thank You for new hearts! Thank You that You made a way to give us and our communities true peace through this new covenant in Jesus. I pray for opportunities to share this awesome joy with everyone I meet. And of course, thank You for dancing! In Jesus’ name I pray, amen.

Let’s Discuss These Questions

What’s your favorite way to express joy? Do you dance? Shout? Sing? Jump? Something else? How have you experienced joy because of something God did?

Let’s Read More

Jeremiah 31:31–34; 2 Corinthians 5:17

Feast of Heaven

By Sharon Lopez

“People will come from east and west and north and south, and will take their places at the feast in the kingdom of God.”

—Luke 13:29, NIV

FUCHSIA

Can you find the color of the day?

In the beginning, God gave Adam and Eve “every seed-bearing plant on the face of the whole earth and every tree that [had] fruit with seed in it.”

God said, “They will be yours for food” (Gen. 1:29, NIV). Do you think they experimented with those plants?

God commanded humans to “fill the earth” with people, but when they disobeyed, He scattered them Himself. This was God’s plan—that the earth be full of different people living in different places across the globe—many having access to different types of plants. Just imagine the possibilities for food creativity!

My children get excited when their *abuela* (grandmother) pats out corn tortillas by hand. This tradition, passed down from her ancestors of Honduras, has survived for centuries and been adopted by many. They soaked corn kernels, smashed the pulp together into balls, and patted them out to cook on a comal—a griddle. Sometimes Abuela makes refried beans and sprinkles them with grated *queso duro*, a hard, salty cheese, to fold within these tortillas.

My children also get excited when their Korean uncle takes the family to Asian marketplaces, like H Mart. They especially enjoy the yummy drinks and pastries we buy. Intriguingly, we’ve learned that the same red beans Abuela uses in her burritos are often sweetened and used as pastry fillings in Korea!

Remember, plants are a gift from God to mankind for food, and He planned to fill the earth with diverse, creative people for His glory!

Can you imagine enjoying the feast of heaven together one day? The Bible talks about us, the children of God from every nation and culture, coming together for a feast—in a place with no barriers! We will worship and rejoice as one, as the three Persons of God are One, worshiping and rejoicing in Him forever!

Let’s Pray Together

Thank You, God, for filling the earth with beauty and creativity, a world more beautiful because people are not all the same. I look forward to the feast of heaven one day when I will be together with my brothers and sisters from all over the world. Help me to treasure other cultures even now as I wait for that time.

Let’s Discuss These Questions

Have you ever tried food from another culture? What are some of the most interesting foods you have tried? How can we treasure the other cultures that God loves and treasures?

Let’s Read More

Isaiah 25:6–9

Calling All Nations


By Rev. Marq Toombs



**BRIGHT
YELLOW**

Can you find
the color
of the day?

“And Jesus came and said to them, ‘All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.’” –Matthew 28:18-20



In Matthew 28, Jesus gives His disciples a great mission also known as “The Great Commission.” That special mission is to go make disciples, people who believe and follow Jesus as their Lord and Savior.

An important part of this special mission is to go. Jesus did not tell His disciples to remain where they were. Rather, He commanded them to go to the ends of the earth and tell others what He did for them. Because of Jesus’ life—dying on the cross and rising from the dead—we will not be separated from God forever if we believe in Jesus! This is amazing news!

That’s exactly what the disciples did. They spread out and went to their neighbors to tell people about Jesus. They went to the next village, the next city, and the surrounding countries! Ever since then, the good news of Jesus has spread like wildfire. For thousands of years, there were countless men, women, and children who heard about what Jesus did for them. More importantly, they didn’t keep the news only for themselves. They also joined in on Jesus’ great mission to make disciples. If it weren’t for the people who listened to and obeyed His calling to go, you and I wouldn’t have even heard about Jesus. Did you know that you and your family are also invited to join in on this great mission to make disciples of Jesus?

The great news is we can obey and take part in this great mission whether it is down the street from where we live or on the other side of the world.

Years ago, I moved to Mexico to tell the people there about Jesus. When my family moved back to Texas, we noticed that our

hometown had changed. The people were different. The languages were different. The stores were different. It was different because people from all over the world had come and brought with them something special. They brought new music, new food, and new customs from their nations. Some were my neighbors and I was able to make friends with people from Mexico, Kenya, Nigeria, Egypt, Lebanon, Korea, and Turkey.

How amazing is that? People from all around the world right at our doorsteps and in our communities. The world that we live in has such an amazing opportunity to tell people of different cultures and backgrounds about Jesus. Jesus sends us to gather His followers from all the nations. But He does not expect you or me to do it by ourselves. He promises to be with us always, even to the end of the world. So let’s go!

Let’s Pray Together

Lord Jesus, You are the Savior of the world. You want people from every tribe and language and nation to be saved. Help me want what You want. Help me do my part to share the good news with other people for the life of the world. Amen.

Let’s Discuss These Questions

Where is the farthest place you have been to from your home? What does Jesus promise at the end of Matthew 28:20? How do you feel knowing that Jesus’ promise that He will be with us always?

Let’s Read More

Acts 10:34–35; 1 Timothy 2:3–6; Acts 17:26–27; Habakkuk 2:14

The Sign of Good News

By Rev. Sam Kang



“I have set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between me and the earth.”

—Genesis 9:13

INDIGO

Can you find the color of the day?

In the rolling plains of Kenya, the late afternoon rain had passed as if quenching the thirst of the few acacia trees on the horizon. Minutes ago we could hardly see anything as the downpour of the rain matched the thunder and darkness.

And just like that the storm disappeared, the sun came out, and the clear sky met the endless fields of long grass gently waving in the afternoon wind. The multitudes of giraffes, wildebeest, Thomson's gazelles, and zebras could once again be seen roaming this great plain of Africa, while a mighty rainbow could be seen from end to end. It looked like it came straight out of the ground, painting the sky with color. All was quiet when my friend Napayeng turned to me and whispered, "*Ngai* has spoken."

Napayeng was a friend of mine. He is part of a people group in Kenya known to be brave and loyal warriors who are also quite spiritual. The Maasai believe in spiritual forces and a god who mysteriously speaks through thunder, earthquakes, and rainbows. *Ngai* (n-kai) is something beyond understanding. But when he told me that God had spoken, it was clear that he was talking about the living God. Napayeng is a believer of the true God, who gave the sign of the rainbow to Noah and his family as a promise. The promise from God

was that life would go on and would not be destroyed by flood ever again. God is alive and in control. The great colors of the rainbow represent the sign that God had spoken and made a promise.

Like the rainbow, God gave us a sign of His most important promise: Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ is God's living promise to all people to rescue them from their brokenness. God's signs are important because they help us remember His faithfulness.

As we finish this book, let's remember seeing the different colors of the day. Just like the rainbow, the colors remind us that God is alive and in control. His promise to give life to all people groups through Jesus Christ has never changed. Many people do not know about God's promises. They don't know that He is real and in control. May we be people that share the good news of the greatest sign: Jesus Christ to the world!

God will make this happen, for he who calls you is faithful.

- 1 Thessalonians 5:24, NLT



**The heavens declare the glory of God, and
the sky above proclaims his handiwork.
-Psalm 19:1**



Contributors



Yohan Shin

is a children's ministry director at Disciple Community Church in Irvine, California. He is ecstatically married to his wife, Joo Eun, with three amazing sons, KaiEl, NaiEl, and RoiEl. Yohan is a missionary kid from Budapest, Hungary, who is Korean by blood, American by mind, and Hungarian at heart. He studied violin performance at Liszt Conservatory of Music and Biola University, and received his M.Div. at Westminster Seminary California. He loves to play the violin, watch Tottenham play soccer, and eat Korean BBQ.



Rev. Juan Carlos Martinez

is the pastor of families at Christ Evangelical Presbyterian Church (PCA) in Houston, Texas. Juan Carlos likes to say he is Mexican by birth and blood, American by citizenship, and a Texan by the grace of God. He holds bachelor's and master's degrees from Rice University in electrical engineering, as well as a master's of divinity from Westminster Theological Seminary in Philadelphia. Juan Carlos married his high school sweetheart, Samara, and they have three children: Santiago Daniel, Karenina Valeska, and Juan Andres.



Sarah Lim

has served as a children's ministry director and an elementary school teacher for over twenty years. She has been involved in short-term missions to various parts of the world supporting children's ministries. Sarah is passionate about children's ministry, since that was where she came to know and accept Jesus as her personal Savior.



Confex Makhaira

is a church planter of Christ Presbyterian Church in Blantyre, Malawi. He is married to Mwai and together they are blessed with two daughters, Eva and Eliana. Confex loves to share the good news of Christ with both children and adults.



Sharon Lopez

is a happily married wife, homeschooling mom of three, and grateful Christ-follower who lives in Dallas, Texas. She spent thirteen years overseas in Honduras as a missionary kid, where she met her husband, Marvin. Now, they serve as a family at Cristo Rey Presbyterian Church, a bilingual church in Dallas where Sharon is involved in children's and women's ministry.



Andrew Shaughnessy

was never a Boy Scout, but if he was, he would have earned top merit badges in Dungeons and Dragons, Mountaineering Skills, and Nerdy Book Knowledge. He writes, he fights, he fires off paragraphs like a fearless word-slinger of old. A four-year veteran of MTW's Marketing and Communications Team, Andrew gets to interview our missionaries all around the world and then tell their stories.



Heidi Suh

was born in South Korea and immigrated to Northern Virginia at the age of six. That sealed her as a loyal Virginian, attending a local high school where she first met her husband, graduating from the University of Virginia, and receiving her master's in teaching from James Madison University. Before serving as a children's ministry director, she worked with preschoolers in a daycare, taught sixth graders in Fairfax County, and homeschooled her three children. Heidi's idea of a relaxing day is to have a good cup of coffee in one hand, a power tool in the other, and a DIY project to be tackled.



Keith Riddle

lives in the Dorchester neighborhood of Boston with his wife, Sarah, and their three boys. Their family has been involved in Christian community development for twenty years in this beautiful and diverse community. His is passionate about pursuing racial justice and reconciliation, especially in the church. After earning his M. Div. at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary in 2018, he now serves as the children and youth minister at Christ the King Dorchester. He is an avid Red Sox fan, loves New England winters, and has been to forty-nine states.



Mwai Makhaira

was born and raised in Malawi, Southeast Africa. She has lived in the U.S. for six years and in 2019, she and her husband returned home to Malawi as MTW missionaries where they are planting churches. Mwai has been married to Confex for ten years and has two daughters.



Rodney Davila

has served as missionary and trainer in three different countries for Mission to the World for twenty-six years. After being involved with the training centers in Bogota, Colombia, and in Santiago, Chile, Rodney moved to Costa Rica to empower and lead an MTW church-planting team that serves with a local church called ICRICEN under an official partnership.



G. Park

was born in Korea and moved to the U.K. with her family when she was five to study English before heading to Ghana for long-term missions. Her parents served in Ghana for seven years before moving the family to the States. While she grew up in different countries and cultures, drawing was a way to process, communicate, and find comfort. Currently she is working as a designer. In her free time, she enjoys sketching, watching movies, futbol, and going on long walks.



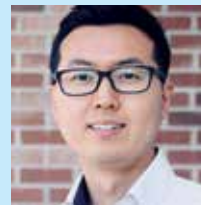
Rev. Rohan Crown

hails from Australia and became a church planter in Lethbridge, Alberta, Canada, in 2007. He received his M.Div. in missions from RTS Jackson and served in different capacities before ultimately landing in the Lethbridge community. Rohan, his wife Rebecca, and their kids (Isabel, Abigail, and Phinehas) have a real love for their community. Lethbridge is a diverse community that borders one of the largest First Nations (Native American) reserves in North America. They have planted a PCA church, Amazing Grace and UR Amazing Ministries, that reaches kids and families in the community.



Rev. Marq Toombs

is husband to one and father to four. He has been involved in gospel ministry and mission for over twenty-five years. Marq currently serves as a pastor at Rockwall Presbyterian Church (PCA) in North Texas. He enjoys coffee, tacos, and stories. More than anything else, Marq wants his family and friends to love the Lord Jesus Christ and to enjoy face to face communion with the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.



Rev. Sam Kang

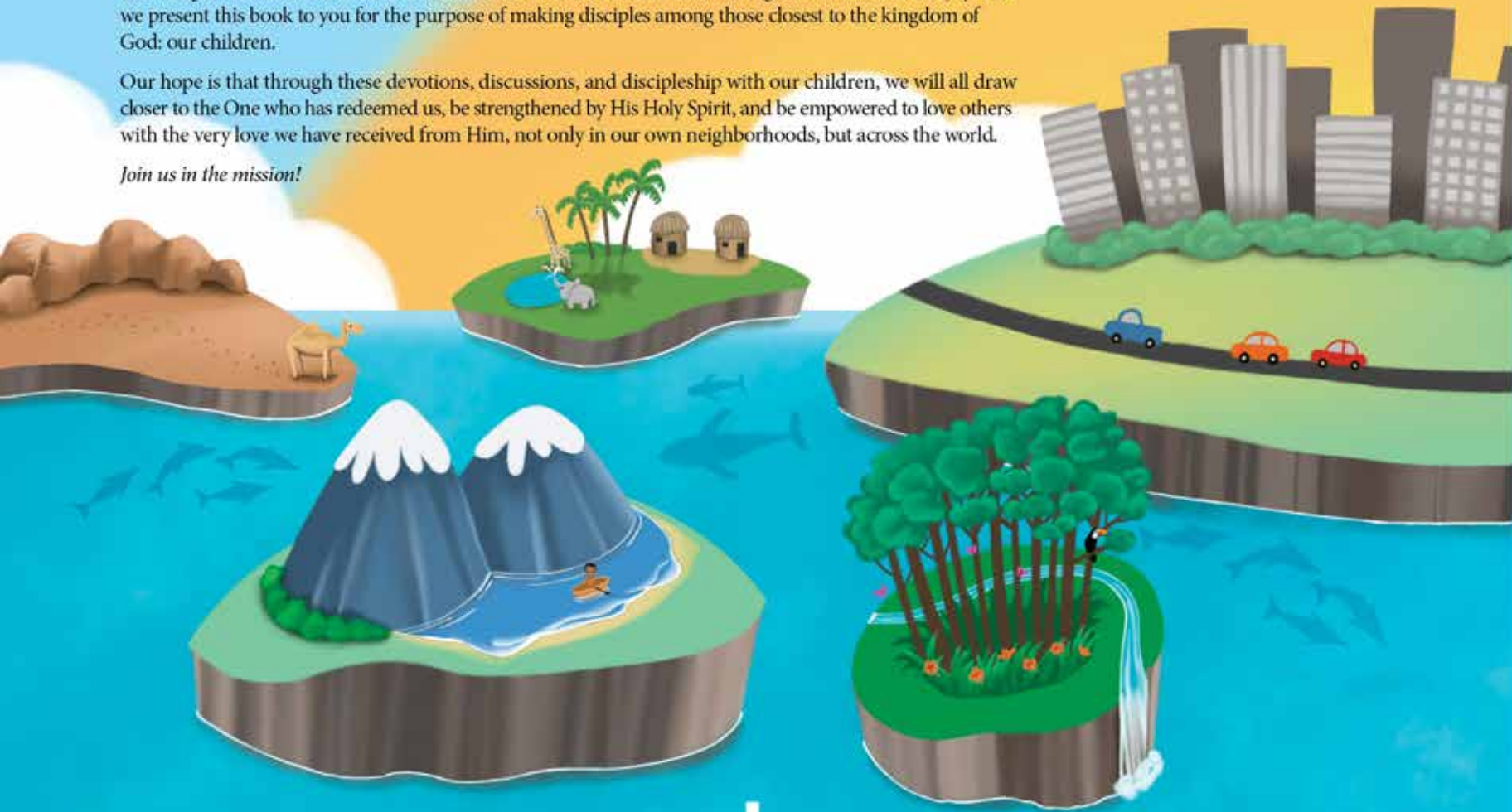
has been involved with missions and children's ministries in many different nations and contexts. As a missionary kid from Kenya, he's had the privilege to witness and experience the Lord's work, which has shaped his involvement at MTW as well as in his academic work. Sam is currently an intercultural studies Ph.D. candidate at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School and is also fulfilling the role of adjunct professor at the same institution. He has also served in the role of an education pastor at Grace Presbyterian Church in Wheeling, Illinois. His passion is to equip, network, and send the next generation throughout the whole world. Sam and his wife, Gloria, live in the greater Chicagoland area with their two children, Ethan and Elliana.

We have been called by our King to make disciples among the nations *(Matt. 28:19-20)*.

This simple mission is what lies behind this collection of devotions. It is with great enthusiasm and joy that we present this book to you for the purpose of making disciples among those closest to the kingdom of God: our children.

Our hope is that through these devotions, discussions, and discipleship with our children, we will all draw closer to the One who has redeemed us, be strengthened by His Holy Spirit, and be empowered to love others with the very love we have received from Him, not only in our own neighborhoods, but across the world.

Join us in the mission!



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Mission to the World