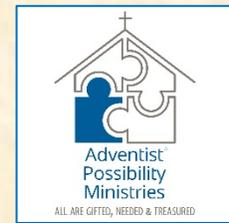


Let Your Light Shine

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As 2021 began its race, all God's children were set to analyze their previous year with the Lord and try to see His will for them for the future. Adventist Possibilities Ministry is no exception. With plans made, goals set, and the vision cleared and focused, those involved in the ministry seek to fulfill the will of God.

For many years we have been seeking the opportunity to influence those who come into our circle of fellowship. We often witnessed our rises and falls, we often saw entire churches living on cycles of positive and negative dynamics, and we wondered why it happened. Why would a Christian worshiping the God who never changes become vulnerable to the smallest swing of attitudes, relationships, approval or disapproval of human beings around them? Why would we easily fall prey to the circumstances of life? Why would we readily give up and stop trying, stop dreaming, stop achieving?

With these questions in mind, consider the children who were left without parents; consider those left without eyesight or hearing; consider those having mental challenges; consider those who can't move due to various reasons. Our concerns continue for women or men who lost the loved ones and for those whose whole life is spent taking care of their children or parents who can't take care of themselves. These individuals have reasons to complain. They have many more reasons to feel deprived and thrown away from the joys of this life. Yet, we find many inspiring stories and encouraging examples in the lives in each of these groups we often refer to as special needs people. Allow me to share a couple of stories.

Three years ago, local authorities asked me to consider providing guidance and counsel for two families. Combined these two families have twelve children. The mothers of the children had husbands who had been imprisoned. This left the women without any financial support. They had no jobs. Financially they were in desperate straights. They rapidly descended the social staircase. The government agency had plans to take away their children in order to protect them. For some unexplainable reasons and out of mercy, they decided to give them a second chance. This left the serious question: Who could become their protector and caretaker? Was there any better solution than to ask a church? This rhetorical question had an obvious answer.

When we first visited the women, we found a miserable scene. The women were drunk and smelled of cigarette smoke, the children were underdressed and sickly. What hope could they have? It seemed the situation could not be mended. However, we rolled up our sleeves and went straight into action. We hooked them up to a water supply line, we

installed a boiler in one place and a stove in another. We brought clothes for the children and beds with bedlinen for both families. We made sure the women did not drink anymore and quit smoking. Everything was done in genuine Christian love with a lot of encouragement and faith, resulting in one-year improvements that were obvious. We became friends and the more we learned the more we understood them. We fell in love with their children. It was heartbreaking to see how they enjoyed their first-ever hot-water-filled bath. With eyes full of tears, we watched smaller kids receive their first toys and the joy of the mothers who could now be assured their children were fed, dressed, and happy.

And then the day came... One day they asked us about Jesus. Who is this Jesus that He can make people from two different worlds so close to each other, so full of loving care? We started Bible classes with them. This is the way God shows His sovereign will over children who were at the edge of becoming orphans; over women who were at the edge of losing all they had...

Another story comes to mind of a story of two boys who were abandoned by his parents. They only have a vague memory of them. Yet, what happened to them is beyond understanding.

Their parents lived a life full of alcohol, fighting, cursing... The place they lived in was always full of their buddies who would spend time with them playing cards, drinking alcohol, fighting, and having uncontrolled and chaotic sexual contacts with each other. The boys' mother had two older girls born from another man. By going to school the girls were spared seeing as much of the evil that took place as did the boys. To make things worse, the boys were not loved or cherished, nobody showed any interest in them. They were left all alone and tried to entertain themselves. One day after a massive night party their mother and grandmother fell into a drunken sleep. Empty bottles and cigarette butts were the only toys left for the boys' amusement. Suddenly they found a lighter among other things on the floor. The younger one clicked the lighter – and the merry flame elucidated his puzzled face. He was only 1 1/2 years old. He could not understand the danger of what he was doing. He clicked the lighter over and over again. Finally, a spark dropped on a curtain. It ignited and burst into flame. Soon the fire was unstoppable. The two boys beat on the kitchen window trying to break it open. A man from the street noticed the smoke and fire and rushed to help. He broke the window and rescued the boys and their mother. However, they forgot about the grandmother. The house burned down. The kids were fostered by their grand-aunt who was a Christian. After this accident, the kids were so traumatized that neither the older nor the younger would speak. Their sisters, who did not know what had happened, also ended up in their grand-aunt's home. We worked with the boys for 2 years. Eventually, a miracle happened! The younger boy said a word. In a while, the older one began speaking as well. He told his new mother the sad and terrifying story of their last day with their parents. Praise God for His children on earth and for his church! The kids are growing well now as they live in the loving atmosphere of a Christian home.

Adventist Possibility Ministries focus on those in urgent and desperate need and thus is an example of Christ's compassionate love towards the unloved and unwanted. Jesus said, "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven" (Mat. 5:16, NKJV 2000). The stories above show exactly how we as the Church – as the Body of Christ – can be about God's business of salvation. Helping and meeting them in times of their despair and discouragement, we can bring light into the darkness of their world. We may find them when they are living the most rampant and sinful lifestyle, but we can bring hope to them despite their sin-marred lives. Our ministry is to let them see Jesus in you and me . With God's help they will desire to follow Him. When the church is about God's business, it breaks the cycle of ups and downs and the individual becomes free from the very things that were holding them down! Through such a ministry when combined with the ministry of a pastor and good sermons, lives are changed. The church, as God's ambassador, generates inspiration and motivation to live a fulfilled life in Him.

So, let us clasp our hands and go do His will. Let us be modern-day Isaiahs in our confident answer to the Lord's question, "Whom shall we send?" – "I Will Go, oh Lord!"

Our Prayer, "Jesus, we want You to come soon and spare this world of all indignity, poverty, humiliation, and passion for material things. We want You to use us as Your tools to bring light to those in darkness, to bring healing to those wounded, to bring forgiveness to the unforgivable. Be uplifted in and through all. We bow before you and give you all the glory! Amen."