

## REACH WIDE

### HOW BIG IS YOUR WORLD?

By Nancy Tichy

#### Chapter 2:

#### “An Early Morning Send-off”

The Nicholsons were up very early that morning. Cara and Jeremy had fixed a simple breakfast, but no one seemed hungry. Mom’s duffel bag stood by the door, packed tightly with all she would need for the coming weeks away from home. A small case next to it carried items she could carry on the plane.

“I hope you won’t be dodging bullets like you did in Afghanistan, Mom,” Cara said.

Mom gave her a hug and whispered, “That was a long time ago, Cara — a very long time ago. And there’s no longer war in the part of Africa where I’m going. Just think of it like you’re lending me out for a few weeks to bless some women who have lost everything dear to them — everything but their very lives.”

“We know you have training for this kind of thing,” Jeremy said. “I just wish you could have found some needy women a little closer to home.” Jeremy tried to sound like he was joking. But no one was laughing.

Dad interrupted, “Let’s see, Marsha: Passport. Money. Medications for travel. And reading material. I guess you have everything.”

“And we’ve made careful plans for what goes on here at home while I’m away. I would never have accepted the invitation to join the team the church is sending out, if it weren’t for you,” Mom assured them. “Oh, by the way, I’ve decided to take the book with me that we’ve started reading together. It’s the best thing for the long flights and airport layovers.”

“We got a good start in it, and we can pick up where we left off when you bring the book — and yourself — back safely,” Dad said.

“Just one of the things we’ll look forward to when Jesus brings you home to us,” Cara said, keeping back tears. With that, they made a circle holding hands, and Dad prayed.

Later, as the Nicholson kids tidied up in the kitchen, Cara confided, “I’ve ordered our own copy of the book, Jeremy. I don’t want to wait all that long to

finish reading it.”

“That’s great! Let’s highlight our favorite parts. And when Mom calls home, we can talk online with her about some ideas for what we can do when she gets home. Are you sure you got the title right?” he asked.

“Of course, Brother. It’s not the first time I’ve ordered something online, you know. The title is: *Love Where You Live: How to Live Sent in the Place You Call Home*. And it’s written by Shauna Pilgreen.”

“This gives me an idea for the assignment I’m supposed to present to my online study group! I’ll share what each of us has needed to do so that Mom can take this trip. Then each group member can create an imaginary trip scenario based on their family situation and report back the next time we meet. That way, they will be part of this adventure, too!”



### REACH WIDE: Ideas for Engagement

Create your own adventure scenario, just as Cara’s friends did:

*Imagine that someone in your family goes on a mission trip, and those left behind send him or her out by meeting their needs and covering their responsibilities while they’re gone.*

- *Who is the person? Where is he or she going, and for how long?*
- *What are the person’s responsibilities at home, and who will fill in for each one while he or she is away?*
- *What methods of communication will you put into place?*

Set aside time to talk about how you might deal with the imaginary circumstances. Pray for someone you know who is actually living out this example of senders and being sent.

## BE CLOSE: Living “Sent”

### BLESS A BUSINESS

Pray with your children, asking God for the names of two (or more) businesses in your community that he is sending you to bless this month. Fill a mug with individually wrapped candies for each business. Wrap the mug with clear cellophane and ribbon. Visit the business with your children, thanking the owner and employees for what they do for the community. Learn the names of anyone you meet. Ask what you can pray about for them, and continue to pray for them as you pass their business. Stop in regularly to keep the relationship building by continuing the conversation.

- How does it help your community to have many different businesses?
- What problems do you see that business owners face?
- Ask God how often he will send you to bless another business.

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## BE CLOSE: Living "Sent"

### PIONEER IN PRAYER

Explore a new area of town that you know very little about. Walk together with your kids.

- What do you notice that catches your attention?
- How do you see God at work in this part of town?
- Who do you see that God has sent to serve this part of town?
- How would you pray for the people in this area of town?

Pray conversationally as you walk, eyes open. Remember to greet people, and engage them in conversation. As you drive home, continue the conversation, and share what you learned about this new area in your town.



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## LOVE DIFFERENTLY: Living "Sent"

### NEW DISH, NEW FRIEND

Discover someone in your community — an individual or owner of an ethnic shop — who is culturally diverse from you. Ask them for the recipe or tips on how to make a certain food from their country. (Don't forget to learn their names!) Involve your kids as you make the recipe. Challenge everyone to be open to finding the positive about new recipes. Write a thank-you note with your kids and go back to share with the person how your recipe turned out.

- What did you like about this new recipe?
- If God sent you to another country, what sort of food would you want to share with the people there?
- How do you think people feel when they come to your country and need to adjust to new types of food?



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### SIGN LANGUAGE

Simple sign language helps you communicate even when our spoken words aren’t effective. That includes people who are deaf or struggle with speaking language in the way you do. A popular way people communicate when they don’t speak the same language is to create gestures. Learn 5 common ways to communicate by sign language — *hello, yes, no, eat, drink, more, and thank you*. You can teach these gestures to very young children who can’t speak, or use them with anyone you have difficulty in communicating with. Ask God to send you to someone, so you can use your new language this month. Maybe they can teach you a new word.



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