

REACH WIDE

HOW BIG IS YOUR WORLD?

By Nancy Tichy

Chapter 6: "An Uneven Trade"

Cara pounded ice cubes into chips before filling the plastic bag. Wrapping it in a dishtowel, she handed it to Jeremy who applied it to the side of his face that was swollen. Holding back tears, she scolded, "Not sure what Dad's going to do. Your new bike was an expensive item..."

"Yes, I know," Jeremy interrupted. "...meant to last me through high school. But, Cara, I prayed for the courage to make that trade."

"And this is what you got. A complete disaster when the wheel fell off what you got in the trade - that old clunk! And then you rammed your head into a fence post," Cara's exasperation was clear. "And whatever were you thinking, Brother, to exchange bikes with Max in the first place?"

"Just this morning I prayed that the Lord would lead me to a solution for Max's need, and I really believe God asked me to do this. Now for the sticky part. How do I break it to Dad and Mom? Thanks, Cara, for the ice pack," Jeremy finished with a grimace.

Later, at a hastily called family meeting, Jeremy...with Cara's support... explained things to their parents. Dad managed to remain calm, but he asked a lot of hard questions.

"We will have to contact Max's parents, Jeremy. He has come close to stealing your bike," Dad said.

"I know, Dad, and I'm sorry. But I also wanted to find a way to show Jesus' love to Max. He's the oldest of five kids, and he doesn't know much English. Students tease him so much and mimic him behind his back.

"I started sitting with him at lunch, and then he began waiting for me after school and tried to keep up with me when I took off towards home. He asked if I would let him ride my bike, and, at first, I said, "No!"

"But then I found out that his family are refugees. His father died in a

bombing raid, and it's hard for his mother to hold down a job. When I finally agreed to let him ride my bike, he just took off. And, of course, I couldn't keep up with him when all I had was his old bike. So I headed for home and decided to call it a trade."

Everyone was quiet until Dad finally spoke, "OK, after our prayer time, let's see if we have what we need in the garage to fix Max's bike and make it safe to ride. Perhaps this is an opportunity to share God's love. Someday, we may agree that Jeremy's sacrifice - and his black eye - was just the beginning of something wonderful."

For Reflection:

What is love if it doesn't cost something? Maybe It is not so much what we give to others when we share Jesus' love, but rather how valuable the gift is to us. And, maybe, how much we have sacrificed.

REACH WIDE: Ideas for Engagement

Learn together what it means to be a refugee or immigrant. Use this [Family Toolkit](#) from We Welcome Refugees to lead your kids as you consider how to love those who have come from other countries, who need your friendship and to know Jesus. Listen to each others' questions during the Dinner Conversations and work together to plan a Neighbor Dinner.

RESOURCES

The Broken Way: A Daring Path into the Abundant Life by Ann Voskamp (Zondervan, 2016);

www.wewelcomerefugees.com/family_toolkit to engage your family in conversations about hospitality and immigration.



BE CLOSE: Sharing When It's Hard!

"I GIVE UP!"

Loving others well can be hard sometimes. It involves sacrifice—giving up what we want for the sake of others. Often it is hardest to do with those who are closest to us. Take a step together to learn to serve others. Challenge everyone to sacrifice and volunteer to do something (maybe that you don't even like to do) just to be kind to someone else in your family or in your neighborhood. It might be volunteering to do a chore your brother or sister normally does not like to do, or doing a cleanup project for your grandparents or neighbor. Do an excellent job and don't expect thanks. Just serve and thank Jesus for the opportunity to experience his love. (Adults, make sure you lead by modeling this challenge as well.)



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BE A SECRET AGENT

Check with your local school office to see if you can donate money to offset school lunch charges for families who are having difficulty paying. With your kids, decide how you can raise the funds to pay for some of those families' outstanding charges. Make an encouragement card for each family and include those with the payment, asking the school to deliver the card to the family. Shhh--keep it a secret. Don't sign your name on the card!



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LOVE DIFFERENTLY: Sharing When It's Hard!

FINDING A GOOD FIT

Foster kids struggle to find friends and to feel like they fit in... at school, church, or on sports teams. Support a foster family by making plans for an outing or a family game night together. The game of [Spoons](#) is easy to play with a wide range of ages and abilities, from very young ages through adults. Be sure to pair up very young children with an adult or older child. In conversation, look for ways you might help the family regularly, such as homework help, passing on needed sports equipment to them, or using your interests (maybe fishing, artwork or baking) to develop relationships with you and your kids.



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SNACK PACKS

Check to see if your local children's hospital has overnight accommodations for families of children with extended illness. If they accept donations, collect various individually packaged snacks or breakfast items that families could eat during their stay, helping them keep expenses down during a difficult time. Write a prayer for the family and insert it in your donation box. Could this be an ongoing sacrifice you make to assist families?



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