



All the Little Things



In many ways, Giselle and Melissa are ordinary teenagers.

Giselle loves fashion and trying new makeup and hairstyles, and Melissa is an artist, bent on discovering new ways to ply her craft. But in other ways, their lives have been much harder than their peers’.

The youngest of five, Giselle and Melissa grew up in a lower-income community near downtown Minneapolis. In spite of their neighborhood’s problems, rents were still increasing due to rising

home prices throughout the city. Their single mother was putting in a heroic effort, but she was struggling as the sole provider for her children’s daily needs.

The family came from a Christian background, but faith wasn’t a part of their daily life rhythms. Then, right before the school year started, they accepted a friend’s invitation to Iglesia Central Cristiano de Minneapolis, a partner church of Cru[®] Inner City. That’s where they learned about the opportunity to know God’s love more deeply through a personal

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All the Little Things

relationship with Jesus. The hopeful message resonated with the family.

And it became even more tangible when the church gifted both girls with PowerPacks® — colorful backpacks chock-full of much-needed school supplies and gospel literature. The PowerPacks helped relieve some of the family's back-to-school financial stress and reminded them that God, and the church, care about all of their needs.

It also helped connect them more deeply to the church and Jeanne, the pastor's wife, who has been discipling them ever since. She even helped Melissa apply to several premier high schools.

They learned about the opportunity to know God's love more deeply

Jeanne credits the PowerPacks, Boxes of Love®, and other Cru Inner City programs with helping the family find their spiritual footing. "That was one of the things that spoke into their lives and was pulling them towards staying in church and making changes to their life," she said. "All of those little things that we can do to sow into people's lives add up until they take notice that 'hey, these people [in the church] are different.' That's why I think that the PowerPacks really stand out."

They certainly did to Giselle and Melissa, who were so touched by their own PowerPacks, they now volunteer every year to stuff and deliver them to others, resulting in more families coming to church and meeting Jesus.



This year, thousands of children across the country had the opportunity to hear about Jesus through PowerPacks® outreach events.



Throughout the pandemic, Cru® Inner City and our partner churches have adapted our outreach activities to effectively evangelize while meeting the physical needs of our community.

I'm Ready

Rossana Aguilar was stuffing food bags at Centro Cristiano Agape in southwest Bakersfield where many in this agricultural farm belt were out of work because of COVID-19. Her small congregation was still reaching out to families in need even as the State of California ordered worship services to cease due to the pandemic.

Still, the church cobbled together all the food it could, and Rossana was coordinating the packing effort when Cru® Inner City staff arrived with an unexpected check. Centro Cristiano Agape was one of five churches to receive grant money through a special Canning the Hunger project developed by Cru as an outreach during the spring. It was a modern-day version of the fishes and the loaves.

“You don’t know how timely or how much this money is going to impact us,” Rossana told them. With the extra funds, the church could minister to so many more families in need.

Among those receiving help was José, a recent widower who was unemployed and without food. After catching wind of his need on Facebook, Blanca, a member of the church, delivered a food bag to his house.

The next day, Blanca returned with a Bible and some gospel literature, including the “Four Spiritual Laws.”

“Read this and I will return later,” she told José.

When she did, he was eagerly waiting.

“I’m ready because of those verses I read. I’m ready to accept Jesus as my Lord and Savior,” he said.

As a new believer, José is in a discipleship study and watching church services online.

“Here was a man who didn’t just have a physical need, he had an emotional and spiritual need,” said Richard Garcia, a Cru Inner City staff member in Bakersfield. “You could feel that God was in it.”

Rossana said she was touched by José’s testimony and how quickly he came to faith after that initial contact.

“Once again it confirms that nothing is impossible for God, and that He does work in mysterious ways,” she said.

Thank you for all the ways you’ve generously given during these difficult times. Your gifts make it possible to minister to the physical and spiritual needs of people just like José.

“Once again it confirms that nothing is impossible for God”

A Personal Word



Milton Massie
Executive Director/
Steward

God designed us to glorify Him, enjoy Him, and share His light with others. So how do we keep our eyes on God's purpose for our lives when the world feels out of control and the obstacles seem insurmountable?

Let's look at Joshua in the Old Testament. He

was commissioned to lead God's people across the Jordan River so they could escape the desert and move into the Promised Land. Just as God had done for Moses, He parted the waters so Joshua could shepherd the people into their calling.

In Joshua 4:7, we read that the new leader marked the occasion with stones of remembrance.

"These stones are to be a memorial to the people of Israel forever" (NIV). The handmade monument was designed to help the people remember that they were God's people, and He had delivered them

to accomplish His purpose, even when they couldn't see a human way forward.

As we read through Scriptures, we see this same pattern play out over and over again. And throughout this pandemic, our Cru® Inner City staff and urban partners have experienced it as well. While the world has been on lockdown, Jesus Christ and His gospel have still been moving mightily, parting the waters of difficult circumstances and creating new evangelistic opportunities.

It's easy to get caught up in the anxiety of the world and lose sight of God's vision for our life. That's why it's important for us to remain in Scripture; we need to remind ourselves who God is and Whose we are. The act of remembering God's character, promises, and faithfulness is the way to stay true to His purpose for our lives, especially in times like these.

Grateful for your partnership,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Milton Lee Massie".

Milton Massie
Executive Director/Steward

No time like the present ... to secure the *FUTURE!*

This life will end. But your legacy can live on.

You'll hear the Savior say, "Well done, good and faithful servant."

But your passion for souls, for sharing His love with people in need, can keep touching lives in the inner city ... if you've tended to basic estate planning in this life.

It's simple. To discover the benefits of estate planning for you, your family, and the ministries you love, reach out to us today.

Cru® has partnered with The Cru Foundation to help you establish your legacy.

Please contact Scott Mesker, Director of Development, via scott.mesker@cru.org or (501) 350-0121, to talk about including Cru® Inner City in your will, setting up a donor advised fund, or whatever vehicles best suit your needs.

Keep touching lives in the inner city. Even after this life is over.

Secure the future. Secure your legacy!

The Treasure Inside



Felicia had been drinking to the point of inebriation. Alcohol was her coping tool for the grief and guilt she felt. Her sister had died in a car accident, and Felicia was supposed to have been the one driving. She should have died, not her sister.

So there she was, another drunken day, walking down the street with her husband when Tameka, a member of Greater Love, a Cru® Inner City partner church in Tallahassee, ran into her while doing an evangelistic outreach. She asked if the couple wanted prayer. Tyrone, Felicia's husband, declined, but his wife waved him off.

"I'm so tired of this," she said, the weight of grief and guilt finally becoming too much, as she accepted the prayer.

For several months after their initial meeting, Tameka faithfully ministered to the family by holding regular Bible studies around their dining room table. She prayed for God to move in their lives. And when Tameka's church held their Box of Love® outreach, she instantly knew who could use one!

She prayed for God to
move in their lives

She brought the Box of Love, packed with gospel materials and the ingredients for a Thanksgiving meal for six, over to Felicia's house. As the family excitedly unpacked the essential supplies, Felicia's 11-year-old daughter, Tariah, found a treasure!

It was a book she recognized. "Mommy, can I have the Bible?" she asked, hoping for her very



own copy of the Scriptures Tameka had been using to disciple the family. It was an incredibly meaningful moment for Tariah, giving her direct access to God's Word and opening her heart in a new way to the love of Jesus.

Just one year later, the entire family is now fully engaged in their faith and attending church weekly. In fact, Felicia serves as the church secretary, while one of her sons plays drums for the praise team. And her husband, Tyrone, who shrugged off that initial prayer on the street, is now in a Bible study.

The Box of Love provided Felicia's family a meal for a day. It also served as a tangible reminder that God, and the church, care about both her physical and spiritual needs. That reminder strengthened her family's connection to the church, cultivating a bond that Tameka worked hard to create. And the results have been eternal!



Karma ... or Christ?

In a housing project in inner-city Atlanta, children and families were hungry.

So the Malachi Project stepped up with Boxes of Love®, thanks to generous friends like you.

It's an outreach of the local PassionLife Church, a partner with Cru's inner-city ministry.

The team delivered a Box of Love to Tammy, who had been a Christian in her youth. Now, she told the team, she believed in karma. She was focused on being the "best person she could be."

But the team walked Tammy through Cru's "Knowing God Personally" tract, sharing the truth of the gospel: All have fallen short of the glory of God, but through God's grace alone — not karma — we can be saved.

A light dawned in
Tammy's heart

And a light dawned in Tammy's heart.

Before the team left that day, she had rededicated her life to Christ!

Following that encounter, Tammy left a toxic relationship, reconnected with her children, and began working with a Christian counseling group ministering to other inner-city families.

She's eager to be in church when pandemic restrictions allow it.

"This year," she says with a smile, "we're doing things differently."

It began with a Box of Love! Please be part of our Thanksgiving outreach this year. Every \$41.40 shares another Box of Love, in Jesus' name. Thank you!



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