

Mission to the Children

(video transcript)

By Karen Spiegelberg

Romans chapter 10 verse 15 says, "As it is written: "How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!"



What a picture that is when you think of it in biblical times, when it was penned, since feet were really considered a very dirty and filthy part of one's body. But oh the feet that would bring the good news of salvation! What beautiful feet they were, and are.

I'm Karen Spiegelberg. Welcome to *A WORD for Women*—a show by women and for women where we build each other up in our amazing and wonderful God-given roles in life!

Today we welcome Karen Kilchenmann—a woman with some beautiful feet. Feet that have embraced a project called "Mission to the Children" which reaches out with the good news of our Savior into many poor villages of Mexico. And it's not only Karen's beautiful feet that are bringing the good news to the children of Mexico, Karen has turned it into a mission trip for high school kids and an opportunity for others to send gifts at Christmas time. Welcome, Karen.

[KK] Nice to see you!

[KS] So tell us when and how you became involved with *Mission to the Children*

[KK] Well I started taking children on mission trips back in 2000 and in 2001 I first heard about *Mission to the Children*. I decided that it would be a good fit for what I wanted to be able to do with students which was to give them opportunity to share God's Word and also to give them the opportunity to share their blessings—things such as school supplies or simple toys, blankets, things that people need and that we often take for granted.

[KS] I was going to say that we very much take for granted. So they take so of these things with them and then what is a typical day while you and the teens are on this trip to Mexico? What is the typical day like?

[KK] Well while we're in Mexico the typical day would involve getting up in the morning and starting to prepare and by prepare, it would be things like reviewing the Bible stories, reviewing the songs, things like that. We usually, except on weekends we can't go out to the villages in the mornings because the students are typically—the children in those villages are typically still in school. So we spend the day, if it's a week day, getting ready to go there. And one of the activities that we do is to help to package

supplies of food and to put large bags of potatoes and beans and flour into small bags so we can distribute. So if you can imagine 12 high school students and a thousand pounds of flour you probably have a pretty good picture of how that turns out.

[KS] It doesn't sound like a good combination to me (laughing)...

[KK] Well it's a challenge. It's a fun combination (laughing)...

[KS] So they pack the food and then they are going into the villages and they are taking the Bible lessons with them that they've prepared for and they're doing the Bible lessons in English or Spanish?

[KK] In Spanish.

[KS] Okay.

[KK] One of the things that we do before we ever go to Mexico select about three stories, three Bible stories, and the students learn how to tell those stories in Spanish, they always develop crafts that are related to those stories and we learn songs in Spanish that we can also sing along with the children.

So when we get to the villages the typical thing that we do is first of all to gather the children and have our Bible story and crafts and so on. And then after that we distribute whatever other items we brought with us. Sometimes that includes children's vitamins to be handed out to the moms, things like blankets, school supplies and then the food.

[KS] And what if any challenges are there involved in a project like this—in taking teens?

[KK] I think one of the big challenges before the trip is just organizational. Getting all of this ready is a big challenge. Once we get to Mexico I think it's a big challenge physically. The teenagers typically work about 12 hours a day doing the things that we do in Mexico. A lot of the things that we take with us are heavy, the weather is hot, the food is different than what they are used to. There is not a lot of air conditioning. The conditions are just pretty rugged compared to our typical lives.

[KS] But yet these kids year after year have wanted to on these trips so there must be some great rewards that come with it.

[KK] Oh there is...

[KS] What are some of those...

[KK] There are wonderful rewards. For me personally, I just love to see the teens interacting with the kids in Mexico. You can just tell that they're all delighted with each other. And it's a wonderful thing to

see. I also enjoy hearing years later from teens who went on the trip and have wonderful memories and you know, always think back to those days.

I think for the teens it's a great opportunity for them to step outside of their comfort zone, to see what life is like among people who have much less than they have, and to share what they have. The most important thing of course is that they can share their hope through God's Word and they can also share some of their physical blessings as well.

[KS] And what has evolved from that too is a collection of Christmas gifts that you do send at Christmas time down to the villages to these same children. So tell us a little about that and how that all works.

[KK] Alright then, the very first year that we went to this area of Mexico we found out that the *Mission to the Children* would like to provide Christmas gifts for all of the children in the villages. So we decided after having been there that we'd like to help with that project. So at my high school in the fall we get names of children that we can get gifts for and we started signing people up. I was hoping for a hundred and we were able to collect two hundred gifts that first year. The next year we did it again and collected three hundred gifts and the next year it was four hundred and the next year it was five hundred and the last two years we've collected well over seven gifts each year.

[KS] Wow, that's exciting!

[KK] Yes, it is!

[KS] Well we have a little surprise for you because we're going to start off your collection for next year...

[KK] Oh, thank you so much!

[KS] A little gift of a little doll for the girls and I know the boys love to play soccer.

[KK] Always a popular item.

[KS] Those are from us. Um, what are some of the Bible passages—one or two if any that give you some inspiration in this mission that you've been a part of for years now?

[KK] Well, I think that one of them that just very plainly speaks to me is in James chapter 1 verse 22, "Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says."

And then the other passage that I'll mention is in Galatians chapter 6 verse 10, "Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers."

And it says, "as we have opportunity". Sometimes I think we have to look for those opportunities, and sometimes we even have to go so far as to make those opportunities. But they're out there and I think that teenagers are very willing and able to take those opportunities they present themselves...so.

[KS] That's beautiful. Those are perfect. Taking those beautiful feet and going and finding those opportunities so serve the Lord. It's wonderful.

[KK] Thank you.

[KS] Two of my daughters have had the opportunity to be a part of one of these high school mission teams, and so I happen to have a picture from the 2008 trip. A picture that the kids took after a long, hot and dusty day in the villages of Mexico, and there is no other caption that can be put to this picture except, "How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!"

Thanks so much for being here...

[KK] Thank you for having me.

[KS] And thank you so much for what you do for the little lambs in Mexico. It's wonderful!

And thank you for joining us on *A WORD for Women*.

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