

## **CBF Offering for Global Missions 2011-2012 Children's Sermon "Touching Miami With Love"**

Materials: Piece of paper with the word "neighbor" written on it in large letters.

*Once the children are gathered, show them the sign with the word "neighbor" written on it and (reading it aloud) ask if they know what this word means. Allow for a few children to answer.*

Say: Today we're going to talk about being a neighbor. Can someone tell me what the word neighbor means? (Allow for a few children to answer.)

Say: Sometimes, "neighbor" means the person who lives next door to you or in your neighborhood, but it has another meaning as well. Did you know that Jesus thought it was important for us to be good neighbors?

In the gospel of Mark, Jesus tells us that we should Love God with our whole heart and we should love our neighbor just like we love ourselves.<sup>1</sup> We love ourselves by staying safe or eating healthy food. Jesus tells us we should love our neighbors in the same way, especially when our neighbors don't have as many things as we have.

I want to tell you a true story about some people who have been doing a good job of loving their neighbors. CBF field personnel Angel and Jason Pittman took Jesus' command to love their neighbors very seriously. They moved with their family into the Overtown neighborhood in Miami, Florida.

In Overtown, many people live in poverty. The schools are not very good and the neighborhood is not always safe. But they decided to live there because they love the people and they wanted to be a part of changing things for the better. And you know what? Their plan is working!

The Pittmans work at a ministry called Touching Miami with Love (or TML). Here, they help children with after-school care and help families who might need money or food. Since the Pittmans moved to Miami, they've seen their neighbors become more excited about changing the neighborhood as well.

Just recently, the TML bus that picked up the children from school was broken. The Pittmans had a meeting with the community, and when they told them the bus was broken, the people in the community asked if they could give money to help buy a new one! Even though these people are poor, they wanted to help because they knew the ministry was very important.

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<sup>1</sup> Mark 12:30-31, NIV: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength." The second is this: "Love your neighbor as yourself." There is no commandment greater than these."

Like the people in Overtown, our church also wants to help ministries like Touching Miami with Love. It takes a lot of money to buy a school bus, or to provide education for kids all year long. This is why we each give a little. When we give money to the CBF Offering for Global Missions, our gifts go a long way because we're all giving together.

This is one way we can be good neighbors – the kind of neighbor Jesus wants us to be.

Let's pray:

Jesus, we want to be good neighbors. Help us to remember our neighbors across the world as we give to the Offering. Amen.