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Reaching Out Through a Dozen Plastic Eggs

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Several years ago the media was filled with stories about children in Milwaukee's inner city being drawn into a violent and deadly lifestyle. The eighth poorest city in America, Milwaukee has a significant amount of drug and gang activity. And yet, though each new generation faces more harmful influences than the previous one, I believe that our city can be transformed through the power of the gospel.

I wanted to be a part of changing the legacy of Milwaukee's families and felt God calling me into ministry with City on a Hill. Its vision is to revitalize the central city through a Christ-centered model of service. And so I resigned as the vice-president of public affairs and marketing of a healthcare system that owned more than 250 facilities, including the hospital which now houses City on a Hill.

I'm passionate about seeing kids who have no understanding of the gospel come to know the Lord ... to begin a series of generations that walk with Christ. We minister to a lot of children at City on a Hill and offer special events to draw in the parents and share the gospel with them. Our hope is that many of the parents will come to Christ and that whole families will be transformed in that way. If the adults resist the gospel, we're all the more committed to reaching the kids, so when they become parents, their families can be all that God meant them to be.

A Family Activity

It can be really tough for parents living in poverty to find time to play with or teach their kids. Often the families have a hard time just getting through life. So when we began planning for our Easter event last year, we knew that we wanted it to be a family activity.

We decided to share the gospel story through [Resurrection Eggs®](#), a resource from FamilyLife. It was wonderful to see the crowd of about 150 respond to our outreach invitation. Some of the parents have major struggles in their lives, but they made it a priority to bring their children to this event.

Some of the children and adults had never heard the Easter story. Although they had heard of Jesus, their understanding of the Bible and salvation was limited.

We set up wooden tables and chairs in what used to be a hospital cafeteria. Generally one family sat around one table on which there was a carton of Resurrection Eggs. It took two tables to accommodate several of the larger families, including one that was new to our ministry. The step-dad had heard about City on a Hill when he was going through a Christian rehab program, and he walked more than a mile in a blizzard to find out about our services. He and his wife came to our Easter outreach, along with their five children. (Since that time, all of the children have given their lives to the Lord, and their mother has also prayed and received Christ.)

One of our ministry leaders, along with a couple from Here's Life Inner City (a ministry of Campus Crusade for Christ), stood on a small platform with a carton of Resurrection Eggs. Dressed in biblical attire, these three people took turns telling the Easter story. When it was time to open each of the 12 eggs, they asked the parents to hand the corresponding egg to one of their children. There was a lot of anticipation about what was in each egg. We could hear rattling as some of the kids shook their eggs, trying to figure out what was inside.

As each egg was opened, a huge picture of its contents was projected onto a large screen. This made it easy for the families to follow the story and to see what was inside each egg (the little donkey, cross, etc.). As the children opened their eggs, their parents interacted with them. We continued this until all of the eggs were opened.

"Choose me! Choose me!"

Then we asked the kids to volunteer for telling the story of their particular egg. Hands waved back and forth with shouts of "Choose me! Choose me!" as 12 boys and girls, ages 5-16, were selected—one for each of the 12 Resurrection Eggs. They lined up on the platform, opened the eggs one at a time, and repeated their part of the story. The parents loved it.

After the children told the story, I went to the platform and invited people to pray and respond to the gospel message. Dozens of children and adults indicated they made professions of faith that day. We were thrilled.



A staff member helps one of the children read her part of the Easter story.

As a surprise, at the end of the program we gave each family a carton of Resurrection Eggs so they could tell the Easter story again at home. People came up afterwards and asked if we had any additional cartons of eggs that they could take to friends and family. Some wanted eggs to give to a mom ... to a sister and her kids ... to an aunt or uncle ... or a grandma. They were very popular.

We heard many positive comments from the parents. They loved hearing their children share the Easter story, and our staff considered it a very successful event. We felt that the addition of the teaching with the Resurrection Eggs made the difference between a program that was recognizing a special day and a program that helped families really understand what Jesus had done.

I'm so grateful that the Lord has allowed me to be a part of His work and to see the kind of transformation that only He can bring to homes and lives.

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