



# Charting the Course:

A devotion by Chuck Hall

## Don't Neglect the Children

It was a cold and windy night in the Andes Mountains. The wind howled under the door of my hotel room. I could not sleep. I was crying out to God that He would show me His will for my life. That was almost twenty-five years ago. My family and I were serving as missionaries in Mexico at the time, but I had wanted to work in Peru. I had traveled to Cusco to determine if God wanted us to move there and work among the Inca Indians. That was not to be. That night the Lord spoke very clearly to me: *Go to Fuller Theological Seminary, train leaders, and **don't neglect the children.***

*Don't neglect the children.* That was strange. I wasn't praying about children. In fact, at that time I had little thought about ministry to children. My attention was focused on planting churches among the indigenous peoples of Mexico. I preached mostly to adult congregations. I have since had a change of heart. I have learned that ministry to children is very dear to the heart of God. As the song says:

***Jesus loves the little children, all the children of the world, red and yellow, black, and white; they are precious in His sight. Jesus loves the little children of the world.***

In the gospels we see God's heart for little ones when the disciples tried to prevent the people from bringing their children to Jesus:

***But when Jesus saw what was happening, he was very displeased (indignant, ESV) with his disciples. He said to them, "Let the children come to me. Don't stop them! For the Kingdom of God belongs to such as these." Then he took the children into his arms and placed his hands on their heads and blessed them. Mark 10:13-14,16 NLT***

Probably most of you reading this gave your lives to Christ as children. We are most receptive to the Lord during childhood. Jesus said that the Kingdom of God belongs to the children. Of those entering the Kingdom, as many as 85% come as children. **Yet only 10% of all missionary work seeks to reach children and only 15% of our giving goes for that purpose.** The Church continues to neglect the three billion children who make up one half of the world's population.

Although World Indigenous Missions is mainly known for planting churches and training leaders, some of our missionaries specifically have a vision for children. I applaud those among us who are reaching children. This is a call for us to assess the time, energy, and resources that we spend so that we can be aware of areas where we neglect children. We must increase our efforts toward those little ones whom Jesus loves. The future of the Church is dependent on our not neglecting the little children of the world.

July 2010