

Christian Missionary Hands Out Hope to Children in Ukraine

Before the war began, Christian missionaries at a safe haven for orphans and needy kids in Ukraine called Shelter Place had ordered a large quantity of a Christian-oriented book called *The Biggest Family in the World*, written by a Canadian author, Paul Boge, whose grandfather had escaped from Ukraine decades ago. The timing was more perfect than they knew at the time.

The children's book, which was recently translated into Ukrainian and Russian, tells the true story of how faith in Jesus Christ impacted Charles Mulli, an abandoned child in Africa. Even amid hopelessness, Mulli finds hope. His life is turned around for the better. What was meant for harm turned into good.

Given Russia's invasion that has been tearing apart families from the beginning, the story suddenly had a strong relevance in Ukraine.

After sending his wife and two young daughters to safety prior to Russia's invasion, Sasha Romanch, who has dedicated his life to serving orphans and children in need in Kryvyi Rih, Ukraine, remained in the war-torn country to help the children at Shelter Place.

Boge explains, "When the war broke out, Sasha had this incredible idea. He said, "There are all these kids getting onto trains—who knows where they're going? But this is an incredible opportunity to talk to their parents and say 'Here's a free book of encouragement.'"

The book *The Biggest Family in the World*, which was published in 2015, showed up when it was most needed. At the end of

January, 1,000 copies of Boge's book arrived at the shelter for the missionary to share, so he was prepared to minister hope and faith to children who were fleeing the violence.

"We thought, I wonder if the story of Charles Mulli might be of interest to children in Ukraine. We thought Charles, who was an abandoned child in Africa, might be an encouragement there. In God's providence, this book showed up four weeks before the invasion," says Boge.

As families scurry in train stations and other transportation spots to flee the war, Romanch gives copies of the book to them to address their hopelessness with hope. He delivers each copy with a message for each child: Put your trust in Christ and know that God has a purpose for your life.

"It's beyond anything I could have ever expected," says Boge. *"For any artist, whether you're a musician, a painter, author, the No. 1 thing that we want is to be used by God to fulfill His kingdom."*

"I think, Could my grandfather have ever imagined that 80-90 years later, his grandson would have written a book that was being given to share the gospel of Jesus Christ with kids in Ukraine who are fleeing?" he adds. *"He couldn't have known that. But you think of just how God works together, even in very challenging circumstances, which we can't explain, but we can know that God is working even when we're not sure what's happening."*{eo}

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