

SOUTH AFRICA

Caleb's lessons for peace

Molo [MO-lo]! My name is Caleb Siwali [KAY- leb See-WA-lee]. I am 8 years old and I live in South Africa. *Molo* means “hi” in one of the languages I speak. It is the *isiXhosa* [ee-see-KHO-sa] language. Don't worry. If you come to South Africa to see me, I also speak English very well.

Have you ever heard of Archbishop Desmond Tutu or President Nelson Mandela? You should learn more about them. They are great men of peace. There are many great men and women of peace in South Africa. My dad and mom are two of them.

My mom, Zandi [ZAN-dee], helps women when they are going through hard times, and my dad, Oscar [OS-ker], started Southern African Development and Reconstruction Agency to help kids and grown-ups learn about how to live in peace.

Peace is not a hard word to say, but peace can be hard to do. When I say “peace,” do you think I'm talking about those little green balls that grow in your garden or come in a tin can? I'm not!

Let me tell you what I know about peace.

1. **Peace comes when everyone feels special.** When I get to school, I say “molo” to each kid. I say their names so no one feels left out. This means I have many friends.
2. For people to live in peace, **each person must clearly say what they think, in a way that doesn't hurt other people.** When my parents told me we were going to the beach “in a few days' time,” I asked, “How many days is a ‘few days?’” I was hoping it would be the next day. If I hadn't asked how many days exactly, there would *not* have been peace in our house. I would have put on my swimming trunks every morning. Then I would have been disappointed. But I wouldn't have thrown a tantrum or been demanding.
3. That is another thing I know about peace. **Shouting or hitting things or people are not ways to build peace.** If I shout and hit, I don't get what I want, and I find that people don't like to be with me. My dad and mom like to

take me shopping because I ask politely if I want a toy or some candy. If my parents say, “Not today,” I respect that.

4. **Listening helps me understand how another person thinks; when we talk and listen, we can come to a peaceful compromise.** A compromise is when each person explains why they want what they ask for, or why they think as they do. For example, sometimes when I am shopping with my mom, I ask for ice cream, but she chooses peas instead. I say, “I don't like peas. I want ice cream.” She says, “But peas are good for your health and ice cream is bad for your teeth. Ice cream will give you cavities.” So I say, “But peas make me feel sick.”

Can you think of a compromise that will make a happy peace between my mom and me? *[Allow children to suggest answers:]*

- *They could buy peas and ice cream. If Caleb eats peas, he can have ice cream and then brush his teeth afterward. This way, he would have healthy food (peas) and happy food (ice cream) and no cavities.*
- *They could buy a different green vegetable that Caleb likes better than peas.*
- *They could buy a toy that Caleb wants so he doesn't feel sad about not getting ice cream.*

I want to practice being a great man of peace, like Jesus and Archbishop Tutu and President Mandela—and my dad. Who do you want to be like?

Uxolo malube nani [Oo-KHO-lo mah-LOO-bay NAH-nee]. Peace be with you.

Prayer

Dear God, show us how to live in peace with each other. Help us to say what we think and listen to others respectfully. Help us to talk to others rather than hitting them or being mean in other ways. Amen.



Caleb and his dog, Skye, are ready for a swim in South Africa.

Photo provided.

Our gifts can help support mission in South Africa.

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\$25 will help provide study materials for peer mediation workshops in high schools.

\$50 will help provide food for volunteers who work as Peace Justice Witness observers in situations that could become violent.

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