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Review: The Berenstain Bears Show God's Love

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Berenstain, Jan and Mike (authors and illustrators), *The Berenstain Bears Show God's Love*. Zonderkids/Zondervan, 2010, ISBN: 9780310720102

Description:

This collection brings together five distinctly different tales previously published under the following titles: *The Berenstain Bears Love Their Neighbors*, *The Berenstain Bears Play a Good Game*, *The Berenstain Bears and a Job Well Done*, *The Berenstain Bears Faithful Friends*, and *The Berenstain Bears and the Gift of Courage*. As the titles reveal, the collection covers a number of subjects-- from completing household chores to standing up to bullies. Each story begins with a Bible verse relating to the theme of the narrative and skillfully weaves a lesson into the plot, without losing the traditional Berenstain Bears wit and action. Sometimes it is a member of the Bear family who learns a lesson; at other times the "villain" is the recipient of the moral. In either case, neither the child-friendly dialogue nor the richly drawn illustrations lose luster for the lesson. This volume will be requested to be read aloud from shelves at home, at school, and at church.

Critique:

Since *The Big Honey Hunt* (1962), the Berenstain's first publication for children, the team has sold more than 250 million volumes, with more than 200 titles to their credit. One reason for their sustained popularity is the fact that in most of the stories, either the adult reader or child listener (and later, reader) will find himself reflected in one of the characters. Although in some circles, the series has been considered controversial because Papa Bear is often the bumbler, there are millions more readers who see the merit of confronting with amusement the fact that adults do not always know *everything*, and that humor and humility are sometimes the best responses to a crisis. In this collection, there is an occasion for each one of the Bear family to learn a lesson--which is also the way with life.

Awards: Top 10 Family Friendly Picture Books

Related Subjects: Animals, Bears, Bible, Bullies, Chores, Family relationships, Home, Humor, Neighbors, Peer relationships, Reading aloud, Siblings, Soccer, Sportsmanship

Character Themes: Acceptance, Cooperation, Discernment, Discipline, Duty, Faith, Family love, Forgiveness, Friendliness, Friendship, Humility, Humor, **Inspiration**, Love, Neighborliness, Obedience, Respect, Spunk, Trustworthiness, Wisdom, Work ethic,