

A Great Promise

November 2020

Not too long ago I received a message from a mom named Yuli. She lives in Trinche, one of our tough Tijuana neighborhoods. Here's what the message said...

Hi Matt,

I want to ask you for prayer for me and my family since nothing works out for me. I don't know if God is angry with me. I don't understand.



Yuli was extremely thankful for a tarp she received recently from Spectrum for her leaky roof.

I responded that I would pray for her and that far from being angry, God loves her. He loves her and her family so much, He sent His Son to die for them! I then went on to share a promise from God's Word. It's a verse I learned as a boy in church. James 4:8 says "Come near to God and He will come near to you..."

The truth of this promise can be almost unimaginable for a woman like Yuli who lives in such a place. She must be thinking, 'God will come near to me?' I know some of the current challenges Yuli is facing. Her husband drinks a lot. They have a hard time putting food on the table for their two young kids. She works a third shift job to make more income. And she has had some troubling health issues as of late. Under the weight of these concerns and the isolation that is generated by the pandemic, God can seem distant, and yes, angry. But that's what makes the promise so amazing. If by faith, we draw close to Him, He unequivocally says He will come close to us!

After sharing this great truth with Yuli, I couldn't stop thinking how many others in our neighborhoods are thinking the same kinds of thoughts. What can we do to assure them that God will come to them where they live too? I decided to write them a letter. I told them how we miss gathering and seeing them at our neighborhood outreaches. I explained that they are not alone and shared James 4:8. I included verses from Romans laying out how they can come near to God and included a phone number where they can call us if they wish to talk further. Every Thursday and every other Saturday we hand out over two hundred of these letters with our bags of vegetables we bring to their front door!



Because of you, Spectrum can bring joy and hope to the families we work with!



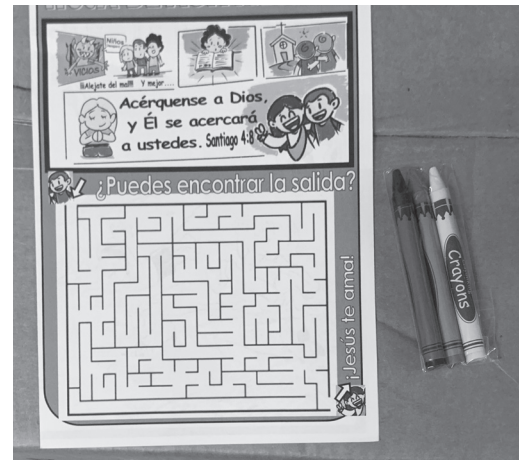
Of course, this is a message we want the kids to know too. So we created a fun activity sheet complete with a word search, a coloring page, a maze and a small set of crayons. On the front page of the sheet is the verse, James 4:8. Julian from our staff drew some beautiful illustrations to go along with it. We want the kids to not just skip over the verse, but to learn and memorize it. We wish it to be on their minds and nestled deep in their hearts. To incentivize memorization, we created a raffle they can enter by recording themselves saying the verse on their parent's phone and then sending it to us. This is the same way schools require students in Mexico to complete their assignments, so kids know how to do it. Included are various toys they can win in the raffle, but top prize is a new tablet. Tablets can be a great tool and extremely valuable in helping kids with their school!

We want every kid to know that if they come close to God, He will come close to them!

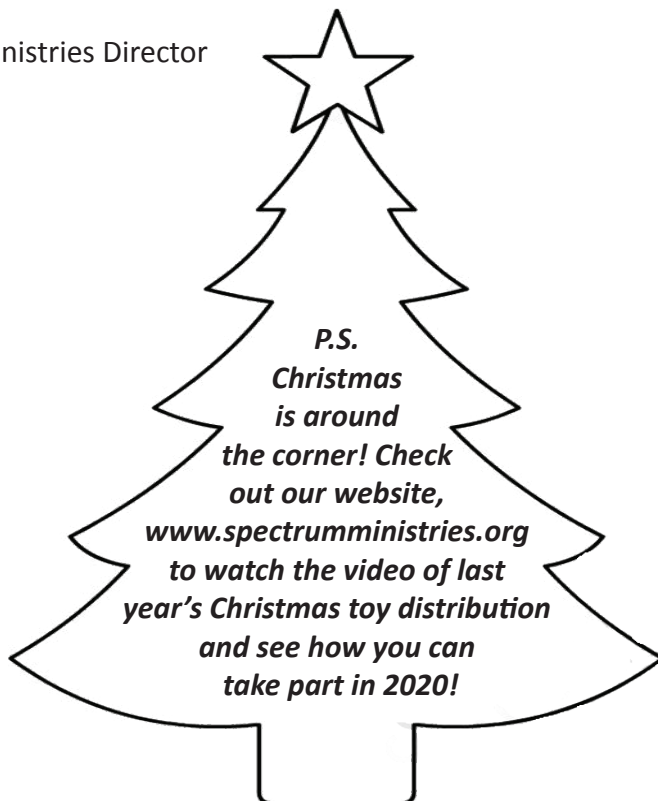
Thank you for giving and praying, and for everything you do to help us reach the families we work with! Please pray for each child and family in our neighborhood as they read about this great promise from James 4:8. Ask God to confirm in their hearts the sure hope that indeed, when they come close to Him, He will hold up His end of the bargain and come close to them!

From all of us at Spectrum we are grateful for you. We pray that you and your family are blessed and have a Happy Thanksgiving!

Matt Kooi
Spectrum Ministries Director



Over thirty kids have already sent us their video reciting James 4:8!



Efren helping to display the rice and fresh vegetables we deliver each week. Praying the letter we include in the bags will bring hope and encouragement to all who receive them!

"Come near to God and He will come near to you..." - James 4:8