

When It Hits You On the Head Like a Rock

September 2020

A few weeks ago I was driving down a highway in Tijuana on my way to a meeting. I was passing through an area with steep rugged cliffs on either side of the road. Simultaneously and like a flash, I heard a thundering crash and was struck forcibly on the side of my head! When I opened my eyes I saw that my windshield was completely smashed and I was covered in glass. I immediately looked in the mirrors to see if there was something I had hit, but nothing was there. My head was throbbing and I was completely disoriented. I was driving seventy-five miles an hour and I didn't know if I should pull over or if I needed help. In the end I just kept driving, trying to process what had just happened and figure out what to do next. Then I looked down and in my cup holder was a rock about four inches in diameter. Evidently it had dislodged from the cliff, fell through my windshield, bounced off my dashboard and connected squarely with the side of my head. My mom always said I can be hard headed! A half an inch lower and it would have hit my temple. A couple inches to the left and it would have bonked me square in the face. God's protection was on full display as things could have been much worse than they were!

Needless to say my day completely changed. I canceled my meeting and instead went to some friends where they helped me vacuum the tiny shards of glass and gave me a new shirt to wear. Adjustments were made and my tasks were re-prioritized. And of course I spent a whole lot of time thanking God I was still alive!

Later, much later, I began to think about how much my experience reminded me of last March. In an instant, the Covid pandemic hit us, disoriented us and changed our plans. No longer could Spectrum host our kids clubs, gather people at our outreaches, bring American groups down to serve, or bring kids to Spectrum camp.

With all that we were prohibited from doing, I remember we began the process of identifying those things which we could do. We talked and thought through what was important to the people we work with. We knew folks in our neighborhoods would need help with food. Having enough to eat for many is challenging when times are good. We also knew those issues would be compounded when work was scarce and there were no stimulus



I definitely didn't see this coming!



This boy is grateful to be ready for school! Please pray we can raise the rest of the funds we need to reach our goal.

checks to fall back on. With our sixteen person staff residing in Mexico, we had the man-power to help. And if people continued to give we would have the resources to put together grocery bags to deliver to families door to door. We put in place social distancing guidelines and every Thursday and every other Saturday now pack two hundred bags of groceries and one hundred and fifty bags of fruit for kids and families.

Other ways we've continued to serve are by regularly bringing food and supplies to orphanages and the senior's home we work with. We also bring encouraging letters to inmates in the teen jail every Tuesday. Last month I wrote about homes we have built for families in need using funds donated by individuals and church groups who still want to give, but aren't able to come due to covid restrictions. And of course this past month, we've been passing out school supplies. Lily

has done a fantastic job of identifying which families have kids who are school age and delivering to them what they need. We still have about 1,000 dollars to raise to complete our goal so if you are still planning to give, we can use it!

One challenge that remains is how to share the Gospel in a climate where the goal is to not have people gathered. We decided that one adjustment we can make is to use messages and more personal one-on-one conversations with people when possible. We pass out Spanish "Daily Bread" booklets for those who are reading their Bibles. And we encourage people to watch Spanish church services on-line when they have that capability. We're doing what we can and appreciate your prayers going forward to both meet needs and share the glorious eternal truths of the Gospel!

In the midst of all of this, several of our staff independently contracted the virus. Bernardo back in May and more recently Lily, Carlos and Robin. Bernardo recovered just fine and Lily was largely asymptomatic. Carlos and Robin however were extremely sick, and Carlos with his Type 1 Diabetes was in grave danger. Thankfully through many prayers, both have turned the corner and are well on the road to recovery!

Throughout this time, we've aimed to do what we are able to do, and God has been so faithful to both guide us and provide for us. It made me think of the verse out of 2 Timothy 4:1-2 which says, "...and in view of His appearing and His kingdom, I give you this charge: Preach the Word; be prepared in season and out of season...". What Paul is saying here is that Jesus is coming back, and no matter what craziness is going on around you, there is no off season when it comes to sharing the Gospel. In fact people need to hear about the hope that's found in Christ now more than ever!

Thank you so much for your prayers and support which mean the world to us! You are vital in enabling us to be prepared in season and out of season to reach people in Tijuana! In a flash and in an instant, He will return. We want them to know Him and be ready!

From all of us at Spectrum,

Matt Kooi
Director of Spectrum Ministries

"No one knows about that day or hour, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. Be on guard! Be alert! You do not know when that time will come." - Mark 13:32-33



Two oranges and a stuffed dog brought a little sunshine to her day!