

## How Rich We Are!

April 2022



Left to Right [Victoria age 3, Baby Hadassah 4mo, Mommy Milca, Victor age 6, Micah age 10]

I remember one day after I had started working full time with Spectrum, I was riding with Pastor Von in his Volkswagen when he turned to me and said in his deep baritone, “Paul, we are rich.” Rich? That was new! We were many things at the time, but I’m not sure that “rich” was one of them! He continued, “We are rich in experience.” Like so many things that Von said, that stuck with me through the years. Oh how abundantly rich we are!

It is still true today. We are rich. We get a front row seat to see God working in the lives of people in difficult situations. We get to take God’s Word to the dark corners of the city. We get to take much-needed assistance to the sick, food to the hungry, and encouragement, love and support to many who deeply need it. It’s my profound privilege to serve. I mentioned this as part of introducing who I am, since I will be writing these letters for a while. I’m a rich guy - at least in the way Von would define it.

My name is Paul Alvarado and I have been working with Spectrum for over 20 years. My wonderful wife Milca and I have four kids. My main focus in Spectrum has been evangelistic children’s ministry through overseeing our kids’ clubs, our children’s camp, and VBS outreaches during the summer. I’m also very involved in the church I attend in Tijuana in teaching and in worship ministry. I love the local church and how God uses the church to change people’s lives. I appreciate being able to serve full time in a variety of ways.

I remember receiving a phone call a while ago. I’m not sure how they got my number, or the name of the family who called me, but I definitely remember that they wanted to talk about shoes.

“¿Dónde está Lily?” (Where is Lily?) a lady asked. Lily works for Spectrum in a role similar to a social worker. She helps families with specific or emergency needs. Often she takes families to the hospital, delivers medicine, or attends to difficult situations which require in-person assistance. Apparently she had bought and delivered some shoes for this family on behalf of Spectrum. I’ve seen enough worn-through shoes and bare feet during the winter in the poor neighborhoods to know that shoes are a valuable ministry!



Paul Alvarado



Shoes can be a big help!

The lady on the phone continued, “We called because we really wanted to thank Lily for helping us out, we really needed it, we did not have money, we didn’t think she would actually come... My husband is so grateful!...”

“Well, give thanks to God,” I replied. “The help comes from Him. I’ll let Lily know...”

“...We really wanted to thank Lily and you...” she continued in much the same manner and for several minutes. As our conversation seemed to be coming to a close she said, “My husband wants to talk to you!” Then I heard a deeper voice come over the speaker, “Hey, I really wanted to thank you. My kid really needed those shoes and we didn’t have money, thanks for helping us out...” He restarted the conversation from point one, and took the time to let me know he was really, very, mucho grateful.

At that point I was tempted to say something like, “Hey, it was my pleasure.” But instead I told them that God made the help possible. Those were some thankful people! Later that week I had the joy of relaying the gratitude to Lily.

When I hear people express thanks for the small and large assistance they receive it reminds me of all of you who make what we do possible. It brings me joy to relay the “gracias” that I hear in the neighborhoods. Your support is appreciated by the families we serve. It comes in many forms. Smiles on kids’ faces, seeing kids who once were sick running around recovered and well, sometimes it is even received through hugs and phone calls. It is part of the shared “riches” we are blessed to have. It is summed up in Spanish in a single word: “Gracias”. Let’s let that be this month’s word to you.

For all of us at Spectrum Ministries,

Paul Alvarado  
Children’s Ministry and Programs



Lily leading a prayer



Children asking

*“And if you give what you have to the hungry, and fill the needs of those who suffer, then your light will rise in the darkness, and your darkness will be like the brightest time of day.” - Isaiah 58:10*