

Opening Doors

February 2023



I remember listening to our founder Pastor Von talk to me about the doors to a person's attention. He told me of different things that can open these doors. He observed that his youth would lend an ear to an athlete they admire, a person they look up to, or maybe an expert on a topic. But each person has a special door that bears a sign "Friends Only." Only a few are allowed in, and that is where the deepest and most meaningful connections are made. This is why I deeply value the friendships that Spectrum makes with so many of the people in the communities we serve.

This memory came to my mind after an encounter with a mom with a huge smile who had come to thank me for the gift we had sent her son. Her son was not able to make it to our toy distribution the month before, and she had asked me if we could send a gift home with her for her eight-year-old boy. I told her to wait until the end, and we would see. Sure enough she came by at the end of the activity and we were able to send a gift to her son. And now, a month later she tells me, "I wanted to bring my son so you can see him! He wants to thank you." They both wore big smiles as the boy gave his "gracias" and they headed off in a happy fashion. I was grateful that this small kindness had minted another friendship.

This is no small thing. It is a great treasure that we have here at Spectrum: friendships, in many cases deep friendships. We see them form while caring for a person in a time of need, feeding the hungry, or encouraging someone in a difficult time. Fixing a roof, building a home, and giving a tarp or blanket can all open a door to friendship. Or it might happen when we stand by a family who has lost someone dear as Lily has done twice in the last few weeks. Friendship can take root when we take a retreat to the youth in the CEMI jail as Carlos and Robin will in mid- February. Or maybe it will develop during the house build with Arturo that I visited earlier today. Arturo and a small team from the USA are replacing a small shack made of spare pieces of wood. It has a dirt floor covered in carpet which gets soaking wet each time it rains. The small starter home that is being built will make warm, dry nights a reality even during the rainy season. Sometimes friendships are formed while sharing tears, and other times while





sharing laughs, or sometimes even by simply lending an ear. Maybe it is in just being there. We are grateful for the many friendships God has allowed us to build.

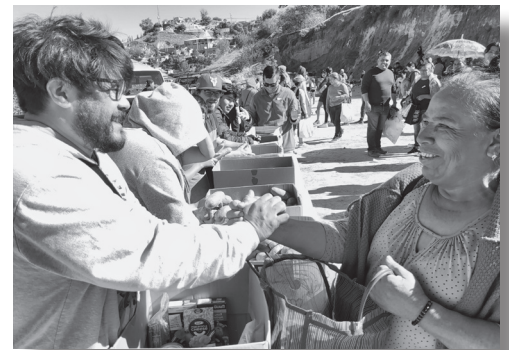
The exciting thing is that these doors open to the gospel, and the gospel changes lives. In showing God's love to the poor, we build friendships, and that allows us an opportunity to share the gospel with an audience who is listening. When I see the crowds, I see the fields, and they are indeed ripe for the harvest! The work of sharing the gospel is a work of

cheerful hope, even in a tough city like Tijuana. Our hope lies in the power of God's word. May His light shine in the lives of the families we serve!

We were happy to be able to provide two washing machines for the senior's home in east Tijuana. We also provided a hot water heater for the youth jail, allowing the youth to be able to take warm showers during this particularly cold winter. We have the opportunity to help support a local youth rehab center this year. We would be partnering with a local church in this ministry with the goal of seeing lives transformed. The important thing to note is that it is your generous support that makes this possible. Thank you for standing with us as we take God's love to the city of Tijuana.

We thank God for the friendships He allows us to make. May all come to know Him! Thank you for your prayers and support.

From all of us at Spectrum Ministries:



Julian making friends

Paul Alvarado
Spectrum Ministries Director

Proverbs 17:17 "A friend loves at all times. A brother is born to share troubles."

P.S.

- If you haven't seen our **2022 Christmas Video**, you can find it at our website: spectrumministries.org
- You can also sign up for our weekly email updates at our website. Just scroll down to the bottom of the page on our website.
- If you would like to be part of our **prayer team** you can receive our monthly prayer requests via email. Just send a message to info@spectrumministries.org to be added to the list.



Building a home that will keep the rain out



Fun with the kids in Granjas