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[I've spent] a lot of time with the missionaries that we have here and this is but the tip of the iceberg that is representative of what we're doing globally. It is so exciting. I can tell you that conservative estimates—as conservative as we can get them—[are] probably in the neighborhood of close to a 100,000 decisions for Christ that have been made this past year because of the ministries that we support around the globe. I believe it may be the single most important thing that we do as a church—[that] is: to focus on the Great Commission and bring the Good News of Jesus around the world.

One of the phenomenal ministries that God is using that we're helping fund and support is the *Camp Ministry* where we are partners with *The Rawlings Foundation*. They have built camps and now we are supporting the missionaries and the teams that are in those camps. [They] are reaching out to the cities that are around them and bringing students—young people—into the camps, presenting the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and then building churches off of that.

Last year we started our camp ministry right outside of Mexico City. I want you to turn your attention toward the screen so that you can get a glimpse of what that ministry is like. Then we're going to talk to the missionary that's in charge of that ministry there for us.

[Video testimony of a drug dealer speaking in Spanish with English subtitles:]

I was a drug dealer...I've killed, robbed and several times been in jail...on several occasions I've been hospitalized for gunshot wounds.

[Pastor Sal's narrative on the video:] The streets of Mexico City host a large subculture that Allen and Aase Owens refer to as *O.S.Y. (Out of School Youth)*. There are over 4.8 million youth between the ages of 15 [and] 25 trying to survive on some of the meanest streets in this city of 28 million people.

That is why The MET supports the Owens in running a 24-hour evangelistic camp. It's all about rescuing as many as can be reached with the time, resources and life that they have been given. Why 24-hour camps?—to stay focused. The goal is to share the Gospel of Christ and the love of God above all else. This time period forces the staff of Tierra Alta to work with precision and causes every aspect of this camp ministry to have purpose.

The idea is to meet people where they are and gently guide them to Christ. People like Alma, a prostitute and drug addict of 20 years. She arrived at one of these camps from the streets of Mexico City.

[Alma's testimony in Spanish with English subtitles:]

I arrived at the camp drunk and high on cocaine. Honestly, in the beginning I didn't care if I died. But...there came a moment, where I was so desperate that I would walk the streets alone and greatly cry out to God to help me get out of there. But to see that there were no obstacles [to come to this camp] I felt this came

from God. I began to know Christ and, in reality, I believe He touched my heart; because now I have no desire to return to the streets.

[Pastor Sal's narrative continues:] But Alma has returned to the streets. This time with a whole new purpose: to bring others from the same streets to these camps so they too may know Christ.

I got to meet Juan, who is an example of one of these street kids. He was sexually molested and gang raped as a young boy—filled with hatred and even demon possessed.

[Juan's testimony in Spanish with English subtitles:]
Satan wanted my life. In the streets...I was beating up everyone I could; trying to satisfy the hatred that I had.

[Pastor Sal's narrative continues:] But today Juan, by the grace of God, is now the opening speaker for the *OSY* camps and is sharing God's love instead of hatred.

[Juan continues his testimony in Spanish with English subtitles:]
Many young people that have come to the camp have been impacted by the word of God and the changed life it can bring today.

[Pastor Sal's audio narrative continues:] These kids' lives—they're a lot like the mud games they participate in during the camp. At the beginning no one wants to get muddy, but once they're in it, they have a blast. Sin is the same way. I talked with Ivan who didn't want a life of drugs and alcohol or to be forced to eat from the garbage.

[Ivan's testimony in Spanish with English subtitles:]
Obviously if you don't receive love you don't know how to give love. I felt rejected by society and I rejected and hated myself. I believe when I first tried drugs, I saw them as an alternative to help me forget my past.

[Pastor Sal's audio narrative continues:] Then the mud gets old and begins to harden and the kids no longer enjoy it as much. That is when they get to go play in the lake, or get sprayed by the water truck, and they enjoy the washing. Through this ministry they learn of God's cleansing of our sins through the shed blood of Jesus Christ. Ivan and a friend were recently shot on the streets of Mexico City over an old dispute.

[Ivan continues his testimony in Spanish with English subtitles:]
When I felt the shot enter my body, it wasn't the adrenaline anymore...it was the consequences of being the person that I had been.

[Pastor Sal's narrative continues:] The message of this ministry is simple: Yes, there are consequences to sin, but there is an alternative beyond the drugs, alcohol, sex and life on the street. That alternative is Jesus Christ. And this past year over 7500 campers have been given the opportunity to experience Jesus with 1500 professing their faith and 700 of them being baptized.

[Pastor Sal resumes after the video:] Church, welcome back Allen Owens. He's running the camp for us down there in Mexico. Now I didn't ask you this—

[Allen Owens:] Hi, I brought my Bible.

[Pastor Sal:] I got mine. Mine's bigger than yours. I found mine, by the way—thank you very much—the big print one is back.

[Allen Owens:] I'm not going to preach, but I might hit you with it.

[Pastor Sal:] Well, don't worry. If anyone preaches, I'll let loose a good one today. I meant to ask you this the last time and I didn't get an opportunity to. You pastored churches in America and now you're a missionary in Mexico. What's the difference to you?

[Allen Owens:] I think the difference might be the fact that when I'm on the mission field I feel like I'm on the front line. I feel like the church in the United States—we've received the blessings, and we have an opportunity to supply the arms and the needs of those who are on the front line. And now I'm there experiencing the result of gracious, compassionate people in the United States. It's just a—it's a big team work—you know everybody playing their part. And I like being there on the front line.

[Pastor Sal:] Which one do you like better: the missionary or the pastoring?

[Allen Owens:] Ah...hmmm.

[Pastor Sal:] Okay, don't answer that. Obviously, you like seeing all the people come to Jesus.

[Allen Owens:] I do. I do.

[Pastor Sal:] And so how many at the camp have attended a camp this year?

[Allen Owens:] Well, we just finished our 2009 season with our 29th camp. And we had close to 10,000—9,600 or so—come through the camp with 1,995 professions of faith.

[Pastor Sal:] Amen! That is so good. Now when we hear those numbers, those are kind of staggering. And if you add those together with what Greg Lyons experiences in the Philippines at the camps in Cambodia and Vietnam—and other places that we support those camps—it's just like there's a harvest of people out there. I would like our church to know what type of person is brought to the camp and what type of person leaves the camp?

[Allen Owens:] All right. Our target is 15-to-25-year-olds and we call them *Out of School Youth* (O.S.Y.) because we have the part of the calendar that doesn't matter if there's school going,

school vacations, or anything else. We target the young people who are maybe graduated but don't have a job—unemployed—or never finished school or have been abandoned or neglected, living in the streets. What we did with the pastors was: we challenged them. We said: We want the worst of the worst. And the first reaction of the pastors was: You want who? And we said: Yeah, the worst of the worst. Find them. Bring them. Somebody's got to reach them. And so that's who we target.

They come to camp—I'm telling you—it's a disaster. The first seven hours, you need to be there. You need to come and experience. If you can see these lives, the first seven hours are probably the most real, intense spiritual battle you will ever witness and experience in your life. It's in those first seven hours—if we can keep a kid connected—that we know in a few more moments they're going to hear the Gospel of Jesus Christ, perhaps for the very first time in their life.

We're battling people that are coming so high off of drugs. They jump out of—literally, I'm not making this up, folks—they jump out of the moving bus (out of the windows) while the bus is still moving for fear that they're going to a rehabilitation center or they're going to some kind of concentration camp or something or a jail/delinquent center. They're so high and so controlled by drugs and alcohol.

We have young ladies who come that are 13/14 years old and they're hemorrhaging, you know. They don't care if they lose this baby that they have. And they don't want medical attention because they're afraid [thinking]: Why would I want to bring a child into this world and live the kind of stinking life that I have? They come to the camp and—they tell us with their hearts—they say: My life doesn't mean anything. I'm not worth anything. I'm useless. Nobody cares about me. Nobody loves me.

And so we offer them a free camp to say: You know what?—there's something free in this world besides this camp. It's a free gift of eternal life. And we see people get back on those buses with a smile on their face. They're not asking for their drugs back. They're not asking for their alcohol back. They're asking: What more is there? Can we stay here? I want to be a part of the staff. We want to serve. This changed my life. And they come back two or three weeks later and they've got 10 or 12 of their drunkest friends with them throwing up on my shoes. You know, I'm going: Oh, for crying out loud, man, point it that way. That's how they change. That's how they leave.

[Pastor Sal:] And you have a staff, right? It's basically your family?

[Allen Owens:] No, my staff's a little bit bigger than that. I do have my family. They're the slaves—my family.

[Pastor Sal:] Where is your family right now?

[Allen Owens:] My wife's right here.

[Pastor Sal:] Hi, Aase. Where are the girls—would you all stand up so we can see you? These girls handle drunks and drug addicts. Aase, you can stand up too...Karen.

[Allen Owens:] I could not do it without my family.

[Pastor Sal:] Yeah and (you know) none of you would send your teenagers to this camp. I guarantee you that. Now, you have a security patrol. You've got to search them. What do you find when you search these kids?

[Allen Owens:] Oh, man, we find stuff that you probably would recognize [jokingly referring to Pastor Sal's well known, pre-Christian drug behavior].

[Pastor Sal:] The next question is... You know the greatest thing about this is that once they leave the camp and they are believers now, that's not the end of the story, is it?

[Allen Owens:] No, sir.

[Pastor Sal:] The way that we do our mission work here is through strategic partnerships with people that are in country, that understand culture, know the people, and have a heart for the people.

A couple of years ago—when we were looking at doing this ministering and partnering—we got several area pastors together and one of them stood out [above] them all. This guy radiated evangelism. He has a heart that is as big as Texas. And we started sharing what we wanted to do. And he started talking about his street ministry. He started talking about getting into schools. And I said: Bingo!—thank You, God—this is the man that we need to partner with. He's become dear friends with Allen as well. And I want you to see a little bit of his ministry that existed before we arrived on the scene. Then I'm going to bring him out and we're going to talk a little bit about our partnership together.

[Video:]

"And He said unto me: It is done. I am

Alpha and Omega

the **beginning** and the **end**

I will give unto him

that is a **thirst** of

the **fountain** of

water of life.

-Revelation 21:6-

[Audio narration on video:]

Abandoned children: neglected handicapped

Forgotten elderly: severely abused

Single mothers, drug addicts: alone and afraid

Many of them are rescued through the multi-faceted ministry of *Alfa y Omega Ministries* located just outside of Mexico City, which operates with a vision of faith and mission of love.

Situated high on a hill with a panoramic view of both active and dormant volcanoes, *Alfa y Omega* is home to a local church, television and radio broadcasting station, Bible institute, rehabilitation center, house-home, community kitchen and a *Good Samaritan House* for homeless people

who otherwise would be living on the streets. Each of these operations—under the umbrella of *Alfa y Omega*, founded by José Quiroz Mejia—are used to share the water of life freely.

In order to initiate true change and real hope in these lives, the end result is: transformed lives, restored homes and marriages, courageous ministers of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, youth with a passion for the things of God, and a new generation of those with a vision of faith and a mission of love. The beginning and the end made possible only because of the fountain of life, Jesus Christ.

[Pastor Sal resumes after the video:] Church, I'd like for you to welcome our good friend, Pepe Quiroz, here to The MET this morning. I believe that this is probably the most loving man that I've ever had the opportunity to be around.

Last summer Kristi and I and a couple other folks from The MET got to go into Mexico City and got to walk the streets with Pepe and see the work that he does. It's scary because it's a pretty rough part of town—it's a very rough part of town—a lot of drug addicts, a lot of prostitutes, a lot of gang members.

We're walking through the streets and I want to stay (kind of) close to Pepe—because (you know) that's a safety zone—and I feel like: Well, where did he go? And I turn around and the people that I'm not making eye contact [with] and ignoring—the ones that are laying on the streets and the ones that are in a stupor—Pepe stops and goes over and he prays with them and he puts his arms around them. And he gets them something to eat and he witnesses to them. I felt about that big [illustrating a tiny space between his thumb and forefinger] after that. It wasn't a show; it's just who he is. And so, Pepe, I want you to tell my church: Why do you do what you do? What makes you love people like that and minister like that?

[Pepe Quiroz answers (through Allen Owens acting as translator, phrase by phrase):] We have a mission to complete. The call of God upon our lives was to work with the people, to go through the streets, and to preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ. There are so many in [Mexico City] that need Christ and to walk beside them and see their needs and to see their need to know Christ. Many of them are captured and trapped by drugs and they need the love of Christ. And to be able to go to the streets where they are and to shine the light of Christ, is what God has put into our lives:

- To rescue the needy
- To set free those who are enslaved by alcohol and drugs
- For the woman who is in prostitution and who needs Christ

I remember, Maria, a woman who [for] many years was involved in prostitution. Her life was very affected and I shared Christ. Many years had passed and I didn't know what had happened to Maria. Then I came to a church where there was a meeting of Christians. A woman came and hugged me with a lot of love and she said: Pepe, you preached to me Jesus Christ. Now I am a new woman, a woman with a life in Christ. Let me present to you, my husband. He is the pastor of the church, rescuing lives for Jesus Christ.

[Pastor Sal:] Gosh, there's like 100 questions I'd love to ask you right now. First of all, I know your family's here, right?

[Pepe Quiroz (through Allen Owens):] Yes—they're over there.

[Pastor Sal:] Where are they?...Right over there? We're so happy to have them with us.

[Pepe Quiroz (through Allen Owens):] My wife Anita...my son, Israel...Normita, my daughter [and their children]...and their pastor of young people, Raulio.

[Pastor Sal:] So when you started this ministry of going out to the least of these—the poor and the drug addicts—what would you do with them when (you know) they had a need? Where would you take them?

[Pepe Quiroz (through Allen Owens):] Many of the young people—young men and young women—we bring them to the *Alfa y Omega Foundation* where we work with them through rehabilitation. Many received the message of Jesus Christ and their lives have been changed, transformed. For example Juan:

His mom called me very early in the morning because of a radio station broadcast. The pain and the [pleading] of the woman was tremendous. She said: My son is dying. Her son Juan had cut himself trying to kill himself—seven times he tried to kill himself.

When he was in front of me, I felt a special love for him. I took off the bandages from his wounds. I looked him in [the] eyes with love but with authority [and said]: You're just playing with taking your life. You don't want to take your life. You need to discover the love of Christ. And the life of Juan has changed. He felt the love of God and today he is part of our staff. One life has been transformed for Jesus Christ from hatred to love, from slavery to liberty. He doesn't want to do anything but serve Christ.

[Pastor Sal:] Fantastic! When you first started out and you didn't have the foundation, where would you bring the children that needed a place to stay and they needed some food to eat?

[Pepe Quiroz (through Allen Owens):] Many of those I brought to my house. My wife Anita is a wonderful woman that God has given me to serve and minister with. Then all of a sudden, I would come to the house with young men and young women. The house in Mexico City is very small, but we would receive up to 20 young people in our home—it was a big house. Anita thought that she was going to marry one man and have four sons—four children—but one time, we had 70 in the house to talk about Christ, to share that Jesus Christ is the light. It was a very special experience.

[Pastor Sal:] Yeah, I bet. Pepe has a very godly heritage. He is a third-generation preacher, evangelist in Mexico City. His son is fourth generation, and so his—was it your grandfather that was first saved?

[Pepe Quiroz (through Allen Owens):] My grandfather received Christ and this began a persecution in the town where my grandfather was from. He had to leave and he moved to

[Mexico City]. He was a pastor and then after that my father was a pastor. They would sing Mexican music. Pepe is an evangelist. My son Israel is also a pastor and evangelist.

[Pastor Sal:] Your grandchildren have no choice do they?

[Pepe Quiroz (through Allen Owens):] I just listened to one of the little ones, my grandson, and he said the following: I am a pastor.

[Pastor Sal:] Oh, Pepe, thank you so much for allowing us to be a part of your ministry. It's close enough that we can actually take a trip down there. I promised Pepe that we would help him finish a security fence around his compound, which is very, very needed. It would just do you really, really well to get to know Pepe and his family and participate in that ministry.

Well, not only are we in Mexico and the Philippines and other places, but one of the areas we have a big burden for is Africa. There's a great harvest going on in Mexico and Central South America, a great harvest going on in Asia, [and] a great harvest going on in Africa. You've heard me previously talk about a man that I referred to as *The Ghost*. We were finally able to catch up with pastor Zachariah this last October and get his entire story—it's just phenomenal. And what you're getting ready to see is just about half of what he has been through for the cause of Christ. I want you to turn your attention to the screens and listen to the story of *The Ghost*.

[Video of Zachariah, *The Ghost*, speaking in accented English with superimposed written translation for ease of understanding:]

I'm Zachariah Sserwadda whom they call "The Ghost." I've lived in this place where I am for over 34 years [video shows a map of the Kampala region of Uganda]. And now when I came here I had come to look for employment here.

I had gone to the market to buy a catfish. I found some people preaching in the marketplace and they were talking about Jesus. I had already heard about Jesus but Jesus was not in my heart. I was doing whatever I was doing: smoking drugs like opium, drinking wine. So now when I heard them preach about Christ, that's when I gave my life to Jesus Christ, right in the marketplace—that was early 1975.

In 1976 I started preaching. It's a burden God has put on my heart—it just came.

We never had Muslims preaching in this country before. Now they go out to win people to Islam. They have some claims from the Bible, so people in the area tended to believe what they were saying. So that was a big challenge for me and I said: How can I refute this claim? How can I win them to Christ?

They were scared because during our preaching of the Gospel—quoting from the Qur'an, having a debate with them—they were actually being defeated and failing. They wanted to get rid of me.

In this place where I am standing [alongside an unidentified, well-traveled, asphalt road]—1997—that’s where Muslims had the first attempt on my life. One of them stood in the middle of the road to stop me and when I arrived here they started shooting loud at my car. Now the bullet which was to kill me got me here—came and hit where I was seated—then it just slid over [demonstrating an arc over his head]. I stepped on the gas pedal to go on. I had a short prayer saying: Jesus, help me! When I passed them, they started shooting at me, aiming at my tires. No single bullet that touched my tires.

The hand of God was upon my life. Even up to now I don’t know how I survived the bullets. I can’t tell. It’s beyond my understanding.

After the gunshots I was a bit traumatized, because I could still hear those gunshots in my head. I said: I’m not going to run away; I’ll still stay in my home; I’ll still stay in my country; the Lord will still keep me. And I feel the Spirit of God telling me: You have to go and preach.

In 2000, March the 12th, I was traveling by this road from Rwanda. I had some ambush by the Muslims. I saw the truck coming from the other side where I was going and it was driving just in my lane. So as I tried to run away from him, there was an embankment on this side, I couldn’t go. As I tried to come back, we immediately had a head-on collision. It came directly where I was sitting and I don’t know how I survived.

The missionary who came from Milwaukee, Wisconsin—as she was called Anita Liebl by name—died instantly. It was a very-very bad-bad situation then when I lost her. It was tragic, really.

By God’s grace I was airlifted to Nairobi hospital. They said I would never walk again because I was badly fractured all over. I told God: If You make me walk on my legs again, I’ll put the devil in trouble. That’s what I said.

So as soon as I started walking, limping so much on my legs, I said: I can preach again. Then I drove my car all the way to western Uganda, in a town called Kasese. I preached the whole week. I came back [the] 24th of December—the following day was Christmas. Somebody called me. He called and said: Pastor Zach, be careful. What I have heard from here: Muslims are soliciting funds to kill you again.

They sent somebody to come and plant a bomb here. As you see, my house is confined [surrounded] by walls [making a concrete fence topped with] the broken glass [bottles] and the barbed wires around it. So when he came down by the water tower reservoir, my daughter [named] Priscilla saw him through the window. And as she tried to wake up her sisters, because they sleep in the same room, when they peeped through the

window the man was not there. So they moved around the home and they never saw the man.

One of the Muslims came to my home and asked me and said: Pastor Zach, do you know somebody entered your home?

I said: Yeah, my daughter told me, but I thought she was dreaming.

He said: That was true. He came to your home. When he entered in your home, he states he found men—strong men with strong flashlights—who were moving to arrest him. He never had time to plant the bomb. He just ran away for his safety.

They asked him: So it means his God saw you?

He said: Yes, they saw me clearly.

And then they killed him, because they tried witchcraft—they failed. They attacked us several times—they failed. The gunshots—they failed. Then the accident—failed. Then they tried again the bomb—still they failed. Then they would say: This man is not a person; this is just a ghost.

[Pastor Sal resumes after the video:] Church, welcome Zachariah Sserwadda with us. Now, Zachariah has a family, 10 children, correct?

[Zachariah:] Right.

[Pastor Sal:] Then you have a bunch of other people living at your house?

[Zachariah:] Yes.

[Pastor Sal:] And you go off preaching all of the time?

[Zachariah:] Yes, sir.

[Pastor Sal:] So who stays at home and runs the house?

[Zachariah:] Most of the time [it's] Robinah.

[Pastor Sal:] Where is Robinah this morning? His wife, Robinah, is she in here? She is probably getting a rest [after] having to follow you everywhere. We'll see her at the end of the service. I'm so glad that you are here, my friend.

Zack—Zachariah's hip was shattered and legs were shattered in that wreck. For years, he's been limping. The Muslims said: We couldn't kill him but we can make him limp. But because of your generous giving and a local doctor, Zachariah now has a brand-new artificial hip and he will not be limping anymore when he goes home.

Zachariah, for my church to understand; in Africa, what is it like in the life of a pastor? Here, we have pretty good lives and our churches take good care of us. What's it like in Africa to be a pastor?

[Zachariah:] Well, it's opposite.

[Pastor Sal:] Opposite?

[Zachariah:] Yeah, it's the pastor who feeds the people.

[Pastor Sal:] Ah, not only the Word of God but real food?

[Zachariah:] Real food, yeah...so, because [many] of them are poor. So if you give so many money—now my church is close to 3000 members—but they bring in an offering of about \$150 to \$200. Then you have so many people around you needing that money:

- You have children who have dropped out of school, who cannot pay for their tuition
- Then you have orphans that are around you whose parents died of AIDS
- Then you have children who like so much to go to school but their parents are very poor

So you find that they need that money. And you as a pastor—because the pastor is the parent—there's no way you feel you can really have that money, but it just goes out.

[Pastor Sal:] You told me when I was visiting with you—

[Zachariah:] The other thing is that pastors just go out to start a church. You don't find a church started. You just go there by yourself, start preaching around, get one person [then] two people, until a church is planted from there. But you have to go through hard times. Because I remember when I did that, we missed our meals. We didn't have food enough for Robinah. You know Robinah is a great wife. Otherwise, if it weren't for her, things would have fallen apart. But we went through a very, very hard time: missing our meals, we didn't have food, we were very hungry, children are crying around you—all that kind of thing. You think: Let me go and look for a job. But nowhere to look for a job—the worker's not going to die; he's not going to stand; because in Uganda it's about 85 percent unemployment.

[Pastor Sal:] So a pastor, even if you want to get a job you're probably not going to get one. If you get one, then you can't pastor the church, so you just choose to pastor the church?

[Zachariah:] Oh yes, you choose to pastor the church and go through whatever comes your way.

[Pastor Sal:] And God takes care of you.

[Zachariah:] Oh, miraculously. You know, people ask me: How do you live in Africa? I don't have the right answer for that. I have a big family. Probably if you think: How are you going to feed the family?—You're going to fall down. You're going to have a heart attack if you try to sit down and try to calculate how you're going to feed 25 people in the family—ooh!—you're going to cause some blood pressure.

[Pastor Sal:] Did you understand what he said? If you've got to sit down and figure out how to feed 25 people, you're going to cause some blood-pressure problems.

[Zachariah:] So we just live by faith. The Bible says: the righteous shall live by faith. [*Habakkuk* 2:4 (paraphrased)]

[Pastor Sal:] So, food shows up?

[Zachariah:] Yeah, we don't have a lot of food like you do here because you eat a lot of food here.

[Pastor Sal:] Yeah, we do.

[Zachariah:] So, in Africa most people live on one meal a day or one meal probably in two days. And probably one type of food like rice or corn meal. I don't know whether you've seen how we eat corn meal.

[Pastor Sal:] Like poché?

[Zachariah:] Poché—right—we call it poché. We live on poché and beans.

[Pastor Sal:] That's what we feed at Henry's village: poché and beans.

[Zachariah:] Right. Mainly people in Africa, they eat meat on Christmas day and Easter day. Because that's what I used to live on when I was—

[Pastor Sal:] So that's a celebration to eat meat on Christmas and—

[Zachariah:] Celebration is a big thing. Because when you celebrate Christmas, I don't see anything new here, because you eat chicken, you eat—

[Pastor Sal:] No, they eat—they too [indicating the congregation], not just me.

[Zachariah:] In Africa, Christmas is a very big thing. You get to eat probably once or twice a year eating chicken, eating beef, and other good food. Out of the rest of the days of the year, you don't have that.

[Pastor Sal:] Just poché and beans...chipote?

[Zachariah:] Chipote, yeah [but not often. With] chipote, you're doing very well [financially].

[Pastor Sal:] It's tortillas, African tortillas.

[Zachariah:] Yes, that's good when you have money.

[Pastor Sal:] So, the pastors that we sent bicycles to, your preacher-boys— First of all, 400 churches [are] under your care, correct?

[Zachariah:] Yes sir.

[Pastor Sal:] And [there's] a pastor at each of those churches that you raised up. You guys remember Henry Ssevviiri; he's at our Fry Road location [today]. Henry's one of Pastor Zach's disciples.

[Pastor Sal:] So we give these bicycles. Now, when we use bicycles here, it's usually for fun or—

[Zachariah:] —for sweating around.

[Pastor Sal:] Yeah, sweating around; we do that too. But in Africa, what do you use the bicycles for?

[Zachariah:] A bicycle is something very important for a pastor—very important. Because I remember when I had no bicycle I used to walk about 7 [or] 8 miles on foot going to preach. But when I got a bicycle it was very important, I could ride miles. I could ride 40, 50, 100 miles carrying somebody on the carrier going to preach somewhere. Then I used to take my wife to go and deliver a baby on the bicycle.

[Pastor Sal:] On the bicycle?

[Zachariah:] Yeah.

[Pastor Sal:] You took her on the bicycle?

[Zachariah:] —to deliver a baby when she's in labor pain.

[Pastor Sal:] No wonder she's not in this room right now. So you brought your wife and the baby back on the bicycle to your home?

[Zachariah:] Oh yeah, no choice, you know? She used to tell me: My husband, I feel I have some labor pain. I said: Okay, get ready. I just put her on the bicycle, we ride together, when the pain comes, [she cries out], then I stop the bicycle. When that is over, she comes back on the bicycle. So—

[Pastor Sal:] That [isn't] going happen here in American, buddy.

[Zachariah:] Yeah, so when you have a bicycle as a pastor, you accomplish a lot. I use a bicycle selling water, because you don't have running water like it is here. You know, you go to the well, like in the Bible, and fetch the water, [and] put the water in the jerry can. You put the jerry cans on your bicycle, [and] go around: Here!—who wants water? Someone will say: I need water. He gives you money that you can use to buy something.

So I sold water and then I went deep in the villages—you call it: out in the bush. You buy matoka—that's [a large bunch of] bananas. I used to buy bananas. And in Uganda we use charcoal to cook food. You put probably a sack of 250 pounds on the bicycle along with about 4 bunches of banana—each bunch probably weighs 100 pounds. You put them on the bicycle and

you push them to the town so people will buy charcoal from you. They'll buy banana for them to eat.

So I used to do that work while serving the Lord, because there's no way the money that comes from the church was enough for me. So I used to do that kind of work—it kind of is self-employed. I'd put a side to that. I go and preach; come back, go sell the water, sell banana, sell charcoal; then I get time to go and preach. That's how I used to do that before (actually) people like you came.

[Pastor Sal:] These are the people right here that have been giving you that money to send you into Sudan, into Botswana, and all the other places that you have been preaching the Gospel.

[Zachariah:] Yeah, I really appreciate you guys.

[Pastor Sal:] We are humbled to be able to do that. Tell the one story of the hundreds that I've heard— When you first sit down and you listen to Zachariah, because you're an American, you're going: Yeah...[skeptically] I bet. We took a film crew over there and talked to everybody that he [mentioned]; and every story he tells is the absolute top-line truth of what's happening in his life.

The greatest thing we face here when we accept Christ is somebody may laugh at us. There, you can be killed. Some of the people that have attempted to take Zachariah's life, he has won to Christ, and now they are preachers that he has sent out into the village. One of them was a young man that was sent to shoot him during one of his crusades; but he comes up to Zachariah and says: I want to be a Christian. Tell that story about the man and the panther.

[Zachariah:] That young man, he had been training in Somalia. Actually during the war between [the] Americans and the Somalis—he was there—he survived (actual) death. You had him testifying [in America].

So then he came back to Uganda and he was instructed to come and (you know) expand Islam in Uganda. So he was coming because he was called (you know) by the young Muslims to come and attack us because you had a crusade by the shore of Lake Victoria. And I didn't know—nobody knew—I just saw the man coming close to me. Then when he came by me, immediately I asked him: Do you want to get saved? He never said: Yes or no.

But on the platform, one of the imams who got saved was on the platform telling people how he was a Muslim and gave his life to Jesus Christ—just changed his life. He was also a terrorist, but right now he's a good man. Then he asked me: Is that [imam] born again? Is he a Christian? I said: Yeah, he's a Christian. He was one time a Muslim, but now he's a Christian. He said: I was with him in the same Islamic school. I said: Oh, sure. So the other guy immediately came down after he testified. Now I never asked him again if he wants to give his life to Jesus. I told this man, I said: This man seems to be a Muslim. Take him in my car, pray for him from there. He took him in the car [and] he gave his life to Jesus Christ.

Then we went back home and then he never told me the story of how he had come to attack us. Actually one of his colleagues also gave his life to Jesus. So the following day I was at home and this man comes. I said: Oh you have come. He said: Yeah, I almost died last night. I said: What

happened? He said: I was attacked by Muslims in my home. They came, drug me out of the home, and they said: We are going to kill you—this is what the Qur'an says—whoever changes from Islam, he has to be beheaded. So we have to do exactly what the Qur'an says. He says: Oh.

Then they said: How should we kill him? Now, it was a group. Part of the group said: We should tie a rope around his neck with a heavy stone, throw him in the lake so that he drowns and dies. Then another group said: No, let's go under the tree and behead him from there. All of them agreed to go under the tree. And in the tree (you know) have some leopards around [in them] sometimes. There was a leopard in the tree. I believe God probably put it there. As they were trying to plan to behead him, it jumped from the tree down and grabbed one of them, scratched him, so all of them run away—they go this fast!

And this man fell down because of fear and the leopard was there looking at him. He was looking at it. Now, because of a lot of fear, that's why he fell down. Then, after probably some minutes, he had an idea—a thought: Why don't you walk away from here? Then when he tried to stand up and walk away, the leopard never attacked him. The leopard let him go and then he came to my home. That's what he told me and I was very astonished. So I've kept him in my home.

People have told me: Why do you keep those people around you? They are going to kill you. And I tell them: Jesus said whoever comes to me, I will never cast him away. There's no way I can send them away. If there's a plan to kill me, still God will keep me. But I have lived with them before some years—nothing has happened—and they are very active with me outside with ministering to Muslims.

[Pastor Sal:] They built a mosque right outside your house.

[Zachariah:] Yes.

[Pastor Sal:] And they put a speaker (like) directly in [your direction] and every day—what is it?—five times a day they do that?

[Zachariah:] Yeah, they say: Allahu Akbar, Allahu Akbar. So that's what they say. Actually they put that big mosque by me to intimidate me [to] run away. But I told them, I said: You can't intimidate me; I can't run away. Actually, I have a very big confidence in Jesus. I don't know where I got that confidence, but I believe it came from the Lord. And I said: I'll not run away. I'm there. They are there. You see that mosque's big, but it has no people.

[Pastor Sal:] No power.

[Zachariah:] I told them, I said: You don't have the truth. You build mosques, but don't have people.

[Pastor Sal:] How many people come to the debates when you debate the Muslims?

[Zachariah:] Oh, thousands.

[Pastor Sal:] Yeah. We were there October—was it October Kristi? We pulled up to this—

[Zachariah:] It was November.

[Pastor Sal:] It was November and we pulled up to this big, open park. Conservatively there were 8-to-10,000 people listening to Zach and his preachers debate the imams and their disciples and totally blew the Muslims out of the water, gave an invitation, and I saw all of these people coming forward. I took a picture of me in the crowd. (It's pretty easy to find Waldo in that picture by the way.) It was amazing. I could not believe that that many people came out.

And so he does this: he goes into Sudan and so many other countries where there's just deep Muslim penetration and he preaches the Gospel. I just wanted you to know that these are the kind of people that—when we give to the *Big Give*—get the kind of support they need.

And so what I'm going to ask you to do now is to take that *Big Give* bag that you received a few moments ago. There is a card inside of that Big Give bag and it says: *Will God find me faithful?* The brochure has a card in it and it says:

I/we {as a family} are including our Tithe (regular budget giving)
\$_____ [in our Big Give bag.]

On the blank there: whatever your tithe is that you normally give in support of the church. And secondly—

I/we are returning our Big Give offering with \$_____ [enclosed.]

This amount—now, you may have come in thinking: I am going to give X. But really, some of you could probably write a pretty significant check right now to fund the cause of missions around the world here at The MET. Some of you could write a check for \$10,000 and not even blink an eye. Maybe you wouldn't be able to go on a certain vacation this year, but a lot of people would come to Christ before you did it. Some of you could write a check for \$100,000. I am convinced, in our congregation, there [are] probably some of us that could even write a check for \$1 million if we so chose.

Whatever we do today—whatever we do today—is what we have to use all year around to support the ministries you just heard of and so many, many more; ministries that equate serving people the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

I want to read a scripture to you that's found in the book of *Romans*. It's the Apostle Paul and he is talking about faith in Christ and he says:

¹³ for, "Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved."

¹⁴ How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in?
And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard?
And how can they hear without someone preaching to them? ¹⁵ And
how can they preach unless they are sent?...

Romans 10:13-15a (NIV)

We can do the sending. Only when the Gospel of Jesus Christ is preached, only when godly men like you've heard this day are out there on the frontlines—like you heard Allen say—and they are sharing the Gospel of Jesus Christ; the one thing that we can do is send those people around the world and to ensure:

- You do not have to worry about what you are going to eat
- You do not have to worry about if you are going to have a sound system
- You're not going to worry about if you have enough Bibles

We're going to take care of that. We want you to stand boldly in the darkest corners of this world and preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ. And punch holes in that darkness. And rescue men and women who have been tied up by sin far too long; who have been told a lie about God and Who Jesus is; and to watch the captive [be] set free.

That happens today in this room. All of that begins with what goes in that bag today. So—

- What you put in that bag is hope.
- What you put in that bag is power.
- What you put in that bag is the Gospel of Jesus Christ around the world.

And so I'm going to pray for us. And at the end of that prayer, I'm going to ask you to bring your *Big Give* bag. And if you do not have a *Big Give* bag, grab an envelope, write a big fat check, stuff it in that envelope, and write “the Big Give” on it. And then we're going—as families or individuals—[to] walk down here and, all across this platform, I'm going to ask you to take that bag and put it down as a sacrifice to God.

- Maybe it means some Christmas gifts you're not going to be able to give
- Maybe it means some dinners you're not going to be able to host for awhile (or)
- ...a vacation you're not going to take (or)
- ...a car you're not going to go buy (or)
- Maybe you're going to work another year or two before you retire

—because you have given a *Big Give* like that.

Whatever it is, it means so much more than the amount on that check.

- It means people will not die and go to hell, but go to Heaven.
- It means children will not be orphaned; they'll have a place to go.
- It means hungry people will not only hear the Gospel, but their bellies will be fed with a little bit of food.
- It means that these African pastors that we support will get a bicycle, will get some theological education; they will know that people care about the work that they do.

So if you would, stand with me. I'm going to pray a prayer of commitment for us and then I'm going to ask you to come and bring your *Big Give* offering.

Dear Lord, You have given us much and to whom You have given much, You have required much. We have heard from Your servants today [about] the work that they are doing in Your name, Lord. You have given us an abundance here in America. You've given us all in this church an abundance. We've been praying and we've been asking You to tell us what You want us to do.

And now, Lord, we are coming to a obey You, to give You the offerings that it's going to take to see that people around the world in the darkest places are able to hear the Gospel, and the good men and women who are doing that work can be supported. And so we commit ourselves to You afresh and anew; and we ask You, God, to take what we are giving and use it to change the world. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

You may come now and deposit your bags up here [at the] front.

Lead Pastor: Dr. Sal Sberna

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If you give, you will receive. Your gift will return to you in full measure, pressed down, shaken together to make room for more, and running over. Whatever measure you use—large or small—it will be used to measure what is given back to you.

Luke 6:38

(New Living Translation)

Legend:

(words in parentheses) = spoken by the preacher *but unnecessary* to the core sentence idea

[words in square brackets] = additional explanation for clarity *not spoken* by the preacher

{words in curly brackets within indented quote} = spoken explanation *not part of the quote*