

## THE MOST EXCELLENT WAY

*“If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal”*

*(1 Corinthians 13:1).*

The Bible has always been a refuge for me, even as a child. Its thousands of pages have taught me many lessons; as well as given me advice, but most importantly they have spoken my heart. As I read through the Psalms, reading of David’s anguish or joy I have felt as if I was reading my own poems to God. This comfort that I have found in what I consider to be the words of God himself can be shown through the actions of my life.

The anxious feeling in the pit of my stomach is normal. We have just arrived at the house, or rather the plot of land of my family for the week. For the past two summers, I have dedicated one week of my busy life to building a house for a homeless family in Juarez, Mexico. Sounds simple enough, right? With my very elementary knowledge of the Spanish language, I am afraid that I will not be able to function in this foreign land. Hence the nervous feeling I have as I stand in front of complete strangers. We at first received awkward smiles from the very pregnant woman we will be building a house for. We soon find out that her husband works from sunup to sundown earning not much more than a couple of dollars. Their house is little more than a few pieces of plywood stapled together. The floor is dirt, flies are everywhere, and there is only one bed. Not only do they own a shockingly different house than the one that I grew up in, but it is also located fifteen feet away from a pig farm, and it is about one million degrees outside. I am uncertain of what I have gotten myself into, but then I meet Evan.

Two little boys, ages three and five, run up to us smiling ear-to-ear grins. One of them runs up to me, gives me a hug, and simply says in his little Spanish accent “Hola Gringa”. From that moment on my heart is stolen. When I am not working my butt off on the house, I am playing with the kids. I spend the week learning words such as “Escondite” for games similar to my “Hide-and-Go-Seek”. After five days of the most intense labor I have ever experienced, I am told that we must leave the next day and head back to the United States.

That night we dedicated their finished, two room house, complete with concrete floors, drywall, and fans. We are told that we can say our goodbyes to the family, and it will be translated for us. I am at a loss for words, which is an odd experience because I always have something to say. As I ask the little boy for a goodbye hug with my broken Spanish and tears running down my face, I realize something. Love has no boundaries. I realize that love can be more than romantic, and deeper than words. I loved this little boy that I could not even communicate with.

My lack for mediocre Spanish words did cause a language barrier. I did not want to just say “te amo”. I felt a connection with him deeper than a saying as simple as that. I wanted so bad to let him know the deepness of love that I had for him, and his entire family, but I couldn’t find the words. Words were not enough, and they did not provide. Yet that does not mean that I did not experience love that week. It was always there. I felt that I had shown these people the love that I have known through the bible, by my actions. And they understood.