

January 2023



Dear Family and Friends,

*"You are my son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased."*

Luke 3:22b

"Thanks for everything. I don't know how to explain everything you have done for me and the love that you have given me. Before I came to Casa De Mi Padre, I was in a place where love, hope, or happiness were not present. I was losing my life and my future, but God had a different plan for me."

When God speaks, what he says is infinitely profound. It is spoken not for his benefit, but to meet the deepest need of the recipients. When God said the words, "Let us make man in our image, in our likeness," he did this so that we could experience a relational bond with him, unique to all else in creation. A special type of relationship based upon the character of who he is, for his good pleasure, and to help us by providing for our deepest needs. God installed in us longings only he can satisfy. He has placed eternity in our hearts, leaving us wanting to live forever. He has designed us to desire relationships with others. Each of us want to love and be loved. He has also preprogrammed us to seek significance in the eyes of someone outside of ourselves.

I will never forget the day when a certain little boy came to Casa De Mi Padre. His heart was filled with absolute terror. I have never seen a child more fearful. He came with wounds on his calves, thighs, on his back, and one of his arms. While his physical wounds were obvious, his emotional wounds ran even deeper. It took a long time to reach the center of his heart and mind. But, with lots of love, time, and provision, we saw incredible improvement. Since those days this young man has been a complete joy to have in our home.

The past couple of weeks I have been reading from the book of Luke and a certain phrase has arrested my attention. I have read it many times before, but a much deeper understanding began to unfold. John the Baptist had opened up shop along the Jordan river and was baptizing all who came to him. In Matthew's parallel account, we are given additional information. Jesus came to the river to be baptized by John. John tried to stop him. And Jesus responded, "It is proper for us to do this." John consented. The Apostle Luke writes, "As soon as Jesus was coming out of the water, heaven was opened and the Holy Spirit descended on him in bodily form like a dove. And a voice came from heaven: "You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased."

When God spoke these words he is communicating much more than just words. God first defines the type of relationship he has with Jesus. And really, it is the blueprint for the type of relationship he wants to have with each of us. In fact, God has placed a hunger for this type of relationship in the hearts of all humanity. Throughout all of history, in almost every culture, people have created religious practices to connect with a higher power, something or someone beyond ourselves. Others have coined this desire, "Father Hunger." We have a home filled with children who have lost their fathers through death, abandonment or disillusionment of their family. Most of our children are left with a hole in their soul longing for a relationship with a father. It is interesting that God has chosen this type of relationship he wants with all of us. It is the same one he has with Jesus. He said so.

The second message from the voice from heaven said, "whom I love." It is undeniable we desire and need love to have any semblance of a meaningful or fulfilled life. Love motivates people to do many things. It is something we crave. And interesting enough, John the Apostle in one of his last epistles writes, "God is love." When we are craving love we are really craving relationship with God. We so often try our best to fill this hunger with human relationships. But they always fall short to meet the deepest need of ones soul. Far too often in our world, the desire for love spirals into a twisted heap of selfish, sexual gratification and ruin. The common phrase is, 'Looking for love in all the wrong places.' But none of these pursuits can fully fulfill the God shaped hole in our hearts for his love. Finally, the voice from heaven said, "with you I am well pleased." We all have it in our DNA to search for significance and affirmation in the eyes of someone else. We want people to see our achievements or contributions and recognize our value and importance. When the Father said these words to Jesus, he was saying, "I see your desire to do what is right. I see the effort and sacrifice you are making for me. I see your intrinsic value." Also God was communicating with his son, "I am pleased with you simply because you are my son. I am pleased with you simply because you are you. These were beautiful words the Father said to his son Jesus. God thought Jesus needed to hear them. How much more do we need to enter into the significance of these words for our own lives?

The words the Father gave Jesus are the blueprints we try as best as humanly possible to communicate in heart and word to every child who comes through the gates of Casa De Mi Padre. Hopefully, through our words and actions our children can see in us "as in a mirror dimly," the reflection of the ultimate relationship, love, and source of true significance. This can only come from knowing God the Father through Jesus. It is why we so desperately need to put our faith in the substitutional death and price-paid forgiveness Christ offers in his death on the cross. Kids need to know the depth of love God has for them.



**Shane Sanderson**  
Executive Director  
Santa Cruz del Quiche Guatemala

I often say to the kids, "I love you." Then I ask, "Why do I love you?" The first few times they give me a bewildered look. So I teach them the correct answer, which is, "Because I am me." Next I ask, "How hard is it to be you?" They answer "Easy." And I say, "Yep. It is." I want them to know they are loved just because who they are.

It has been almost exactly 10 years ago that terrified little boy with all the wounds on him came through the gates of Casa De Mi Padre. The time he has been with us has flown by. Now it is time for Carlos David to transition out of Casa De Mi Padre. These changes are never easy for me, but they have to happen. I asked Carlos David if he would write a letter sharing his thoughts and thankfulness he has for all you have done for him through this ministry. Here are his thoughts:

*Hello Father Shane,*

*Thanks for everything. I don't know how to explain everything you have done for me and the love that you have given me. Before I came to Casa De Mi Padre, I was in a place where love, hope and happiness were not present. I was losing my life and my future, but God had a different plan for me. He changed my life and I found love, kindness, and hope for my future.*

*You told me that when I came, one of the first days, I was on the stair of the office, and you said, "Hey Carlos David jump in my arms." But I didn't jump, because I was so afraid. A couple of years passed, and the same thing happen. I was on the stairs, and you said the same thing to me, "Hey Carlos David jump in my arms." And I without any doubt, I jumped into your arms. The fear and distrust had disappeared. From that moment on, everything in my life started to change. All the talents that had been hidden inside me; I began to see. Before this, all of them were lost. We have passed through so many things together. I had never felt the love of a father before I came to Casa De Mi Padre and met you. I thank, thank, and thank God and you.*

*But like the song "Dust in the Wind" says, everything is passing so fast, like dust in the wind. As quickly as we came and started to grow, now the time has come to leave the home and see life from other perspectives and start living our own life. But not without God, because without him we are lost in a bad world. I will miss you, but I will visit you. Please pray for my life and for a good future.*

*Thanks everyone for helping this ministry. Thank you for helping us. Thanks for your support and your love for us.*

*Thank you, Father Shane, for being a good father and showing your love for us. I will never forget you because you are my father. I have so many things to be thankful for. Even if I could write them all down, my words would never be enough.*

*I love you so much,  
Carlos David*

**Construction Update:** We are down to the last four or five months to complete Casita no. 2. We still need funds for doors, windows and security bars. Estimated costs \$10590. Bathroom fixtures \$1900. Purchase tile and supplies, \$8455. Tile installation \$5410.00. We are very thankful for those who have given to get us this far. Thank you!

**House Operations Needs:** We are needing to raise new monthly supporters to help us cover our Child Care staff. These are the important people who help us take care of the kids day in and day out. It is around \$575.00 to support one staff member for a full month. Please pray with us to see the Lord meet this on going need.

Words can not express the gratitude and honor we have for you. Thank you for all you have done and given to empower us to be the hands and feet of our savior for these kids. We love you so much too!

Many New Years Blessings,

*Love*  
*Shane*  
Joseph Shane Sanderson

*With Great Joy,*  
*Thank you!*