Westley: Okay, so what is your name?

Jose Pepe Rojas: My name is Jose Pepe Rojas

W: when and where were you born?

J: I born in Chile. Santiago, Chile

W: Uh, can you tell me about your family, like mom, Dad, siblings, etc.?

J: Yeah, Sure. Um, I'm coming from a very (pause) eh dysfunctional family. My mother wasn’t a hard worker. My father was a lazy guy, very smart, very artistic, very gifted with the hands, but very lazy and plus very violent and drunk and uh I don't have brothers or sister. Um, and um, my father leave home when I was five years old (pause) and, he never come back.

W: Um. tell us a little about Chile, like, what was your life like in Chile growing up?

J: Um, uh Chile is, it's a very, very unique place is, is, is in the continent, but in some ways like an island. Uh, we have the Pacific Ocean from one side and the Andes cross all the country in the other. That means we are very, in some way very isolated in some way, uh physical. It’s a very it’s a very rich country in natural resources. Um, uh, we produce a lot of fruits and veggies. Uh, the country is very diverse from north to south. North is the driest desert on the world, is in the north. And the center is like, um, like California in some ways, very fruitful. South, is, is a rainy, but it's still a lot of agriculture. Um, a lot of animals, um, all the milk in the products, the, the, the area produces in south of the country and in the corner this part is very close to the Antarctic and it's very, very, very diverse. Very long too. If you put the country here in the United States, let's see, it’s something like from New York to California maybe that long.

W: Wow

Callie: Wow

J: but very, very skinny. Very, very skinny. And um, right now we have- the population is growing, maybe 17, 18 millions around that? Yeah.

W: What were your, like, fondest memories from Chile?

J: Um, um, pause), let's see. I think soccer. So sorry, but it's football, okay? Football, football.

W: (laughs)

C: (laughs)

J: Like (if) I say Soccer, I can offend some of my, uh, people. Yeah, football. That was the most fun thing. My friends too. I grew up with a lot of friends. I make a lot of crazy things when I was young.

W: Mm

J: Um, yeah, very good friends and so good, good memories.

W: That's excellent. (pause) Uh, what kinds of crazy things, do you mean?

W: (laughs)

C: (laughs)

J: There is some that I can give you. An other are off the record obviously,

W: (laughs)

C: (laughs) Yeah?

J: but um, (pause) um, I was in many trouble in my young age. I was involved in drugs. I was involved in drinking. Crazy, uh, years of my life. I didn't make nothing I just drugged

W: Hmm

J: and that was, wasn't good, wasn't good. I think, (pause) um, I make so many things so bad, that, just to give you (chuckle) an idea, when, in my country and that years in the seventies, the go to the army was mandatory. Mandatory. Well, I was in the army for maybe a week and they kicked me out

W: Oh.

C: Oh my goodness

J: because I wasn't a (pause) good person.

C: Wow

J:In the army, they, they don't, they don't even think, “well, we can fix this man.” They kicked me out (snaps fingers) “get out.” Yeah. Many different things, not doing well.

C: That’s crazy

J: that time, bad decisions.

W: Wow, Um, how old were you when you decided to immigrate out of Chile?

J: Um, how old was, um, (long pause) I leave for the first time with my family in 86. I was 31 years old.

W: Okay

J: That was the first time I moved with my family, from Chile to Brazil

W: Mhm

J: That I, I have been living in many, many different countries and um, but that was the first time. 31 years old, I moved with my wife and my three kids to Brazil.

W: So you grew up in Chile, you and your mom and umm, you liked to play soccer a lot, had a lot of crazy years going when you were young

J: Yeah

W: and then, uh, could you tell us about settling down and having a family in Chile?

J: Yeah. Um, well I, (pause) I, I became Christian. Um, and that was really for me, that was my salvation because I was (pause) having too much drugs in my body that I was a little crazy. I was turning crazy. Um, even without drugs I have, I have, (in the past during this time in his life) I been hallucinating and all the time that was my mother was thinking, “I need to take you to the psychiatric because I can’t manage you.” Eh, I can, I don't live with my father, I don't have brothers. I live with my mother and my grandma (pause) and I was crazy. And, one friend of mine invited me to the church. At the beginning I thought, no way, no way jose, I'm not going to the church. You are crazy.

W: (laughs)

C: (laughs)

J: What? Jesus and uh what? No, no way. But at the end, I went with my friend, with several other friends, all these guy was doing exactly the same thing: drugs. We went to the church, in my case I became Christian. And that was my (pause) salvation really. In all sense, okay? My spiritual, my life, everything, and I meet this sweet girl at the church.

W: Mhm. At the church

J: Yeah. And (pause) I married with her and everything changed.

W: Wow. All because of the church

J: Because of the church. Yeah. All because of the church.

C: That’s crazy

W: Do you remember what….like say, you said, “oh, I don't know about this”. Like, do you remember what the turning point was where you were like, “wow, I'm going to become Christian now.”?

J: Yeah. Um, the, the turning point was during this, one of the first service, first or second service that I attend the church, the pastor make an invitation to people to come to the altar. And, the idea was pray for them and that is all. But, because I was very macho, I don't want to go to the front, I don't want it to be there. And the pastor says in the moment, I know that someone here in this building don't desire to come to the front. Let me tell you something. You can pray wherever you are. You can pray. You can pray in the bus, walking, in the bathroom, sit(ting) in the toilet. You can pray. And I was thinking “Okay, when I leave from the service, from the church, from the point of the church to my house takes maybe 50 minutes, one hour, by bus. And I will sit.” I remember very clear by the window and all my friends over here making noise. You know, guys, 17 years old, 19, 20, crazy. I was there and I looked out the window, say a small prayer, very simple. I say “I don't know you, but the guy in the church says that if I talked to you, you can help me and I need your help. I’m open.”

J: That was all. Nothing more, nothing- (mimics heavenly noises and says “hallelujah!”)

W: (laughs)

C: (laughs)

J: No, nothing like that. Nothing. Very, very, very simple. When I (pause) when I arrived to my place, just get out of the bus, I was completely different. At the point when I arrived home, I opened, I live in an apartment. I opened the door of my apartment and my mom looked at me and she says “Now, What kind of drug is this one?”

C. (Gasp)

J: And I say “Mom. It's no drugs. Nothing. I have, I'm clean.” “And what's going on?” I say “Well, I'm a Christian.” “What?!” “I'm a Christian.” Everything changed.

W: Was your mom and grandma, were they Christian or?

J: My grandma. My mom was (pause) in French como si como sa.

W: Mm.

J: I don't know, but yeah, that was my turning point.

W: Wow. That's really powerful.

C: So, you said you first moved from Chile to Brazil.

J: Yeah

C: What was your experience there?

J: Um, uh, I was pursuing (to) be a missionary. I was looking to do, um, to do something. I, I, I(pause) I want to help others, but I recognize that I need some training in order to do this. And this was the reason. We moved to Brazil to get training with an organization called youth with a mission. Y1. And I met with them and I spend, we spend with my wife maybe 14 years of our life (pause) working with them.

C: So when did you eventually come to the US?

J: Um, I came several times. Um, I came-the first time was in 1992. At that time I was living in Equatorial Guinea, Africa and I received an invitation to be part of an uh, conference called mercy ministries. And because I was working in Africa and living in Africa, they consider what we were doing there was, um, mercy ministry. They want to know what kind of ministry was this, and I flew to Texas. Tyler, Texas. That was my first time. Um, later came other time, and at the end, um, in 1999, I moved from my family, from Chile to Honduras. And at the end of October, 1998, there was a big hurricane who almost destroy(ed) Central America and Honduras. Honduras was the, the worst country in Central America. And I went to visit what, what, what was the reality of the country, come back to Chile, share with my wife and my kids, and take the decision, “lets move to Honduras and help to the people in Honduras”. And I live in Honduras for two years. 1999 until 2000. At the end of 2000, we built 52 houses for people who lost everything during the hurricane. And when we finished the project there, we asked to the Lord “what is next, where we go”? And we feel that the Lord says go to the United States. And we moved to Denver, Colorado and we spent (pause) lets see, 14 years in Denver and four years ago I moved, we moved to Virginia.

W: What was the process of getting to the US. Like did you have to, like how, how hard was it to become an, uh, I guess, did you have like your, uh, like your green card or umm?

J: Yeah, permanent residence. Is- that is a long story.

W: Okay

J: But I try, I will try to make the short version. Um, I was, um, pastor in a church in, in Colorado, and with the (pause) being under the cover of this church, I get my religious worker visa, but in order to get that green card, I went, I moved to Chile to get the, the visa in Chile in order to get this work permit. It's a long process, it’s a very expensive process. Very, very complicated. Very bureaucratic. Yeah. Takes years and thousands and thousands of dollars to get a uh, work permit.

W: One -just a simple question. How many years do you think that took you to uh, get the permit?

J: Um, It's very interesting (pause) because they say for get the permanent residents, um take or the permit. I don't remember right now. What is the permit or the um, whatever. That one of the things take in the law, If you read the law for a religious worker visa, they say, immigration says these things take six months. Well, in my case, take I think four or five years to get (permit)

W: Wow. That’s a long time

J: Take a long time. Take a long time.

W: What do you feel like you, uh, left behind in uh, Chile and Brazil and such. Did you feel like (when) you moved to the US, did you have to say goodbye to any family or any people or anything?

J: Yeah. Well, my family, my particular family is very small. Um at this moment I have just one cousin. He’s third or fourth grade, I don't have any relationship. Was wasn't very difficult for me. In other way too um, I, because I was living in so many places, um, I didn't have the, the strong connection with the country. I was, I feel like I'm I am a citizen of the world. I am no, you know. Yeah. Some people are very connected with the country and my food, my bread, or the weather or I am not, I'm completely different. No.

W: That’s very freeing.

J: Yeah. Yeah.

W: Um, was there anyone in here in America waiting for you when you got here?

J: To what?

W: What- was anyone here in America that you knew, that was like waiting for you here?

J: Yeah. I have some friends, some friends. Especially in my years working with Y1, youth with a mission. I meet a lot of people. I met a lot of people in Chile. I met a lot of people when I live in, in, in, in Africa and um, I'm very, I am a very social person and I can make friends (snaps fingers) very easily. And when I came here, yeah, I got some of my good friends.

W: Um, when did you start learning English?

J: Um, I started learning English in high school in Chile. Its its its mandatory, its very basic, but for me it was good. I learned, I learned easily.

W: Did you start really using it like when you left Chile or was it more like when you came to the US you started really using it?

J: Oh No. During my years living in Chile and work, working with Y1, I use a lot of English to communicate with the other missionaries and yeah.

W: Um, when you got here to the US like uh, (pause) setting up, what was your first job, like how'd you start making money?

J: Uh, um, my, my first job here in United State was like a volunteer because I couldn't, I couldn't work. They, they don't allow legally. Um, and, and I've worked with the same organization that I work at in Honduras. They move the office, uh, the headquarters from Hawaii to Denver, Colorado and I work it with them like a volunteer. That means I have some support. I didn't get salary, but I have some support from friends. That, that was my first thing; friends who support me.

W: So when you moved, did you, um, (pause) did you feel like there was like a community of like a supportive community around you? Maybe of uh, a lot of Chileans or say people who are also immigrants kind of?

J: Yeah. I-I live in an organization. This wasn't a housing program

W: Oh.

J: for people of low income. And very interesting, many, many of them were Christian, but many of them too was foreigners like me. Um, there was Ukrainians, Russians, a lot of Russians, um, Africans, um, people, a few people from Europe I remember very well. And these organizations provided housing but in very, very low cost and that was very, very affordable for us. And the other thing, too is, these organization was- have a very good connection with Y1. And there was a Y1 based in Arbada. What is northeast or northwest Denver, and they have a very good relationship. And when they know I was coming, they helped me.

W: That's great.

J: Yeah.

C: It’s nice that you had like, a lot of communities everywhere.

J: Yeah, Yeah. A lot of people was there trying to help.

W: Uh, what did you do for recreation in uh, when you moved, I guess?

J: Umm, recreation, let's see.

W: Like for fun, you know?

J: Yeah, yeah

W: Yeah

J: Yeah. Um, you know, I spent a lot of time at the church, with people. Um, again, I'm very social and, um, our home was always open with- for people. Um, we don't have any problem if somebody came \*knock knock knock\*s (knocks on desk with hand) and knocked the door without invitation. You are very welcome. And if we are, if that was during lunchtime, “Oh, come on! Let's move! Move the plates and you are welcome.” You know? Um, I love that thing. I love, I love movies. I love um, uh I'm very sport guy. I love (to) play. I'm very competitive. Um, if you invite me to play tennis, even when I'm no good, I will try to beat you.

W: (laughs)

C: (laughs)

W: I like that.

J: Yeah.

C: Yeah um, So you said you've uh, held like a lot of jobs, um, based on Y1? Is that what you're saying?

J: Yeah

C: Um, so is that what brought you to Virginia?

J: Yeah. Well, um, let me go a little bit, a little back.

C: Yeah.

J: Um, I get my green card

C: Ok

J: in Denver, Colorado and I started my application for my citizenship. Okay? Um, some of my, two of my kids was living very close to here, one was living- is living in, in, in Baltimore, in an area of Baltimore, and at that time my oldest daughter was living in dc. And even when we have a nice church, a lot of friends, a lot of friends, um, something was missing, and was my family. Um, my youngest daughter at that time was living in India, uh, with her husband and I was- we were again, a nice place, very good friends, but the family was very important for me and for my wife too. Um, we want(ed) to be close with our grandkids. My grandfather was a very, very special man for me, um, because I didn't have a father. He became in some way my father and always have in my heart the desire to replicate in some way with my grandkids, what I have received with my grandpa. And, and we moved here. We found that this church was looking for another Latino pastor to take care of the Latino church, the Latino congregation and, and we move and we connected very well and I'm here

C: that's great. (clears throat) So did you find it was easy to acclimate to Harrisonburg or the US in general, like did you have any troubles with it or...

J: What kind of trouble?

C: Um, anything like uh, getting used to the weather as you said earlier or like discrimination-

W: Or culture shock.

J: Ohh

C: Culture?

J: Oh, yeah, yeah. Um, yeah. I think if, if, um, if I look back to Colorado, Denver, Colorado and um, Harrisonburg, Virginia is, is, is, is a big difference.

C: Umhm

J: Big difference. Um, very broadly the uh, Colorado have a big Latino influence, a big, big Latino influence and the people are, if, if we can say more liberal uh, sometimes when, when we use the term liberal is, is the connotation is little. I don’t know little different.

C: Yeah

J: Maybe I can say is more humanitarian,

C: Mmhm

J: maybe sounds much, much better. Um, uh, for example, just to give an example, Cinco de Mayo, uh one of the biggest Cinco de Mayo celebration in United States is in Denver, Colorado.

C: Oh!

W: Wow

C: I didn't know that

J: Yeah

W: Me neither

J: is huge.

C: (laughs)

J: Huge. Why? Because the white American has embrace, the Latino community in-in a very good manner, very good way.

C: Yeah

J: I moved to uh, Harrisonburg, Virginia. Uh, the people here is very polite, very polite, but in some way in my opinion very hypocritical. They don't express really, they, they kind of smile at you, but they are no smiling really.

C: Yeah

J: Um, I have uh suffer some discrimination. Yeah. Yeah. Um, maybe less than other people, um, because I am no the typical Latino. I am, I'm tall, I can speak English

C: Mmhm

J: maybe not very well

C: (laughs)

W: (laughs) What?

J: but I can speak.

C: You speak fine.

W: Yeah, it’s perfectly fine.

J: with a little strange accent, but I can do this. But I still I suffer some, some discrimination. Just to give you some ideas. No, no, no, some, no long time ago I was in a restaurant with my family and people was coming later than us and they was served first. For example. And I notice! They came 20 minutes later than us

C: Mmhm

J: and they serve to them. Th-Th-That’s to give you some ideas and other, and other things too. But yeah, it’s no easy. Has no easy. It's very interesting that my senior pastor, my pastor says one of the first time, you know what the motto of Harrisonburg, the friendly, the friendly city?

C & W: Mmhm

J: Uhhh, I don't know.

C: (laughs)smo

J: I don't know.

C: Yeah

J: I have some. There is people, really, there is people who really, really, really embrace others, but there is other people that are still, no. And I understand. This, this is, uh, confederate land. One of the things that when when, that I noticed when, when, when we moved four years ago here, here in this place, I saw more confederate flag than any ever in my 14 years before.

C: Has living here made you more interested in politics? Or have you always...

J: No, no,

C:MUmhm

J: It's nothing new for me.

C: Ok.

J: Um, no. Um, the, the reason is (clears throat) for me, I, I have a high sense of justice.

C: Mmhm

J: Um, could be from when I was a child. Uh, the situation that I suffer with my father. I don't know. Th-There, I was very poor too. I live in a very, very poor neighborhood. I grew up in a poor neighborhood and my family was the poorest of the poor. And, I don't know too if maybe it's a mix of things. My mother in law, um, she was a poor lady, but years before she was a very well educated, living in one of the most richest families in Santiago. She lost everything. And, and she have a heart for the community and I learned, I learned something from her. Is, is nothing new.

C: Mmhm

J: I love justice. I and, yeah.

C: So did you feel, um, moving to Harrisburg you said it was very different. Do you still feel that your received okay? Did, did you find um, Harrisonburg had a nice community? Um like of immigrants and stuff like that?

J: Yeah, I think, um, things are changing.

C: Mmhm

J: We have, uh, Sal Romero in, in the city council.

C: Yeah.

K: We have an African American lady too.

C: Mmhm

J: Um, back of, back of our church here. We have a, a, a neighborhood that I call United Nation.

W: (laughs) I like that.

J: Um, because there is people from everywhere.

C: Yeah

J: Um, these, uh, let me put this in this way. United States is a melting pot and like I say to other people before, this melting pot-pot is changing from White to Brown. And this is something that is irreversible, is, is, is not possible when somebody says, uh, “Make white America again”. Sorry, no.

C: (laughs) Yeah.

J: It's, it's not going to happen. Can be happen if you are take the guns, the weapons and create on a, I don't what, um, but it's not going to happen. Really because this melting pot is changing, is changing to be more brown than white. Um, if I remember well four or five years ago, I go in this country for first time in the history, more Latino babies born in one year than white babies. That, that is, pay attention of this. This is something that is, it's not turning point, is. And, we need to live with that.

C: Yeah.

J: We need to accept this. This is the reality.

C: Yeah

J: Even they close the door. If they shut the door completely. Still with the people living here, the number says, and I'm not saying this, I'm very bad mathematic, for math, I'm terrible. But the people who knows says maybe 2030, maybe 2035, there is no going to be majority in the country. Everybody's going to be minority.

C: I’ve heard of predictions even as early by 2020.

J: Look at that.

C: Mmhm

W: Mmhm

J: Very soon.

C: Yeah, very soon

J: Very soon. That means-

W: Exponential growth, you know?

J: Yeah. The thing is, with that reality, are you continue it fighting against other who are- no man! This is the time to start to embrace because we are going to be here in the same boat. All of us.

C: Umhm. Yeah. Would you say that your, your overall experience in the United States has been a positive one then?

J: Yeah. Yeah, yeah.

C: That’s good to hear.

J: Very positive.

C: Um, what has been the most difficult part about living in Harrisburg- like Harrisonburg specifically? Is it because you didn't have, don't have like that big of a culture as you did in Denver or is it something else?

J: You know what I, again, I don't have.I think the most difficult thing for me is when I interact with people who, who have a different opinion about me just because the color of my skin or my face or my, uh, my broken and poor English. That is the only thing. That is my biggest conflict. My… But it's, it's no me too, it’s them. Because if they know me, maybe very probably they can find in me a good guy and a very good friend. I’m, no, uh, yeah.

C: That’s nice to hear. Um, so what has it been like working, um, at this like church? Um, do you find that because you're in a real- like involved in the religious community, people have been more accepting? Um, or what has just been your over-overall experience?

J: Yeah, I think ,yeah. Um, it's very interesting here in this country. Many people call themselves Christian,

C: Mmhm

J: but really, uh, many of them are no really good Christian. They are, I don't know, fans?

C & W: (Laugh)

W: They go to church on Sunday, fair weather fans, yeah.

J: Yeah, but Christian, no. But, still they have some respect when somebody says I am a pastor and um, yeah, you know, working in this church, yeah.

C: It’s good to hear that. Um, would you say that being where you are, like involved with this covenant has given you a different perspective on Harrisonburg and then maybe other people um involved in like different situations or no?

J: Well, uh, the good thing for me is to be in this church is, is this is a church who is embracing every single one. We're no making any difference. Um, the Latino Church of this con- this church has been here for 31, 32 years. This was the first Latino church in all Harrisonburg. This one.

C: Oh my goodness.

J: That was the first one.

W: Wow

J: That speak very strong. That here, the people of this church have a commitment with this group of people even when they don't speak language, their language. Some, some of them are undocumented. I don't mention illegal because I don't like that word,

C & W: Mmhm

J: but undocumented.

C: Mmhm

J: They are here and they are welcome here in this church. Um, we, some of our series, we, we bridge by series for four weeks, six week, whenever. I remember we put a banner outside with the new series. We put the title of this series in English and in Spanish and Arabic for our community over here. Um, when we open, when we have programs here, like, uh, harvest, party, uh, Easter, we have all kinds of people here. Muslim, Christian, non Christian, non Muslim. Everybody's welcome. I love that because for me this is the, this is the church is the best platform to speak to others about how we can work, how we can live, how is the way to love other people. This is the best, the best way.

C: It's a really good message, your- you're spreading.

J: Yeah

W: I agree, yeah

C: That you should be accepting everyone. Um, so have you been, visited Chile ever since you’ve moved to the United States?

J: Yeah, yeah.

C: Do you go back often?

J: (clears throat) I go to Chile almost every year,

C: That’s nice

J: (clears throat) every year, um, um, in the last three years, four years, March is the time when we go to Chile, um, there is a dentist here in the city, very well known is, uh, Smile Makers.

C: Mmhm

J: The doctor is Greg Johnson and he's part of our congregation. And when I arrived here, he says to me, I want to go back to Chile. I have been in Chile many times and I want to go back to Chile, but I want to go to another place I'm going to go to Puerto Montt, is a city maybe 1200 kilometer from Santiago, and I want to take a dental team and go and help poor people in, in that area. And we have been doing this for the last four years. Um, if I put the number I can say thousands of people has been blessed by Greg and other dentists, other, uh, hygienist helping, cleaning fillings. Everything. And it’s free.

C: (whispers) That’s awesome.

J: And in the last two years, um, we add a construction team because the church is building a new facility for children. This is going to be an hogar, a house for children, little one, and we built this past march, we built one of the unit is going to be a big facility with four or five buildings. We built one in March and we are thinking to go back now in next year, February with another team. Yeah. I go back to Chile. Uh, but always with the, I'm not going to, I'm not going to vacation. We go to serve, to help people.

C: Do you specifically go in March and February for a reason? Is it like the best time...?

J: Um, it, that was the best time for, for Greg,

W: Oh

C: Got it.

J: um, because he have a perfect window of time. Ten days, 12 days. That was the reason.

C: Got it

J: And for the construction team, uh, I'm thinking in February or Mar- March is a good time because there's no raining.

C: Ohh

W: Hmm

J: Puerto Montt is, if you take away, uh, from the equator line to the south, it’s the same distance from the equator to north. That means it's going to be Oregon or Washington state.

C: Mmhm

J: That means a lot of rain and the window of time work best for construction is during summer.

C: Got it, I see. So, do you, um, think that any of your views or values, um, about living in the US has changed since you've been living here or or did you like have a different view before you moved here?

J: Um, no, I think it's- (pause) well, let's see. I moved from, from, uh, Honduras. I always lived in countries of the third world. Coming to the United States, yeah, you find another dynamic. You find another way. Um, uh, for example, Latinos, we are masters of improvisation. Uh, Americans: Planification. Is making plans. We don't make no plans, but we are very good improvising, um, in coming to this country and put together both. I enriched my life because I'm good in this, but this other thing is good too.

C: Yeah, It's cool to see how those mesh

W: Interesting.

C: So, so far, what would you view as the happiest or best time in your life?

J: Being with my kids.

C: Anytime, that that is?

J: Uh, yeah, for me is the best, I think. I have three kids. Um, it's not easy to meet together. Like I said before, the youngest years ago was living in India. Uh, she moved from India, from Kolkata, India to Seattle. Um, later, the oldest who was living in D.C, she moved to Luxembourg.

C: Oh my.

J: and is quite complicated

C: (laughs)

J: to meet together, but when I meet together is, is heaven for me. I love it. I love to be with my kids. I love to be with my grandkids.

C: Mmhm

J: I have um, uh, we have a very good communication with our kids. We talk even when they live very far. We talk almost every day with them. Yeah.

C: That's great.

J: How many times you talked with your parents?

C: Definitely not as much as that (laughs)

J: No?

C: No.

W: And you?

W: Uh, somewhere in like every three or four days, you know.

J: Yeah

C: Mmhm

W: (I) Just try to do that every day

J: Yeah

W: or something

J: Yeah. Good.

C: It's probably cause we take for granted how close we are to our family.

W: Yeah, you're right.

J: Yeah. Okay!

C: (Laughs)  
J: Next question.

C: Um, the last question I have is, um, what historical events have had an impact on your life?

J: Say again.

C: What historical events have had an impact on your life? So I think specifics, so you mentioned the hurricane, um in Honduras, that had a big impact. Has anything else had a really big impact on your life?

J: I can think a couple of things. Um, first of all, I think, uh, Jesus Christ for me was really

C: Mmhm

J: impact my, my life. He changed my life completely. He saved my life. Um, 19, 1994, I was in, in Goma in Zaire, Zaire, at that time, during the Rwandan War and visiting some of the feeding camp. That was the most shocking things for me. But at the same time was kind of shaking my life when I saw that reality. Um, see human beings in that condition was, gave me something that I never experienced before. Um, most of these was children. That was the most. Yeah, um, the magnitude of this tragedy was overwhelmed. Uh, at that time in Goma, there was easily a million and a half, maybe more, refugees living in, in, in a poor area. The condition was so extreme in, in everything. Food, water, bathroom, uh, medicine. Um, that was incredible for me. Um, for example, I didn't know that there was an organization on the world. Not many people know this organization, but this one NGO who work there specific work is to remove bodies from, from the camp

W: Wow.

J: because they need to move (snaps quickly) quick these body because, uh, prevent sickness and other thing. And that, that was, if I think about something that impact my, that that place was, yeah.

C: Wow, that’s crazy. Well, those are all the questions we have for you.

J: Yeah?  
C: Yeah. But it was very nice talking to you.

W: Very powerful, yeah

J: Yeah

**CUT AT 50:51**