Immigration Issues

Part 1 of 2: A Biblical Response to Immigration Policy
with Darrell L. Bock, Soraya Marin, Alejandro Mandes, Samuel Rodriguez, and M. Daniel Carroll Rodas
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Welcome to the Table, where we discuss issues of God and culture, and today our topic is "Immigration" and we're going to take a special look at issues related to the Latino population here in the United States.

Let me introduce our guests. I'll begin with Samuel Rodriguez who is President of the National Hispanic Leadership Conference, and he is here via Skype, and he's in the blue shirt there. And then Daniel Carroll Rodas is a Distinguished Professor of Old Testament at Denver Seminary. He is our other Skype presence, and he is the one who will have the books in the background because he teaches Old Testament. When you teach Old Testament, you've got to do a lot of studying.

And then I have as well Alejandro Mandes who is Executive Director for Immigrant Hope and National Director for Hispanic Ministries for the Evangelical Free Church, and he has flown in today from San Antonio. And then Soraya Marin who is a missionary in transition, who works with people who immigrate to this country, and she can kind of tell the practical side of what's involved in that.

So you can see, we have assembled a broad panel of experts to deal with the topic of immigration, and particularly as it relates to the Latino population here in the United States. Let me just launch by giving some statistics and then I'll have each of you introduce yourselves by telling how you are doing what you're doing.

The Pew Research Hispanic Center, on January of this year 2013, released a report called "A Nation of Immigrants" and reported that there are 40.4 million immigrants in the United States as of the year 2011. That's obviously well over 10 percent of the total population, and so that's a very significant portion of our population that is here. And according to a recent survey, and when they asked public attitudes about the amount of immigrants in the country, it says that 39 percent said that dealing with the issue of illegal immigration should be a top priority for the President and for the Congress.

That sounds like a lot, but it actually makes it the 17th highest ranked issue when that question is asked, whereas, one-third of the Hispanics present said that the issue of immigration was important to them personally. And then if you ask them what should be done, 28 percent said that dealing with illegal immigration should be given tighter restrictions, while 27 percent said a path to citizenship should be a priority, and 42 percent said both tactics should be given equal priority. I think that's an interesting split in terms of what people think should be done. So that kind of sets the table for where we're headed.
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Samuel, I'll ask you to begin. Tell us what you do and tell us how you came to that role, and also whether you have been here all your life or not.

_Samuel Rodriguez:_ Well, by the grace of God, I preside over the National Hispanic Christian Leadership Conference, which is a Hispanic Evangelical Association of 40,118 member churches throughout the 50 states and Puerto Rico, started by Dr. Jesse Miranda in 1992 as A.M.E.N.; and it's been a wonderful journey.

I was born in the Republic of New Jersey, and born in the Republic of New Jersey from parents who migrated from Puerto Rico; but my entire ministerial trajectory has been primarily – started ministering in East LA and southern part of Texas – the Rio Grande Valley, Harlingen, San Benito, San Juan; Tamaulipas, Mexico.

So it's been a wonderful, wonderful journey in interacting as a Puerto Rican, but ministering completely all of my life with Mexican Americans and the immigrant. Understanding the journey – 35 percent of our churches approximately are composed of undocumented individuals. So when we talk about immigration, it's not a political issue, it's a moral issue with definitive kingdom ramifications.

_Darrell Bock:_ And a personal issue for the people who are involved in your church, and a pastoral issue for pastors who pastor in such churches.

_Samuel Rodriguez:_ Yes.

_Darrell Bock:_ Okay. Danny, why don't you give your background.

_Daniel Carroll Rodas:_ Yes. Good morning. I'm the son of a Guatemalan mother and so I've spent a lot of time growing up in Guatemala, as Darrell knows, because we grew up together. I spent almost every summer in Guatemala. We would go to school, stay with family all over the country. And eventually, I ended up teaching in Guatemala for almost 15 years.

And then when I came back to the US with my family, we came to Denver and this is where I began to hit the immigration issue. And slowly – and I guess we'll get to this later – I began to ask myself what the Bible says and how Christians should engage the issue.

And I go to a Hispanic church, I'm a member of the Hispanic Ministerial Alliance here in metro Denver. I work on the board with Samuel. Samuel is my boss, at least in that. And I also help them with the immigration piece.
So the son of a Guatemalan immigrant who was raised bilingual-bicultural, and the split personality and living in the hyphen. That's part of my journey.

And his mother was my Spanish teacher, so that's the most important thing to know about Danny. Alejandro, tell us where your roots come from.

Well, I was born in Corpus Christi here in Texas, lived in Laredo, and was educated in Austin, and two times here at DTS. Quite often as I travel around, the Hispanics will ask me where I'm from, what country; and I like to pull their chain by saying, "Well, my parents went to sleep Mexican, but woke up Texican."

How I got involved in the immigration part is in this work with National Hispanic Ministries, I can't come into a church that does not have significant numbers of Hispanics. So a whole lot of that is trying to figure out, "How do we make disciples, how do we plant churches, and how do we do that in the context of the Evangelical Free Church of America?" So I also work for Samuel, as we all soon will be, and very proud to work with him in the NHCLC.

Now how large a denomination is Evangelical Free Church.

Evangelical Free Church has 1,500 congregations and many, many of them are in older neighborhoods that are transitioning, so a lot of them have a very big heart for missions; and I'm telling them this is a new mission called Samarica, where Samaria will not stay there, they come here. And so what we're trying to do is help our churches understand that they don't have to sell out and move to the north 40, they can stay right there and work internationally in their neighborhood.

And am I right that the Evangelical Free Church's roots are actually European immigrants who came over to the states?

Right, Norwegian. I married one; she was a missionary in Laredo, Texas. So they do have immigrants, they have immigrant roots; and so it really resonates to them to think about reaching immigrants again.
**Darrell Bock:** Yeah, well just to tell my own story before I turn to Soraya is, I think my family goes back four or five generations in terms of immigration. Both sides of family are Romania and Austria are the roots, so I think it's important to remind people as we have this discussion that all of us, or many of us – unless we're American Indians – have a rootage that involves immigration at one point or another. Okay, Soraya, tell us your story. How do you become a part of this conversation?

**Soraya Marin:** Well when people ask me where I come from, I usually have to ask a question clarifying, because my grandparents were from Italy, my other grandparents come from Spain. I was born in Venezuela and I've been here traveling all over the world as the Lord has me. So right now, I'm in training to be a full-time missionary in Spain, and I migrated here to the United States when I was 16 years old.

**Darrell Bock:** And you currently, am I right, your current role is that you – I don't know whether this is an official position or something that you've chosen to do – but you help people who are immigrating to the United States get acclimated to the states. Is that correct?

**Soraya Marin:** It's an official position because the big boss gives it to me every time I turn around, but it's actually a labor of love, helping others to go through the process.

**Darrell Bock:** So you volunteer in this area.

**Soraya Marin:** That's correct.

**Darrell Bock:** This is how I got your attention. Okay, well let's dive in. Danny, I think you're with us here. Let's start with a biblical base and let's talk about as we approach the issue of immigration, we think about it from a biblical standpoint. Orient us to the concerns that Scripture gives us about how people who are foreigners should be dealt with and treated.

**Daniel Carroll Rodas:** Can you hear me, Darrell?

**Darrell Bock:** I sure can.
Because we got cut off just for a few minutes there. It's really the challenge is to get Christians to actually go to the Bible on this call, on this topic.

We just lost him. Samuel, I'll let you chime in if you're there. Have we lost them both? Okay. Alejandro?

Can I take a shot at this?

Yeah, go ahead.

You know, the Scriptures are repeated all over the place of how we should treat the stranger, the foreigner. And while some people may argue back-and-forth exactly, "What does that mean and is that relevant today?" I just bypass that totally, Darrell. I go straight to the Great Commission: "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations." And it doesn't say the ones that are over there.

So, for me, I basically bypass the whole political thing and encourage churches to reach out to who their neighbors are. If they don't know them, they should get to know them. The law does not say that we can't love them, evangelize them, disciple them, show compassion for them. That's a non-issue right now.

So, for me, the Bible tells me I am to love, evangelize, disciple all people. And when the government says I can't do that, then I have a decision. But they're not.

So in your take, the key passage is the Great Commission which says to go to all the nations; although the interesting thing you've already observed is is that one sense, you don't have to go anymore; the nations are coming to us. So how does that impact how churches should see their responsibility in your mind?

Well I think right now, everybody is very weirded out because of the whole issue of immigration and legality. There are really some people that don't know if they can talk to them. I even got a letter from one church asking if they can marry them, if they can let them have Communion, can they become members. And as far as I'm concerned, we just need to continue to hammer away with the fact that they're here legally. Now that's one group talking about illegal.
The fact of the matter is, I think there's 50 million immigrants. The 28th largest country in the world is here, first-generation immigrants, and we've got to after all of them, not just the undocumented, but the legal immigrants also. And so we have these large pockets of immigrants all over the place – Muslim, Chinese – and as far as I'm concerned, that's America; and we don't need permission from any government to go and exercise the Great Commission.

**Darrell Bock:** Yes. Danny, we've got you back, so I'll let you start in. And we may have to be dealing with this, but that's all right. We were setting the Scriptural backdrop, and I asked Alejandro which passages he thought were important, and he opened by talking about the Great Commission, that the call is to go to all the nations. So that gives us kind of a New Testament starting point. But there is more in Scripture to this theme, so I'll let you walk us through it.

**Daniel Carroll Rodas:** Yeah. I'll just take a quick minute. I actually began talking about 1 Peter, Chapter 2, that all of us as Christians are sojourners and strangers. And what I tell people is, what you're seeing is that migration is a central metaphor for what it means to be a Christian. And if that is true, then it actually means that the more we know about immigration and the more we know immigrants, we'll actually have a window into the Christian faith that we've never thought of before.

And then what I try to do is move people away from the legal issue. I mean you have to get to there. But the problem is, oftentimes, that's where we start; and what I tell people is that's where we should end. And so I say, at least in my Bible, I've got about 1,200 pages before that. I take them to Page 1, Chapter 1, Genesis 1, the image of God and get them thinking about immigrants as people. After that – again, just to do this quickly, because I know there's a timeframe here – I walk them through all kinds of narratives in the Old Testament about people on the move, even Abraham, and Ruth, and all these others. Joseph is a stranger in a strange land. And then I spend some time talking Old Testament law and ask, "Does Old Testament law give us some kind of orientation to the kinds of things that we should be looking for in US law? And what can Christians contribute to the legislation discussion?"
And then I would move to the New Testament, Jesus, his view of those who are different. The Samaritans, of course, he was a refugee for a time period. Then I'd try to unpack the theme of New Testament hospitality and Paul's ideas of the walls of separation are broken down. So you can see it's all over the Scriptures from beginning to end. And I know we don't have the time, but I could do this for hours, Darrell.

Darrell Bock: Well I will restrain your Latin impulse here and I'll account you to hold back. But the point is that there really is a variety of ways in which this can be addressed, and there are a variety of angles, and all speak in one way or another positively to a kind of sensitivity to people who are here and who have come here. Would that be kind of a bottom line for you, Danny?

Daniel Carroll Rodas: Yeah, and I think the challenge is to get Christians consciously begin to frame their view on immigration from that very basis. On the activist end, sometimes I'll find people who are interested in immigration or a poor immigrant, but it's more out of a Christian impulse. They really can't take you anywhere in the Bible. On the other hand, I have Christians who just default to Romans 13 and the legal issue. And as Alejandro knows, I mean I don't know if you'll get to this, Darrell, but he's done a wonderful job nationally, developing a program to help churches and Christians get informed and trained in immigration law. So that might be something you might want to talk to Alejandro about. But I commend his work to you. But just getting Christians to be very self-consciously Christian about this would be a major step.

Darrell Bock: Now, Samuel, how do you view this as President of the National Hispanic Leadership Conference of – let's talk biblically first, and then we'll get into the more practical sides. What would you add to what Alejandro and Danny have said to us?

Samuel Rodriguez: No, but they framed the biblical context in a very adequate manner. It's reconciling Leviticus 19 with Romans 13, it's Matthew 25, it's applying the Good Samaritan Parable to occur in immigrant reality. And what Danny alluded to, Genesis, it's recognizing the Imago Dei, the image of God in every single human being.
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The way that I phrase it is simple. Because immigration really stands as a politically polarizing issue and debate in America, we attempt to transcend that at the Hispanic Evangelical Association, and the phrase that I use that immigration is not about the donkey or the elephant, it's more about the agenda of the lamb. It's more about the lamb's agenda. And sometimes as Christians, we suffer from cultural and political myopia, and we see things via the spectrum of a political apparatus rather than prophetic witness. So the charge is, when you wake up in the morning and you see yourself as a follower of Jesus Christ, then we will see the immigrant with compassion. If you see yourself as one political ideology or the other, then you may see them via the optics that may dilute the very compassionate nature that is embedded in the Word of God.

Darrell Bock: Okay. Soraya, now we've laid some biblical groundwork here. Let's talk a little bit about the practicalities of what happens when someone comes to the country. What scenarios do you work with on a regular basis as people get acclimated to coming into the country? And I'm assuming that you have contact with people who are attempting to do so, both legally and are who are here illegally as well. What exactly does that involve?

Soraya Marin: That's correct. There's a group of people that legally can come into the country as students or work visas, and then there's a whole path that you go through to help them with that. And then there is the ones that typically you'll find here – because I haven't met anybody from other countries wanting to come illegally – but once you find them here, it's a total different path to help them there. But there's a couple of things that are very common to both of them, and one is a very obvious one, and that’s the language issue. And then I would advise anybody that is migrating to any country, of course, to research and learn as much of the language, even when you speak the same language. As I'm going to Spain, I'm finding myself trying to look for things that are different, because it's an ability to communicate with a community that makes sense, whether it's the exact syntax or grammatical expression is different, it's, "Are we communicating or not?"
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The other thing that I think is also very practical is values: "What values really do you hold in your life?" Because when you migrate to a totally different environment, those will be pushed and those will be exposed to the new cultural activities and the new cultural forces that you're going to be encountering. So really migrating to a different country, make sure that you know what you believe in and what your values are to make sure that you don't compromise those that really are important to you.

And for Hispanics, family is one of those big values and is one that often gets compromised in trying to chase the American dream versus family. So it's one that we've had to constantly help and walk alongside with people in terms of what that means.

**Darrell Bock:** How do family values get challenged in the pursuit of the dream? How exactly does that happen?

**Soraya Marin:** The opportunities that people have here in order to either obtain further education or work is very extensive compared to many other countries where people migrate from. And if you're not careful, that really can take a life of its own where, perhaps, seeing your family and spending time with your family is something that gets put on the back burner. In the cases of the ones that are coming that are illegal, sometimes you have to counsel people that haven't seen their family in years – 10, 15, 20 years.

I recently had to deal with a couple that faced the death of a sister, and he came to this country illegally and he hasn't been able to see her, and she died, and he barely was able to talk to her on the phone; but that was it. So there's a big tradeoff, I mean there's a big price to be paid for that.

**Darrell Bock:** Now, Samuel, let's talk about values a little bit more in the Hispanic community. I know family is an important value. What other values are generally the part of the Hispanic culture that those who are not Hispanic may or may not be aware of?

**Samuel Rodriguez:** Faith. Faith, faith, faith, faith. Across the board, faith. It's faith, it's family. A great sense, by the way, of entrepreneurship. It really is the 21st century embodiment of Plymouth Rock in Jamestown. You have this idea of religious freedom, religious liberty; and you have this idea of entrepreneurship – the idea that, "Hey, in this country, we can start our own business, we can provide to our children something that we did not have," and it is embedded in the Latino DNA.
We will give more for our children and we will pass on to our children much more than what we receive. And that's embedded in the Latino DNA.

So let's think about it – it's faith, it's family, it's a hard work ethic, it's entrepreneurship. I think these are values that permeate the American experience.

**Darrell Bock:** What are the dangers – and, Alejandro, I'll turn to you for this, and maybe Samuel, you can chip in – what are the dangers of someone coming over into this society in terms of what happens to Hispanic values? We've already heard a little bit of the tension that's introduced in relationship to family relationships. But what are the other dangers that you commonly see that Hispanic immigrants run into?

**Alejandro Mandes:** Well, there's a culture clash. All the things of their country and the family that help permeate and keep everything together in their worldview are ripped away. And so they have opportunities they've never had, they have choices they never had, they have media that draws them. So, so many of the things that were kind of like a womb to them are gone and they had default decisions that were being made for them that now they have to make very, very conscious choices.

The opportunities can be very, very good and turn out very well. But I agree with my compadres and comadre that this is, I believe on the net, a very good thing for them here. The choices are difficult, but I think on the net, it's good to be here.

**Darrell Bock:** Samuel, what do you see? And then Danny, I'm going to come to you next.

**Samuel Rodriguez:** Well, I mean, again, I agree with Dr. Mandes. At the end of the day, it's a net gain across the board, individually and for our country. But there are some values, there are some radical shifts. You put this in perspective at a macro level, in their individual countries – be it in the small farm, be it in the community in the downtown and what they produce – there's a commitment to production. When they come to America, we become uber-consumers.
So consumerism really takes us over. And then there's more of a community component outside the US; and in America, there's uber-individualism. So there's uber-individualism, not just individualism, but uber-individualism, uber-consumerism; and these two things clash with the Latino DNA coming in.

**Darrell Bock:** And how much risk is there of becoming isolated because you're culturally disconnected at least initially from the culture? Is that a danger or do people come in groups? How exactly does that work, Samuel?

**Samuel Rodriguez:** There is. First generation is the generation of self-preservation. It is a generation that is more committed to self-preservation – I'd rather use that than isolation. But it is a de facto isolationist sort of outcome, but it's more self-preservation. Second generation, it's more about integration and acculturation. So what happens? That's why these Latino evangelical churches thrive – of course, the commitment to Christ and the vertical outreach – but it's because that Salvadorian church in East LA, they make pupusas. It really is. They make pupusas and they play Salvadorian music, and you basically say, "Hey, this feels – it looks like, it smells like an extension of my native land."

So that first generation church is primarily immigrant and primarily committed to self-preservation leading to isolation.

**Darrell Bock:** Danny, what do you see in your interaction in this area?

**Daniel Carroll Rodas:** Well, let me just add a few things to what has already been said. Yesterday, I was up in a town – I'm here in Denver – and so I was up in the mountains at a small church in Frisco, which is close to skiing areas, and I was speaking. And fascinating church, bicultural church, and they're really working on this. But a number of Guatemalans were there. I mean here in Colorado, most are Mexican, and they were all from Santa Rosa from the Departamento de Cuilapa, and they'd all come to Frisco. I mean so what you're seeing is what somebody was talk about where you gather together, and they were connected by family and friends from Santa Rosa in Guatemala.

The other thing that I would add to what's been said, and I think the majority culture needs to appreciate this – the move to integration is actually a negotiation of loss. And so what I find is a certain sadness. Even though they can get caught up in the consumerism and the individualism, they're negotiating the loss – the loss of language.
In the Hispanic church I go to, the kids speak English among themselves, the parents speak Spanish among themselves. The parents will speak to the children in Spanish and the children will answer in English. Inside the home, you're witnessing the negotiation of the loss of language. And how do parents talk to their kids about some of these hard, hard issues?

We also know from statistics that because of the shadow of the pressure of being undocumented. And those who know immigration law realize that if you're here undocumented, there's no path, no line to get into. And so they live under this shadow, and so there's increased drug abuse, spouse abuse, and alcoholism in Hispanic communities, because they have this extra layer of pressure every time they go out on the street and every time they get on the road, the pressure and the fear of being stopped.

We have families in our church where the father's been taken away to detention centers; and that whole layer that people don't know about in this country, a lot of these detention centers are privately run businesses, they're international firms.

Here in Denver, there's a 1,400 bed detention center that's run by GEO, an international security firm that gets paid by the government per day, per head. I mean there's all kinds of things that are going on within the Hispanic community that lays this shadow over them that is increasingly causing issues within the family itself, and the church becomes the haven for self-preservation and communion and compassion.

Danny, let me follow up, because I know in reading your book on this topic that one of the things that struck me, and that most people are not aware of is, how open our borders were for a long time in encouraging people to come – not just that people came and they came illegally, but they were encouraged to come here and find themselves here. And then when kind of the game started to switch and we became concerned about how open the borders were from a national perspective, all of a sudden, these people were caught in this shadow that you're talking about. Can you elaborate on that some?
Daniel Carroll Rodas: Well there's a long history there. I mean the US is a country which is full of the history of migration. In the mid 19th century, the largest group were the German, and then you move into the Irish and the Italians; and we slapped quotas on them because they were Catholics. So this has been an ongoing issue since the founding of the republic; and what we find worldwide – because this is another thing that may be important for you, Darrell – the UN guestimates there's about 215 million people migrating worldwide, looking for work, food, a new life.

The US is just part of an international challenge. So to fix the US issue doesn't really deal ultimately with global economics which is driving the migration of people. So I think what we need to appreciate is, this is about work and jobs worldwide, and this is what happens in this country. A large percentage of the farming industry is done by undocumented immigrants, meat-packing plants, a lot of your service industries – whether the restaurants or cutting the grass, construction – largely staffed by undocumented immigrants.

So on the one hand, we have this help wanted sign, and then in the other hand, we have this "we don't want you" sign. And so this is the clash; and in Washington, this is one of the debates. You see the Chamber of Commerce debating politicians because business needs their labor.

And so those are the uncomfortable global issues that we have to get to and then ask ourselves, "How does US law somehow integrate into the global economy?" These are the complicated issues that we don't get on bullet point newscasts on our media.

Darrell Bock: So if you just went and said, "Well let's shut it all down and stop," we'd actually have whole parts of our society that would also come to a halt simultaneously. Is that right?

Daniel Carroll Rodas: Yeah. And just think about farming. One of the reasons you can have food that's reasonably priced is because it’s undocumented labor and they don't pay them good wages. The reason you can go to a shopping mall and enjoy sales on what you buy is because that's being brought in overseas from labor that's not paid adequately.

I mean a lot of our economy – I mean if we shut down the undocumented labor force, what would happen to the restaurants, what would happen to landscaping, what would happen to construction? It would just massively close down. So this is another thing that people aren't talking about, but which is an economic fact.
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**Darrell Bock:** Now, Samuel, as you look at this from your angle and we think about the tension between – and I think the rest of our time is going to be spent here – the tension between finding a path that is, if I can say it, humane in dealing with the immigration problem and that it's realistic, and yet at the same time, dealing with the legal concerns – how does the conference view that tension and how are you, from your end, trying to address these issues?

**Samuel Rodriguez:** It's a framework, and that framework reconciles Leviticus 19 and Roman 13. One: We have to stand committed to providing some sort of pathway for integration for these individuals. Second: We have, as a sovereign nation, every right to protect our borders. There is, whether we like it or not, a de facto narc or trafficking war taking place in particularly northern Mexico. Our states and our nation carries the right to protect our citizens. We need to protect those borders.

By the way, if we have technology to be able to read a license plate in Afghanistan from hundreds of miles in the sky, do you think that we can detect 200 undocumented individuals crossing the Rio Grande with backpacks? The answer is yes, we have that technology. It's just more of a resource allocation of whether or not we have the will to engage that technology in our borders, both southern and northern borders.

But third, we have to look at guest worker programs and our future flow issue. Visas: I have a little bit of a concern with some of the proposed legislation forthcoming that addresses future flow guest workers with a little bit of myopia – myopia meaning it's more about, almost exclusively about, business now and very little about family reunification. And as a pastor, I concern myself with that. We need to balance that out; that coin has two sides to it, and it's both business sector and family reunification. I think those are the major components.

As the Association, we endorse an idea that's been signed on now by the National Association of Evangelicals, the Southern Baptists, a number of very prominent evangelical organizations across the country saying that the best pathway is one that reconciles Leviticus 19 with Romans 13. We have to include some pathway to integration while simultaneously protecting our border.
Darrell Bock: So this is a situation in which, although in the United States, often the conversation is polarized, and then you have to choose in kind of an either/or. You're saying that what you all are advocating is a both/and – that you want on the one hand, a way of assimilating and getting people really to become productive members of the society. When you assimilate people, that's part of what you're providing for.
You're making it easier for them to become full participants, and thus full producers to the society and contributors to the society, rather than having to live in this shadow that we've talked about. While on the other hand, also honoring a state's right to not only control its borders, but also to control its population growth, and whether it can handle the population growth and the stress on infrastructure, etcetera, that comes with that. Is that a fair way to characterize what's being done here, or what's being argued for?

Samuel Rodriguez: It's both/and, it's not either/or. You're right, it is both/and. But, again, it's doing away with the extremes. By the way, everyone agrees, deportation is not practical. We can't afford to deport 11-12 million individuals. We don't have the manpower to deport 11-12 million individuals. So if we can't deport them, what do we do with 11-12 million individuals living in the shadows?

Darrell Bock: Not to mention the families that that breaks up if you do it.

Samuel Rodriguez: And families have been broken up. So what do we do? We integrate them. I think that's not only the Christian thing to do, it's the right thing to do across the board.
So it's just a matter of having prophetic will. I think we sacrificed the moral imperative; we sacrificed doing the right thing on the altar of political expediency. This issue has been more about politics than it has been about doing the right thing, and we have all these families and individuals that are currently suffering when we really understand what the answer is.