

Q & A with Adriel Sanchez



Core Christianity Staff (CC): Tell us how you came to personal faith in Jesus Christ.

Adriel Sanchez (AS): I was raised in a nominally Roman Catholic home by a single mother who worked very hard to provide for me and my siblings. We didn't spend much time in church, but my mother did teach me the Lord's Prayer. In High School, through a series of providential circumstances, I was befriended by a Christian family that welcomed me into their home. It was through their witness that I first began to understand the gospel for myself, and to attend church. I can still remember praying one night after a long discussion with the father in that family, "God, I know I'm a sinner and that I am not living my life the right way, *but I really don't want to have to go to church on Sundays!* Please change my heart." I woke up the next morning with a strange desire to go to church, and I haven't stopped going since then.

CC: Who has served as a spiritual mentor to you?

AS: I have had so many wonderful spiritual mentors over the years. Men and women who have encouraged me in my walk with the Lord, and helped me to grow in the faith. When I first began attending church services with that family I mentioned, I became very close with the pastor of the church. It was a small congregation of about fifty people, and he encouraged me in my walk with the Lord, answering all of my questions as I studied the Scriptures. I look back on his pastoral care with great fondness. He was patient, gracious, and had a heart for simply teaching the Scriptures. He's still faithfully pastoring a church of around fifty people, too!

CC: Seminary isn't always deemed "necessary" today for pastors. Why did you feel you needed that equipping for ministry? And why Westminster?

AS: To be honest, I didn't know what all I was getting into when I signed up for Westminster! I had heard that it was theologically rigorous, and I was looking to learn and be challenged. I had a sense of call to the ministry, but wanted to make sure that I was well equipped to teach the Scriptures to others. James' words in James 3:1 have always haunted me, "Not many of you should become teachers, my brothers,

for you know that we who teach will be judged with greater strictness.” I think it’s important for pastors to understand the historical background of the Bible, and to have the ability to handle the Scriptures in their original languages: Greek and Hebrew. Having attended Westminster, I don’t think I could have gone to a better place for training. It was hard, but extremely rewarding!

CC: You’ve opted to serve the local church. As a young pastor, what is the most challenging aspect of serving as shepherd to a congregation?

AS: It’s easy to feel like a failure in pastoral ministry. There’s a constant sense of, *I could be doing more: I could be praying, I could be studying, I could be following up with a visitor, I could be visiting a sick member, etc.* The weight of caring for souls is crushing, and I often find myself echoing Paul’s words in 2 Corinthians 2:16, “Who is sufficient for these things?” I have to remind myself daily that this is *Jesus’ church*, and he’s going to build it by the power of the Holy Spirit. I take comfort in the word of the LORD to Zerubbabel, “Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, says the LORD of hosts.” (Zech. 4:6)

CC: As a co-anchor for Core Christianity, any surprises to doing a daily program for radio?

AS: Initially, I was surprised by how *hard* it was. I’ve done some work with podcasts in the past, but radio is a different animal altogether. There was a bit of a learning curve, but as time has progressed I’ve felt more and more comfortable. Now, I’m surprised by how much fun I’m having. I look forward to recording each session, and love hearing the different types of questions we get.

CC: Do you have a “life verse” or favorite Scripture?

AS: One verse that I often go back to is Psalm 127:1, “Unless the Lord builds the house, those who build it labor in vain. Unless the Lord watches over the city, the watchman stays awake in vain.” This verse comforts me because it reminds me that this is all in God’s hands. He’s building his church, and keeping watch over her.

CC: If you were the caller to CC ... what question would you ask the hosts?

AS: I really like questions that get us talking about the Christian life. The Word is so practical, and going back and forth with Mike about how Scripture shapes our daily living as believers is great. My second choice would be a question about aliens – just to have fun.

CC: Where did you meet Ysabel—and what first attracted you to her? 😊

AS: Oh boy, I could have filled the entire space with the answer to this question. Ysabel and I met while I was in college. I was a freshman at a small Christian Liberal Arts school, and Ysabel ran the coffee shop on campus. I didn't particularly like coffee, but I would go and buy drinks just for the chance to talk with her. I was competing with what felt like the entire men's basketball and soccer teams, because they too thought she was a catch. I'll be honest, she's beautiful, and that drew me in. I didn't know she was "the one" until I got to know her better, though. One night before we were dating she told me, "I don't really know what I want to do with my life, but whatever it is, I want my life to be poured out for Jesus." Yowza.

CC: You have three adorable kids—when you brag about them what is it usually to say?

AS: We're about to have a fourth, as well! I'm amazed by how different each of our kids are. Adayah (6) has the most empathetic heart. It's amazing to see how he cares for others, especially those who are in need. Talitha (4) is our fireball. She's extremely passionate, and curious. Even at this young age, she seems so tender to the Lord. She loves asking questions about God, so I'm trying to get her to call in! Aurelius (2) is our bruiser. I brag about how tough he is. The one thing they do all have in common is that they like to be silly. We have a lot of laughs.

CC: Given the busy life you lead, what recharges the batteries?

AS: Moments of solitude are key for me. I try to sneak away when I can, and spend time in prayer, or reading Scripture (unrelated to what I'm preaching on). I've found that when I'm exhausted, the temptation is just to veg out and watch Netflix with my wife. That's fun, but I don't know that it's a battery charger. I do get refreshed when Ysabel and I are able to get away for dinner, or lunch. We try to have a weekly date. It's good for our marriage, and it's good for me!

CC: If we were going to send you on a getaway (we aren't!) ... where would you choose to go?

AS: My wife and I got away for the first time sans kids some months ago, and we took a trip to Maui. We had so much fun, I think I might go back there. Eventually, I'd love to do a tour through Europe. I'm a Southern California guy, and haven't done very much travelling. We're hoping that since we had children young, we can travel when they're older.