

SAVED

TEXT ON BLACK: ANNUAL CHURCH CONVENTION, SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS.

SAMUEL (V.O.)

And let me tell you something...
The word of God can change lives.

Loud applause followed by the sound of an organ.

INT. HOTEL, CONVENTION HALL-DAY

Vibrant colors, from all the different guests clothing,
liven the room. Banners and other religious ornaments hang.

The congregation, hundreds of PASTORS and GUESTS stand and
applaud.

PODIUM

SAMUEL JONES, (40's, pastor, wearing dark suit with collar
clergy shirt,) waits for the applause to end. A gospel choir
stands behind him.

SAMUEL

And so brothers and sisters what I
want you to think about today is...
How did God change you?

The ORGANIST strikes a few melodic keys to rev up the crowd.

SEATING AREA

A WOMAN, 40's, wearing a feathered hat, jumps to her feet.
The MAN, next to her also rises.

WOMAN

Praise the Lord. Hallelujah.

MAN

Amen, pastor. Preach the word.

MONICA JONES, 30s, Samuel's wife, in the front row, rises to
her feet and begins to clap.

Samuel dabs his forehead with a handkerchief.

SAMUEL

Before you became the person you
are today, how did God change you?
God can change anyone and he will
change you if you call on him—
(raising his Bible)
(MORE)

SAMUEL (CONT'D)

"Romans 12:2, do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect."

The crowd cheers.

SAMUEL (CONT'D)

Finally, let me urge you to continue to preach the gospel. God is good. God is love. So love one another and continue to spread the good word. God bless. Thank you.

Samuel exits the stage amid applause and song.

INT. HOTEL, HALL B-LATER

Tables, with books and ornaments for sale, are crowded with GUESTS.

A REPORTER, 20's, interviews pastor GREG CHARLES, 50's, wearing collar clergy shirt.

REPORTER

(holding microphone)

You've mentioned in the past about expansion, can you shed some light on how that can be attained?

PASTOR CHARLES

Luke 6:48. We must dig deep, even to our heart, to its center, to build upon. We gotta dig deep for a good message and we most certainly gotta dig deep in our wallets to make a donation.

FAR END OF THE ROOM

A WOMAN, 30s and her DAUGHTER, 10, take a picture with Samuel then leave.

WOMAN

Thank you, Pastor.

SAMUEL

Thank you. God bless.

Pastor SMITH, 50's, dressed in suit and clergy shirt, approaches. SEAN PHILLIPS, donor, 60's, stands next to him.

PASTOR SMITH

Samuel, I want you to meet one of our most generous donors, Sean Phillips.

Sean steps forward and shakes Samuel's hand.

SAMUEL

Nice to meet you, sir.

SEAN

The pleasure is all mine. Pastor Smith tells me you're becoming a rising star. Might even be on the ballot for president.

SAMUEL

I just try and do the Lord's work.

SEAN

Amen. Listen, come find us when all this dies down. We've got a lot to talk about.

SAMUEL

I most certainly will. God bless.

SEAN

God bless.

Sean walks away. Pastor Smith quickly addresses Samuel.

PASTOR SMITH

Listen, we're gonna start the ballot process in about an hour. Sound good?

SAMUEL

I'll be there.

Pastor Smith disappears into the crowd. Samuel sees Monica at the far end of the room when—

DOUGLAS HUNTER, 40's, holding a Bible, obstructs his path.

DOUGLAS

Pastor Samuel.

SAMUEL

Yes?

Douglas shakes his hand.

DOUGLAS

Douglas Hunter. Great sermon. I attend your church all the time. Do you mind if we take a picture?

SAMUEL

Absolutely. Let's do it.

Douglas stands next to Samuel and raises his camera phone.

REFRESHMENT TABLE

Monica grabs a glass of water and hands it to BARBARA SHEARS, 30s, guest at convention.

MONICA

So, what did you think of the sermon?

BARBARA

Inspiring. To say the least.

Monica takes a sip of her drink. Samuel approaches Monica and kisses her on the cheek.

MONICA

How are things going?

SAMUEL

So far so good.

MONICA

Oh, where are my manners. This is Barbara Shears.

Samuel shakes Barbara's hand.

MONICA (CONT'D)

Barbara is part of Pastor Charles' congregation.

SAMUEL

Thank you for coming. "For we are laborers together with God."

BARBARA

We'll I'm laborer of what I love so, this was a joy for me to be here. Thank you for having me.

SAMUEL

Indeed. Welcome.

(to Monica)

Could I steal you for a little bit?

Monica finishes her drink.

MONICA

Sure.

(to Barbara)

Nice meeting, you.

BARBARA

You too.

INT. HOTEL CHECK-IN LOBBY-DAY

Samuel and Monica cut through the crowd.

MONICA

What time is voting?

SAMUEL

In about an hour. Provided they can get the other pastors away from the cameras.

INT. HOTEL, ELEVATOR AREA-DAY

Samuel pushes the call button then looks down at his watch.

MONICA

Everything all right?

SAMUEL

Yeah. A lot to get through today.

Monica rubs his arm. The elevator doors open.

INT. HOTEL, ELEVATOR-DAY

Samuel pushes the twelfth floor button when—

BARBARA (O.S.)

Hold on.

Samuel holds the doors. Barbara enters the elevator.

SAMUEL

And we meet again.

BARBARA

"For where two or three are gathered there am I among them."

SAMUEL

Matthew 18:20. I'm impressed.

BARBARA

Don't be. I memorized it a long
time ago so I could use it at work.

They laugh. The elevator begins its ascent.

SAMUEL

(to Barbara)
Floor?

BARBARA

Ten, please.

Samuel presses the tenth floor.

MONICA

How do you like the hotel?

BARBARA

It's all right. Not too fancy but
comfortable. How about you?

MONICA

It's okay. Not the Ritz Carlton.

SAMUEL

I took her to the hotel for our
anniversary and she's been hooked
ever since.

BARBARA

You only live once, right?

Chiming bells followed by the doors opening.

BARBARA (CONT'D)

(exiting)
This is me. Hope to see you later?

MONICA

Yes.

SAMUEL

God bless.

Doors close as the elevator travels to the twelfth floor.

MONICA

Nice lady.

SAMUEL

Yeah, she seems nice.

INT. HOTEL, TWELFTH FLOOR HALLWAY-DAY

Maze-like hallway illuminated by chandeliers.

Monica and Samuel walk to room 12D. Samuel places his keycard into the door slot.

INT. HOTEL, ROOM 12D-DAY

Large room styled with glossy wooden furniture. Adjacent to the door is the mini bar.

MONICA

My feet are killing me.

Monica, adjusting her earrings, heads to the bathroom.

MAIN BEDROOM

Grand view of the downtown area. Samuel widens the curtains allowing more light to enter. He stares at the buildings.

BATHROOM

Bathrobes hang on the door. On one side is a shower and on the other is the bathtub and toilet. At the center, of the room, is a dual sink counter.

Monica, staring at her reflection, fixes her makeup. Her mood changes to melancholy. She takes a deep breath.

MAIN BEDROOM

Samuel closes his eyes when Monica approaches.

MONICA (CONT'D)

I think I'm gonna skip the next event until... oh, I'm sorry I didn't realize you were...

Samuel opens his eyes.

SAMUEL

You want to join me?

MONICA

Sure.

They interlace their hands and close their eyes.

SAMUEL AND MONICA

"Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name;

(MORE)

SAMUEL AND MONICA (CONT'D)

thy kingdom come; thy will be done
on earth as it is in heaven. Give
us this day our daily bread; and
forgive us our trespasses as we
forgive those who trespass against
us; and lead us not into
temptation, but deliver us from
evil. For thine is the kingdom, and
the power, and the glory, for ever
and ever. Amen."

Samuel passionately kisses Monica. She opens her eyes.

MONICA

What was that for?

SAMUEL

That's for how much you mean to me
and how much I love you.

MONICA

I love you too.

SAMUEL

I know things haven't always been
good but—

MONICA

It's all right, Sam. Really it is.
(beat)
Are you all right?

SAMUEL

Fine. You know what, you're right,
why don't you rest and I'll come
get you after we vote. Should be a
least an hour or two.

MONICA

Why so long?

SAMUEL

I think Greg and the other pastors
are gonna be talking to donors and
the media for at least another
twenty to thirty minutes. Everybody
wants—

MONICA

Their five minutes of fame.

SAMUEL

See you in a bit?

INT. HOTEL LOBBY, ELEVATOR-DAY

The hotel crowd has died down in numbers.

Samuel exits and heads toward the entrance.

PASTOR SMITH

Samuel.

SAMUEL

Are we ready to start?

PASTOR SMITH

I'm just trying to get everyone to wrap up.

Pastor Smith rushes back to the convention.

PASTOR SMITH (CONT'D)

I'll see you there. We'll try and make this quick.

Samuel watches him leave when Douglas approaches.

DOUGLAS

Pastor-

SAMUEL

(walking toward entrance)
I'm sorry. Can we talk later?

DOUGLAS

Sure.

Douglas watches Samuel exit the building and enter a taxi.

EXT. EAST COMMERCE STREET, DOWNTOWN-DAY

PEOPLE stand in front of St. Joseph Catholic church. Loud cheering. A newly married COUPLE, exit.

INT. MOVING TAXI, BACK SEAT, EAST COMMERCE STREET-DAY

Samuel, by the window, smiles at a wedding when-

Beeping sound. Samuel looks down at this cellphone.

CELLPHONE SCREEN: Where are you?

SAMUEL REPLY ON SCREEN: On my way.

The driver heads toward the expressway.

EXT. FBI BUILDING, NORTHERN DISTRICT-DAY

Four stories. An American and Department of Justice flag blows in the wind. Samuel's taxi pulls to the front.

TAXI DRIVER (O.S.)
Twenty-five even.

INT. TAXI-CONTINUOUS

Samuel pays the driver when-

Loud tap on the window. THOMAS RODRIGUEZ, lawyer, 40s, holding a briefcase, stares at him.

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM-DAY

Conference table with chairs. An American flag stands in the corner. On the wall is a department of justice emblem.

Samuel, holding his cellphone, sits next to Rodriguez. Visitor badges hang from their suit jackets.

RODRIGUEZ
Are you all right?

SAMUEL
I'm fine. Just have to get back to the hotel before people realize I'm not there.

RODRIGUEZ
Well, things should move smoothly here unless-

Approaching footsteps. Deputy prosecutor, JENNIFER GARCIA, 50's, holding documents and FBI agent, NICHOLAS AKKERMAN take a seat facing Samuel and Rodriguez.

GARCIA
Let me remind you... none of this is valid until your client turns over everything he has. Agreed?

RODRIGUEZ
Agreed.

Garcia slides copies of a document to Rodriguez and Samuel.

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