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"Do not be afraid or discouraged because of this vast army. For the battle is not yours, but God's"
2 Chronicles 20: 15 NIV

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Greetings to you all in the name of our precious Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. We praise the Lord Jesus for having so wonderfully blessed us and for having sent his Holy Spirit to guide and teach us. We hope and pray that He has been blessing you wonderfully and that your life has been filled with His grace. Thank you for your continued prayers for us and support of the ministry here in Peru. We definitely see the results of you praying for us. You are special people called by our Lord Jesus Christ to minister to His children. Thank you for your faithfulness to His calling. Thank you for your love for Him, for us, and for His children.

As you may have noticed, we did not send a newsletter to you in February. It has been a very interesting two months for us. We have had to travel a lot and deal with a lot of surprises and problems. The Lord has also blessed us and continues to multiply the ministry here. In February we had to leave the country, because Mary Alice and the children had still not received their resident visas. We had scheduled the trip to go to Santiago Chile, because it was the lowest cost place with a Peruvian Embassy. We hoped and prayed that the resident visas would be ready before we left to go. If they were not ready we would have to return a second time to Santiago to retrieve the resident visas at the embassy. Praise God, we received the official notice that the resident visas were ready to be picked up in the embassy in Santiago three days before we were to leave. It took four days to get the visas from the embassy in Santiago, Chile. While we were there we visited the largest park in the country and got to visit the beach for two days before returning to Peru. Even though Chile was much more modern and the people were a lot more pleasant and polite, we could not wait to get back to Peru. I guess that is one more confirmation of our call to be here.



Benjamin, Joshua and Mary Beth in our backyard.

Once we returned to Peru, we had to immediately start the process to receive the resident cards for Mary Alice and the children. This took three days in Lima. Mary Alice and the children then returned to Huancayo and Arthur stayed in Lima to meet with a group of leaders from the Mission Society: Dr. Phil Granger, the new President of the Mission Society, his wife Sue, Frank Decker, the Vice President of Field Ministries, Jim Tuttle the Latin America Coordinator, and the field leaders of Mexico, Costa Rica and Peru. They spent two days in Lima discussing the different fields and sharing successes and failures. They also met with Bishop Ochoa of the Peruvian Methodist Church. After these meetings the group traveled to Huancayo to see the ministry that was taking place there and to meet with church leaders about restarting pastoral training, the mobile medical unit, and other needs and possible ministries. The group returned with Arthur to Lima and departed for Paraguay. Arthur departed the next day to go to Dalton, Georgia to participate in a Mission Conference at Dalton First United Methodist Church. After the Dalton conference Arthur spoke at Alpharetta First United Methodist Church, before returning to Peru on March 5th.



Mary Alice, Mary Beth and Elsa at Kid's Club in Ahuac.

We also have experienced some struggles during this time. A former Peruvian Methodist pastor, who was on probation for misconduct, and a missionary from the Korean Methodist Church, offered money and a promise to buy land and build a church building to two of the churches in our District, if they would leave the Methodist Church and work with them. One of the churches was the El Tambo Church and the other was the San Ramon Church. This has obviously created tension and division not only in the churches, but also with in some of the families in these churches. We have also lost a number of our young people from our teaching team as a result of these events. It appears that the Lord is raising up a number of other young people to take their places. .

During this time of strife, the Lord has been faithful. A new Kid's Club was started in Conception and now has more than 30 children each Sunday afternoon, and we are going to start another new Kid's Club in El Tambo the first Saturday in April. We will then have four active Kid's Clubs. During our absence from Huancayo, Ansel and Jennifer Rogers continued discipling the youth from El Tambo. They also started a discipleship group with the adolescents from the Huancayo Church. Upon our return, we decided that the Rogers would continue with the two groups and we would start another youth discipleship group with unchurched youth. We now have 12 meeting in our home each Thursday night. Most of these young people had previously received Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior, but for various reasons had left the church and were not currently attending. Two of the young ladies prayed to receive Christ into their lives this past Thursday night. One of these young ladies, Christina, is pregnant, and needs your prayers for this situation. Please also pray for the others in this group: Susan, Cinthia, Esteban, Alan, Eric, Jonatan, Brando, Ricardo, Josue, Kelly, and Erica.



Two of our children at the San Carlos Kid's Club.

As I am writing, President Bush is visiting Peru. His visit has provoked an increase in terrorist activity. A car bomb was detonated in a shopping center in front of the U.S. Embassy in Lima on Wednesday night, and one of our pastors in the jungle has reported a significant increase in visible protests in his area. These activities are believed to be related to the terrorist group called the Shining Path. We have not been effected by these events with the exception that we have had to postpone or restrict our travel during this time, and we do not expect any additional problems. Pray that these activities subside with our any further incidents.

Again we want to thank you for all your support and prayers. Please continue to pray for the church here in Peru, for the children and young people that are part of the ministries here, for the tension in the churches, and for the church leaders. Pray for the Lord to enable us to train more church leaders, cell pastors, and church pastors. Please pray for the leaders of the church here: Bishop Marco Ochoa, and District Superintendents Jose Bustamante and David Figeroa. Please pray for our continued adjustment to the Peruvian culture and that we will boldly speak God's Word wherever we go. We pray that God is drawing you closer and closer to Him every day.

God bless you. We love you.

Yours in Christ,

Arthur, Mary Alice, Benjamin, Joshua,
and Mary Beth Ivey
Missionaries to Peru

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