

PETERSON'S News of Proclaiming in PERU

SUMMER 2015

Travels and New Birth

If you drive about 40 miles southwest of Fort Wayne, Indiana on highway 24 you come to Peru, Indiana, a travel destination for people interested in seeing Cole Porter's birthplace. Travel a lot farther south and you'll arrive in Peru, South America, where 14 dancing and singing North Americans witnessed God change eternal travel plans and establish "new" birth places for Peruvians in Lima, Chosica and Ica.

This year we used our 14-day ministry trip to reach out in Peru's capital city, **Lima**, in **Ica** 200 miles to the south and in **Chosica** 50 miles inland. Through dance, music and mime, our team ranging in age from 13 to 60 unpacked the gospel for audiences in three public schools, one private school, an impoverished section of Lima, four churches, two Lima plazas and a municipal theater.



A Day of Miracles

Recently someone asked, "What was one highlight of your trip to Peru?" I was excited to share about one day in particular which overflowed with visible evidence of God's power. Many times we have to step out in faith/obedience without ever knowing the results of our efforts. However, on this particular Saturday we saw with our own eyes what only God can do—work miracles of love in hearts that are ready to respond to him. This was a day to see this happen for five persons:

The day began with dance and music workshops, the last of three such classes where students from a Christian school were invited to participate. During last year's outreach there we were invited to provide this service for them, hoping we could encourage their students to reach out to others with the Good News, using their creative talents. Since I did not attend the dance workshop I will insert a quote from Stacey, the dance team director, explaining the first two heart-changing events in the day of miracles:

First, we had our last workshop with the students ...being that it was Saturday we had four come to the dance workshop, but none were able to go out to our outreach with us. Since we were not worried about having them ready to dance with us, we spent more time on some worship exercises (using movement to express our emotions, struggles, and our personal experiences with God). This really broke down some barriers and we were all (adults included) able to share with each other on a deeper level.



That led to us going through a gospel tract as a group together and sharing our personal experiences with Jesus, which led to 2 girls accepting Christ as their Savior today! However, the really AWESOME thing is that only ONE of those two was Peruvian...the other was our own sweet Anna, who has been such a trooper through all kinds of things before and during this trip. God's ultimate purpose for her participation was to get her to the point of understanding how to have a true relationship with Jesus for herself! We have watched this transformation slowly taking place through this entire month of preparation and during this trip, and it culminated today with her decision to surrender her life to Christ. Watching the joy on her face as she danced and spoke tonight brought some of us adults to tears! God is so amazing in how He works! Praise Him for both of our new sisters!"



The third and fourth miraculous transformations came later that evening. After a short rest at the pastor's home our plan to launch another street outreach was doused by rain and the South American soccer final that afternoon. In Peru the country stops to watch these sports events. The streets are left deserted until the match is over. During this time the dancers reworked some routines. Then after the game, we all went out to do a few songs and dances to attract the people that were passing through a large park in front of the church. We invited everyone we saw to come see the full performance inside the church.

During the hour and a half performance for this local CMA youth service the people in the park who we had invited plus the ones from the church gave us an audience of about 50. This was the first time Anna performed and shared as a new creation in Christ. This change allowed the whole team to perform totally unified for the first time. It seemed to all of us that the Holy Spirit was freer now than before to flow in an amazing way. Rino, our Peruvian leader, presented a creative invitation to those that would like to give their lives over to Christ. Even though it was a youth meeting, a gray-haired man had been drawn in from the street and had sat through the whole performance. He sat squarely in the middle of the front row. When the invitation came, he raised his hand but was not silent about his confession as he began to explain the testimony of his last few years of life. He was a Christian but admitted he had been angry at and running from God during the last 3 years after his wife had left him. But as he was passing by the dance and music in the park he told us that he tried to keep going but was compelled in his spirit to follow us into the church. The Holy Spirit spoke to him in a powerful way, urging him to return to walking again with Jesus. As the man spoke, Rino was deeply moved and had to hold back his emotions. Two girls sitting on either side of the man let the tears of joy flow as they prayed with him. A broken spirit before the Lord is such a precious sight. Miracle number 3 had occurred and was celebrated with a great resolve!

The Spirit continued to move through the room and next settled on Guillermo. He experienced the fourth God-miracle of the day. The previous afternoon we were sharing outside in a park in the center of Lima. There was no shortage of opposition as we struggled with technical issues: no microphones and the battery on our speaker died right as the first dance was beginning. One of the dancers immediately called a prayer circle. Kim kept the crowd entertained with his amazing saxophone skills (without accompaniment) and Rino miraculously got batteries within a few minutes. We held a crowd of about 75 people for over an hour. At one point, one of our dancers pointed to a man with a red backpack and said, "One of us needs to talk to him. He's been here for the whole performance."

For the first time several of us met Guillermo who said he understood how to accept Jesus, but had never taken that step because he was afraid he wasn't good enough. He thought he needed to be perfect before he followed Jesus mainly because he didn't want to be one of those Christians who continues to do "bad things" and are bad examples. This is a good reminder to all of us that people are watching those of us who call ourselves Christian. As we spoke with Guillermo, we kept bringing him back to Jesus' sacrifice and His perfection rather than our own efforts and good intentions. We could see he was so close to making a decision. We encouraged him that once he makes that decision Jesus will help him to live as he should, but he needs to take that first step in faith! As we ended our conversation he said he was interested in seeing the performance again.



At the following evening's event Guillermo showed up early, watched the rehearsal, the street dances and then stayed for the whole church performance. He witnessed the dancers' interactions with each other off stage and experienced the gospel again through their performance and testimonies, through Rino's invitation and by listening to the elderly man's confession about wandering away from God. What a perfect set of events to bring someone to their knees—hearing about Christ's love and sacrifice, witnessing a broken man confess his sin and receiving an invitation to accept God's life-changing love. Guillermo had conversations with the church's pastors, with Kim and others and finally with Rino minutes before our bus pulled away. This last time proved to be the definitive one as he took the miraculous step of faith and walked into new life. The bus waited for Rino to get on and for Guillermo to announce his decision!

After rejoicing on our bus drive home we arrived at our seminary abode. We all got off the bus and waited as usual for Rino to call the gate keeper to open the door. Because it was taking longer than usual he walked down to a second entrance. "Strange", I thought, "Doesn't he have his phone?" We approached Rino to find out if there was a problem. He told us that his phone was out of power and that a call was the only way to get someone to open the door for us into the school grounds. So in desperation he prayed. Instantly his phone worked so that he could make the call. He showed us his phone still lit up even though the battery symbol showed no power! That was miracle number five; a perfect way to end the day by reminding us how much God cares for us and longs to respond to our requests. All of them together showed us His power at work—"Ask and it shall be given to you; seek and you shall find; knock and it shall be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks, it shall be opened." Matt. 7:7-8





Our California headquarters “set-up” continues well

We have been building since May, remodeling part of Kim’s parent’s home so that it will accommodate all of us. The Lord has blessed us with an experienced Christian contractor who has been guiding us toward the goal. The experience has been exhilarating and exhausting. And it has had it’s share of difficulties. Among them, the challenge of complying with California building codes. I have often wondered if this is like trying to attain righteousness through keeping Pharisaical laws. At any rate, we thank God for his grace evidenced in our lives as we combine two families (Kim’s parents and us) under one roof. Completing the work will require most of our attention during the summer months.

What is next?



In August we will meet with the organizer of an outreach that we plan to be part of in Chile in January. Caleb and Tracy Forrester-Godoy worked with us in Spain several years during our camping ministry there at L’Arcada. They now live in Chile and want to reach their community using sports and other creative means to share the Gospel. They presently have a workshop in their home used to train widows in creative skills so they can have an income to support their families. Please pray that our January 2016 plans will come together and that the Lord will build just the right team to join us there.

We offer our humble thanks to everyone who is praying for us and contributing toward our needs. You are helping us serve God in his work of making miracles happen.

Special Prayer:

We also ask for continued prayer for our remodeling work and expenses. If you would like to make a special contribution to Proclaim on our behalf it will help allow us to pay for this project from our salary and not our savings. Thank you for considering this.

For him whose love compels us,

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