

April Newsletter 2024

Thank you so much for your prayers and faithful support this month. We truly appreciate you, and the Lord will use your giving for the kingdom as we place it in his hands with faith. Here's where we are in:

News/Ministry: Getting to know others little by little.

This month, praise the Lord. There have been many opportunities to get to know more people. Rocio's family gets together each Monday. Papa Lucho, Rocio's grandfather, has two sons (Rocio's uncles) and three daughters (Rocio's aunts). One of the daughters is Rocio's mom, Mery. They were big get-togethers, as the whole family came together. We went there, and they liked Stephen and Noah and visited with us a lot, as we did with them. Another opportunity we had was to play volleyball and soccer with the parents of Noah and Stephen's school. There will be a parent sports tournament in June, and the parents are training once a week for that. Participating in this event has been fun and a great opportunity to get to know others better. Likewise, we visited a church in Huari twice with Pastor Beto one Saturday night; they were doing a "vigilia" (night watch praying time) and once on a Sunday morning. There was a medical campaign in this church last November 2023, and we met some workers in the church who helped- Fatima, Judith, and Socrates. We also met the pastor, Edwin.



The Church in Huari



Soccer with School Parents



Stephen and Noah in school uniforms



Volleyball with School Parents

Rocio has started a lady's group of friends she has known in the past. They are studying the book of Proverbs. They have met about four times now! As a family, we would eat in a "menu restaurant" frequently, like in a small restaurant, because the food was cooked healthier there. We got to know the cook, Monabel, and visited her son, Piero, and her daughter, Ivosca, in their house and shared Christ with them. Their response is still yet to be seen, however. Planting seeds may come along in the future to sprout.

Circumstances:

There have been many discouraging times, but the Lord has helped us through them. I'm trying to be perseverant and patient while being patient with others. Though there are days we feel like Peter when he was fishing all night and caught nothing; however, those times are to empty us of ourselves to be filled by God. In the end, though it is hard to feel emptiness, in a sense, it is good because the only one who can fill it is Christ. The only One who can put more people in your path amid loneliness, place a desire and goal in your heart to spur you on, or even comfort you with His presence. Remember, after Peter that night caught nothing and was emptied of himself, Jesus came and told him to throw the net on the other side, and there was a load of so many fish that the boat almost sank!

That is why we take heart and don't lose hope, because it is God who produces the harvest! Partly, these feelings were due to people not showing up for set times. Despite this, however, the Lord has encouraged me greatly as I have continued to write the Bible lessons until the end, and I know in my heart God will use them and help others through them. Through all of this, the Lord placed on my heart a very crucial thing: he told me, "Pray for them, don't try and teach them." It is truly the Lord's work to change hearts. I start teaching many times in my mind, but then the Lord tells me to slow down and listen. Listen to Him, and He will tell me what to say. What also comes to mind is to trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding but to submit to him in all your ways, and he will make our paths straight. (Prov. 3:5-6). The Lord is telling us, "Trust in me."

Spiritually

Along with the idea above, the Lord has shown me a couple of helpful passages this month that complement each other well.

Jeremiah 9: 23-24, "This is what the Lord says: "Let not the wise boast of their wisdom or the strong boast of their strength or the rich boast in their riches, but let the one who boasts boast about this: that they have understanding to know me, that I am the Lord, who exercises kindness, justice and righteousness on earth, for in these I delight," declares the Lord."

Philippians 3:3, "For it is we who are the circumcision, we who serve God by His Spirit, who boast in Christ Jesus, and who put no confidence in the flesh-though I myself have reasons for such confidence. If someone else thinks they have reasons to put confidence in the flesh, I have more: circumcised on the eighth day of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; in regard to the law, a Pharisee; as for zeal, persecuting the church; as for righteousness based on the law, faultless.

But whatever were gains to me I now consider loss for the sake of Christ. What is more, I consider everything a loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them garbage(rubbish), that I may gain Christ and be found in Him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ- the righteousness that comes from God on the basis of faith. I want to know Christ- yes, to know the power of his resurrection and participation in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, and so, somehow, attaining to the resurrection of the dead."

Knowing Christ is worth it all. As we encounter struggles down here, I have to ask this question, and it's good for you to ask as well: Can I say that? Can I say what Paul is saying is also true of me? Do I long to know Christ that bad that I give my life for it? Though there are trials and losses, is Christ worth my life? The followers in Acts knew so and acted upon that. A harder question is: Is Christ worth suffering for? The answer in the Bible is yes, but what will be our answer, my answer, and your answer when hard times come? It's a response out of faith that has to come. I am reminded of what Hebrews 11 says of Abraham, "By faith Abraham, when God tested him, offered Isaac as a sacrifice. He who embraced the promises was about to sacrifice his one and only son, even though God had said to him, "It is through Isaac that your offspring will be reckoned." Abraham reasoned that God could even raise the dead, and so in a manner of speaking he did receive Isaac back from death." May each and every day or in any situation may we respond with our lives and actions with a resounding YES, he's worth everything!! (I love when Isaac asks his father where the sacrifice is, and Abraham tells him the Lord will provide it, and He did!) As we give our lives more and more fully to Christ, He will be able to make himself more known to us, work in us more, and pour over his blessings from heaven on us.

John 12:24 gives us hope, "Very truly I tell you, unless a kernel of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds." In the book Prayer by Richard Foster and in the chapter entitled "The Prayer of Relinquishment," he states,

"Why does God seemingly require relinquishment (the giving up of something) before bringing something into being? Part of the answer lies in the fact that frequently, we hold on so tightly to the good that we do know that we cannot receive the greater good that we do not know. God has to help us let go of our tiny visions in order to release the greater good he has in store for us.

But this is only a partial answer. The fuller answer lies in the purpose of God in transforming the human personality. Relinquishment brings to us a priceless treasure: *the crucifixion of the will*. Paul knew what a great gift this is. "I have been crucified with Christ," he joyfully announces. There is relinquishment. There is crucifixion. There is death to self-life. But there is a releasing with hope: "It is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by the faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me" (Gal. 2:19-20).

Do you know what a great freedom this crucifixion of the will is? It means freedom from what A.W. Tozer called "the fine threads of the self-life, the hyphenated sins of the human spirit." It means freedom from the self-sins: self-sufficiency, self-pity, self-absorption, self-abuse, self-aggrandizement, self-castigation, self-deception, self-

exaltation, self-promotion, self-depreciation, self-indulgence, self-hatred, and a host of others just like them. It means freedom from the everlasting burden of always having to get our own way. It means freedom to care for others, to genuinely put their needs first, to give joyfully and freely.

Please remember, we are dealing with the crucifixion of the will, not the obliteration of the will. Crucifixion always has resurrection tied to it. God is not destroying the will but transforming it so that over a process of time and experience, we can freely will what God wills. In the crucifixion of the will we are enabled to let go of our tightfisted hold and follow our best prayers." (Foster 54)

This a good description of what Rocio and I are going through here in Peru. And we praise the Lord; God has given us an opportunity like this to be emptied of self and humbly submit under God's mighty hand so he can lift us up in due time (1 Peter 5:6). And so, I pray for the grace and the power of the Spirit for all of us to live lives worthy of God who calls us into his kingdom and glory. One concluding verse, "For Christ love compels us, because we are convinced that one died for all, and therefore all died. And he died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again (2 Cor. 5:14-15). Thus, we always keep in mind that it is in view of God's abundant mercy and grace that we worship Him with all that we are giving ourselves as an offering to Him (Rom 12:1) and as we let go of the fear and go deeper in the river (Ezekiel 47:3-5), we will approve that God's will is good, pleasing and even perfect! Meaning it is totally worth it!! Let's go deeper in the river together and trust Him further!!!

Fundraising: This past month's giving of March giving has been excellent, and we praise God together for his goodness and provision for His work in the field of Peru and want to thank each of you!!! We need to raise \$50,067.44 for our third year for this ministry to continue. We are at approximately 53%. We trust the Lord to continue providing and bringing this ministry to fruition. If you feel the Lord Jesus is leading you to be in ministry with us financially, you can use the link below to contribute— <https://tnpartners.org> (Make a free account and choose Josh and Rocio Ivey missionary to give).

Prayer Requests:

1. For protection from the enemy: The devil's not happy we are trying to move forward in the land with the Kingdom of Christ and he doesn't want to lose ground.
2. We praise the Lord, and there have been more opportunities to get to know others and get involved. Please pray that more doors will open so we can get to know and serve others in Christ Jesus more.
3. Our sons, Noah and Stephen, are slowly learning Spanish in school. Please pray grace over them to continue and for us as parents to help them as much as possible.
4. For the Lord to guide us to people who are seeking Christ and have spiritual hunger to know Him more.

5. For wisdom in where and whom to minister to.

Blessings in Christ Jesus!!!



Dressed as Hussars of Junin ([Hussars of Junín - Wikipedia](#)) for school

