



Peru

Missionary Newsletter
of Scott and Meghan Dillon

August, 2009



Prayer Requests

“The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective.”
James 5:16

- » Praise: Mark is growing so quickly. Praise the LORD, he slept eight hours the other night.
- » Praise: Our time on the church retreat went well.
- » Pray that our Spanish would deepen and that our vocabularies would expand.
- » Praise God and thank you for continuing support. We are still short a chunk, but we're living under our budget to make up some of the difference.
- » Pray for the bible study that meets at the “Mirador” on Tuesday nights. Scott teaches on August 25.
- » Pray for Scott's visit to Huaraz to find a place to live (first week of September)
- » Pray for the Iglesia Refugio (Refuge Church). The church is growing and is in need of space, but doesn't have the monetary funds to seek another location.
- » Pray for Meghan as she works with the women in the church. Last week, she made dinner (Jambalaya) for a couple's bible study. It was the first time for many of the attendees to have sausage or shrimp.

Crime in Peru

One of the eye-opening experiences for us is living among a certain amount of chaos. Driving in Peru, for example, is an experience that requires patience and a loud horn. There are rules, but the rules bend like rubber and aren't quite as clear as my American “fit-in-my-box” mind would like. Thankfully, we don't have a car, but there are many other aspects of living in Peru that require patience. Some of them require personal security guards.



Sunday, July 19 we came home from church to a door busted open and a few belongings taken. The thieves must have been scared out because they left without cleaning house (or cleaning *the* house). And while we are very thankful that they didn't get away with more than a laptop, a digital camera and video camera, we felt very violated. Theft is very common and it forces people to live behind big metal fences, electric gates, and many streets even have security guards. Sadly, you cannot always count on the police being on your side. I hid all of our valuables before they arrived for their investigation. Regardless, thank you to everyone who prayed for us as it wasn't exactly easy to accept that some large man was in our bed (I don't know why, but our sheets and pillows were everywhere, it's like they jumped on the bed while they were here). Pray that *stings* like this one would help us to see our need to be here and not turn us cynical and away from viewing the people here as Christ sees them.

Another Visit

It has been a winter of visits for us down here. We welcomed Meghan's family in June and we were glad to have my mom, Jane and a great family friend, Joyce in July. We enjoyed some of the features of Arequipa, the beauty of Colca Canyon, but most delightful was just sitting around and enjoying each others' company. It was a taste of home and we're so glad they could come to visit.



Motherhood in Peru

As you might imagine, it is quite different being a mother in Peru than in the States.

For example, I must keep Mark covered if we leave the house. Not a single part of his skin can be seen! It's not a rule or anything, but it's certainly a cultural mandate. If someone can see Mark, they first tell me how cute he is, and then immediately fuss at me that they can see him at all. Complete strangers will pull his blanket up over his face without asking. This is mainly because they are afraid of him catching some sort of sickness, the flu, dust going up his nose, or maybe even a bad spirit.

The other day a Christian Peruvian woman with whom I have developed a relationship fussed at me for drinking milk while eating grapes. She explained to me that the concoction would create a poison in my body and potentially kill Mark, who is breast-feeding. I didn't agree or believe what she said, but because of my close

relationship with her, it made me very upset. How do I explain to this Christian woman that maybe some of the "motherly advice" she grew up with is mere superstition?

How difficult it is for some Peruvians to completely abandon the ideas of their ancestors! Certainly the Gospel needs to be displayed *through* their culture and personalities. However, God desires to change the whole self and that almost always means culture sanctification also.

All of these experiences sanctify me as well. It makes me pay attention to the areas of my own culture that aren't Biblical but are merely American. My intent isn't to lose those things, but to drop judgement on others who don't follow my mold. Being a mother in Peru is more about living in the freedom of the Gospel and not becoming bitter or jaded from cultural differences. With this attitude I hope to be an effective witness cross-culturally.

Mirador

The word, *mirador*, means viewpoint.

Normally, it's used to describe a place where you can see a good view, like a "Scenic Lookout." An area of Arequipa, nicknamed The Mirador, is outside of town on the side of El Misti (the big volcano). Because of its location, there is an incredible view of the city from this side of town. However, no one is putting up a big house with lots of windows anytime soon because it is also one of the poorest areas of town.

The church we attend, Iglesia Refugio, has a bible study that meets at the Mirador on Tuesday nights. If you remember in our previous newsletter, I (Scott), have been working at the Cafe Berea to afford time for the pastor, Efrain, to go to the bible study. However, that plan never could've lasted long.

For the past month and a half now, I have been attending the bible study with Efrain. About twenty people have been coming and it's a very encouraging ministry. Three weeks ago a mother and daughter gave their lives to Christ. The daughter then recently attended the youth retreat with the church. I am increasingly encouraged by this Bible study and will be teaching on the 25 of August.



Campamento

The word, *campamento*, means campground or just camp. Here it refers to a location about an hour outside the city where the church has their youth retreats. There are two youth groups. The older group, *jovenes*, actually goes up to about the age of thirty unless they're married. On the weekend of July 31, the church took the group of *jovenes*, about 20 people, to the campamento for a weekend retreat. I (Scott) was invited to teach on relationships and purity.

I had been nervous in preparation because while I didn't want to stand and read a short manuscript to the group, I also didn't want to confuse or speak poorly to anyone. I prepared the message in Spanish, had it corrected by my teacher, and read it enough times to myself that I could speak with intonation and inflection and yet not get stuck on a rabbit trail and not know how to say something.

The message went well and afterwards we had a group discussion that lasted a while. I was quite encouraged and able to participate in the discussion. Opportunities like this one and the bible study at the Mirador have wet our appetites for all that God has planned for us in Huaraz.

