

Rumble in the Jungle

By Billy Drum

I spent last week in the Amazon Jungle with our teammates, Arthur and Mary Alice Ivey, and Beto and Karen Matos (Peruvian nationals who work with us). We went to train 12 new leaders who wish to lead discipleship programs in the jungle. This is a part of the multiplication process... we disciple people in The Word, and when they are mature and ready, they start their own groups. The Ivey's began the discipleship program in 2005. It is now in it's "third or fourth generation", meaning that it has multiplied at least that many times. What began as 20-25 people in the first two groups has now multiplied to more than 2000 people who have studied together and started new groups. The leadership training sessions were designed to help new leaders prepare to start their own bible study/disciple groups in their own villages, towns, families, etc.

The training was in Puerto Bermudez, a frontier village on the edge of civilization. People travel from all around by truck or by boat (often dugout canoes) to bring their crops to market. We traveled by pickup truck on paved roads for 4-5 hours, and then on a treacherous rock and dirt road for another 6-7 hours. Depending on conditions, this part of the trip (the rock road) can take upwards of 8 to 10 hours.

The conference allowed the new leaders to share their questions, concerns, and their stories. It was through the sharing of their stories that the group was able to open up and bond with each other in ways that they otherwise could not have. Sharing their stories was a powerful part of the training. As each person shared, we could see a change in their face - especially their eyes. They were set free from their fears, worries and pains that were holding them back.

Please pray for these new leaders as they go out and make disciples of others:

Pablo and Floria - a couple from Puerto Bermudez, were responsible inviting the new leaders and hosting the event. They have a ministry that is touching lives throughout their region of Peru. Pablo is a local pastor with a strong desire to bring others to Christ. To support their ministry, Pablo has started a soft drink bottling operation in his home. He works 20 days a month bottling and selling drinks with local jungle flavors to community stores so that he can work the other 10 days full time in ministry. By the way - he is outselling Coca-Cola in many of the surrounding villages! Pablo also has a special ministry to reach the young people in this area... he has started a disco where they can come and dance to Christian music under black lights and flashing disco lights. A disco in the jungle - think glorified carport/garage/wooden building where people are able to enjoy themselves, dance to Christian music, and be free from the influence of sex, drugs and alcohol. A gospel message is also shared with them during the night by Pablo. It is a pretty successful venture!

Angel and Sara—Last year, Angel was going out late at night, drinking, and being unfaithful to his wife while she was sitting at home every night dreaming of ways in which she could kill him when he returned home. It was during one of these times of crisis that Pablo and Floria (see above) came to help counsel the couple and share the gospel message with them. Through this counseling and the work of the Lord, they were able to reconcile their marriage, learn about Christ, and are currently in the leadership program, wanting to lead others to Christ through discipleship.



Gilberto and Ernesto -2 former alcoholics who are now on fire for Christ and spreading the word throughout their village.

Edwin and Cati -A young couple (both 20 years old) They want to minister to others their age. The husband shared that before being saved he was involved in demon worship.

Gracia and Elinda -Two girls (each 15 years old) Both of them were kicked out of broken homes and lived on the streets for some time. Both of them, fortunately, found someone to share the gospel with them and protect them from the possibility of life on the streets and prostitution. Both of them shared how their lives have changed and they are working for reconciliation and discipling within their families and others in their situation.

Flor - A little over a month ago, her husband was killed after being struck by a motorcycle. At that time, he was ministering to others in their community. Many of the people at the meeting had been touched by his life in some way or another. He, too, had started a Christian disco in another village (Palcaso) as a means of sharing the gospel. He had been attacked, both verbally and physically, by others for his work spreading the gospel. The Christian disco was competing heavily with the traditional discos in the area that played secular music and served alcohol. At the time of his death, Flor was involved very little in the ministry and was raising their 2 children (4 and 15 years old). Immediately following his death, a woman came to her for advice and counseling. Flor did not know what to say or do, but she began talking and found herself sharing the gospel with this woman. She found that she DID have the words and the ability to share. She was empowered by this experience. She has not let the loss of her husband impact the ministry and she is now carrying on in his footsteps and continuing his work.

The participants were also trained in children's ministry (Kids Club). After the training, they practiced their new knowledge with 150 kids in attendance! Many parents came and stood on the fringes, curious as to what was going on. Beto, Karen and Pablo quickly put together an impromptu lesson for parents and shared the Bible with them... many of them accepted Christ that afternoon.

It was an incredible week in the jungle! Many people were changed by stories of God's unfailing love, acceptance and forgiveness in their lives and the lives of others. And they are now living the Great Commission... going forth and making disciples.

To learn more about my exciting experiences with jungle food, insects, and several animals, please go to our blog site. (www.drumsforchrist.blogspot.com)

March to the beat... Daily life with The Drums

- ◆ The two girl's bible study groups are still plugging along after 6 weeks. We have 3 more weeks to go in this study. No dropouts (which is a welcome surprise). The university girls (Monday nights) are, by far, more studious and more involved in the discussions. The youth girls (Wednesdays) are definitely youth girls... they are either completely silent or they are laughing their heads off. Sometimes they do their study homework, sometimes they don't. With that group, I have to keep reminding myself that sometimes my job is just to plant seeds...
- ◆ We have a new group that has started meeting in our living room on Tuesday nights. It is an "open group", meaning that everyone is free to invite people each week, and we aren't following any set book or study theme... just a bible lesson on whatever the speaker chooses that week. The group is mostly "twenty-somethings". This past week, we had 13 in attendance, with 2 missing because they were in the jungle. I'm impressed with the level of engagement that these young adults have - they really dig in and study and discuss. After the lesson, they hung around and played the guitar and sang contemporary Christian songs for another 45 minutes before calling it a night.
- ◆ Did you know that **70% of the people in the world are oral learners?** That means that they either cannot read, or they don't process information well from a written format. This statistic is the same in the USA... 7 out of 10 people learn best by hearing and experiencing, not by reading. In other words, handing people the Bible isn't enough. We are committed to teaching the bible stories and principals in an oral/storytelling format, so that ALL will have the opportunity to learn The Truth... the illiterate, the blind, the children, and everyone who wants to hear and learn more. But it is taking a lot of work on our part, because Spanish is not our first language. We are learning how to tell all of the stories in an oral/storytelling format and lead discussions and teach the biblical principals behind every story. The majority of the cultures in the world revolve around an oral history and storytelling tradition. We come from a technological culture that has forgotten this tradition. We are trying to re-learn it for the advancement of the Kingdom. Please pray for our language skills and our learning/translating of the bible stories and principals so that others can hear and learn.
- ◆ **We have 10+ teams on the calendar for next year (2009)**, and a couple on the calendar for 2010! Medical teams, construction teams, evangelism/children's ministry teams, etc. Some are going to the jungle, some are coming to Huancayo, some are headed South to Puno/Lake Titicaca. We also have several people planning to visit us on "scouting visits" to check things out for their teams/churches for the following year. If you are planning on a short term mission trip or scouting visit for 2009, **please get on our calendar SOON!**
- ◆ Please check out our blog for more interesting journal entries from the month... www.drumsforchrist.blogspot.com Everything just won't fit in the newsletter!!!



Walking alongside Peruvians

Some of the more "interesting" fine points of living in Peru:

- ◆ If you have a sore throat or a cough, a traditional remedy is to throw several frogs in a blender with some milk and drink the "juice". No joke! There is almost an entire street devoted to home remedies (among other things) and we have watched the frog remedy in action! Scientifically speaking, it probably actually works because most frogs and toads have a toxin in their skin that acts as a numbing agent, but that doesn't make me want to do it! Maybe this is where the original meaning of "I have a frog in my throat" came from???
- ◆ I recently attended a school anniversary celebration (basically, Peruvian style Homecoming without the football game or the Homecoming queen). The event lasted all day—not unusual. Every class performed a different cultural traditional dance, complete with full costumes. Very interesting, actually. During the event, the school sold meal plates as a fundraiser. The choice was a plate of mixed grilled meats or grilled trout, served with potatoes and huancaína sauce. Several of us went for the grilled meats, and several went for trout. All was very tasty! The interesting part to me was, there wasn't a fork or knife to be found in the entire place... we're talking hundreds of people eating plates of food with no utensils. Actually, I'm all about that plan! It is much easier to pick the tiny bones out of your trout without having to worry about a fork! And let's face it, there is something really liberating about picking up a piece of meat and tearing it off the bone. I'm finished with the Martha Stewart phase of my life... I'm moving on to a more indigenous phase! This works for me!
- ◆ Still haven't tried cuy (guinea pig) for dinner yet, but I hear it is on the menu soon. A little scared... I'll let you know how it goes... I won't use a fork!
- ◆ I'm a little afraid of the Indian witchdoctor man who walks around the market pushing a baby stroller full of boa constrictors. I'm talking, HUGE boas in the seat of a baby stroller. He is chanting something and shaking a fancy stick. People walk by him and put money in his basket, but they don't receive anything and he doesn't even stop walking to talk to them. I don't understand it yet. But he has a serious, almost scary look on his face and I have decided that I don't really want to know too much about him.
- ◆ In the jungle, it is not unusual to have a giant bat circling your head during your prayer meeting, nor is it unusual to have a tapir walk into the corner store for a banana, or have a scarlet macaw yell at you during your leadership meeting... all of these things happened to Billy in the course of one day in the jungle.

Contact information for The Drums

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*Regular mail takes 7 days
 from USA to our door!
 Awesome!!!*

We have a USA phone number! You can call us at 979-985-5268 and it will ring our phone in our home office in Peru!

Please check the blog for updates at www.drumsforchrist.blogspot.com

To see the newsletter in color, get the pdf edition online. Go to the website and click "Newsletters" to download the newsletter in color!
www.drumsforchrist.org

To donate to our ministry account, please mail in the form at the right, or visit The Mission Society website and donate on-line to our personal ministry support account #5/321. <http://www.themissionsociety.org/people/drum>



DEAR BILLY AND LAURIE,

I will pray for you. Please send me your prayer letter.

Update me by email: _____

As God provides, I plan to partner with you by giving \$ _____ per month / quarter / year for _____ years.
(circle one)

I would like to donate a one-time gift of \$ _____.

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Some of the members of the Tuesday night Open Bible Study group that meets in our home.

Prayers & Praises

Praises:

- ◆ We now host three nights of bible study groups and disciple classes in our home, with a fourth night to begin this month.
- ◆ Ryan and Miles (and the rest of our family members) lived through Hurricane Ike. Laurie's family members in Houston have been without power and water and took a lot of damage to their area, but they are finding the silver linings in that storm cloud... God always has a silver lining!
- ◆ Prayers answered! Miles has a job at Texas A&M working in food service. He works each night from 3-9 p.m.
- ◆ Praises for the smooth transition from tourist visa to residency for Sarah. We are now all official residents of Peru.
- ◆ Praises for teaching jobs! Laurie is now teaching science to 2nd-5th graders and English to 3-6 year olds.
- ◆ Billy has just returned from Puerto Bermudez (Amazon jungle) where he worked to train leaders who have started bible studies and disciple groups in the Amazon... an amazing trip!

Prayers:

- ◆ Continue to pray for the bible studies and disciple groups

that we host in our home each week. Pray that opportunities continue to show themselves so that we can share the gospel and grow others in Christ.

- ◆ Pray for our continued language learning and our ability to use our new language to spread the Word of Christ. We have begun working with a local Peruvian teacher who has agreed to help us with language, translations, writing bible study, etc.
- ◆ Pray for Billy's (& Sarah's) ministry to people in the city parks - reading / telling bible stories to children and anyone who would like to listen.
- ◆ Pray for job opportunities for Ryan, currently studying at Texas A&M Kingsville. Pray for his studies as well (Honors Chemistry, Microbiology, and Psychology among other courses this semester!).
- ◆ Please pray for all of the people in the jungle and the sierra who have accepted Christ and are eager to learn more. Several Peruvian nationals have stepped up to help teach and spread the gospel. Pray for their success! We still need more who are willing and able to disciple others... *The harvest is plenty, but the workers are few.* Pray for our national disciples to have courage and strength to step out and lead others, telling The Story and teaching The Word.



Serving Christ in Perú

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Visit us at

www.drumsforchrist.org

Supporter News... You are our Heroes!

Our supporters are THE TOPS!!! Thanks to all of you for all that you do to make the ministries in Peru possible!!!

Children: We receive \$100+ each month from children who sponsor the ministry. This past month, we received a letter and photos from some children in Dallas who ran a lemonade stand to raise funds for the children of Peru. The Sunday School classes of Millican Baptist church also sponsor us each month, and this summer they collected donations during their VBS to go toward ministry in Peru. These are just some of the ways that children sponsor missions.

College students/young adults/singles/twenty-somethings: We have several twenty-somethings who EACH give \$100+ each month! We are amazed that college students/twenty-somethings would sacrifice so much for our ministries here! We also have several in this group who regularly send us handwritten, homemade note cards, emails, etc.

Families w/ young children: Families with young children already have so much on their plates, but this group continues to be a large portion of our givers. One supporter from Rowlett recently wrote to us that she was concerned for Peruvian children and what Christmas is like here—she sent in an extra donation this month to help cover special Christmas expenses or festivities that we might need for children here. And we especially appreciate the donor who sent our son a prepaid gift card at the beginning of the school year—thank you for remembering that we are separated from our two oldest children and still support them financially while they attend school in the USA.

Retired / Seniors / Fixed-income givers: One of our supporters recently sent us an extra donation to do “whatever we wanted to” with it... so we bought Maria (a widow with 7 children) groceries for a week. We then received another donation that enabled us to buy 200 children’s bible story books and a case of bibles. We have another sponsor who sends us magazines (in English) every month and always includes a special something for Sarah... a treasured package in the mail! Another couple sends us \$1 per day = \$365 a year, to help defray the cost of ministry and living in another country.

Groups: We have several “group” sponsors—churches, Sunday school classes, bible study groups, etc. Our home church, Christ UMC, sponsors us and helps us through live feeds and posted podcasts of sermons on the internet, continual prayer and support, Sunday school classes that give monthly, the Beth Moore study group sponsors children’s ministries... in so many ways, we are supported “back home”. The First Presbyterian ladies of Stephenville sponsor us every month, as do the Halltown (Missouri) Baptist Band of Brothers bible study, and the women of FUMC Navasota and Trinity Lutheran. Texas A&M office groups collect money each month in a change jar and send in the total each month. They give up their vending machine change, etc. to help fund the ministry in Peru. Other groups and churches sponsor us once a year with a donation for ministry expenses. Thanks to all of our Group Sponsors!!!

Various job descriptions: We have sponsors of all different job descriptions... pastors, youth workers, coaches, salesmen, dentists, engineers, professors, doctors, exercise physiologist, teachers, housewives, business owners, students, lawyers, judges, writers, missionaries, nurses, administrators, CEOs, prison personnel, military personnel, retirees, veterinarians, financial analyzers, handymen, builders, athletes... it takes all members of The Body working together to make things happen for The Kingdom!

Various locations (prayers & finances): We have sponsors and prayer partners from all over the world - Texas, Missouri, Louisiana, Tennessee, Wisconsin, Oklahoma, California, Hawaii, South Korea, Virginia, New York, Mexico, Dominican Republic, Chile, Ecuador, Thailand, Kenya, Costa Rica, Honduras, South Africa, Argentina...

All denominations coming together for one cause: We have sponsors who are Methodists, Baptists, Presbyterian, Catholic, Lutheran, Episcopalian, Non-Denominational, Church of Christ, Pentecostal, etc... Thanks to all of you for obeying the Great Commission and sending us out to baptize and make disciples in all nations!

