

La Luz de Cristo para Perú

January 2009

Volume 4, Issue 1

A Year of Change

We find ourselves back in Costa Rica this week for a conference and training with our Latin America missionary peers. And in being here, we have been reminded of our time in language school and the changes that have occurred in our lives within the past year or so.

Not so long ago (just a year and a half), we were saying goodbye to Texas and friends and family... we sold our home and all of our belongings and moved our family to Costa Rica to attend language school in preparation for ministry in Peru. As if that weren't hard enough, we slammed hard into the face of culture shock as we struggled to adapt to life in Costa Rica, being students in a foreign country, changing family dynamics, and trying to live in a house the size of our former dining room. We have spent a lot of time this week remembering how difficult life was for us during that time. It has, in many ways, been a painful week because some of those wounds are still pretty fresh.

However, it has also been a week of being reminded of how far we have come. When we arrived in Costa Rica last August, we couldn't speak Spanish... we couldn't answer the phone correctly, we couldn't ask for help at the grocery store, we couldn't understand people on the street. Daily life was so hard. Today, we spent time with missionary friends who are in their first months of language school, as well as with a new missionary who speaks no Spanish yet. It was very exciting to realize that WE UNDERSTAND EVERYTHING now and we were helping our non-Spanish speaking friend by translating for her! It was fun to go and visit our old friend, Lizbeth, and have her comment on how great our Spanish is now. So much has changed!

During the past year, we have changed family dynamics dramatically, with Ryan returning to college after being in language school with us and with Miles returning to finish his high school career in Texas (he will graduate in May). We went from having crazy teenage boys in our home and being surrounded by their friends and "wildness" to a much different dynamic of raising a 5 year old little girl - a world of Barbies and horses and princess dress-up clothes. We were so fortunate to have the boys back in the house again for Christmas this year for a couple of weeks!

We have changed from being students (Costa Rica) to being teachers once again, teaching school and bible studies and discipleship classes in Spanish in Peru. We moved from a rainforest/tropical environment to the top of the Andes mountains. We remember walking the streets of Costa Rica in the rain and thinking that the distance we walked every day was enormous. In Peru, we walk 3-4 times that distance every day,



Sarah with new friends in the Ashaninka village near La Merced. The Ashaninka are an indigenous people who live in the high jungles of Peru.

in the mountains, in extremely high altitude with no oxygen! And we love it!!! In the past year and a half, we moved from Texas to Costa Rica to Peru, changing cultures, homes, climates, countries, and roles in life three times. It has been a time of major change in our lives.

Change is inevitable. Sometimes, change is painful. Sometimes we don't want to change and fear it, and sometimes we welcome change. As we look forward to this new year, we know that we will continue to see many changes in our life here in Peru, as well as many changes in the lives of those around us. We look forward to seeing both boys celebrate important birthdays - Ryan will be 21 in February and Miles will be 18 next week. We anticipate Miles' graduation from high school in May and his move into college life. We anxiously await the new ministry opportunities and changes in our relationships with people here in Peru. We know it won't all be easy. Some of it will be very difficult. But we trust in God's plan for us in this year... *"For I know the plans I have for you; plans to prosper you and not to harm you; plans to give you hope and a future"* (Jeremiah 29:11)

May you trust in Him in 2009 and know that His grace is sufficient for you, no matter what changes may come your way, no matter how difficult or painful or dramatic—no matter what... He will never leave you nor forsake you. Hang in there! ☺

Happy New Year! We love you!

Laurie and Billy

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

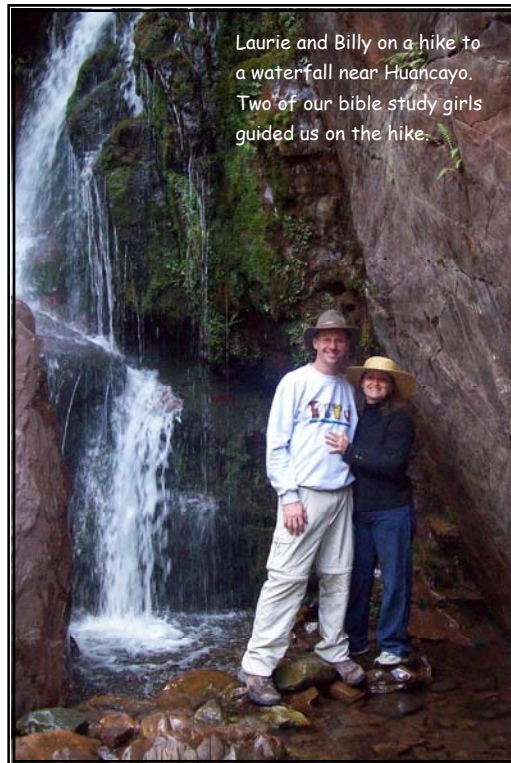
Happy New Year!



Christmas Eve - the whole family together!!!



Sarah played "Mary" in the live nativity scene at her school.



Laurie and Billy on a hike to a waterfall near Huancayo. Two of our bible study girls guided us on the hike.

Walking alongside Peruvians

Cultural Learning Corner

- ◆ Turkey is the traditional Christmas meal here, and is generally only eaten during this time of year. There is a belief here that you should get your turkey drunk before you kill it. Some say it improves the flavor (?) and some say it makes them easier to kill. The problem is that the "killer" often drinks more than the turkey and ends up drunk, too. Then you have a drunk guy wielding an ax. We heard one story of a guy who felt bad for his drunken turkey friend and, in the end, couldn't kill him.
- ◆ One night in the middle of the Reunion de los Padres (Peruvian PTO meeting), the director begins to tell us about the drama that the kids are putting on during the closing ceremony of school - they are doing an actuation of the Nativity. She begins to tell parents which part their child will play and what costume to get. Then she says to me, "We voted to have Sarah be Mary, but we wanted to check with you first, because we know that your religion doesn't believe in her." So I had to say that, "Yes, we believe in Mary. She was really in the Bible and she was really the mother of Jesus. Of course we believe in her!" So she says, "Oh. Well we thought that non-Catholics don't believe in Mary or in virgins. You DO believe in her?" "Yes - she was really in the Bible, and yes, there really are virgins. We believe that she was the mother of Jesus." "So can Sarah be Mary in the play?" "Yes, as long as you don't worship her! Focus on Jesus." So everyone breathed a big sigh of relief and they were pleased to know that Mary would be able to perform in the play. Then ensued a big discussion over how many wise men were there, actually, and do we really need the shepherds? And what did the wise men bring for gifts? I never heard the part of any angels being assigned. It was interesting and entertaining to sit and listen to. I think maybe we need to have a Bible study for the parents of the school! There is obviously a big gap in knowledge!!! Actually, this is the norm here... there isn't much knowledge or depth to what people know about the Bible...
- ◆ Our Nativity set has been displayed since the end of November on a piece of furniture in our dining room/living room. One day after lunch, Maria walked over to it and carefully touched each piece. Then she turned to me and asked, ?Que cosa es esto, Hermana? (What is this, Sister?). I said that it is a nativity scene, to which I received a blank stare. So I continued to point out each piece and name them. She seemed baffled by the names until I got to Jesus. "Oh, Hermana! This is the Baby Jesus!" and she touched him lightly. She also pointed out the shepherd's crook (something she could identify with in this culture). Then, she was off again—back to work. Seeds... sometimes we plant seeds and pray for them to take root in someone's heart and grow.
- ◆ Our little friends who come in the afternoon a couple of times each week had a similar experience in our home this month. We decided one afternoon that our lesson would be the story of the birth of Jesus. We had received a child's nativity set in the mail from some supporters and we planned to use it as a prop and a way to act out the story. As Billy pointed out the characters in the nativity set, one of the kids (13 years old) said "I know a song about these people, but I don't know this story." We told the story in Spanish first, and then in English (with a HUGE focus on the Spanish understanding). Then the kids retold it, acted it out with the set, and made their own set with paper characters and a popsicle stick stable. What a privilege to be the people who get to tell this wonderful story to these kids for the first time!

Contact information for The Drums

You can email us at: Billy@drumsforchrist.org or Laurie@drumsforchrist.org

Our physical address is:

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Urb. San Carlos
Huancayo, Peru

*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>

Prayers & Praises

Prayers: (one for each day of the month)

- ◆ Praise God for sending us Judy, Ginger, Suzanne, and Betty to work with the missionary children during a recent missionary conference. It was so great to spend time with "Texas Girls"!!!
- ◆ Pray for the Quechua church in Chilca as they go through a major change in leadership and upheaval within the membership.
- ◆ Pray for The Mission Society home office as they rework the budget in light of economic times and shortfalls in giving.
- ◆ Pray for Billy and his continued language learning.
- ◆ Pray for Miguel - a national missionary here in Peru. He is about to go to the Canta area to work with the people there and start disciple cell groups.
- ◆ Pray for the leaders of the disciple groups in Peru
- ◆ Pray for the MANY people who are seeking to know Him and are studying each week in disciple groups
- ◆ Pray for Ryan and Miles as they return home to Texas and school after spending a wonderful Christmas with us here in Peru. We were so happy to be together for awhile!!!
- ◆ Pray for Laurie to find the resources she needs to teach school this year and be effective in the classroom.
- ◆ Pray for God to continue to open doors for us to minister to the people of Huancayo.
- ◆ Pray for the building of good relationships/friendships

DEAR BILLY AND LAURIE,

- I will pray for you. Please send me your prayer letter.
- Update me by e-mail: _____
- As God provides, I plan to partner with you by giving \$ _____ Per month / quarter / year for _____ years.
- I would like to donate a one-time gift of \$ _____



Name (PLEASE PRINT) _____
 Address _____
 City _____ State _____ Zip _____
 Phone _____ Home Church _____

TAX DEDUCTIBLE GIFTS MAY BE SENT TO:

The Mission Society
 PO Box 922637
 Norcross, GA 30010-2637 USA
DESIGNATE GIFTS: "DRUM SUPPORT 5/321"

- ◆ Pray for Maria and her children—pray that she can continue to find work to support her family. Pray for her youngest children, Creder, Manuel, and Mariela as they work to study English and as they enjoy Billy's presence in their lives
- ◆ Pray for Colegio El Camino (where Laurie teaches) as they change locations and prepare for a new school year.
- ◆ Pray for Laurie & Billy to find ways to grow and learn and strengthen each other in their faith and in their relationship
- ◆ Pray for Sarah as she learns and grows more and more each day
- ◆ Pray for the McEuen family (currently in language school in Costa Rica) as they struggle with funding and support. Also, pray for Louise Reimer as she works to find support for her mission service in Peru (hopefully joining us in 2 years).
- ◆ Pray for our friend Liz—praise God for her presence in our lives! I don't know what we would do without her!
- ◆ Pray for Beto and his influence in the ministry
- ◆ Pray for the Ivey family and their continued service in Peru
- ◆ Pray for missionary children who are in the USA without their parents (Ryan, Miles, Benjamin Ivey...)
- ◆ Pray for all of the people who support us in this mission
- ◆ Praise God for his daily provision in our lives
- ◆ Pray for our health as our bodies battle different germs here
- ◆ Pray for the children in Kid's Club ministries
- ◆ Pray for the abandoned and abused population here
- ◆ Pray for God's Word and His Light to shine in the darkness in countries all around the world. Pray for missionaries around the world. Praise God for calling and sending people to share His love in every nation.



Serving Christ in Perú

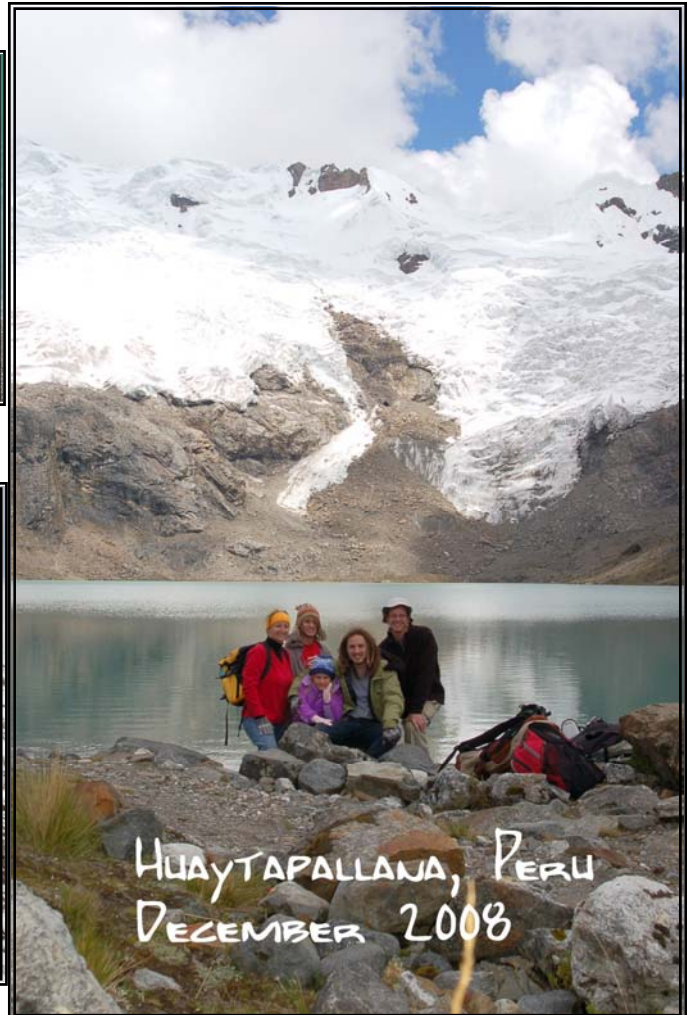
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Visit us at

www.drumsforchrist.org



Huaytapallana is a glacier range very close to our house. After an hour's drive and a very long hike, we arrived at the glacier at 15,803 feet above sea level. It was a very hard hike, but very worth it. Glad to have shared the experience with the whole family, plus 5 Peruvian friends who hiked with us. It's not everyday that you can ice-climb a glacier!!!

