

August Newsletter 2023

Thank you so much for all 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

The huge blessing this year has been working alongside Pastor Beto in the online Bible study groups and the July trip to Peru. Both have brought peace about us being there as a family and doing ministry. Praise the Lord, four more people this year added on to monthly supporters. This month, we were able to teach the Matthew study group twice. The Spirit encourages all those in these studies and us, too. This study has approximately 12 to 15 Peruvians from all over Peru (Huancavelica, Puerto Anapate, Florida, Huancayo, Lima, etc.).

Circumstances

- "Be Still and know that I am God."

There has been lots of worry and some sleepless nights this month about various things (work, family). When our heads were spinning in anxiety, the Lord spoke this to me. He said: "Enjoy my presence." Sometimes, it's just being with Him that matters. Not studying to death or trying to figure out everything, but just enjoying the life He gives us. We often need to feel or recognize his presence, be held in his embrace, in his arms, and hear his voice singing over us so that the worries, fears, and burdens will blow away through his power and turn into trust.

I got that word when I saw it in a different translation of John 10:10, "The thief comes only in order to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have *and enjoy life*, and have it in abundance (to the full, till it overflows)." That's really what we were created for, what we were made for, to be with Him (for a relationship with Him). In spots of worry, we need to remember He is with us so we don't have to faint (Jos. 1:9) or fret; just surrender and stop trying to carry the world's weight. In other words, we need to stop trying to be God or be in control and allow God to do that job. He does it better than us! When our minds spin in circles and can't rest, the Lord says, "Be still, and know that I am God." His presence and embrace will bring us true peace beyond understanding because He is the God of peace. He is our fortress and comfort. "God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear, though the earth give way and the mountains fall into the heart of the sea, though its waters roar and foam and the mountains quake with their surging. There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God, the holy place where the Most High dwells. God is within her, she will not fall; God will help her at break of day. Nations are in uproar, kingdoms fall; he lifts his voice, the earth melts. The Lord Almighty is with us; the God of Jacob is our fortress. Come and see what the Lord has done, the desolations he has brought on the earth. He makes wars cease to the ends of the earth. He breaks the bow and shatters the spear; he burns the shields with fire. He says, "Be still, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth." The Lord Almighty is with us; the God of Jacob is our fortress." Psalm 46

- "Elijah"

Though we have felt peace in the leading of the Holy Spirit to Peru, and even there this year, within me is the fear that we might not have enough to last when we go down there. As I think about this fear and the money factor, God put some thoughts in my heart.

The first was how God cared for Elijah in a drought of several years. God guided Him to a brook where ravens brought him bread and meat in the morning and evening, and he drank from the brook. Later, the Lord used a widow who had nothing and was preparing her last meal for her and her son to die to help Elijah. The Lord did a miracle supplying oil and flour that wouldn't run out at all until the drought was over. This shows the Lord taking care of his servants.

We can be encouraged if we look a little deeper into this story with Elijah and the widow. Interestingly, Elijah asks this widow for a drink and a piece of bread.

She responded, "I don't have any bread- only a handful of flour in a jar and a little olive oil in a jug. I am gathering a few sticks to take home and make a meal for myself and my son, that we may eat it- and die." This is a woman who has lost all hope. Yet Elijah responds to her, "Don't be afraid. Go home and do as you have said. But first, make a small loaf of bread for me from what you have and bring it to me, and then make some for yourself and your son. For this is what the Lord, the God of Israel, says: "The jar of flour will not be used up and the jug of oil will not run dry until the day the Lord sends rain on the land." John 10:10 says Christ has come that they may have life, and have it in abundance (to the full). But Christ does ask for the little we have and to place our trust solely and entirely upon him; it is then He can work. In the feeding of the 5,000, a boy came with two fish and five breads. The widow at the temple put in all she had, two copper coins, and it was more than all others who had given much but out of spare. Or even Peter, who couldn't catch fish all night and was asked to go out and cast the net on the other side again, to whom fish in abundance was given. We need to be as a child to enter the kingdom of heaven, one who is dependent on God.

Regarding the jugs that wouldn't be used up or run dry, I sang a song to the Lord recently that has some similarities:

"I don't want to sing words into the air that the wind chases away. I sing to You, Jesus. I don't want to make noise like clanging symbols that drain into emptiness. Only You, Jesus, can fill my soul. Only You, Jesus, can make me whole. Only your Jesus can fill my cup. Only you, Jesus, can lift me up." It helped me so much to recognize that I am empty without Him, that only He can satisfy my heart, and that only He can fill it. It may seem selfish, but ask God to fill you-cause only He can, and you need it! So, Jesus says, come! Come to me those who are thirsty and drink. Come to me, all those who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. We need to be as a child to enter the kingdom of heaven, one who is dependent on God. When you are in a place where you are depending on God and not just yourself, you are in a blessed place; it's there where Christ moves.

Spiritually

One more thing about worry is it distracts us from focusing on Christ. When we have too many worries, we often feel scattered-brained. It is then when, as it says in Hebrews 12:1-2 we must "...throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer of our faith. For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God."

I sang one more song: //I only want you, Christ. Take away all other distractions. All I want is to seek your face. I put my trust in you; all other things fade away. You are the only way. //

Psalm 27:4-5 relates to this feeling and also helps us focus on God, "One thing I ask from the Lord, this only do I seek: that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to gaze on the beauty of the Lord and to seek him in his temple. For in the day of trouble he will keep me safe in his dwelling; he will hide me in the shelter of his sacred tent and set me high upon a rock."

Lastly, a small plea from a king to God in trouble surrounded by enemies, Jehoshaphat in 2 Chronicles 20:12, "For we have no power to face this vast army that is attacking us. We don't know what to do, but our eyes are on you."

Focus on Christ even amid chaos and trials, worship Him, and be filled with hope that doesn't disappoint or put us to shame because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, whom he has given us. Sometimes, we must be emptied of ourselves to be truly filled with Him.

Fundraising

We need to raise \$50,067.44 for our third year, and we are at 35% of that amount. 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 the Ivey missionary to give).

Blessings in Christ!!!

(Photos below)

