



HEATHER KOKUBUN

January/February 2017



Dear Praying Friends,

“Hi, this is Fiorela. Thank you so much for taking my call. Is it true you live and work in Lima?” “Yes, ma’am,” I once again answered. “And is it true that you’ve survived the passing of your husband, and you’re really okay? You’re happy and living life again?” Resisting the urge to sarcastically comment, “I think I survived,” I instead confirmed, “Yes, ma’am. God is good.” She followed that by asking permission to begin calling me once a week so I could disciple her and teach her a few things about the Lord.

Fiorela is a young lady who lives in *Provincia*, as we call it here, which means “way out of the big cities of Peru.” She doesn’t have a church anywhere nearby, but she received Christ and was given my number by one of the ladies of our church. For about a month and a half now, we have been meeting once a week over the phone, and I’ve been able to disciple her, teaching her the fundamentals of the faith. Just recently she asked me, “*Hermana*, tell me about this Holy Spirit I’m reading about. Who is He, and what does He do?” Wow! If you want to get reignited about Christ, start all over again with someone who knows nothing about God, and rediscover with them the wonders of all Christ has to offer.

Fiorela is full of zeal, hungry, and excited to learn and study every bit of the Bible that she can. Discipling her has not only helped her but also been a huge encouragement to me. I always pray for her before we hang up, and I look forward to the day when the Lord will allow us to meet. She tells me she shares the things I teach her with others. Isn’t that what discipleship is all about?

It’s summer here! I arrived home after enjoying holidays with family, fully refreshed and loaded with new ideas to help our people grow and get motivated to continue on in the faith. We began an eight-week competition program for our teenagers. Our theme for the year is *Estad Firmes* (“Be Strong”). We want our teenagers to learn to be strong in Christ. Many of our teenagers not only face peer pressure in the schools they attend but also in the homes in which they live. Any choice they make to follow Christ is their choice, not one impressed on them by their parents. If they come to church, it is because they want to do so. If they go soul winning, it’s because they make it a priority. If they choose right, they do it on purpose, because almost everyone else in their lives accepts a different worldly style of living. Few of their friends, family, and relatives actually understand or have come to the place of supporting them in their faith.

Seeing my young people come together this summer, memorize Scripture, and grow in teamwork and leadership positions has been just a one of the highlights for me. Please pray for my teens. Pray that God will build them up this year, that we would be able to construct a strong foundation, and that they may be able to stand against the “wiles of the Devil.”

Last week I held a three-day retreat for my teen girls. The most exciting part for me was seeing my disciples teach their own classes about Christ and disciple the other younger and newer young ladies. I was blessed by several pastors’ wives who joined us to teach as well. We had a fabulous week, and the girls even got to enjoy tea in the home of our own pastor’s wife. We were blessed to have more than 20 girls over the course of the three days. I pray that this summer will be one in which many of our teens can look back on and say: Summer 2017 is when God spoke to me, it’s when I decided to change, it’s when I made this commitment, etc.

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Thank you for your partnership in praying for God's work here. I was reading yesterday about Jesus' life and the many things He did to reflect His Father. My loving Father gently reminded me that it is not me my people need. They need Him. Am I being a mirror who constantly reflects the Father's love?

Gratefully serving Him,

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