

December 2016/January 2017



Dear Pastor and Praying Friends,

They stood there talking about “life.”

We showed up for our scheduled Saturday soul-winning meeting, thinking it was going to be another usual Saturday. Little by little, our Sunday school children began to show up. We handed the tracts to the Sunday school children as we prepared ourselves to leave. I asked God to allow us to see someone saved that day in a way that would impact the Sunday school children. We headed up a hill and found a group of children playing with tops. One of our children approached the group, and as soon as she opened her mouth, more kids surrounded her to listen. My wife and an older lady from church aided in witnessing to the group. All in all, 6 boys accepted Christ that afternoon.

I was quickly transported to a memory of the first group of boys I witnessed to when my family and I arrived in Peru in 2012. I remember asking God that day to show our children something that would impact them. One of the boys in that group was Carlitos. He was a sweet-spirited, respectable boy who still showed signs of lingering, healthy baby fat. He instantly became my shadow and stuck by my boys whenever he could. I spoke to him as if I was speaking to one of my sons. He appreciated my candor and my caring for him. We became close to his family and occasionally invited him over for lunch. Unfortunately, our paths had to separate for a couple years, as my family and I left that church to help Bro. Zach Foust in the church he started. Carlitos and I still kept in touch via social media, but we both knew it was not the same. In January of this year, my wife and I were invited to teach a special teen class in Carlitos' home church. My son Marco jumped at the opportunity to invite Carlitos to that special teen class. It was wonderful to see these two, now teenagers, pick up from where they left off a few years ago. Mind you, they had not seen each other during that duration, only written to each other. They stood there talking about “life” and other seemingly important older-boy stuff, like sports and what gel is best for their hair. I smiled and thanked God for their friendship. Then I quietly prayed that God would show those two young men something that would impact their lives.

It truly is a deafening and colorful sight to see.

The table was being set for another spectacular Christmas event at IBI San Gabriel, the church Bro. Foust and his family started. Our Sunday school children were even more excited than the adults, as they knew presents were involved. Bro. Foust decided to do their *Chocolatada* in the church this year. *Chocolatada* is a Peruvian tradition of taking hot chocolate, sweet bread, and gifts to impoverished areas. We had a great turnout.

A few days later we celebrated the New Year together in IBI San Gabriel. Many families showed up, and beautiful displays of homemade pyrotechnics were enjoyed thereafter. You can literally climb to your roof, sit back, and enjoy the fireworks that the neighbors put on display for you. It truly is a deafening and colorful sight to see.

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A few weeks later, we celebrated the birthday of Joaquin, my youngest son. It's hard to believe my baby boy is now nine years old. I can still remember waiting for the midwife to arrive as I aided my wife. I remember how cold it was that January night as my wife gave birth to him in our bedroom. I remind him constantly of the miracle that he is. I am really excited to see what God has in store for our children.

To be continued . . .

I am thankful for praying and giving friends such as you. If it weren't for you, my family and I would not be able to be here in Lima, Peru. We love you and pray for you often. I pray that the Lord continues to bless you and your family.

I have included links below for more information and pictures of the various ministries of Team Peru (IBI). Please feel free to share them with friends and families who may ask, "Hey, what is Team Peru up to?"

- http://fbmi.org/?team_posts=peru
- <https://www.facebook.com/teamperu>

Prayer Requests:

- Safety for our family, our team leader Bro. Dan Hubbard, and the other families of Team Peru
- Additional monthly financial support
- Health for the families of Team Peru
- Bro. Hubbard's health
- My dad's physical therapy
- The spiritual lives of one our faithful supporter's two sons, that God would grant the parents grace as we join them in prayer for both of their sons, ages 20 and 14

Blessings:

- We saw 56 souls saved.
- Our Sunday school class children are soul winning and bringing visitors to church.
- My dad is gaining more movement through his therapy.
- Many children and families came to our end-of-the-year activities at church.
- New families have joined the church.
- Joaquin turned 9 this year.

Thank you once again for your prayers and support.

Your co-laborers to Peru,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Abraham Avila".

Abraham, Fabiola, Marco, Leilani, and Joaquin Avila

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AVILA family



team peru



IBI San Gabriel's Christmas *Chocolatada*



Carlitos and Marco talking about "life" - 2017



Our Sunday school soul-winning group circa 2012—Carlitos is hugging Joaquin.



The group of boys that were being witnessed to



Our baby boy Joaquin celebrating his 9th birthday

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