

February 2020:
Prayer and Praise update!



Some thoughts on Evangelism...

Last year we wrote about the breakthrough we were finally feeling after a couple of very difficult years in Peru. As last year drew to an end, rather than God leading us somewhere else, He gave us a renewed heart for the local church and neighbourhood we live in.

One of the things He has been awakening in us is a heart for evangelism and sharing with those who don't yet know him. Anna has had several opportunities to share the Gospel with mothers from the boys' school and **we have been praying about God giving us opportunities in our local neighbourhood.**

I know it probably sounds strange because we are missionaries but evangelism is not something that has come naturally to me (Anna) in the past. It has often felt burdensome (what if people do respond, won't I be overwhelmed?) and scary (what if I look stupid or am rejected?).

Honestly, the past decade has been more about discipleship for us - discipling those who already knew Jesus and encouraging them to evangelise others. And that is valuable too, but **God has recently been highlighting people to us in our neighborhood who are open to Him and giving us faith to invest in relationship with them.**

Although part of our vision for our time in Peru is to plant churches, we are also aware that Jesus never commanded his disciples to go and plant churches, but rather to make disciples. Many of those disciples, however, were not believers yet, even after Jesus rose from the dead! (Matt 28:17)

A disciple according to the greek word 'mathetes', is someone who wants to learn, so **our vision for Oikos this year is 'each one, disciple one'.** We are asking God to show us the people around us who want to learn about God, especially the ones who aren't followers of Jesus yet. It's about finding one person who is open and investing in them rather than feeling like we need to reach the whole neighbourhood in one go!

Suddenly evangelism doesn't seem like a burden but an opportunity to build relationships and see God's power at work (and where He is already working!). It is about listening to others and their stories and discovering where they need to know that God's kingdom is close to them to bring breakthrough right now, whether that be in because of sickness, debt, relational difficulties or addictions. **It's about sharing our stories (our testimonies) of where God has brought breakthrough in our lives and then inviting them, to discover God together by reading the Bible together.**

Mark and I started prayer walking our neighbourhood for 10-15 minutes every weekday last week and already one of our neighbours on our street has invited me to go walking with her and was asking me all about prayer and how to pray. Please pray for her and all her family to come to know Jesus personally!



Some family news...

We have just returned a couple of weeks ago from a family holiday with Anna's family in Sydney. It was lovely to finally meet two of our nieces in person and be with some of our family after 4 years. The boys were gifted surfing lessons for Christmas and all managed to give it a good go, something they and Mark have continued in Lima.

Mark and Anna managed to get a weekend away to Melbourne to visit friends David and Christine Wanstall at Encounter Baptist church, and we caught up with Andy Niblock for a weekend who came over to see us from Perth.

The boys are now back at school (being at an international school here means less summer holiday compared to Peruvian schools which go back in March) whilst it is finally getting hotter in Lima after a cloudy, mild start to the summer. We are looking forward to a visit from Alex and Hannah Absalom this week!