

God's Work in Peru

June 2009

Gordon and Betsie Wenger share how God led them to Velille, Peru as missionaries. Gain a glimpse into their lives and ministry.

Greetings in Jesus' name! We, Gordon and Betsie Wenger, together with our four children, are blessed and privileged to be involved in what the Lord is doing in Peru, South America. We are so grateful to know that the Lord is building His Kingdom all over this world. What a strange confidence He places in us frail men! Why would He choose to use you and me? Even the ones who we men see as great and useful have weaknesses and failures. But yet He calls us "workers together with Him" (2 Cor. 6:1). Let us rise up and work with God. Let us rise up and intercede with Christ. Let us rise up and obey the Spirit's promptings. May He give each one of you a burden to pray, to go, and to preach.

I would like to start with the background of how we got involved with the Lord's work here in Peru, then give you a glimpse into life and ministry here, and finally, encourage you as to how you also can be involved.

In 1996, when I was eighteen, I went on a youth team to Peru for four months. In the years that followed, I could never forget the

needs and openness of the people, nor the lack of workers that I saw there. Over the next ten years, the Lord continued to prepare my heart for serving His Church in His way. I took several trips to other parts of the world, studied at Bible Schools, and sought to serve Him wherever I was.

We regularly have people ask us to hike out to their mountain homes to share with them from the Bible.

During the first year of our marriage, the Lord of the Harvest began opening the way for my wife and I to go back to Peru. I had laid it down and only wanted to go if He made it clear that it was His will. Eventually, we heard about another remnant church that had a burden to check out the needs and to possibly get involved in Peru. We started talking with

Town of
Velille, Peru



them and prepared to go on an exploratory trip. Brother Emanuel Esh joined us on that trip and later included a country profile on Peru in the February, 2003 issue of the CCM newsletter.

Market scene in Velille, Peru



People walking the street in the town of Velille, Peru

Over the next few years, we were involved in a few more short trips to Peru. During that time, our home church at Cambridge, Ohio encouraged us to move to Cleveland, North Carolina to be able to join in their burden for the needs in Peru and be sent out by them. We did that in the spring of 2004, and in the fall of 2004, Titus Peachey's family and we moved to Peru.

The work here has undergone many changes over the last few years. After their two years here, the Peachey family was led by the Lord to be involved in His work back in the States. We have also been back in the States off and on throughout the last several years. In 2007, after a year of evaluation in North Carolina, we were sent back here with the blessing of the church at Cleveland. However, they decided that they would not be able to continue to be involved in the work here. We were not sure that coming back in this way was best, but Christ clearly called us and wanted us to come in faith. We can definitely say that, praise His name, He has been providing and guiding! We have been very blessed to be able to lean completely on the Lord for all our support. It has increased our faith to watch as He has taken care of our every need time and again!

There have also been a good number of youth involved in the work here over the years, so we have not been laboring alone. We are so thankful for each of the dedicated youth who has served here! May God raise up more young men and women, willing to lay down their lives for His sake.

We live in Velille, Chumbivilcas, Cusco, Peru. We were led to this remote, mountainous area of the country partly because there are other groups working in most of the cities and easier-to-reach areas of Peru. Velille is a small town of about 3,000 people, but with a much larger number of people living in other communities around here.

Our town is the market town for the area so every Monday it gets flooded by people who come from as far as ten hours away. We are involved in selling baked goods and Bibles at the market. We try to make Bibles and Christian literature available to believers, both here and in other areas nearby. On market day people come on foot, on horses, and in vehicles, bringing with them sheep, potatoes, produce, cattle, wool, and many other wares. They buy and take home sugar, rice, vegetables, clothes, dishes, batteries, and everything else they need to live on for the next week.

Most of the people live off of their animals and the few crops that they can grow at 12,000 feet in the mountains. Even most of our friends who live in town here also have fields and animals far out in the country. People here often live in one room adobe houses without electricity, running water, or any source of heat.

Most of our Quechua neighbors here are nominal Catholics with a lot of traditional

to hold regular services. We also have services here in town twice a week.

For the first several years, so many people listened without any change of heart. It has been a real joy to have seen several souls surrender to the power of God in the last few years. Now we have the privilege of guiding these babes in Christ in “all things” as commanded in the Scriptures. The discipling now looks like a much longer process than it did at the beginning! But God is faithful and we are willing for Him to use us as He wants to.

It is a blessing to know that we are not the only ones involved in the Lord’s work here. There are some others who have done extensive work in other parts of southern Peru over the years, some of whom we have had contact with. There are also several other conservative Anabaptist families now working in different parts of Peru who we get together with when we are able to. However, that is not as often as we would like, since they live from 12 to 40 hours away from us! But what a blessing it is to fellowship with them when we can!

There are always hardships involved in living in primitive settings like this. Sickness and the cold are real parts of life. We get tired and tempted to be weary. We wonder how our children will turn out without many good examples around them as they grow up. But we trust in the Trustworthy One and cast our every care on Him. Praise the Lord, He has never failed us, and we are convinced that He never will. His promises are faithful and true!

We are praying for the Lord of the Harvest to raise up more soldiers to join the harvest and are looking for at least one couple or family to join us in the work here. We are also looking for young men and women with a burden for the lost Quechuas to come serve the Lord with us. Most of all, we are looking for believers who know how to pray for souls, to join in the battle from afar. Please let us know if you want to receive updates or more information on the work here.

—Gordon Wenger

Inca animism mixed in. There are a few Adventists here as well. We are involved in starting the first Christian groups in Velille County (distrito). Most people here have a helpful base of believing in God, Jesus, and the Bible. However, they have mixed those beliefs for so long with idolatrous sacrifices to the earth, mountains, sun, etc., that it is now much harder for them to understand the need to turn away from all that in order to follow Christ.

We find the people here quite open to talking about religion or asking questions about how to please God. Especially out in the country, almost anyone is happy to talk and listen as we share about the Lord. We regularly have people ask us to hike out to their mountain homes to share with them from the Bible. There are always more invitations to come and visit than there is time to go. The Harvest is plentiful but the reapers are few. There are a few smaller communities nearby where we try