

This week, we are going to take a look at the culture of Peru. Because we only have a short time, it will only be a quick look--a glance--at the diverse nation of Peruvians. You've already learned a lot about what life is like here. Keep those things in the back of your mind as we move forward today...

PART UNO

History in a nutshell

The first people to come from Peru arrived about _____ years ago.

The greatest empire in Peru was that of the _____.

The Spanish came to Peru in the year _____ conquering the Inca.

The _____ leaf is used culturally in Peru, but is also used to produce the illicit drug called _____.

The people who grow the leaves are afraid of retaliation from the police, the government and the terrorist movement called _____.

PART DOS

A History of Mistrust

In your own words, describe why some of the people have a mistrust of outsiders (especially Yanquis).

PART TRES

Food

Culinary experts have said the food of Peru is among the _____ in the world.

Cuy is the Quechua word for what North Americans call _____. It is a common food for the people who live in the mountains of Peru.

What kind of food do you want to try while in Peru?

PART CUATRO

Etiquette

Most Peruvians greet one another with a _____ on the cheek. How do you feel about kissing people to greet them?

There are three hand gestures we need to be careful of using while in Peru. They are _____, _____, and _____.

Three important phrases in Spanish are _____ (“thank you”), _____ (“please”) and _____ (“May God bless you”).

We need to be careful not to be too loud when we talk and interact with one another. How do you feel about this?



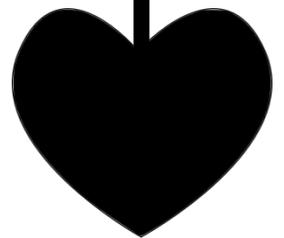
— week Four —

Cultural Service

This week we will be exploring two areas of the mission life: cultural differences and service. We are called not to be served but to serve. This is exciting work for which God has prepared us. What is more exciting is that we are called to serve people who are different than us...

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER THIS WEEK

1. Am I expecting the people of Perú to meet my needs?
2. Can I accept the fact that just because people are different than me, it does not mean they are wrong?
3. When “their way” is the way we need to do things, can I handle it?





DÍA UNO:

OFFERING WATER

If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, streams of living water will flow from within him.

-- John 7.37-38

Did you know that each year, a lack of safe water causes:

- 1.4 million child deaths from diarrhea?
- 500 000 deaths from malaria?
- 860 000 child deaths from malnutrition?

Unthinkable to those of us who live in the USA! We go to the sink every day and turn the faucet and out comes clean water. But not so in Peru. We go to the faucet (if there is a faucet) and out comes contaminated water. Those of us who serve on the mission field here have special multi-stage filters in our homes to protect ourselves and our families from parasites and contamination. But our Peruvian friends don't have filters. Some drink the water straight from the tap. Some know that boiling it is an option for better health (but still don't take the time to do it). Many don't have a faucet at all... they go to the local stream or canal or river and collect their water in buckets for use in their homes.

Have you ever been without water? Have you ever been truly thirsty? Can you imagine drinking water from a dirty watering hole – a river where cows and sheep wade in the water just feet from where you are trying to drink – a river where women are washing clothes and dishes upstream?

The prophet named Isaiah wrote: “The poor and the needy search for water, but there is none; their tongues are parched with thirst. But I the Lord will answer them; I the God of Israel, will not forsake them. I will make rivers flow on barren heights, and springs within the valleys. I will turn the desert into pools of water, and the parched ground into springs.

Guess what, Folks... You’re it! We can’t fix all of Peru’s water problems. But God knows a better answer – he is sending you to be water for the people of Perú. Living Water. Clean, pure Water.

In John 7:37-38, Jesus said, “If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, streams of living water will flow from within him.” We generally focus on the first part... if anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink. But the second part is SO important for us as missionaries... whoever believes in me will have streams of living water flow from within him. *Whoever* believes! In the past few years, the words in the Bible that have given me the most comfort and the most hope have been the “absolutes”... the words that leave no room for doubt. So for me, when I see words like “whoever believes”, it is an absolute for me. It doesn’t say, “for most of those who believe”, or “for the cute ones”, or “for the ones who show up in church every week”... no, it says “whoever believes”. That’s *me*!

Another absolute in that same statement is “streams of living water *will flow* from within him”. *Will* flow. Not “might flow”, but *will* flow. In other words, if I truly *believe* in Him, he *will flow* from me to others. In other words, within us is a wellspring of Him – “a bubbling surge of life that flows out of our innermost beings, satisfying our needs as well as the needs of others. We weren’t created to be mud puddles for Jesus – clogged, filthy wells. We were meant to be rushing rivers, pouring out His love and mercy to everyone around us. We were meant to be conduits of living water, the sweet and refreshing flow of the Holy Spirit coming in and flowing through and out of our lives.”¹



DO YOU BELIEVE THAT LIVING WATER CAN FLOW FROM YOU? ARE YOU A
MUD PUDDLE FOR JESUS, OR ARE YOU A BUBBLING SURGE OF LIFE-GIVING



¹ Joanne Fluke – Having a Mary Spirit

WATER? WHAT DOES IT TAKE TO KEEP YOUR LIVING WATER CLEAN AND AT-THE-READY TO POUR OUT FOR OTHERS?

So there you have it. You will be in Perú for a week or so. You aren't going to clean up all of the waterways. You aren't going to dry up all of the mosquito holes and single-handedly cure every child's diarrhea. You won't be able to fix malnutrition. But you can provide Living Water to the people you meet. "God has chosen us to be vessels for His presence. As we dig our spiritual wells deep and rely on Him to help us keep them clean, as we daily prime the pumps of our spiritual hunger, Christ fills us with Himself. Then He places us strategically as living water drinking fountains in a drought-stricken land. Tall crystal goblets filled



with His mercy, brimming over with His love. Lush oases where weary travelers come and taste and see that the Lord is good. You and I have been cleansed and filled in order to be spilled. A crystal-clear refreshing drink of Jesus Christ.”²

HOW ARE YOU GOING TO PROVIDE LIVING WATER TO THOSE AROUND YOU? HOW ARE OTHERS GOING TO SEE CHRIST IN YOU? CAN YOU PROVIDE A CRYSTAL-CLEAR REFRESHING DRINK OF JESUS TO THE PERUVIANS? TO YOUR TEAMMATES (THAT INCLUDES NORTH AMERICANS AND PERUVIANS)? TO YOUR CHURCH?

² Joanne Fluke – Having a Mary Spirit



DÍA DOS:

WHO ARE THEY?

"Therefore keep watch because you do not know when the owner of the house will come back—whether in the evening, or at midnight, or when the rooster crows, or at dawn. If he comes suddenly, do not let him find you sleeping. What I say to you, I say to everyone: 'Watch!'"

-- Mark 13.35-37 (NIV)

The roads here in Peru are fun to travel. I, of course, write that rather tongue in cheek, because they are often unpaved, long and winding this way and that through a very high altitude. It makes for an interesting day. For example, about 29 kilometers (around 18 miles) outside of the city of Huancayo there is a glacier on a mountaintop called Huaytapallana. Although it really isn't all that far, the journey there takes about an hour and a half because the pavement ends just on the edge of the city, and then it winds and bends upward to the point where we start hiking (at an altitude of around 4000 meters or 13,300 feet).

The first time we climbed the mountain, our son, who at times experiences motion sickness, did great on the way up; but after seven hours of hiking in the cold in altitudes up to 16,800 feet, he didn't do so well on the way back. About a quarter of the way back to Huancayo, he quickly put his hands to his mouth, and asking the driver to stop, he quickly stepped outside to evacuate his lunch from his stomach. Really it wasn't much of a surprise. It happens here. And generally the people are prepared for it. The driver knowingly reached into

the first aid kit in the bus, removed the bottle of alcohol and poured some on a rolled up bit of toilet paper. The purpose wasn't to clean up anything (which was my first thought), but instead he meant for my son to use it to hold the tissue to his nose and breathe in whenever he felt nauseas. The people here know the tricks to cope in the altitude.

Other people here have told us other remedies. Some say holding a clove of garlic in your mouth and occasionally biting into it helps. Others swear by coca leaf tea (yes, that's the same stuff they make cocaine out of). Before we left for home, we ordered a few cups to share. It came with the leaves still floating on the top of the boiled water. The taste was nasty, but with enough sugar almost anything tastes okay. It helped a bit.

People have been living here in the altitude for thousands of years, and they've learned a thing or two about how to adapt to their environment. It's pretty impressive, really.



THINK ABOUT IT FOR A MOMENT: YOU'VE MADE SOME ADJUSTMENTS IN ORDER TO SURVIVE IN THE ENVIRONMENT IN WHICH YOU LIVE. MAYBE YOU'VE HAD TO LEARN THE BEST TIME TO NAVIGATE TRAFFIC IN ORDER TO



AVOID SITTING STILL ON THE INTERSTATE. MAYBE YOU'VE LEARNED THE SUPERMARKET HAS THE BEST CUTS OF MEAT ON THURSDAY MORNINGS. WHATEVER IT IS, YOU'VE LEARNED HOW TO MAKE THE BEST OF THE LIFE IN THE PLACE YOU LIVE. WHAT ARE SOME OF THOSE ADAPTATIONS YOU'VE MADE?

As citizens of a first world country, it is very tempting to think that we have all the answers. That we have so much to teach. The truth, however, is that we have just as much to learn. We'll be focusing on that more next week. For right now, we just want to think about the simple fact that we are from two different cultures that have learned two different ways to live and adapt to the worlds around us. Because of this, there are differences in the ways we think, we act, or we do things. With this in mind, there is something very important we need to remember: As missionaries, we are called by God to share the Good News of the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Beyond this, we are not called to tell others their way of doing things is wrong.

We recently heard a story of a church board in the United States who refused to let a Hispanic congregation use their building for a worship service on

Sunday afternoons. The church was empty at that time of day, the faithful members of the church having already beaten the rival denomination to the best restaurant in town (okay, I know, my bias is showing... I'll stop...maybe). Anyway, the reasons given for not allowing the congregation to meet was that "Hispanics are known for not ever getting anywhere on time" and "If they want to worship God here, they just need to learn English and worship with the rest of us at eleven o'clock." That is, after all the proper time to worship God (Oh, darn, I did it again, didn't I?).

It breaks our hearts to hear stories like that, and we hear them more often than we would like to. It's hard because it appears as though churches like that one are more concerned with protecting their temple made with human hands than of spreading the Kingdom of God. Yes, certain things in the cultures we meet cannot and should not be tolerated. Human trafficking, for example, is wrong; and we as followers of Jesus Christ are obligated by our faith to do all in our power to stop it. On the other hand, showing up for meetings on time is a cultural thing that might be annoying to us who arrive thirty minutes early just to be sure we're on time. Just because it's annoying, though, does not make it wrong.



THINK ABOUT IT: ARE YOU WILLING TO LOOK AT CULTURAL DIFFERENCES WITHOUT MAKING A JUDGMENT CALL? IF THERE IS SOMETHING IN THE CULTURE THAT ANNOYS YOU, WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO ABOUT IT?



The text from Mark that we read today has Jesus talking about the end of time and about when the Son of Man will once again appear on the face of the earth. He concludes the chapter by telling us that since we have no idea where or when it will happen, we need to be ready. We have to watch.

As missionaries, we have to do the same thing. Jesus may reappear with the sound of the trumpet while we are together on this trip. He might not. We don't know. We are confident, however, that he will make an appearance. If we are watching, Jesus will show us new and different ways of seeing the Kingdom of God at work. He will show us about our cultural differences and help us to both value our own and the other culture more. Why? Because Jesus will help us to see that it is not just the culture of the Peruvian people, it is also the culture of our brothers and sisters in Christ.



SO WHAT IS YOUR CULTURE LIKE? EVEN THOUGH YOU MAY NOT HAVE BEEN IN A LATIN AMERICAN COUNTRY BEFORE, YOU MIGHT ACTUALLY ALREADY HAVE SOME THINGS IN COMMON WITH THE PERUVIAN CULTURE.



WE´VE PUT TOGETHER A SURVEY TO FIND OUT. IT IS BASED ON GENERALIZATIONS ABOUT THE CULTURES AND IT IS NOT 100% ACCURATE, BUT IT IS DESIGNED TO BE FUN AND TO HELP US TO SEE HOW WE THINK. ALL YOU NEED TO DO IS READ EACH STATEMENT AND CIRCLE THE ONE THAT IS MOST LIKE YOU. DON´T THINK ABOUT IT TOO MUCH, AND DON´T GET CUTESY AND CIRCLE BOTH. BE BOLD: CHOOSE ONE OR THE OTHER.

- A.
 1. It is important to look at the facts and draw your own conclusions.
 2. It is important to trust the experts.

- B.
 1. Most things in life are clear-cut, black and white.
 2. Most things in life are uncertain and gray.

- C.
 1. What I think determines what I do.
 2. How I feel determines what I do.

- D.
 1. When a meeting starts at 7 PM, I am there by 6.30.
 2. When a meeting starts at 7 PM, I am there by 8. Maybe.

- E.
 1. If it´s broke, throw it away.
 2. If it´s broke, fix it... again.

- F.
 1. History is studied in school.
 2. History is all around us.

- G.
 1. It is important to look for the positive side of things.
 2. It is okay to be uncertain about things.

- H.
 1. "I don´t know, so I´ll tell them I don´t know."
 2. "I don´t know, so I´ll tell them what I think *might* be true."

- I.
 1. Time is money.
 2. Tomorrow is another day.

- J.
 1. Beauty determines talent.
 2. Talent is beauty.

- K.
 1. I look out for number one.
 2. We are in this together.

- L.
 - 1. Standing out in a crowd makes you special.
 - 2. Standing out in a crowd makes you a target.

- M.
 - 1. Competition increases strength.
 - 2. Cooperation increases strength.

- N.
 - 1. Being aggressive is effective.
 - 2. Being passive is respectful.

- O.
 - 1. Logic and reason over what works.
 - 2. What works over logic and reason.

- P.
 - 1. The internet is a great tool to get information.
 - 2. The internet is a window to the world.

- Q.
 - 1. If I can't make it to a meeting, I'll call to let them know.
 - 2. If I can't make it to a meeting, they'll figure it out when I'm not there.

- R.
 - 1. Make a plan and stick to it.
 - 2. Make a plan and stick to it until you have to change it.

- S.
 - 1. Force of will is power.
 - 2. Relationship is power.

- T.
 - 1. Those in authority can be challenged.
 - 2. Those in authority are there for a reason.

- U.
 - 1. Laws are made to protect us.
 - 2. Laws are made, but I ignore them if it's inconvenient.

- V.
 - 1. Turn up the furnace.
 - 2. Put on a sweater.

- W.
 - 1. Reaching the goal is the most important part.
 - 2. The journey is the most important part.

- X.
 - 1. I tend to be an either/or person.
 - 2. I tend to be a both/and person.

- Y.
 - 1. I'm a goal setter.
 - 2. I'll know the goal when I get there.

- Z.
 - 1. Fifteen dollars a day? No thanks, I'll get a real job.
 - 2. Fifteen dollars a day? Wow, when do I start?

TO SCORE THE SURVEY, SIMPLY GIVE YOURSELF ONE POINT FOR EVERY 1 YOU CIRCLED AND TWO POINTS FOR EVERY 2 YOU CIRCLED. ADD THEM ALL TOGETHER TO GET A TOTAL. YOUR TOTAL SHOULD BE BETWEEN 26 AND 52.

26 – EXTREMELY NORTH AMERICAN CULTURALLY... CAN WE SAY “GRINGO”

27-32 – VERY NORTH AMERICAN CULTURALLY

33-38 – SOMEWHAT NORTH AMERICAN CULTURALLY

39-40 – IT DEPENDS ON THE SITUATION

41-46 – SOMEWHAT PERUVIAN CULTURALLY

47-51 – VERY PERUVIAN CULTURALLY

52 – EXTREMELY PERUVIAN... DO YOU LIKE TO EAT CUY (GUINEA PIG), TOO?



DÍA TRES:

OFFERING MY LIFE WITH GOD

Then Peter stood up with the Eleven, raised his voice and addressed the crowd: "Fellow Jews and all of you who live in Jerusalem, let me explain this to you; listen carefully to what I say. These men are not drunk, as you suppose. It's only nine in the morning! No, this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel:
"In the last days, God says, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your young men will see visions, your old men will dream dreams.

-- Acts 2.14-17 (NIV)

The group had been in the church for almost 2 hours now. At least an hour of that had been spent singing. I think it was the same song for the entire hour, but maybe it had changed somewhere along the way and I just missed it. The songs all seem to sound the same to me...

Anyway, the preacher had preached and the translator had translated. It appeared that we were about to leave. Thank Goodness, because my feet were so sore from the constant dancing and singing and my head was throbbing from the music and trying to listen to so much Spanish and the translations. Finally, we are going to get to go to bed. And then it happened.

The preacher said something in Spanish. He was smiling and nodding his head and looking straight at me. "Me", I asked, pointing at myself? I looked behind me. Surely he was looking at the Peruvian behind me.

The preacher then said whatever he said again, in Spanish. This time, he had a little bit of a worried look on his face, and he turned to the translator and

repeated it. There was an exchange as the preacher pointed at me again and motioned for me to come to him. The translator then delivered the most terrifying news I have ever heard. “He wants you to come up and talk to the congregation. He wants you to tell a story about what Jesus has done for you. You need to come give your testimony.”

“Me,” I asked again, almost begging for him to say I didn’t have to?

“Yes, you. It will be offensive if you don’t. Please come tell your testimony. I’ll help you translate.”

I timidly walked forward, wondering what on Earth I was going to say. Suddenly, my mind was a complete blank. *Jesus? Who’s Jesus? What has he done for me? What is a testimony? A story about Jesus? I can’t even remember my own name right now, much less a story. What am I going to say???* It hadn’t ever occurred to me that I might have to speak to anyone, much less an entire congregation. I wasn’t at all prepared for this. I wasn’t even sure what my testimony was. Was it when I was baptized? Or was it when I was so sick and in the hospital and Paula came from church and prayed for me? Do I even have a testimony worth hearing?

It was the longest walk from the front row to the pulpit that anyone has ever taken.



HAVE YOU EVER BEEN IN A SIMILAR SITUATION? HAVE YOU EVER BEEN ASKED TO GIVE YOUR TESTIMONY? ARE YOU PREPARED?



Folks, I’m almost guaranteeing you that sometime on your trip someone is going to be asked to give their testimony or tell a story about what Christ has done for them. It is an important part of the culture here, to tell your story and share with others. And people here are always ready to tell their stories! You have to be ready, too. Let’s get started...

TESTIMONY WORKSHEET

Life as a non-Christian: Attitude, behavior, etc:

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Actual conversion – How God brought me from darkness to light: (Use Scripture to testify about the saving message of the Gospel)

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Current state: With Christ as Lord and Savior, how is my life different; (What changes occurred; Trusting and obeying my new Master, etc.)

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Example: Paul giving his personal conversion testimony to King Agrippa (Acts 26:4-23):

- *His life before faith in Christ* (vs. 4-11): Paul told how he was raised very religiously, even as a Jewish leader. This led to an “anti-church” and “anti-Jesus” campaign. Zealously, he went around destroying the church (which is one of the reasons he called himself the “worst of sinners” - I Tim. 1:16).
- *His day of salvation* (vs. 12-18): Paul then proceeded to share what actually happened the day of his conversion. He talked about how he was humbled and confronted by the Messiah – the Christ, who drove him to his knees, where he eventually sought faith and repentance.
- *His current state* (vs.19-23): Paul concluded his testimony by sharing how he was now obedient to his new Master, Jesus Christ, preaching that people should “repent and turn to God and prove their repentance by their deeds.” Ultimately, Paul seized the opportunity to turn his personal testimony into an evangelistic message that was intended for Agrippa himself, as well as many others who were present in the courtroom! (This serves as an example of how and why we

should share our personal testimonies of God's amazing grace in our lives to lost people.)



PREPARING YOUR PERSONAL TESTIMONY

All team members must be prepared to give their personal testimony – To testify of God's amazing grace in your life. You will have many opportunities to share with believers and unbelievers throughout the trip.

Do not be embarrassed or ashamed of your testimony. God wants to use you. Share with people what you have seen, heard, experienced, and tasted in the Lord – indeed that He is Good!

Use the following guidelines to help you formulate your thoughts. Write it out, practice it, and be prepared to share it with team members at the team meetings.



HOW TO PREPARE A PERSONAL TESTIMONY

A carefully prepared testimony, empowered by the Holy Spirit, can be of immediate and effective use in nearly every witnessing situation. It should be our desire to present Christ in such a clear, attractive, yet simple way that those who hear will not only want to know Him too, but they will also know "how" to know Him intimately.



SOME CONSIDERATIONS – DOS AND DON'TS

DO

- Ask the Lord to give you wisdom and guidance as you write (James 1:5,6)
- Follow the three-point outline: "My Life With Christ"
 1. Life before knowing Christ
 2. How you came to know Christ
 3. Life after you received Christ
- Emphasize all points, regardless of when you came to faith in Christ (as a child, an adolescent or an adult).
- Begin with an interesting, attention-getting illustration/story, and close with giving thanks and glory to God

- Always reinforce what you are saying with Scripture, for the power is in the Word! (Rom. 1:16)
- Edit carefully, rewrite and memorize it!

DON'T

- Use Christian jargon. Words and phrases that would be unfamiliar to a non-believer (such as “I found Jesus”, or “I was totally depraved”). Though words and phrases like this are precious to us, they are often misunderstood and not comprehended by non-Christians.
- Be too wordy and/or beat around the bush (put into practice the truth of I Pet. 3:15 – what is means to give an answer of the hope you have, yet doing it with gentleness and respect).
- Speak about church denominations in a derogatory way. And guard against speaking harmfully about individuals and/or different people groups.
- Give the impression that the Christian life is “a bed of roses”.



CONCLUDING CONSIDERATIONS

- Share it with loving enthusiasm as you are filled and empowered by the Holy Spirit (Eph. 5:18).
- Speak loudly and clearly in a natural, relaxed tone of voice (avoid ministerial “twang”). Remember, when Jesus spoke, the crowds “were amazed at the gracious words that came from his lips.” (Luke 4:22)
- Avoid mannerisms when you speak, such as rubbing your nose, jingling coins in your pocket, swaying, clearing your throat, and using “uh’s” and “ah’s”.
- Avoid arguing and other high-pressure methods of getting a “decision” for Christ. Remember, men are “born of the Spirit”, not through the persuasiveness or logic of men (note I Cor. 2:4-5).
- Smile often! “Let the joy of the Lord be your strength.” (Neh. 8:10) Pray the Lord would allow you to be radiant with your countenance and words.
- Memorize your testimony and practice it until it becomes natural.

DÍA CUATRO:

QUIET PRAYER



But Jesus often withdrew to lonely places and prayed.

-- Luke 5.16 (NIV)

The following is an excerpt from my journal when I was going through some mission training. In a way, it is me tattling on me. You'll understand a little more after you read it, but I will confess upfront... I'm not the perfect model of what everyone thinks a perfect Christian should look like! Not at all. And I thank Jesus everyday for being perfect in my place, because I *know* that I won't ever attain it! So, here goes:

Thursday, August 16

Today began with our growth group having a meeting for bible study. A study on Silence and Solitude – not my favorites! I admit, silence and solitude are unsafe and lonely creatures for me. Like some people are afraid of spiders and bugs, the fear of sitting silently or being alone is really overwhelming. I'm willing to have my "quiet time" and write in my journal or do my bible study, but actually not doing anything? You've got to be kidding me! Becky says that she has one day each month that she goes away for the day... no kids, no husband... just goes away to a park or a lake and sits with God. Susan said that she takes a one week retreat once a year – all by herself, no books, no TV, just her time with God. I can't even imagine! The torture! Maybe one day every-so-often (like once a year), but a whole week?! Ridiculous! These people are nut

cases... extreme Christians... I just can't be like that. Surely the Bible doesn't say that I have to do THAT!

My group suggests to me that I try to do it. Try to "fast" from doing and just be with God. Maybe start out with just one day a month, or maybe just a half day (I think they see the terror on my face) and work my way up... I'm secretly thinking that they are crazy and I can't wait to tell my husband about these loony toons!

So, of course, our class whole group session today was about Soul Care. The entire day is about taking care of our souls, about Jesus' practice of going off in solitude to refuel himself with The Father. All of my feelings were surfaced in scripture... loneliness in solitude, etc. Luke 5:16 – But Jesus often withdrew to lonely places and prayed.

After lunch, we were forced (some went very happily, I was petrified) to go outside and find a place to sit alone with God for an hour. No Bible, no journal, no nothing. I actually started to cry before I even got out the door to the parking lot! "I don't know how to do this. Where will I go? And hour?! Are you kidding me!?! Yesterday we went through hostage training – wasn't that enough? Now you want me to spend an hour alone? Take me back to hostage training!"

So I had a serious rant at God – "Why are you making me do this? I don't know how to do this. Why are you trying to stress me out?"

What I didn't expect was His response. Almost immediately, he said, "I'm not stressing you out... you are. Just go with it." (I hate it when your mother comes out in God!)

Well, knowing that it is futile to try to argue with God, I went (but I was still very unhappy about it). I found a place in a small stand of pine trees. It felt secure and protected. It reminded me of the area where we used to play "fort" in front of our cabin in the mountains growing up. The ground was carpeted with pine needles and the trees seemed to naturally make a circle around me. This place felt secluded and safe and I hoped that the clock would tick quickly.

So I sat and wondered, "What do I do now?" I tried to pray and ask Him what to do, but He didn't really answer. Then it occurred to me that the

idea was more to listen than to talk, so maybe I shouldn't pray or ask for anything. This ought to be boring...

The first half of my time was awkward and difficult, mostly spent looking around and wondering what to do and what I was supposed to be getting out of this. I guess at some point I started to relax and notice things and just think.

God spoke to me in a pinecone, all prickly and closed up tight – I need to open up to others more in order for my seed to be released and bless others.

And he spoke through a wet twig that I was able to bend in half – maybe I would be more flexible if I were full of water. I'm too dry and brittle and fragile right now... I need to soak in more Water. (Living Water)

Before I knew it, the time was up. What seemed like an eternity earlier was already over. Just an hour...

What began as something I did not want to do (be alone) became something I was protective of! At one point during the hour, another person walked near my spot in the woods. I was very still so they wouldn't see me. I was hoping I wouldn't be found. Isn't that funny? I was protecting the very thing that I hated – silence and solitude!

God really had a lot to teach me today. Maybe I'll try it again sometime... I want to. I just have to get over my fear and remember that today was good...

I told you... I'm not perfect. Far from it. And I warned you that I am not the model missionary / Christian. I'm human. Every day is a struggle for me. I have to constantly reflect on my actions and my thoughts and pray for help and forgiveness. It's the only thing that keeps me from crossing the line and becoming a Pharisee (and most days, I know that I cross the line and have to beg for forgiveness and "get right" again).

Probably one of the things that gets me into more trouble is my own personality. I'm a Type A in a lot of ways. I love to make lists and I have a serious need to accomplish everything on the list. I am a perfectionist at heart – not only do I

expect perfection in myself, but I often demand it of others. I know it isn't possible and I know that it is a vice, but it still surfaces in me *a lot* and I have to fight that part of my personality. (I told you I was going to tattle on myself a lot today.)

So the idea of going off and doing nothing and being in solitude is multifaceted for me. Number 1 – For a Type A person, it seems like a waste of valuable time. How am I supposed to accomplish anything if I'm *doing* nothing?

Number 2 – I don't really want to be alone with myself. It makes me reflect on myself and my actions too much and I begin to see my imperfections too clearly... not good for a perfectionist.

Number 3 – I don't really know how to do it well (sit alone with God). Another strike for the perfectionist. If I'm going to do something, I want to do it well - To perfection. There really isn't a formula for how to be alone with yourself and God. There aren't steps to follow or guidelines or rules. How can I do it well if I don't know the goals and the guidelines and the rules???

Get the picture? This is ROUGH for me!

So, being the science-minded person that I am, I began to look for answers. There HAS to be a formula or a play book or answers to this! Right? Well, be careful what you ask for.

On the "doing" part... that isn't very relational. We are called to relational ministry. Jesus was in relational ministry. He could have just waved his mighty hand and made everyone understand, but he didn't. He related to people. He spent time with them. He sat with them, comforted them, talked with them, taught them... he built relationships. I've heard great people speak on the subject of "doing" verses "being" and it all boils down to the same thing... relationships are more important than accomplishing what's on the list of "to-do" items. Partially, it is hard for North Americans because our culture values "doing" and accomplishments. On the contrary, the Peruvian culture is not at all about "doing". They really couldn't care less if they accomplish anything today. But they highly value relationships! They just want to "be" with other people, to build relationships, to sit together... So for me, I have to really work on calming my urge to do, and really work on just being. Being still, being with others, being focused on people and not my list.

As to perfection... also not very relational. Jesus *is* perfection, but he didn't flaunt that to the disciples. He didn't go crazy when Mary poured perfume all over his feet ("That's going to stain the floor! Someone get a rag! Oh no, don't get that in your hair – it's alcohol-based, it will fry your hair. And by the way, this is very embarrassing for me."). Can you imagine?! In fact, the story of Mary and Martha (different story) is one that just eats at my soul. In my book, Mary should have jumped up off that floor and set the table! I mean, really! The King is in the living room! Get up and get to work, you slug! I understand the lesson in the story (don't send me hate mail!), I'm just saying that it is hard for me – I'm a perfectionist at heart. And I'm a do-er. Mary isn't *doing* enough. And Martha needs help making the dinner party perfect. Trust me – I would have been Martha in this story!!! And oh, how I *wish* I was a Mary! I wish that my nature was to be relational and it was natural and easy for me. But it isn't. I have to work at it.

So how will this play out for you? Just warning you ahead of time... missions is VERY relational. If you don't build relationships and focus on relationships more than on the task or job you have come to perform, you will fail miserably. In fact, if you do see your task or job as being THE most important thing that you are coming to Peru for, then your focus is in the wrong place. I know – it's hard. You want to "get the job done". But what exactly is "the job"? Trust me – Jesus says it's about relationships.

Your to-do list is this...

1. Pray – spend time alone with God.
2. Listen – just sit and listen to what he has to say to you.
3. Be – don't "do" anything, just "be"
4. Love – focus on loving well... love the people around you, love the Peruvians, just love whoever you come into contact with. Be relational.



DO YOU SPEND TIME ALONE WITH GOD? ARE YOU ACTIVELY LISTENING TO WHAT HE HAS TO SPEAK INTO YOUR LIFE TODAY? CAN YOU "BE STILL" IN HIS PRESENCE? CAN YOU CEASE "DOING" AND JUST "BE"? CAN YOU



SIT AT THE FEET OF JESUS WITHOUT WORRYING ABOUT THE THINGS ON YOUR TO-DO LIST?

I still have a long way to go on my issues, I admit. And honestly, I still haven't taken a week off to go into solitude (actually, not even a whole day). I highly value my quiet time. And I can sit alone with God and a cup of coffee (I'm positive that God is a coffee drinker, too) and marvel at his creation. And we think together. And sometimes I like what I hear him saying, and sometimes I don't. But I still enjoy his company everyday, and I'm willing to continue to meet him for some silence and solitude... it's not so bad being alone with Him. He's alright.



PERU IS A VERY RELATIONAL CULTURE – THAT IS IN STARK CONTRAST TO
OUR NORTH AMERICAN CULTURE. HOW CAN YOU BE MORE RELATIONAL



ON THIS MISSION? WHAT THINGS OR ACTIONS DO YOU NEED TO FOCUS ON TO BUILD
RELATIONSHIPS? ARE YOU MORE COMFORTABLE “DOING” OR “BEING”?



DÍA CINCO:

THEY THAT WAIT

But those who hope in the LORD will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint.

-- Isaiah 40.39 (NIV)

"I had to wait FOREVER in line at Starbuck's this morning! I swear, there had to be five cars in front of me!"

"This computer takes sooooo long to boot up in the mornings. Something must be wrong. It is taking more than 2 minutes just to turn it on!"

"Good Heavens! How long could it take to run 10 items through the scanner and pay! I don't have all day! And I think she has more than 10 items in her cart, anyway!"

"Okay, he's 10 minutes late. How much more time should we wait?! He gets 5 more minutes, and then we're leaving. This is ridiculous!"

If any of these sounds familiar, I have news for you... you are going to HATE the lifestyle in Peru. Okay – maybe hate is too strong, but you aren't going to be happy. This is NOT a fast culture. Not by a long shot. On the flip-side, you (North Americans) have been raised in a culture that values speed and efficiency. You have been culturally trained to expect almost instantaneous results. North Americans don't want to wait for anything. If a meeting is supposed to start at 9, then by-golly it better begin at 9, right?

True story... On the first day of the school year (for teachers), our school district always has a teacher convocation. All of the employees in the entire

district meet in the district's main auditorium for a series of speeches and motivational moments. The superintendent speaks, the school board members are presented and say a few words, a guest speaker gives a motivational speech, etc. One year, we had a new superintendent. This would be his first big moment with his employees. At exactly 8 o'clock, when the event was to begin, he rose to the podium and took the mic.

"Please close and lock the doors, as instructed," he said to the men in the back of the room.

All heads turned and watched as the three designated men in the back of the auditorium closed the doors and used their keys to lock them. You could have heard a pin drop. Then all heads slowly turned back to the new superintendent.

"It's 8 o'clock," he said. "It's time to begin the school year. I will not tolerate late-comers in my district. You are to set an example. Now, let's begin."

And with that, our school year began. Several employees were locked out that day, and it didn't make many new friends for the superintendent, but I don't think too many people were ever late to a meeting with him that year!



HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT THE SUPERINTENDENT'S ACTIONS? ARE YOU PUNCTUAL? DO YOU VALUE TIME? HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT TIME MANAGEMENT AND EFFICIENCY?



I have told that story to some of my Peruvian friends, and they are aghast at such an idea. That is so far from their culture that they have absolutely no frame of reference for such a thing. People are late all the time. It is a fact of life here. It's just how it is.

In contrast, let me tell you another story...

Last week, we were invited to a quincenera (a traditional birthday party for a girl when she turns 15 in Latin America). The invitation said that the party would start at 8 p.m. But we knew better, after all, we have lived here for awhile now and we know that nothing starts at the appointed time. So we asked a friend when we should go to the party.

“It’s hard to say. If they say it is starting at 8, then you might go at about 9ish. They are probably going to have a party before the party, because the birthday girl won’t actually appear until midnight – it’s traditional.”

“Midnight! Are you serious?!” I gasped for air and my head spun. “My 6 year old is invited to this party. Her bedtime is 8:30. Heck – MY bedtime is 10! When is this party going to be over? When the birthday girl appears, is that the end of the party?”

“Oh no! That is when they cut the cake and do the traditional dancing and serve dinner. The party won’t be over until 3 or 4 a.m.,” she says.

We had already committed to going to the party, but we decided that we will go at 9ish and we will greet the parents and all of the other people from the church who will be there, we’ll politely stay for awhile, then we’ll make an “early” exit and get Sarah home to bed. So we leave our house at 9 and we are greeted in the street by two members of the band that is supposed to play at the party. They would like to borrow our speakers. (If the party was supposed to start at 8, wouldn’t you think that the band would have their speakers there by now?) So we loan them our speakers, then they run off down the street in the opposite direction to borrow cables and microphones from another missionary. Hmmmm...

Needless to say, the party didn’t start at 8. Nor did it start at 9. We sat in an empty banquet hall until 10:30. When we decided to leave, there were 10 people in the hall – 8 of which were band members (still not playing any music because they were still hooking everything up and testing the sound). The family of the birthday girl was nowhere to be found. We saw the pastor from the church (Hallelujah! We CAN prove that we tried to come to the party!) and one lady from the church. We politely told them that Sarah needed to go home to bed because she had been sick for two days and was on medication. All the way home, we kept asking ourselves questions... Why did they put a start time on an invitation that is so obviously NOT the start time? Is it cultural to show up to a party 3 or 4 hours late? How can you be the hired band for an event if you don’t even have the equipment ready or available at the appointed time? I wonder what a quincenera is like, since we still haven’t actually experienced one...



PUT YOURSELF IN THIS STORY... HOW WOULD YOU FEEL AT THIS MOMENT?
 ARE YOU ANGRY / DISAPPOINTED / AGGRAVATED / BEWILDERED / OTHER?



The North American culture trains us in impatience. We live in a culture of express lines, express lanes, fast tracks, and instant action. We are not accustomed to waiting, and our attitudes show it when we are asked to wait or forced to slow down. A recent short-term mission team was ready for dinner at the appointed time (7:00). All were present and accounted for and had formed a line outside the dining area (very North American). At 7:10, some began to look at their watches and grumble. At 7:15, the grumbling turned to questions of “what is the hold up?” and “I’m starving! Are they ever going to let us in?” At 7:20, some were complaining rather heatedly at the career missionaries saying, “What is WRONG with these people? Can’t they cook a meal on time?” At 7:40, some North Americans actually went into the kitchen and took it upon themselves to try to hurry things up by taking over and “helping” the ladies in the kitchen.

The point being, when you lose your patience and your North American attitude takes over, you usually lose your ability to be a good witness and example to others in the process. The ladies in the kitchen were embarrassed by what had occurred. They felt that they had lost the respect of the North Americans whom they were trying to serve. And they didn’t particularly LIKE a couple of the North Americans when it was all over, due to the complaining and grumbling and impatience (those things translate in body language and tone of voice... you don’t have to speak Spanish to have others know when you aren’t happy).



SPEND SOME TIME WITH THESE VERSES AND MAKE A DECISION TO LEAVE
 YOUR NORTH AMERICAN IDEAS OF TIME MANAGEMENT AND EFFICIENCY
 BACK IN NORTH AMERICA. YOU’LL BE MUCH HAPPIER, AND YOU’LL BE



MUCH BETTER AT RELATIONSHIP BUILDING IN PERU IF YOU COME WITH PATIENCE ON YOUR HEART.

2 CORINTHIANS 6:4-6

COLOSSIANS 1:11

PROVERBS 19:11

1 THESSALONIANS 5:14

GALATIANS 5:22

1 CORINTHIANS 13:4

COLOSSIANS 3:12



A few facts about:

This and that in Perú

- 🐾 Perú is the biggest producer in Latin America of gold, zinc and lead. It is the second world producer of copper. Antamina is the biggest copper-zinc mine in the world and Camisea is the second biggest gas reserve.
- 🐾 You can find 28 different climates in Perú, making it to be one of the 5 biggest biodiversities in the world.
- 🐾 On a sad note: The sixth most polluted city in the world is La Oroya, Perú. Because of mining issues, 99% of the people suffer from lead poisoning.
- 🐾 In the ocean off the Peruvian coast one can find over 700 species of fish and 400 crustaceans. Twenty out of 67 species of whales in the world are there as well.
- 🐾 The Amazon river, which starts in Perú, is the largest river in the world by volume (with a total river flow greater than the next eight largest rivers combined) and one of the two cleanest (Congo river being the other). It flows 150,000 cubic meters per second.
- 🐾 The Lord of Sipan tomb, in Chiclayo, is the oldest in the Americas and the most magnificent. It can only be compared with the tomb of Tutankamon in Egypt.
- 🐾 Caral, just 114 miles north of Lima, is the oldest discovered city in the Americas (3000 years BC).
- 🐾 On the last coffee exposition in Paris, Peruvian coffee was voted the best by both American and European tasters, out of 33 presented.
- 🐾 Electricity is 220 volt. That means if you are bringing anything electrical to Peru, be sure it takes 220 volts or you have a converter.