



Keesa Renée Dupré

Christmas 2009

My Dear Friends,

It is so hard to believe that, by the time you read this, it will have been a year since I returned to the States. It doesn't seem possible! In many ways, it seems as though it was only yesterday that I was standing in the Praise Choir at La Roca that last Sunday night (just a few hours before I left) with tears rolling down my face at the thought of leaving that place and those people who had become so precious to me. And yet, as I think on all that has happened over this past year, I wonder... can it have only been 12 months?

What a time of growth and blessing it has been! As much as I still miss Peru, I wouldn't trade this year back in the States for anything. As I look at the ways God has used my time here, has used you, my dear friends and family in Christ, to grow me and stretch me and break me and heal me, how can I help but praise Him?

God has used my classes, my internship, my interactions with other missionaries and my ministry and participation in the local church body here to grow me and prepare me in various ways for the ministry in Peru. For example, through my internship and various classes and participation here at ABC, He has taught me much about discipleship which forms such a key element of the ministry in Carapongo... and which I knew so little about this time last year!

Through various classes, especially my classes on Early Church History and Church Growth from the book of Acts, He has taught me what His Church should look like, how it grew through the centuries and especially some of the fundamental differences (and similarities!) between the Catholic and the Protestant churches... an understanding which will help me no end as I minister in heavily Catholic areas!

But perhaps the richest and most precious growth over the year has been the growth of my relationship with God and the depths of joy and satisfaction in Him that I've only begun to discover. O, that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith (Paul cries) that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is

the width and length and depth and height—to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge, that - you may be filled with all the fullness of God! “To know the love of Christ which passes knowledge.” Only pause a moment and meditate on that phrase...meditate and worship!

As we celebrate the Christmas season this year, it is precisely that love which we are celebrating... Christ emptied Himself, took the form of a Servant—took the form of a helpless baby—was born in a stable, lived the sinless life that we could never live, died the horrible death that we deserved to die and was raised from the dead so that He could give us new life in Him. And He did it all for love for the glory of God and His Name.

*“But God demonstrates His love toward us,
in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.”*

As I look towards 2010, I see a horizon resplendent with opportunities to proclaim that love to others, both here in the States and (soon, Lord willing!) overseas in Peru. We are ambassadors for Christ, Paul says in another letter; just as ambassadors, we represent Christ to the world, pleading with them on His behalf to be reconciled to God.

My friends, as the year draws to a close, will you not join me in seeking opportunities to proclaim Christ to a hopeless and dying world, whether at home or abroad?

Rejoicing in Him,

~Keesa