

Amanda R. Johnson

## Peru Missions 2009-Testimony

Before I went to Peru I thought I had a grasp on how to live well. I stayed on the course expected of me that being high school, college, and eventually a career, marriage and a family. To live *a full* life, though, I had to also be active in my church. I did that by singing in the choir, and participating in youth group. In college I went to small group regularly, attended all the church events, and even served on a ministry team. I busied myself with church things because it was only in those moments that I felt like I was actually significant, and that I had some purpose. I found myself living from Sunday service to small group to prayer meeting and then to Sunday service again the next week. That means a few hours out of 3 or 4 days of a 7 day week. The rest of the time I did not care about.

During missions training I began spending more time with God; not more time doing stuff, but actual time reading my Bible and sitting quietly with God to listen to Him. That time truly rocked my world as I learned more about God and His plan for my life. Soon Devotions and Quiet Time made it onto my list of stuff to do to live a full life.

Once I got to Peru my day-to-day life was changed drastically. At every moment there was something that could be done to serve God and the people, whether it was devotions, praise band, talking with and praying for the people, or helping to clean the house. Every moment mattered, or at least so I thought. In Peru we went on house visits to people in the neighborhood. There we were able to talk with people about their families, their health, their spiritual lives, and whatever came to mind. More impactful was the opportunity we had to pray for every person. At my first house visit, honestly, I did not pay much attention to the woman because I could not understand her at all. She was speaking in Spanish, of which I knew very little, and everyone understood what she was saying except for me, and I got tired of asking my team members to translate. I zoned out, and daydreamed about nothing at all. When it came time to pray for her I was really convicted because I did not know all of what to pray for. I missed about half of the time we ever spent with that woman. I promised God that I wouldn't do that again.

At the next house we ministered to a woman who was about 75 years old, whose time on this earth was drawing near to an end. Her prayer was not for herself, for she knew Jesus Christ for herself, but for her children and grandchildren who did not. She did not want to leave them without them knowing her Saviour also. After we prayed for her I really felt compelled to share a little bit about myself with her. In broken Spanish, I told her about how my father had passed away two weeks before. I told her that God loved my family and was holding us. I told her that God loved her family also, and was holding them to. I told her to have hope. That was all I could say because I didn't know any more words. She understood me. Rather, she understood what God wanted her to know at that moment.

That moment which was so brief, which had no introduction changed what that woman thought about God. It changed what I thought about God also, and the abundant life He has planned for His children. I realize now that living an abundant life didn't mean doing all of this stuff and sticking Jesus' name on it.

My purpose is found in God who can use me despite my sinfulness. It means I should live in a minute to minute surrender of my life to God, being ready to do what He wants me to. This means that every moment counts. Every second in which there is breath in my lungs and Jesus in my heart is sovereign, and should be spent worshipping God. There is no *other* time than the present, and I must spend it loving and serving the One who gave it to me.