

Sam Snow

When I signed up for the 2009 Summer Mission trip with JCA, I did not really know what to expect. Even after all the preparations of training, I did not have any idea about what life in Peru looked like. The only real expectations I had were that God would use our team to love the Peruvians, and that He would work in our hearts as we loved His people. During the trip God met and exceeded these expectations in amazing ways.

When I first saw God working in Peru, seeing many answered prayers and hearing many testimonies of miracles, I had a realization. God was not working in Peru because we were there; He was not answering prayers because we came all the way from the US; He was not with us just because we were on a mission trip. No... He was, and is, constantly revealing Himself to the people in Peru because they are earnestly seeking Him. I realized this because I saw God everywhere. I saw Him answer many prayers, and He also showed me in two separate, miraculous instances that He was with us. I also heard many testimonies of people with miraculous healings, prophetic dreams, and I saw God change people's hearts, drawing them back to Him. I wondered why it is so easy to be skeptical of these things. I wondered why we don't often see God work in these ways back at home in the US. As I thought about this, I learned a little bit more about what Jesus meant when he said that "it was harder for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than a rich man to enter heaven."

The trip to Peru revealed a lot about my life here in the states. I saw how people lived in Peru, and I saw the universality of humanity: the work, the play, the daily life, the special occasions, the laughter, the tears, the "pursuit of happiness", and ultimately, the need for something more than this world can give. I saw how I am no different than them,

aside from circumstances alone. I learned that because I don't "need" God, it's so easy to rely on my own strength, or the wealth and protection of my way of life. I thought about my health: if I get sick, do I trust in the doctor, or do I trust in God? In Peru people sometimes have no other choice than to cry out to God for help when they are sick. The more I watched God answer prayers, the more I realized that I often don't let God answer mine. I pray for things, but I try to accomplish them on my own strength or wealth. I know that I could never enter the kingdom of heaven on my own strength, but by God's strength and mercy, I will learn to depend on Him in all that I do. And by living a life fully dependant on God, I hope to always let God have His way in my life.