

THE

McKendree FAMILY

MISSIONARIES TO THE
Peru, South America
D E A F 1ST



April 2016

Dear Pastor and Church Family,



We arrived safely back in Peru on March 1st. While we were on furlough, many of you asked, "Who is taking care of the Church?" I answered sadly that we had to close the doors and many of the people probably would not be going to church anywhere while we were gone. I am pleased to say that on our first Sunday back, we had 36 in attendance! There has been a renewed interest from the people, a joyful embrace from those who missed us, and a clear reminder that they are God's people, not just ours, and that He takes care of them wherever they are according to how much they're willing to let Him. We also rejoice over those who came for Resurrection Sunday and our fellowship time afterwards.

One of the most difficult times as a Pastor is to have to tell someone, "We don't know if your loved one was saved." Within our first week back, we experienced a bittersweet reunion with a Deaf lady who comes from time to time. She contacted us to let us know her father had passed away. He was 78 years old. I had witnessed to him several times, but he had held onto his faith in Catholicism. She asked if we would come to the wake, and if we would interpret for the funeral. The burning question on her heart was "Is he in heaven?"

I desperately wanted to comfort her with words and Scripture, but I could not in good conscience say that we knew for sure he was saved, but only that we had witnessed to him and he did not make a decision at those times. This deaf woman was naturally overwrought with emotion, sadness, and a deep realization that her father may be in hell.

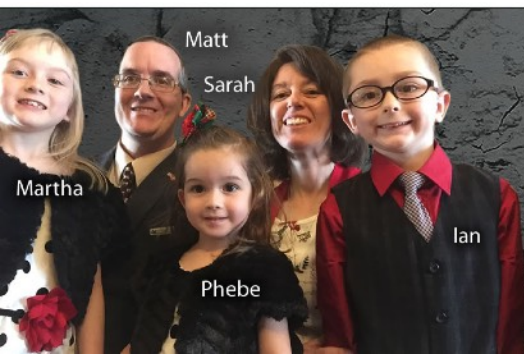
It is with great joy to tell you about Gael. Gael is hearing, and he has been coming to our church for the last three years. He started coming to our Saturday Children's Bible Club, then began coming Sundays with his mother, Pilar. Pilar was saved a year ago and baptized, yet every time we talked with Gael about his salvation, he would shrug his shoulders and say he didn't understand. We have been praying that his eyes be opened to the truth. God answered that prayer last week. He came by to talk about baptism. As we sat in my office, I explained to him that baptism is not salvation. It is only a step of obedience by the saved. As I began to witness to him again, I saw he was more responsive. He was willing to admit he is a sinner, that he needed to have forgiveness from God, and that he did not want to go to hell. He wanted to be with God in Heaven. Gael did not get saved in my office, but went home and spoke with his mother. He made things right with her first, then together, he simply asked God to change him and save him. Gael made it public this Sunday and now we will begin teaching him about baptism.

It is also blessing to tell you about Nestor. Some of you may remember that he was the live-in boyfriend of Maryluz, the Deaf woman who passed away from cancer in 2016. Nestor came to me again recently after raising his hand during the invitation that he was not saved. He expressed his fear that he was in danger in the streets or on a motorcycle because he is Deaf and cannot hear danger coming. We sat in my office and using simple images, I witnessed to him. This was the first time that he responded with the clarity that he was a sinner with a terrible past life. He has felt the struggle again in his life that he didn't want to do wrong anymore. He wanted to do what Maryluz had done, and ask God to clean him so that he could have permission to come into God's clean house some day. As we knelt in my office, he signed to God in Heaven these very words and afterwards he said, "Thank you. In Jesus' name, Amen."

Blessings on you all.
To the Deaf 1st and Whosoever Will,
Matt, Sarah, Martha, Ian, & Phebe

Prayer Requests

- ◆ University Sign class
- ◆ Upcoming special service days
- ◆ Public school Bible Deaf children class
- ◆ Parents of Deaf children workshop



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