



PERU

MISSION

Short-Term Missions Orientation Manual 2016

For he was looking forward to the city that has foundations,
whose designer and builder is God. Heb. 11:10

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Welcome to Peru!

Thank you for choosing to spend a week of your life with us! We are glad that you will be joining us in planting and establishing the church here. It is our prayer that this trip will challenge **and** stretch you, and be deeply rewarding. God is doing many exciting things here in Peru, yet much remains to be done. Your interest in helping us is an answer to our prayers.

Peru Mission (<http://www.perumission.org>) is a Reformed Christian mission that is working to build the City of God in the urban centers of northern Peru. We live the following values:

- * We proclaim Jesus always, everywhere, and to everyone
- * We live from the center of the liturgy
- * We engage the battle by carrying the Cross
- * We build a culture captive to the lordship of Jesus.

Short-term teams work on a wide variety of projects such as Construction, Vacation Bible Schools, Christian Camping, Evangelism Outreach, Leadership Development, and Medical Campaigns. All these help advance our ministry plans, care for our neighbors in need, and draw new people into our community where they can hear the Gospel.

Regardless of the type of work you do, most teams find that the greatest rewards and the longest lasting changes that take place are in the relationships that they form. The most significant work that you will do while here will not be building a wall, or painting a room, or helping heal a sick child; rather it will be making friends, loving kids, and spending time with the people in the churches.

We hope that this packet will help you better prepare for your trip, and process it after you go back home. God bless you as you begin this journey!

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Where We Work



Known as “The City of Eternal Spring”, **Trujillo** is the capital of the region of La Libertad, and is named after the birthplace of the Spanish conquistador Francisco Pizarro. In addition to the city’s rich colonial heritage, it is home to some of South America’s most spectacular archaeological sites, such as Chan Chan and the Huaca de la Luna.

Cajamarca, which is located in the Andes in northern Peru, is best known as the place where Pizarro defeated the Inca army and took the Inca ruler Atahualpa hostage. Today it is a beautiful and growing mountain city that retains the character of the rural Andes.

Celendine, is a small town two hours outside of Cajamarca where we are working to build the city of God through church planting.

History and Culture

Before the arrival of Spanish conquistador Francisco Pizarro in 1532, several different empires ruled Peru; impressive ruins of these can still be seen throughout the country. The last and most advanced of these empires was the Incan Empire, which dominated all of Peru and parts of modern day Chile, Bolivia and Ecuador from 1438 to 1532. Following the Spanish conquest Peru quickly became the South American center of commercial and political control by the Spanish crown.

Since gaining its independence from Spain in 1821, the country has experienced periods of prosperity and staggering inequality, eventually leading to the rise of terrorist movements such as the Shining Path in the 1980s. In 1990, Alberto Fujimori became president and helped the country regain its economic footing and effectively squashed the terrorist forces, unfortunately while simultaneously presiding over one of Peru’s most corrupt governments. The country is now experiencing an economic rebound and its economy is one of the fastest growing in the world.

Peru is divided into three basic regional categories: mountains, jungle and the coast. The country is best known for destinations such as Machu Picchu, the Amazon rainforest, and the surfers’ paradise along the northern coast. Peruvians are strongly nationalistic and proud of their cultural heritage, including their cuisine. Eighty-one percent (81%) of Peruvians consider themselves Roman Catholics, but the evangelical church is growing rapidly. Despite the evils that have plagued the country since its founding, Peru is a vibrant, multifaceted and youthful society hungry for the Gospel and the hope it brings.

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Travel Basics

Before You Go . . .

Official Requirements

A valid US passport is required to enter Peru. If anyone on your team does not have one, start the process a few months ahead of time! See <http://travel.state.gov> for full instructions. **We will need a list of team members and names as they appear on passports and passport numbers 60 days before your trip! If we do not receive a full list with the stated requirements, then your per person costs may go up depending upon airline prices.** Keep your passport in a safe place while traveling. While traveling in airports, etc., it should be on your person. When in Trujillo or Lima, you may leave it in the hotel. It is safe there. Further, you may want to make a copy and keep with you and/or scan it digitally and store it in an email folder that you can access via the Internet, thereby giving you the ability to print another copy “just in case”. This is also a good idea for any other important cards you may bring with you in case your wallet or purse is stolen (e.g., driver’s license, Social Security card and any credit or debit cards).

If anyone in your group is NOT a U.S. citizen, be sure to contact the nearest Peruvian consulate to find out if it is necessary to get a visa in order to enter Peru or other countries they may travel through getting to and from Peru.

Airport Security

To avoid delays, put all liquids, scissors, and pocketknives or nail clippers in your checked luggage. If you must bring liquids or creams in your carry-on baggage, they must be in 3 ounce-sized bottles or less, and placed in a quart-sized clear plastic zip-top bag. Personal medicines are fine, but bring a copy of your prescription. If you want to lock your luggage, use locks with the TSA logo on them so that security personnel can search your luggage without breaking your lock.

Donations

A good guideline is to divide any donations you are bringing among the team so that it can be declared as your personal belongings. Peruvian customs regulations require that many electronic items or items for *commercial* use be declared and taxed upon entering the country. This does not include your personal electronic items (such as telephones, iPods, etc.). Philanthropic groups and individuals planning to enter Peru with medical supplies in quantities greater than for personal use are advised to contact Peru Mission prior to your trip for assistance with your medications and/or other medical supplies.

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Airline Luggage Limits

Check your airline's Web site! Most airlines have a limit of 1 or 2 checked bags up to 50 pounds each on an international flight (prices vary for the second bag if only one is allowed). This is in addition to your carry-on luggage. LAN, the Peruvian airline, we will be flying limits to just 50 lbs of checked luggage. This may be one bag or two up to a total of 50 lbs. If you will have more than 1 checked bag from Lima to your local city, then please consider the costs of overage luggage.

For complete up-to-date information on passports, visas, and requirements for US citizens traveling abroad, see the "Country Specific Information" on Peru available at <http://travel.state.gov>.

When You Land . . .

Immigration and Customs

You will be given a white slip of paper on the plane before you land. **The paper, called a "Tarjeta Andina", should be guarded carefully throughout your stay in Peru and kept with your passport.** It will be stamped upon entry by immigration official. This paper is your tourist visa and is good for up to 90 days. **You must have this with you when you leave the country; if you lose this, you will have to pay a fine.** Fill the form out completely and note that you are here on vacation (as a tourist) and your address in Peru is: Hotel Paraíso, Jr. San Martín 244, Trujillo, Peru. Another address will be supplied for the Cajamarca Teams.

After going through immigration, pick up your bags at the luggage carousel. Once you have your bags, proceed to customs, where you will scan your bags again and turn in your customs form. You may also have your bags searched. Always be polite and explain you are on a mission trip and any and all items are your personal items or donations to our mission.

Once you have made your way through customs, look for the Peru Mission missionary meeting your flight. They will assist you while in Lima and to your next destination.

Stay together as a group. Pick pocketing and snatch-and-run theft is a common problem in Peru. Keep your eyes on your things at all times! Even in the airport. . .there are many people that will grab your bag and run while in the airport.

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While in Peru . . .

Money Matters

The official Peruvian currency is the “sol” (singular) or “soles” (plural). You can check the current exchange rate of US Dollars to Peruvian Nuevo Soles at www.xe.com/ucc. Very few places accept American dollars and it is best to plan to have soles for your personal expenses.

You can use your US ATM card at most ATM’s (“cajeros”) here, and withdraw money in either dollars or soles at a good rate with a small transaction fee. US Dollars and Visa credit cards (with a valid photo ID) can also be used in many hotels and nicer restaurants or stores. Advise your local bank that you will be out of the country to avoid any problems with using your bankcard.

Ask a Peru Mission Missionary about where and when to exchange money. **Make sure your dollars are crisp, new bills (dollars often are not accepted if they have even the slightest tear or ink on them) in denominations no larger than a twenty (\$20). DO NOT EXCHANGE MONEY IN THE AIRPORT.** You will have a chance to exchange money at a much better rate the day after you land. You will not need any money before then. We do not recommend Traveler’s Checks, which are difficult to exchange here.

What is the standard electrical current in Peru?

Standard current in Peru is 220v, while in the US it is 110V. Some electronics sold in the US are compatible with this range of currents; check your appliance labels. If they are not, bring a sturdy converter (cheap ones often burn out), or better yet, battery-operated appliances. Computers, iPhones, and iPads are able to plug directly into our outlets without a converter.

How much should I tip porters and waiters?

Tips are not customary in Peru. If you would like to give a few soles to your porter or hotel concierge, 1-3 soles should do it. Ask your Peru Mission Missionary first, she or he may be handling tips for you depending upon the hotel and situation. In most restaurants a few soles is sufficient; in nicer restaurants, it may be 10-15%. Sometimes in airport parking lots, someone may try to help you with your bags without asking your permission and then demand a tip. A firm but kind “no gracias” will help avoid problems.

What if I do not speak Spanish?

The mission will arrange pickup, transport, and translators from the mission or the local church, depending on what your activities are. Most of the nicer hotels and travel companies have English speakers. Having Spanish speakers on your team is a plus, but is not required.

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Health/Safety FAQ's

What vaccinations will I need?

In order to avoid contracting dangerous diseases while in Peru, it is recommended that you are up to date on the following immunizations:

- Tetanus within the last 10 years.
- Hepatitis A and B are recommended. To complete the series, you will need to start the shots at least 6 months before you travel, but if you do not have that much time, you can get substantial protection from getting started.
- Typhoid protection is recommended and now available in pill form.
- Yellow Fever and Malaria pills are not necessary unless you are going to the jungle.

For more information talk with your doctor before coming, or visit the Web site of the Center for Disease Control (www.cdc.gov/travel), for health and immunization guidelines for all countries.

****Peru Mission requires a tetanus vaccine within the last ten years of your travel to Peru.****

What about food and water in Peru?

Visitors should be careful about what they eat and drink while in Peru. Stick to bottled water for drinking and brushing your teeth, and keep your mouth closed in the shower. One should only eat well-cooked food in clean restaurants. Avoid eating food from street vendors. Also, avoid lettuce, and any unwashed fruits or vegetables. All the food served in the homes of your missionary hosts is prepared with your health in mind and can be trusted. It is a good idea to carry hand sanitizer and Kleenex on you at all times for use before meals or in bathrooms.

Should I bring any medicines?

Having Ibuprofen, Tylenol, or aspirin is a good idea. The altitude in Cajamarca makes some a little uncomfortable for the first 2-3 days; get plenty of rest and drink lots of water. It is also a good idea to bring medicine for an upset stomach; changes in diet can make some a little uncomfortable. However, most medicines can be bought here if you have a need. If you wear contact lenses or glasses, bring extras in case of loss, as well as plenty of contact solution. We know reputable Christian doctors if you get sick while you are here.

What are the chances of crime?

The most likely threat that you might encounter will be from pickpockets and petty thieves. Much like the US, serious crimes do occur, but they are usually confined to the seedier parts of town and during late hours. Visitors should be careful not to flash money, and should avoid keeping money in a hip pocket or a purse where it is easily accessible. Also, be careful about cameras, jewelry, and other valuables that can be easily snatched. Never walk around with earphones hanging on your ears or around your neck... this a clear signal to thieves. Visitors should always remain in groups and should be alert and watchful. We have never had any serious problems, and - we would like to keep our record in tact.

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As a matter of safety, women should never travel in Peru alone, even if they speak Spanish well and know where they are going. One of the greatest blessings of a short-term mission trip is getting to know the other members of your team. Wherever possible, plan to do ministry in groups. When this is not possible, the males on the team have the responsibility to make sure that women are escorted to their destination safely.

Tips on Cross-Cultural Interactions

When we enter a new culture we must learn to adjust to our new environment to avoid being misunderstood, or misunderstanding others! For example, if you were to visit someone's house for the first time, you might notice that the food they eat or the way they raise their children is different from your own household. However, you probably would not immediately start criticizing their childrearing, or asking them to serve you different foods. In the same way, as guests in a different culture, we may see plenty of things that do not make much sense to us at first, but if we seek to understand them better, we can help bridge the gap instead of increasing it.

In fact, most cultures (including our own) exhibit both strengths that glorify God, and cultural sins that need to be redeemed by the Gospel. By becoming acquainted with new cultures, we often have much to learn about our common Creator.

Here are some tips on how to approach the Peruvian culture as a guest of the country and an **ambassador of Christ**.

Interaction with Peruvians

Interacting with Peruvians will probably be the most positive, and at the same time difficult, aspect of your visit. You may experience some stress in becoming accustomed to different behaviors, food, attitudes towards time, and most of all, language. Managing your stress is of utmost importance.

Some of the most noticeable “differences”:

- Peru is a more traditional culture than the US. It is more family-based and gender-differentiated, for example.
- Peruvians do not operate at a frenzied pace. Slow down!
- Most Peruvians are culturally Catholic. While most do not attend church or read their Bible regularly, most do believe in God and are open to talking about spiritual things.
- Meals usually consist of a light breakfast, very heavy lunch, and a light late dinner. Be prepared to eat according to this schedule.
- In Peruvian evangelical sub-culture, it is considered a bad witness for Christians to smoke, drink alcohol or dance, even in moderation. Be sensitive to what is permissible but not beneficial (1 Cor. 10:23). Ask a missionary if it would be appropriate to engage in these activities.
- **In Cajamarca, moderate dress is very important; you don't want to ruin the Christian witness by flaunting your “American Christian” freedom!**

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- Be sensitive on subjects of race, politics or religious denominations, which are viewed very differently in Peru.

Some Guidelines for Cross-cultural Interactions

- Make an effort to fit in. You are the strange one. Change your habits and routines.
- Always treat pastors, doctors and people older than you with great respect.
- If someone offers you a gift or shows you hospitality, thank them and accept it graciously.
- Reserve your enthusiasm. Americans have a reputation for being loud. Do not reinforce this stereotype.
- Try the food. If you do not like something, they will understand, but be polite in your facial expressions and verbal remarks.
- Young people in the US are much more independent than in Latin America. Stick to your group, and listen to your leaders!
- Dress appropriately and modestly. Do not be a sloppy American.
- Be on time or early. Do not make your hosts wait on you.
- Leave unnecessary items at home. Simplify your lifestyle during your stay. Talk to people instead of listening to your iPod!
- Note that the sewer systems in Peru cannot handle toilet paper. Use the wastebasket located by the toilet to deposit your toilet paper.

Practical Tips

- Greeting Peruvians with the appropriate salutation each time you see them is good manners (“Buenos Dias”- good morning, “Buenas Tardes” – good afternoon, or “Buenas Noches” – good night). Normally when entering a room it is polite to greet and acknowledge each person individually.
- The appropriate greeting between men and women, or women and women, is a light kiss on the cheek. Men usually greet with a handshake.
- Make an effort to speak in Spanish to your hosts. Try not to exclude them by speaking only to each other in English.
- Assume that they understand English even if they do not speak it. Your tone and actions also convey a message even if in another language.
- Avoid making disparaging remarks about Peru in front of Peruvians. As a guest, find things to compliment rather than criticize.
- When an invitation is given to a meal or other event, it is expected that the one who invites will pay.
- Smile! It breaks the tension.

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A Word About Dating and Flirting

One of the greatest cultural differences between the US and Latin America is the way men and women interact. Latino men are more forward or aggressive towards women, and most “respectable” women do not encourage this behavior by flirting back.

Some good things to know about male-female dynamics within Peruvian culture:

- Men and women do not normally have close platonic friendships or hang out one-on-one unless they are dating.
- Women do not usually approach men they do not know to introduce themselves or initiate conversation; this could be taken as flirting. Men more often initiate with women, and if both are single, it is usually with the purpose of romance.
- Many Peruvians view light skin, hair and eyes, and tall height as attractive.
- Americans are especially desirable as marriage prospects because many Peruvians would love to live in the US. For these reasons, Americans in Peru receive *more* attention from the opposite sex than is normal.

Some suggested guidelines:

- Avoid one-on-one time with Peruvians of the opposite sex. Try to hang out in group situations, or with others of your own gender.
- Make a commitment to not flirt or date during your mission trip. Make yourself accountable to your team members if they see anything going on.
- Talk to your team leader or a missionary if you feel uncomfortable in any situation involving attention from the opposite sex.
- It is better not to exchange emails or connect to someone on Facebook when you have only known them a short time. If you do keep in touch, try to conduct your friendship in a way that glorifies God and is not flirtatious.

Of course, we cannot and should not completely avoid Peruvians of the opposite sex, but it is important to be aware of the different cultural backgrounds and expectations in order to avoid gossip or leading someone on. Some Peruvians in our church community have more experience with Americans and will understand these differences. When in doubt, be cautious.

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Packing List

Bring in your carry-on luggage:

- A change of clothes in case your luggage is held up.
- Toiletries for a couple of days (toothbrush/paste, shaving supplies, hair supplies, etc.)
- Earplugs if you have difficulty sleeping on the plane or in noisy hotels.
- Small roll of toilet paper or Kleenex (public toilets may not have it). Baby wipes are convenient for this as well as cleaning hands when no soap.
- Sanitizing wet-wipes or hand gel.
- Copies of passport, tickets, drivers license, credit cards that you may be carrying.
- Travel insurance info and emergency contact numbers, including medical.
- Names and contact numbers of missionaries on the field where you are traveling.
- Personal medications-Tylenol, Ibuprofen, Pepto-Bismol tablets, Imodium, allergy and asthma medications. Please let your team leader know about special medical conditions before the trip.

Bring in checked luggage:

- Toiletries
- A converter-adapter for personal care appliances (the electricity is 220 V in Peru).
- Bible and journal or notebook
- **Water Bottle**
- Washcloth – bath and hand towels are provided, but not washcloths
- Baseball cap or hat for the sun
- Plastic bags for dirty clothes
- **Sunscreen** and sunglasses
- Travel alarm clock
- Rain poncho or umbrella (for Cajamarca)
- Imodium AD and/or Pepto Bismol
- Prescription medications (with a copy of the prescription)
- For those who wear contacts, bring an extra pair and your glasses
- Flip-flops/Sandals
- Comfortable walking shoes
- Light jacket
- Sweatshirt or fleece (it gets chilly June-August in Trujillo, year-round in Cajamarca)
- For Construction: Work pants/jeans, T-shirts you don't mind getting dirty, work boots or tennis shoes, work gloves, appropriate tools
- For Church: collared shirt with khakis/slacks for men, sweater or blouse with slacks or *modest length* skirts for women.

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What NOT to pack:

- Nice jewelry or watch.
- Bulky purse — hip packs or money belts worn under your clothes are much better.
- Travelers' checks — very hard to cash.
- Anything of great or sentimental value.
- Shorts (It is better to have a *modest length* skirt and *knee length* pants.)

Address:

Use this for tagging your baggage and as your address in Peru on the immigration slip:

**c/o Alleen McLain
Avenida Fatima 113, Dpto. 200
Trujillo, Peru
Tel. 94 773-5150**

For Cajamarca, an address will be provided.

Other reminders:

- Pack light! It will make things easier for both you and your group.
- Bedding and towels will be provided for you, but you may want to bring a washcloth.
- You do not need to bring bottled water. There is plenty available in Peru.
- Put things that can spill in Ziploc bags.
- You may not have time on the trip to do laundry or go shopping for personal items. Please bring everything you need with you.

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What is the Weather Like?

Cajamarca

The weather in Cajamarca is often spring-like (warm days and cool nights). The dry season is from June through November, with little rain or humidity. The rainy season however, from December until May, is continuously wet and muddy, but with bright moments throughout the day—so bring rain gear. Long pants and long sleeve shirts are great for the day, with a sweater or jacket in the evenings. Sunscreen, hats, and sunglasses are also important at this high altitude (over 9,000 feet).

Trujillo

Trujillo is on the northern coast, in the midst of an incredibly dry desert (our average annual rainfall is about 0.5 inches). Known as the city of the Eternal Spring, the weather is comfortable year-round. Summer months are from December to February and will reach highs in the low 90s, with lows in the 70s. Winter months are from June through August, with lows in the 50s and highs in the 60s - 70s. You will want to wear short sleeves in summer months, and frequently in winter as well, but bring long sleeves for winter days, and a light jacket for winter evenings.

Peru in General

Good, sturdy shoes are necessary with the rocky roads and hole-filled sidewalks—hiking boots, sturdy tennis shoes, or everyday shoes like topsiders are appropriate. Dress for church services is semi-casual: *modest length* skirts for women and khakis for men are fine. Preachers should wear either a tie or a clerical collar.

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Gifts

What to do with Extra Packing Space

You may wish to bring gifts of hospitality to your new friends in the congregation that you will be serving. Most Peruvian churches are not able to afford things like prizes for Sunday School classes, construction paper, pencils or Christian literature. Many of these things can be collected from your church or friends. If listed in a bulletin, you will be amazed at how generous people will enjoy being. Here are some suggestions on gift giving.

For the Churches

- Spanish Bibles (Reina Valera or RV1960 is the standard version)
- Christian literature or study materials translated into Spanish
- Arts & crafts supplies for Sunday school or women's groups
- Toys, games, puzzles, stickers for kids
- Pens, markers, church office supplies
- Bible Story Coloring Pages

For the Mission

- Contact Alleen McLain for more details

Guidelines for Giving

- If you bring something for the church, please present it to the entire congregation through your team leader.
- Avoid giving gifts to individuals unless you have enough for everyone.
- Avoid giving valuable gifts. A technological gadget or luxury item may create envy or breed materialism.
- DO NOT give loans or gifts of money to individuals.
- DO NOT give something you would not want to receive (something old, used, etc.) Do not assume you are giving to poor people.
- If you would like to make a money offering or larger gift to the church, please consult with the missionaries first.

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Quick Contacts & Recommended Reading

Peru Mission Contact Details

Los Alamos 427

Trujillo, Peru

Phone (within Peru): (51) (44) 94 773-5150

Phone (from US): 769-218-4584 (this number rings in Peru—leave a message)

Missionary Contact details

To dial any of these numbers from the US, simply dial (011-51-44) + number listed below.

To dial from Peru outside of Trujillo, dial (44) + number listed below.

NAME	EMAIL	CELL PHONE	OTHER PHONE
Wes Baker	wesbaker@perumission.org	94 773-5152	830-221-5241
Albert den Oudsten	albertdenoudsten@gmail.com	96 538-6754	
Dale Ellison	daleellison@perumission.org		601-213-1758
Steve Hill	sdhillhaven@gmail.com	96 538-6749	
Alleen McLain de Tomás	alleenmclain@perumission.org	94 773-5150	769-218-4584
Stuart Mills	stuartmills@perumission.org	96 538-6750	
Alonzo Ramirez	alonzoramirez@perumission.org	96 538-6762	
Hermes Tomás	hermestomas@me.com	97 970-1215	

Our Peruvian Pastors

Trujillo

- Wichanza Church: Pastor Juan Marquina
- Arévalo Church: Pastor Ricardo Hernandez
- Parque Industrial: Pastor Percy Padilla
- Cristo Rey: Pastor Jaime Avellaneda

Cajamarca

- Los Rosales Church: Pastor Juan Santa Cruz

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Hotels

The mission will arrange your team's hotel stay (we usually get discounts) and incorporate the cost into your trip fee.

Recommended Reading

- Serving with Eyes Wide Open by David A. Livermore, a guide for serving with "cultural intelligence" while doing short-term missions.
- Walking with the Poor: Principles and Practices of Transformational Development by Bryant L. Myers, a valuable Biblical perspective on poverty and working with the poor, from a veteran at World Vision.
- The Conquest of the Incas by John Hemming, a riveting account of the Spanish conquest of the Inca Empire in the 16th century.
- The Next Christendom by Philip Jenkins, Important book describing the recent shift of Christianity's center from Europe and North America to Asia, Africa and Latin America.

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Coming Home

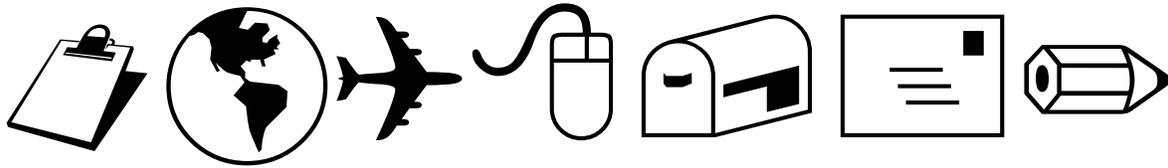
The number one question after returning from a mission trip is, “What now?” Besides sharing photos and memories after a trip, how can you get involved in God’s global mission when you are back at home?

1. Learn more at our Web site, www.perumission.org.
Give or Get involved with any of our ministries, or follow our missionary blogs! You can also sign up for regular mission updates via email or newsletter by contacting Alleen McLain at alleenmclain@perumission.org.
2. Talk to your church’s missions committee.
Find out how else you can volunteer or help with your church’s outreach activities.
3. Volunteer in your own neighborhood.
The mission field is not only located overseas. There are many ways to help the poor and proclaim the good news of the Gospel, from soup kitchens to local classrooms to prison ministries. Volunteering regularly, and forming relationships with the people you serve, is a great way to continue being a “missionary”.
4. Make some new friends.
Cross-cultural relationships can be found all around you in the US. Most immigrants or international students are never invited into an American home, or reached out to by an American church. Here is your chance to welcome strangers in His name (Matthew 25:35).
5. Get some education.
Take a Perspectives course, read up on current events overseas, or even study at a seminary.
6. Pray for us!
There are many challenges we face, and your continued prayers will sustain us more than you know. Thank you for your prayers!

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A Word About Debriefing to Team Leaders



Jesus took advantage of every opportunity to help his disciples process the experiences they were having as they traveled, talked, ministered, and related to each other and to others. When they sometimes did not grasp the principles Jesus was living and teaching, Jesus would take them to the side and explain things to them. (See John 13:12-17.)

While traveling, Jesus debriefed His disciples: "Who do people say I am?" and "Who do you say I am?" (Matt. 16:13-20, Mark 8:27-30, Luke 9:18-20). Jesus used the travel time to find out what was going on in the hearts and minds of his disciples as well as to take them deeper in their understanding.

After traveling, Jesus continued to debrief his disciples: "What were you arguing about on the road?" (Mark 9:33-37). Jesus paid attention to the conversations and attitudes of the disciples. He brought their pride into the light and interjected the correct Biblical perspective into the issues of everyday life, even arguments. Jesus took advantage of the teachable moments that presented themselves (Luke 9:46-48). He used them as object lessons and points of interest to help them develop a Biblical viewpoint with Biblical principle.

At the end of a mission, (Luke 9:1-10 & 10:17-20) Jesus helped the disciples see how God had used them. He would spend time alone with them to rest, to encourage and to process their experiences.

Time spent together on a short-term mission trip provides a unique opportunity to disciple and help others grow deeper in their faith. Debriefing is an ongoing process before, during, and after a mission trip. Please utilize the opportunities the Lord provides. Know your team and be aware of how they are doing on the trip. When someone is struggling, take them aside and encourage them to lean on the Lord and His sufficiency. Some - more specific suggestions include:

1. Before the trip, pray as a team and ask the Lord to work in and through you during the trip.
2. Bring some devotional materials or journals with you. Set aside times for individual quiet time and group prayer or discussion during the trip.
3. Use the project as a laboratory to teach your team to depend on God. When problems arise, stop and pray about them.
4. Consider how God may be teaching you through your experiences, or calling you to be involved in His Kingdom work, after you return home. Discuss goals as a group, and keep each other accountable to them!

For he was looking forward to the city that has foundations,
whose designer and builder is God. Heb. 11:10

