



The GUTIERREZ Family

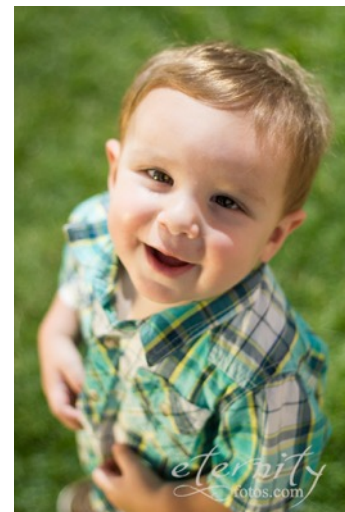


Arequipa, Peru

I will never forget the sight of the mountains as we descended into Arequipa for the very first time last year. Those same mountains now greet me every morning as I wake up and look out my window, and every time I go out, there they are, hovering over the entire city as a constant reminder to me of how far we've come since that first decent into our new home. December 11th marks our one year anniversary of living in Peru. While we had a few unexpected situations and some difficulties this year, more than that, we have had so much joy and blessings as we have transitioned here, and we are incredibly grateful for how the Lord has carried us through this year. Looking back on 2014, we can only praise God for how he has sustained us and given us the grace and strength to continue on.

We started our year in Peru in a state of chaos. After moving out of our home in Colombia, we spent 6 weeks in various temporary housing situations before finding a more permanent home to rent. After signing a rental contract, we waited another few weeks for our moving company, and then a few more weeks before we had cars.

By mid-March we felt "settled" in Peru, and on April 28th we flew back to the U.S. for what we thought was going to be a quick 8 week trip so our son Simeon's skull could be operated on and so we could visit a few churches. Unfortunately, Simeon was sick the morning of his scheduled surgery, and due to the doctor's busy schedule, our 8 week furlough turned into 5 1/2 months. It was a sweet time in Tacoma, WA visiting churches, family, getting Simeon's medical needs met and allowing Nathaniel to study. We were well fed by our home church, and spent time with dear old friends. It was a joy to watch our children



Simeon after successful surgery

know and love family members and enjoy the city I had grown up in. Greatest of all the blessings of our time in Tacoma was how flawlessly and perfectly Simeon's surgery went. The surgery was on a Tuesday afternoon and we were in church that following Sunday morning as a family! Thank you for all of your prayers, financial assistance, emails and messages during that time. We know we had an extra special protection and measure of grace from the Lord.



Nathaniel training elders and deacons in Huanta

We returned to Peru on October 14th eager to get back to work. We took a few days to unpack and settle back in, and by that weekend Nathaniel was off and running in ministry. He has been preaching, teaching Bible Studies, counseling couples and has been busy with evangelism in Arequipa. Evenings and weekends here are extremely busy because that is when most people

can meet due to work schedules, so Nathaniel is gone about half the evenings each week and almost all weekend. Two weeks ago he was able to travel to Ayacucho where he preached in Huanta and also in town named Uchuraccay (13,000ft!) via Quechua translation. Nathaniel is so grateful to be able to continue to assist in Huanta - the ministry he grew up in. From time to time he and his teammate Nathan Bonham plan to visit, encourage and help in the training of new leaders throughout Huanta. Please pray for their upcoming trip to Huanta this Spring.



Nathaniel traveling to Uchuraccay with a group from the church in Huanta. (Above the timberline!)

I (Alicia) feel settled back into our life here in Arequipa. After being gone in the U.S. for so long I was nervous about what it would be like to come back to Peru and prayed daily for grace, mercy and excitement to continue our work here, and the opportunity to meet other Peruvian friends. The Lord answered my prayers above and beyond and not only has he given me a heart of contentment here, he also has provided in the most perfect way several Peruvian women who are quickly becoming wonderful friends.

I met one of those women one night during a Catholic parade that was passing by our house. I introduced myself and since our sons went to pre-school together, we had an immediate connection. Since that night our two families have been able to spend a lot of time together, and have grown to become good friends. Most recently, Nathaniel and I were able to watch their son overnight while they spent the night in the hospital. They later told us that we are the only ones in Arequipa they would trust their child with. Please pray for this family. They seem very interested in the things of the Lord, and we are very eager for our friendship to go deeper.



Lunch with new friends in our neighborhood

This Friday we are hosting a Christmas party for our neighbors. As we passed out the invitations with homemade cookies attached, the neighbors were excited to participate in an American Christmas party. Our prayer is that that it would be a time of sweet fellowship amongst the neighbors and that we would have the opportunity to get to know them better and gain their trust. One of the first things a person sees when they walk into our home is a large wall with the verse, "As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord," printed in Spanish. As I hung this verse, I prayed that it would be a clear message to those who come into our home that we do serve the Lord, and that it is He who shapes our lives. We pray that as these neighbors come to enjoy a Christmas celebration, they will leave with an interest in who we are as a Christian family.



Christmas cookies and invitation

Our children are doing well here in Peru as well. I am homeschooling 5 year old Jeremiah in Kindergarten and he is especially interested in volcanoes and science. Gabriella is 3 and is turning into such an enjoyable little lady who loves anything pink. Simeon, now 18 months, has been thriving since his surgery and even though he was at one point considered well below the growth charts and a little behind for his age, he has been catching up and developing at a rapid rate.

We are so thankful to the Lord for this year in Peru, but we are also incredibly thankful to you our supporters who faithfully pray for us and give us such an encouragement through your financial gifts as well. We could not be serving in Peru without you, so thank you for all that you do to keep us working here in Peru.

Merry Christmas!

Nathaniel, Alicia, Jeremiah, Gabriella and Simeon Gutierrez



Jeremiah - 5 years old



Gabriella - 3 years old



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