OPENING REMARKS
28 OCTOBER 2006
SHANNON LORING
"Mission to Peru"

El Espiritu de Dios esta en este lugar
El Espiritu de Dios se mueve en este lugar
Esta aqui para consolar
Esta aqui para liberar
Esta aqui para guiar
el Espiritu de Dios esta aqui

All around the world, people are loving and serving Jesus and worshiping Him in many different languages. I was just singing a worship song in Spanish that my husband and I sang over the summer in Peru. If you can speak and understand both the Spanish I just sang in and the English that we sang in together earlier, you've got a precious gift that can be used to touch the hearts of all the more people for Jesus Christ.

Will you join me in prayer?

Lord, You have given us a voice to praise you, words to describe you and be a witness of you, and a hope to share of you with others. Help us to be faithful to You and Your leading in our lives. Be faithful, Heavenly Father, to use these pictures of Peru here tonight and the stories we share and people we introduce from Peru to our friends and family. Bring inspiration and excitement for what you're doing in other places in our world. Help us to respond and go out to a world in need of your love and hope. Amen.

My husband Joshua and I were immersed into the Spanish language this summer as we spent June and July in the jungles of northern Peru, the third largest country in South America.

We spent a month in Iquitos, Peru and then went down to Pucallpa, Peru for another month.

Neither of us knew Spanish fluently, although Joshua got by very well. But as we interacted with our Peruvian brothers and sisters, we saw the beauty of being a part of the larger body of Christ – the unity of Christ that covers over language and living differences was amazing.

What a blessing to work beside so many pastors and laymen and women, fixing up or building churches. We loved worshiping with them as well, and hearing them preaching and teaching God's Word.

We saw 2nd generation ministers preparing for pasturing churches, just as their parents had prepared, some not to many years ago.

What a privilege interacting with Peruvians throughout our days – moto-taxi drivers, hotel employees, those selling their goods. We pray we showed them Jesus, spoke of Jesus, and at least made them aware of the Nazarene churches in their area ministering in the name of Jesus.

It was also an honor working with seasonal missionaries, Dr. Larry and Addie Garman.

Joshua's and my time there seemed like just a drop in the bucket of life. In many ways we were just observers, participating a bit with our hands, hearts, and words, but the Nazarene Peruvians have a wonderful history and continue to be fruitful with the message of Jesus Christ.

We want to be faithful to share a little about this experience with you, our NBC family.

CHAPEL SERVICE MANUSCRIPT
28 OCTOBER 2006
JOSHUA LORING
"Mission to Peru"

INTRODUCTION

Our goal tonight is to share about missions and our experience in Peru this last summer. Everybody here, I am sure, are familiar with missionaries coming to speak at your church or camp meeting. Do you know what a missionary is though? Let me share with you how a missionary friend, who served in Northern Africa sharing the gospel with Muslims, summed it up for me. He said, "A missionary is a Nobody, telling Everybody about the SOMEBODY who can save Anybody" (Bud Acord, n.p.).

"As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord" (Joshua 24:15). You know, every time I hear that verse I cannot help but think of five missionaries that have had a huge impact on the church and the world. Has anyone seen "At the End of the Spear"? It is about five missionaries that said that same verse I am sure somewhere in their lives or at least with their lives. For them it meant their lives taken by spear and machete as they shared the gospel. It is probably not going to cost us that much physically, but it does spiritually. We have to die to self and let Christ live within us. I also think we need to consider that it could still in the twenty-first century cost us physically though. While Shannon and I did not work in the jungles of Ecuador we were only a few hundred miles south of the scene of that tragic, yet God honoring event.

In the Amazon of Peru today we have over two hundred Nazarene Churches among the Aguaruna Indian people. They are very similar in dress and customs of the Waodani the five missionaries went to. We have a Bible college there and a clinic training course that is made available to the top ten students each year. There are three districts: The Amazon district, the Loreto district, and the Pucallpa district make up the Peruvian Amazon area. All this work is

almost totally indigenous. The Garmans are the only missionaries that work there and they only bring in teams from time to time now and work with the nationals there. After forty years the Garmans have given up their home in the jungle. God is so amazing!

When the Lord called me to NBC to study, I thought missions would be on hold until I finished here. I put such an amazing God in such a little box. Since being here in 2003, I have been to the Navajo reservation twice. Once I went with a group from NBC. Then last summer the Lord totally took us by surprise and sent us to Peru for two months where we could grow together in our calling for missions!

HERO OF THE FAITH

Well, my time is short here so let me share with you about one of my heroes of the faith. His name is Pastor Miguel Jerdbosh. He is also a husband and father. His wife is Jeni, and his children are Junio, Katherin, and Josue.

When I was in Iquitos Peru in 2002 Miguel was the pastor of Americas Church of the Nazarene. Since I had been gone he had trained his youth pastor Jose to take over that church and Miguel took on a church that a pastor had walked out on. Well, in Miguel's new church. Colinas Church of the Nazarene he is at it again. There is a master mason and carpenter in that church who has helped us build our last six church buildings there. Miguel has been discipling Serjio, and Serjio has felt the call on his life to pastor a church. The second church that we built with Serjio was to be his own! He was so humbled by the whole experience and you could see the people from the neighborhood draw to him. He and his wife, Estefeta, will do well in Violeta Correa Church of the Nazarene.

QUICK NOTE OF TEAMS

Just so you know the month we were in Iquitos three teams came. There was one from Oklahoma, another from Ohio, and the last one from Virginia. The team from Virginia is a Baptist group that comes down regularly and builds Nazarene churches. With their help and the help of Serjio we were able to build two new church buildings, remodel another, paint one that was finished two years before and do a lot of work at the district office. I suggest to you who are pastors to keep Work and Witness in mind when you all encounter your first church building project.

FIRST TRIP TO PADRE COCHA

Shannon and I made a visit to one of our churches in a village called Padre Cocha. This church plant was started when I was in Iquitos in 2002, so I was interested in how it was doing.

Iquitos is surrounded by water on three sides and the only way to get there is to fly or take a four to five day boat ride from the nearest highway in Pucallpa. So, to get to Padre Cocha you take a three wheeled motor taxi to the far north end of Iquitos. That is where the Nye-nye river and the Amazon river come together.

Then from there you take a small wooden boat with a lawnmower engine and a long prop and propeller sticking out the back. The captain, who could be only 12 years old, will take you up the Nye-nye river for about forty five minutes. From the river it is a ten minute walk to the church.

PASTOR MANUEL

Pastor Manuel leads the church, and he is equivalent to a first year Bible college student that just came to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ in 2002. He has been taking the extension courses on the district, but that requires that he travel for one and a half hours and pay two

dollars one way. Pastor Manuel averages about fifty dollars a month with the church and any side jobs he can find. It is difficult for him to go to all the classes available, but he goes when he can and the district helps out where it can.

Many of his congregation did not show up that morning due to a celebration in the village. His oldest son and daughter-in-law were there with their two children and an older lady from the village came. Pastor Manuel's wife was sick with dengue fever. This caused by mosquitoes and it is worse than malaria, so some say. So she could not be there and the younger children were home with her. At the end of the service we prayed for her and the church and went home.

BRING THE FILM

We determined that we could bring the Jesus film equipment to Padre Cocha and help Pastor Manuel out with ministering in his village. I talked it over with Pastor Miguel. He is the only one authorized to take it out and run it. He was all for it, but there were some costs. I said, "no problem, I'll take care of it." Then he said, "It is a lot of equipment, we need help to carry it all. What if we get the Work and Witness team to go, at least three of them?" I said, "I don't know, pray about that one." I knew I could get the young adults from the district church to go, but the Work and Witness team, that is different.

OKLAHOMA COMES ALONG

One day the opportunity arose to talk to Dr. Garman about the idea. I told him all the details and he thought that was great! Hey, this is your opportunity, I thought. "Dr. Garman, what would you think about some of the team from Oklahoma going with us?" He looked at me and said, "You can take all thirteen if they want to go."

Wow! I couldn't believe it. You see I knew some of the team had an interest in it because I hinted around about the idea, but I never thought Dr. Garman would allow the whole team to go. It would be a late night for an already tired team to get back around 10:30 pm. This also means we would be traveling for an hour down river after dark. This is not often done by the nationals. There is too much risk if something should go wrong and you cannot see anything out there on the river.

I talked with Karen the team leader and she got the word around. The next day she said, "They all want to go!" Wow! That is great! It also means more logistical work for me with boat and taxi, but also more responsibility as well of their safety. Dr. Garman helped me to arrange a boat, equipped with enough life jackets for everyone, to meet us at the Nye-nye river. They would take us up to Padre Cocha and then wait until we were finished to guarantee us a ride back.

The big day arrived. We worked half a day on construction and then went back to the hotel to get ready for the evening. We needed to get out there around four pm to start talking with people and inviting them to come see a movie. Since there is very little electricity in this village it is not often they get to see movies, let alone anything else unless by candle light. I think the whole village came out to see the movie.

THE MOVIE

The movie was a Christian video that showed a family in the struggles of life and needing Jesus. It met the people right where they were in life and was a great ministry tool.

THE INVITATION

Pastor Miguel gave a short message following the movie. He mentioned that what is important to having a better life is to know Jesus as your personal Savior. It is not about what church you go to. Then he opened up for anybody that wanted to accept Jesus for them to come forward and pray with him. There were several names added to the "book of life" that night. Afterward he opened it up for anybody that needed to rededicate their lives to Jesus. Another group came forward and Miguel talked with them about what this moment means. That they need to find a church and study God's word. Then he introduced Pastor Manuel, and said, "If you don't have a church then come to Pastor Manuel. He is the Nazarene pastor in this village and he will help you grow in the Lord."

RAISE THE BABY

Praise God! This was so wonderful and we were all excited about the results. Now it was time to pack up and get this worn out group to their beds. Not so fast though. Pastor Manuel approached me with a lady and introduced me to her. He said this lady just rededicated her life to the Lord. I said, "Praise God, it is good to meet you. May the Lord bless you." Then, Pastor Manuel said, "Her one and half year old daughter died today and she would like you to come pray for her to get up."

Those words rolled around my head as I translated them and within seconds several thoughts passed. First, I thought I misunderstood what he said, but the look on their face was clear. Under the three forty watt bulbs we were running with the generator to pack up I could tell I understood correctly. Their look of hope almost brought me to tears.

The next thought was about Pastor Manuel's wife, who had dengue fever and we prayed for her the week before. She was now better and we praised the Lord for that! Also, when we arrived at the village that afternoon we found out his youngest son had come down with malaria

the last week. Part of the group went to the house and laid hands on this precious child of God and prayed over him while the rest were setting up equipment and inviting people to come see the movie. His son felt well enough to make it out that night and maybe these things were a contributing factor. We all know that God hears and answers prayer. The problem was I did not know how to respond.

The team and I were ready to leave. We accomplished everything that was planned and the Lord showed up in a big way! The equipment was almost all packed and the red-eyed team just sat through an hour and a half movie that they didn't understand one word of. To be honest this scared me! I thought I lived with a mindset of eternity and a heart for ministry, but I was ready to run at this point!

The Holy Spirit held me together and I drew deep from all the scriptures, training, and experiences I could find and did the only thing that seemed right. I turned to Pastor Miguel and said this lady just rededicated her life to Jesus. He said, "Praise the Lord." Then I told him she wants us to come to her house and pray for her child who died, but I don't understand everything she said. Can you talk to her?" He did, and she told him the story that Pastor Manuel shared with me but in more detail. It was there, "come pray that my child will get up. Pastor Miguel, tired, sore, and compassionately he said we will go with her to her house.

I told Karen the team leader what was going on. We would need most everybody to help get stuff back to the boat, in the dark, down the steep steps at the end of the village. Shannon would head that up and make sure that everyone was okay if Karen wanted to get two or three that wanted to go with us to the house. That was it, the whole plan. I knew nothing about what Pastor Miguel was thinking.

AT THE HOUSE

When we arrived at the house there were about thirty to forty people hanging around outside smoking cigarettes and a few candles burned here and there. Inside was pretty well lit with candles and one light bulb that hung from a wire above the table. There were close friends and the immediate family inside. The child lay lifeless in a small white wooden coffin on the table. The floor was dirt and lumpy to walk on, but that was the norm wherever you walked in the jungle. We hugged and cried with this lady that was hurting so deeply. She told us the baby had ammonia and had just died that morning. There is not much hope in the jungle when a baby gets ammonia. The medicine is too expensive for them, and even more so to go to the doctor.

Then Miguel did something I would not have expected. He called for everybody's attention. The people outside got up and came in, filled around the doorway, and around the open window. He told them how this child is precious in the sight of God and how God has raised this baby eternally. Then he talked about those of us who are beyond the age of innocence. He told them that we needed to be prepared for the day when we would die. If we were to go to our grave tonight would we know that we are going to heaven? Then he led a prayer that would help them find Christ for their lives amidst this tragedy. He closed with letting them know that Pastor Manuel is available if anyone needs to talk later on, or has any questions about how to know their destination is heaven.

COULD HAVE MISSED THE LORD

I was ready to leave when we had accomplished our objective. I would have missed out on God's plan to minister to this community. I praise God for Pastor Miguel and his sensitivity to the Holy Spirit. I had never been to a funeral where I just showed up and gave a message out of the blue. It would rarely if ever work in this culture, but Miguel knew his people and he was open to what God would do. He preached the Word with power and authority.

Pastor Miguel will be a part of the ordination services this coming January. It will be the first time in the sixteen years the church has been in Iquitos that there will be an ordination service held there. Seven pastors all together will be ordained. It was a beautiful thing to witness a young pastor like Manuel and an experienced pastor like Miguel working together to build the Kingdom of God and grow each other.

I do not know what to tell you about what you will face in your ministry. I see the difference in my life and the life of others as we train and prepare for ministry and practice this ministry as the Lord enables. The thing I learned is be prepared as possible, prayed up, and filled up with the Holy Spirit, and don’t leave until the Lord is done with you and with those you are ministering to.