



Faces in the Window by Nathan Bonham

Seeing a face pressed against the window has become a normal occurrence. The sound of Andino music resonating in the streets catches their attention, and they stop and peer through the glass to find out what's going on. Eventually, one of us glances up and locks eyes with the passer-by, who then scurries on about his business.

Each Tuesday night, we get together with a couple of Peruvian guys from the church to practice Andino music and original songs that they have written. The purpose of this group is to share the gospel; from the powerful lyrics of these songs to teaching others how to play instruments, we want this group to be evangelistic. Lord-willing, we hope to begin playing around the city, then share the gospel with those who may gather around. Of course, we have a lot more practice to do before we are polished enough to start anything in public!



One particular Tuesday evening, though, practice was a bit different. Instead of the normal flow of pedestrians glancing through the window, we received a knock on the door. It was a young man, early twenties, and he walked in a bit timidly. He explained that he had heard the music and was hoping to find others to practice with who also had a common love for Andino-style music. We

invited him to join us, and after a couple hours of playing, we had the opportunity to share the purpose of our group. We shared that we come together for much more than just to play music; we come together because of the gospel. The young man understood and respected our views, but politely said that he would come for the music and nothing else. We invited him to come back for our next practice.

It was just a matter of weeks before we saw the Holy Spirit at work in this young man's heart. From building our friendship, to praying together each week, to the gospel-saturated lyrics of the songs, the Lord used this group to change his heart and mind. Not only have we rejoiced with him as he professed his newfound faith in Christ, but now we see this new brother in Christ longing to be involved in the ministry of the church! This past Sunday, he took part in the worship service when our little group played a few of the songs we have been practicing. Furthermore, he started joining us in our ministry to youth in a different part of the city. It has been amazing to see his not only willingness to serve, but also to be among the first to raise his hand with questions he has about what it means to follow Christ.

Please pray for this young brother in the faith. There is no doubt that his faith will be greatly tested through the trials of a difficult life in Arequipa, but also by a local culture that despises evangelicalism. He will undoubtedly be challenged. Please also pray for the continued ministry of our music group, that more of those faces peering through the window would turn into fruitful relationships that point to the Gospel. We hope it will be a means to reach many more in Arequipa.

Black Jesus by Nathaniel Gutierrez

“Hurry! You need to move your car before the procession comes!” explained a concerned Catholic lady. As I was getting into my car she explained that there was going to be an enormous procession that would not only fill the whole street, but that would shoot off fireworks in every direction - most likely damaging my car.



Lord of Miracles procession in main square

The procession she was referring to was in honor of El Señor de los Milagros (“The Lord of Miracles”) also known as “the black Jesus”. This image of Jesus was painted by African slaves on an adobe Catholic church in Peru. In 1655, a massive earthquake killed thousands of people and toppled many buildings also destroying the Catholic church leaving only the wall on which the image was painted. Since then, every October, millions of people participate in processions honoring this image, and one of them was going to pass right in front of our home.

We quickly got the kids dressed in warmer clothes and went out into the night to talk with the many neighbors who were eagerly lining the street awaiting a

procession that didn’t arrive until two hours later! Though we sometimes struggle with scheduled events starting late in Peru, that night we were so grateful for the extra time in which we were able to really get to know our neighbors and have conversations we might never have had the opportunity to have. One man in particular dove in deep and told us his life story as we sipped on the hot chocolate we shared with him. He was so curious about his missionary neighbors and was visibly relieved to know that we were normal people. He explained, “I have lived here for 10 years, and I have never had a conversation with a single one of my neighbors until tonight.” We were grateful that he eagerly accepted an invitation to have dinner with us in the next few days, and we anxiously look forward to diving right back in where we left off.



Gutierrez family welcomed back to Peru and ministry in Arequipa

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