

Cross Family Ministry Update
April 18, 2022

Dear Praying Friends,

We hope in the Lord that you had a wonderful time celebrating the perfect, substitutionary sacrifice of Jesus and his glorious resurrection! Thank you for consistently praying for us. We continue to see the power of God's word on display as we make disciples here in Peru. Souls are being saved and lives are being transformed. With God's help we want to be the best disciple makers we can be for his glory in and out of the home. To God be all the glory!

Disciple Making 2022: We thank the Lord for daily opportunities to teach our girls who God is, how he created us to serve him, and our need for his salvation. We have recently been studying through Proverbs, Isaiah, and Acts. Meal times are when I teach the Bible to the family. There are also constant opportunities throughout the rest of the day to point the family to God and his word. May we Christians always be consistently teaching and living out God's word before our families, the church, and the lost and dying world around us.

God is greatly using Kelly's daily ministry with our girls at home and with ladies in the church. I am always encouraged by her desire to know more about God and study his word. I praise the Lord for working in and through her. May our marriage always be a clear picture of the love and care that Christ shows for the church and of the church's submission to Christ!

I am enjoying teaching a twelve-session course on Christology to a group of people in our church on Tuesday and Thursday nights. We have had seven classes so far. I am teaching through the gospel according to John with the focus of answering the question - Who is Jesus? The themes that God provides there about Jesus are a clear gateway to discovering those truths in other passages as well. So far we have seen that Jesus is God, Jesus is eternal, Jesus is one of the three persons of the Godhead, Jesus is the Creator, Jesus is light, Jesus became a human, Jesus makes God known to humanity, Jesus is the promised Messiah, Jesus is the Lord - I AM, and that Jesus is the sinless Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. Those are just some of the details about Jesus in chapter 1. There is still much more about Jesus to investigate and teach. God's word is a rich treasure.

I have really enjoyed teaching. I thank God for guiding my studying and writing. Several people in the class are relatively new believers in Christ. These foundational truths from God's word are helping to purge from their minds the lies and deception that they had believed for so long. I look forward to seeing what God will do in the remaining five sessions.

We thank the Lord that the Saturday kids Bible clubs are going well. We are glad for the opportunity to teach the children about the Lord. We are glad to see more church members becoming an active part of the disciple-making ministries of the church. Some of them accepted Christ, were baptized, and became members of the church in the past couple years. God is unmistakably producing spiritual fruit in them. Praise God! They are now actively involved in the disciple making process in their homes, at their jobs, and in the church. What a wonderful God we serve!

One thing that makes us sad, though, is to see children from the community who in many cases are practically raising themselves. They seem to have free rein to come and go as they please throughout the day and night. We pray that more parents will come to know Jesus as their Savior, actively care for their families, and lead them to know and serve the Lord.

"The testing of your faith produces perseverance": We thank the Lord for his daily grace. We have recently had several rounds of sickness come through our family. We thank God that we are feeling better these days. Being sick or experiencing other challenges of life that change daily schedules and plans are always good reminders of the human weakness that we experience and our need for God's strength, care, and guidance at all times. We praise God that he is holy, sovereign, all-powerful, wise, and perfect in all of his attributes in contrast to our wickedness, weakness, and foolishness as humans.

James 1:2-5 (NIV)

Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything. If any of you lacks wisdom, you should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to you.

Kelly and I thank God for the help that he gives. We thank him for how he is working through his word and Spirit in our family. Our desire is to be wise stewards of all the resources that he provides for his glory. We thank him for helping us make consistent changes in our thinking and choices. By his grace, we want to love and serve him with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength. Key points of stewardship in this endeavor are getting to know him better through his word each day, teaching others who he is and what it is to follow him, getting the sleep that we need, exercising, eating nutritious foods, etc. We want to serve the Lord with strength while he provides that; and when he chooses that we serve him through times of weakness, pain, trial, difficulty, etc. we know he is guiding our steps.

Mark 12:28-31 (NET)

Now one of the experts in the law came and heard them debating. When he saw that Jesus answered them well, he asked him, "Which commandment is the most important

of all?" Jesus answered, "The most important is: 'Listen, Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one. Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.' The second is: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these."

Cultivating an appreciation for God's creation: The beauty and complexity of God's creation is fascinating. What seems ordinary and commonplace, on closer inspection is extraordinary. Let's keep bringing glory to our Maker by appreciating his creation and being faithful stewards of it. What a delight and wonder it will be to one day see it liberated from the destructive effects of sin!

Romans 8:18-26 (NET)

For I consider that our present sufferings cannot even be compared to the glory that will be revealed to us. For the creation eagerly waits for the revelation of the sons of God.

For the creation was subjected to futility – not willingly but because of God who subjected it – in hope that the creation itself will also be set free from the bondage of decay into the glorious freedom of God's children. For we know that the whole creation groans and suffers together until now. Not only this, but we ourselves also, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we eagerly await our adoption, the redemption of our bodies. For in hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope, because who hopes for what he sees? But if we hope for what we do not see, we eagerly wait for it with endurance.

I have really been enjoying preaching through Hebrews for the past several months. What a privilege we have to live as holy citizens of God's unshakable kingdom. May we all run the race that God sets before us with perseverance - keeping our eyes on Jesus and casting off every sin and weight. It is a wonderful joy to see God working in people's lives through the preaching of his word. We pray that you will maintain a daily relationship with God through time spent in his word and in prayer.

Thank you again for your consistent prayers for us and your sacrificial financial support. We greatly value your gospel partnership with us.

Jay

Jay & Kelly Cross
Alexia, Isabel, Esther & Lilian