

# Peru News

## Emails By Drew Harris

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Volume 1

June 4, 2005

### May 27, 2005

Dear Friends And Family,

Hello everyone. This summer I am in Cusco, Peru working at an orphanage supported by my church Port Gibson Baptist Church. My church has had a relationship with the orphanage for over a year and a half. In February, the church helped buy a building to house the girls. I am staying at the girl's orphanage.

I arrived in Peru on Tuesday. It was a long flight, but overall restful. Since that time I have been following around Jeremy as he has been helping me get accustomed to the area and the people. The last two days we toured the region, which is very beautiful. Right now Pedro, the son of Juan and Cecilia, is with me helping me with my Spanish and getting around. He is 9 and has been my professor of Spanish. I am finding the language challenging, but it more and more is coming day by day.

Today I will go to the boy's orphanage, called Elim. There are about 17 boys living there ranging in age from 6 to 18. They are all very good about coming up to you to shake your hand. The main thing we have in common is soccer, which will be a humbling experience.

Please pray for me in the following areas

1. That God will give me ease at learning the language
2. That I will know how to help here
3. That I will not get sick either in health or in homesickness

4. That Jesus might be exalted.

For those of you who have written me, thank you. I will not be able to write back, but I do appreciate reading your emails.

Sincerely,  
Drew



### June 1, 2005

Hello friends and family,

It has been brought to my attention, that in my first letter, I had a few typos. Now I trust that it is not the lack of capitalization that was being critiqued. If any of you have typed on a European keyboard you know that things are different here. Rather than spend my time correcting errors, I thought I would write you and hang out with the kids.

The first typo that has been brought to my attention is in the spelling of Elim, Eliam. Not a big deal, but just so you know the

boy's orphanage is named Elim. The girl's orphanage is named Talita Kumi. Elim means oasis in Hebrew. Talita Kumi comes from the New Testament when Jesus commands the dead little girl to get up. Now you know and you have a name to put with a place. The second typo was when I said the boys are good about shaking your head. As amusing as that picture is, it's not quite true. They shake your hand every time you arrive and leave. Now they do hit each other's heads as they chase each other around, but the intent is entirely different. To please my father, I will try to read through this email twice before I send it to reduce the confusion.

In the following, let me give you a taste of life here in Cusco. I will do this by first telling you about my normal routine during the first week that has passed and then by telling you about the work that has been going on before I arrived and will continue after I leave.

First, let me tell you that I am greatly enjoying life here. I count it such a blessing to be here. First, I am grateful to the Lord for the opportunity to see his work in this country. The gospel has certainly come here and is doing a good work, especially as I observe at the two orphanages. Yet, in the history of this country, it has not come with purity (because it is men who are given the treasures of the gospel and they tend to tarnish the splendor). As I am here, I continue to learn more about the history, but I look forward to doing some reading when I return upon the Incas and south America.

I am also grateful for my church for sending me as a representative of their care for this work. I do not take the assignment lightly. I also am grateful for you my friends and family. Being away from everything that is familiar, makes you realize what you have.

Now let me write to you about the last week. It has been good overall. My routine was to wake up and have breakfast with the girls and Juan, Cecillia, and Pedro. The breakfast consists of a flat round bread and tea. I have come to appreciate the simplicity and consistency of the meal. Especially when my stomach was doing somersaults, it was a good safe meal. Now that last sentence may seem like I am not enjoying the food, which would be the furthest from the truth. At Elim, pillar is the cook and she is awesome. I am eating quite well I will have you know. It only took my stomach a few days to adjust. Now I feel like myself, only in Spanish, for which I am thankful to our Lord. After breakfast, Pedro and I would go and buy some stuff at the market. I buy a bottle of water a day.

I am taking the advice to not drink the water, which my stomach appreciates. Cusco sits at 10,500ft elevation. It is very dry here and that combined with the altitude makes drinking more water and air necessary. The area is beautiful lying in a modified valley surrounded by the mountains. The city has its own charm. The beauty lies in the old buildings, but the public works has some more work to do. After shopping I join Jeremy and Nalida to go to Elim.

One day last week we toured the sacred valley, with a tour group he was leading. Usually we are at Elim, where I simply hang out with the boys. I will talk more about the time with the boys and the orphanages in the next paragraph.

On Monday, I started a Spanish class which will occur in the evenings with a lady from Jeremy's church. I go to bed mentally exhausted and then wake up and start again.

We usually arrive at Elim about an hour before lunch. At this time the boys are

getting ready to go to school. Here they have three shifts for going to school. One group goes all day, one goes in the afternoon and the last goes at night. Antonio, the boy's dorm parent, is usually corralling them into the shower to get them ready. At present the plumbing is busted so today might be interesting with hygiene. If you would pray about that problem, it would be appreciated.

After the boys clean up, they have a devotional in the dining room. We then eat a fabulous lunch consisting of rice and some meat and vegetable. We always drink a tea that I believe is spelled Maté. Then the boys go to school, at least most of them. There are a few who do not go because they are new to the orphanage and their paperwork still needs to be processed with the school. In the afternoon, kids from the area come after school to eat and get help with their studies.

I have been teaching English to anyone who is willing to learn. We walk around and point at things and exchange the English for the Spanish. To satisfy my mother's phonetical fanaticism, I also write out sounds and work on pronunciation and the basics of grammar. Around 4:30 the kids come together for a devotional before dinner. After dinner the kids from the area, who would not get a meal otherwise, go home. Then the rest of the boys who live at the orphanage trickle in and eat. In the evenings things are rather causal as the kids entertain themselves playing marbles, musical instruments or now chess (by the way I got beat in the first game).

In the coming weeks, Jeremy and I are going to work on a bible study addressing the fundamental doctrines of Christianity: Who is God, who is Man, who is Jesus, what did he do, etc.

Two days ago we went shopping for school bags and school supplies. Today or tomorrow we will go shopping for shoes as the ones they have are fairly worn. By the way there are 17 boys at present ranging in age from 8 to 18. I will tell you about some of the boys in additional emails. I also will write about the girls at the girl's orphanage. The other day I spoke with Cecillia about the history of girls (and that in Spanish). I will try to tell you about those 8 little girls. There are two sets of sisters. Their story is sad, which makes their new home all the more happy. I hope you will enjoy the photos I have included.

I know you are all busy, so I apologize for such a long email. They might be shorter in the future.

Please continue to pray, here are some specific concerns:

1. That I become competent with basic Spanish
2. That the physical needs of the kids are met
3. That things at Jeremy's church, Maranatha, are improved
4. That the plumbing is fixed
5. That Franklin and Allison be less aggressive and temperamental
6. That Jesus would be exalted and more well known in this whole city and country

With love,  
Drew

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## June 1, 2005

### To Port Gibson Baptist Church

Hello Brothers and Sisters in The Lord,

Thank you for sending me to Cusco, it has been such a blessing. I feel like I am at home, because the Lord's people are here

and His work is being carried out. You have done a good thing at purchasing a building for the girls. A little bit of money there, goes a long way over there. Please be reminded about how little 50,000 is in the scheme of eternity and in comparison to the treasures that are in store for God's children.

Please keep that in mind as you might consider providing for better accommodations for the boys. Currently their plumbing is shot. I got my hands dirty as we helped dig and determine the problem. To solve the problem, which is still a hope, we have hired two men who are doing a lot of digging. The set-up for the plumbing is horrible. I think William told me that a pipe is only supposed to drop about a foot over 20 feet or something like that. Well one line drops one meter in 6 inches. We are working through the situation. Despite such adversity, we trust in the Lord and are confident in Him to solve the problem.

I will take some photos of the girl's orphanage so you can have a visual image.



Let me try to describe it. It is about four blocks from Jeremy and Nilda's house. It is in a nice part of Cusco. It is down an alley by a park where kids play soccer and basketball. The house has a courtyard. The first part of the house is where I am being housed. They are adding on three floors. I am on the second floor and it is completed. There are two new floors being constructed above. This will provide a lot of room for more kids. There are currently 8 girls. They are adorable. They called me Brother at first and now uncle, in Spanish that is. My

contact with them is limited to breakfast and sometimes playing afterwards and a little in the evening. I will try to spend more time with them in the future. The little ones are more at my conversational level, but I feel that I should be with the boys more.

I am enjoying time with the boys. We play soccer and wrestle. I am teaching several English. They are a lot of fun, joking with each other and rough housing. It is evident they love each other and those who take care of them. Jeremy, Nilda, Evan, Pillar and Ronald all are very good to the kids. The worker is worth their wage and these are not receiving enough.

I am starting to gather the stories of the boys and the girls. I will give some biographies in coming emails. Now Jeremy and I need to go to the bank before going to Elim. We may buy shoes for the kids in the coming days.

Thank you again. I continue to pray for you, confident of your prayers for me.

**June 2, 2005**

Friends and family,

I told you yesterday that there was plumbing problems at Elim. I am happy to report that the plumbers were able to solve the problem. For this we at the orphanage all thank the Lord. It took them digging two very large and deep holes. The problem was caused by the kids putting things down the drains. Certainly this was irresponsible, which is being addressed by Nilda. However, you all know that kids will do this. I can't count how many times the boys at Chamberlain-Hunt have been destructive with their own accommodations. One difference is that their shower is the

This email was sent to all his family and friends. Drew would like for our church to receive the funds and then send with his mother.

same location of their bathroom, so it is easier to understand how a sock could slide down the drain/toilet.

Another difference is the cost, which it took to repair the problem and the set backs for the orphanage. I was involved as we bartered with the plumbers. We decided that the work would be 150 soles instead of the initial offer of 180 soles. This would cover all labor, but none of the materials.

Now I want you to think about the last time you or a friend had plumbing problems. If I recall right, the base cost was 50 dollars just for the plumber to grace you with his presence. Then he will tack on more costs with each precious hour he spent. To help put things in perspective--the exchange rate for soles to dollars is 3 to 1. Therefore, just for having the Plumber visit you would pay 150 soles. The labor for the plumbing problem at Elim took over 10 hours. Parts cost another 50 soles approximately. So you are thinking, that was relatively cheap. Yes, for us it would be cheap. However, for them it was very costly. You should have seen when we went to hire a plumber off the street.

When we drove up in the taxi and announced we needed a plumber, 30 men desperate for work rushed to our taxi. There is not work, even for those who want to work. To put things in perspective. An educated worker is making 8 soles an hour. The economy of Peru is another issue for another time, an issue I am still gathering facts to understand.

What I want to bring to your attention is the effect of Elim at having to pay 200 soles for the plumbing problem. It meant that money that would pay for food would be used to pay the plumbing bill.

Now I understand that people in the states have to make budgeting decisions all the time. When unexpected costs arise, you have to take funds from another allocated place and redirect them. However, I know that myself and many of you to whom I write do not have that experience now (though you might have in the past). I would like you to consider, pray about, the possibility of giving a gift to this good work or regularly sending some funds to aid their costs. Please email me if you have any questions or have a desire to do that. My mother will be coming down in 5 weeks and we might be able to arrange some way in which she brings the funds.

I have a dream to get the boys in a new building, which from our perspective would not cost that much.

I hope you are not offended by me soliciting you. Just consider.

Thanks,Drew

