



# James Update

# Strengthening the Church in Latin America

December 2016

## Pastor Quispe

Meet pastor Juan Jose Quispe. He pastors a small church on the Bolivian Altiplano and leads an Evangelical denomination of 50 churches. Two years ago he completed our three-year Equipping Servants (ESI) pastoral training. This past January he stepped into our two-year intensive mentoring Pastoral Assistant (PA) volunteer program. He's a busy man -- in addition to teaching at the Pedro Domingo Murillo Technical Institute downtown La Paz for three days a week, he pastors his church, leads his denomination, leads one ESI group, and dedicates 16 hours each week to studying through Roman and preparing messages to meet twice a week with our PA volunteers to preach, evaluate messages, and walk life and ministry together.



Juan Jose's testimony points to God's amazing grace, as every genuine testimony does! It starts with his great grandfather, who came to faith in Christ out of very unusual circumstances. His great grandfather was one of the early converts in Bolivia - the gospel arrived in Bolivia in the final days of the 1800's. So the fact that this man was willing to identify himself with Jesus at a time when believers were persecuted and even martyred for their faith -- is surprising enough. But what's even more astonishing is that his great grandfather was a Shaman (witch doctor) in his Aymara community. The Quispe's were farmers living in small Aymara communities on the 14,000' windswept Bolivian Altiplano (High Plateau). His great grandfather was the spiritual and political leader of his community.

One day his great grandfather got into a fight with another Shaman over community land-rights. The other Shaman placed a curse on him. The curse was believed to be so strong that his great grandfather was forced to go to the strongest Shamans to rid himself of it. These strongest Shamans purportedly live in Cochabamba, Bolivia and Brazil. His condition worsened until he was completely bed-ridden. Desperate for life, he finally asked his family members to take him to the Shaman who had placed the curse on him. This Shaman, gleeful that Juan Jose's great grandfather was dying, told him to read the gospel of Mark as part of his final death blow. (All Andean Shamans apparently have Bibles as part of their ritual collection.)

So his great grandfather did read Mark, but instead of the coup de grace the witch doctor desired for him, the Holy Spirit spoke into his life. Juan Jose's great grandfather wept his way through Mark. Upon finishing, he gave his life to Jesus. The Lord granted him both spiritual salvation and physical healing -- and afterwards he lived a long life as an early Christian evangelist among the Aymara people. God's grace in the Quispe family impacted not only this man but also his son, grandchildren and great grandchildren. As a small boy Juan Jose saw his need for Jesus and asked the Lord to forgive his sins and save him. Today Juan Jose serves Jesus as a pastor among his Aymara people -- and is one of our ESI leaders.

*Kep & Debbie James*

**Partnering in the gospel with you, Kep and Debbie**

## Our Purpose ...

to exalt Christ strengthening the church in Latin America to be true to the Bible, discipling believers to maturity & taking the gospel where it is least known.

### **Please Pray:**

- **Equipping Servants (ESI) pastoral training** —that the 850 active participants & 1625 grads since 2002 will know the sufficiency of Christ & His Word to impact the world & church for Christ.
- **14 Pastoral-Assistant Volunteers:** intensive 2 year training for pastors in Bolivia.
- **ESI Expansion: Pray** as we start new training centers in Uruguay, Colombia & Cajamarca, Peru. **Pray** for God's supply for the 2000 Pastor-Book-Sets needed over the next 4 years.
- **Family:** Andrew & Angie are in Uruguay. Pray for the next 2 years as they learn the culture and build relationship to start planting churches in this very spiritually challenging area of Montevideo. Katie is seeing gospel impact in her relationships in Cleveland. Sami & Heather serve the Lord in the ILC church in La Paz in Biblical Counseling ministry.