



## Christmas Greeting 2021

Hello from Bolivia!

What an encouragement yesterday!! Our good friend Pablo preached the Sunday morning message at our church. Pablo is the government lawyer who helped us in 2012 get Bolivian citizenship – and along the way we had the joy of pointing him to Jesus. Pablo is the newest elder-in-training at our ILC Church. He spoke from Matthew 2:1-12, noting that Jesus' birth produces rejection in some (like Herod), but great joy in those of us who believe (like the Wise men) -- a wonderful message! His concluding challenge was, *"The true reason for Christmas is Jesus, and THIS is cause for GREAT JOY! Many of us have suffered terribly this year with death of family members, sickness, and loss of jobs. Things have not turned out the way many of us had hoped. But in spite of this, believers should be filled with joy because God has given us the greatest gift of all – Jesus! In Him we have light, hope, encouragement, the forgiveness of our sins, and eternal life because God incarnate came to earth to seek and save the lost. This Christmas we may not have the gifts or even the food we enjoyed other years, but let us resist falling into discouragement, brothers and sisters. Our hope is not in material possession, but in the greatest Treasure of all -- God our Savior, who became man to bring us life. He is the cause of all true joy."*

His words left a lump in our throats since just three weeks ago Pablo lost his 14-year job due to political persecution mounting against non-Party members; then they had to sell their car and their apartment to make it through this trial. What an encouragement seeing God raise up believers and leaders for His church with strength and confidence in Christ!

Thanks be to God for His indescribable Gift who came to earth to lay down His life for our salvation!

*Kep & Debbie James*

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