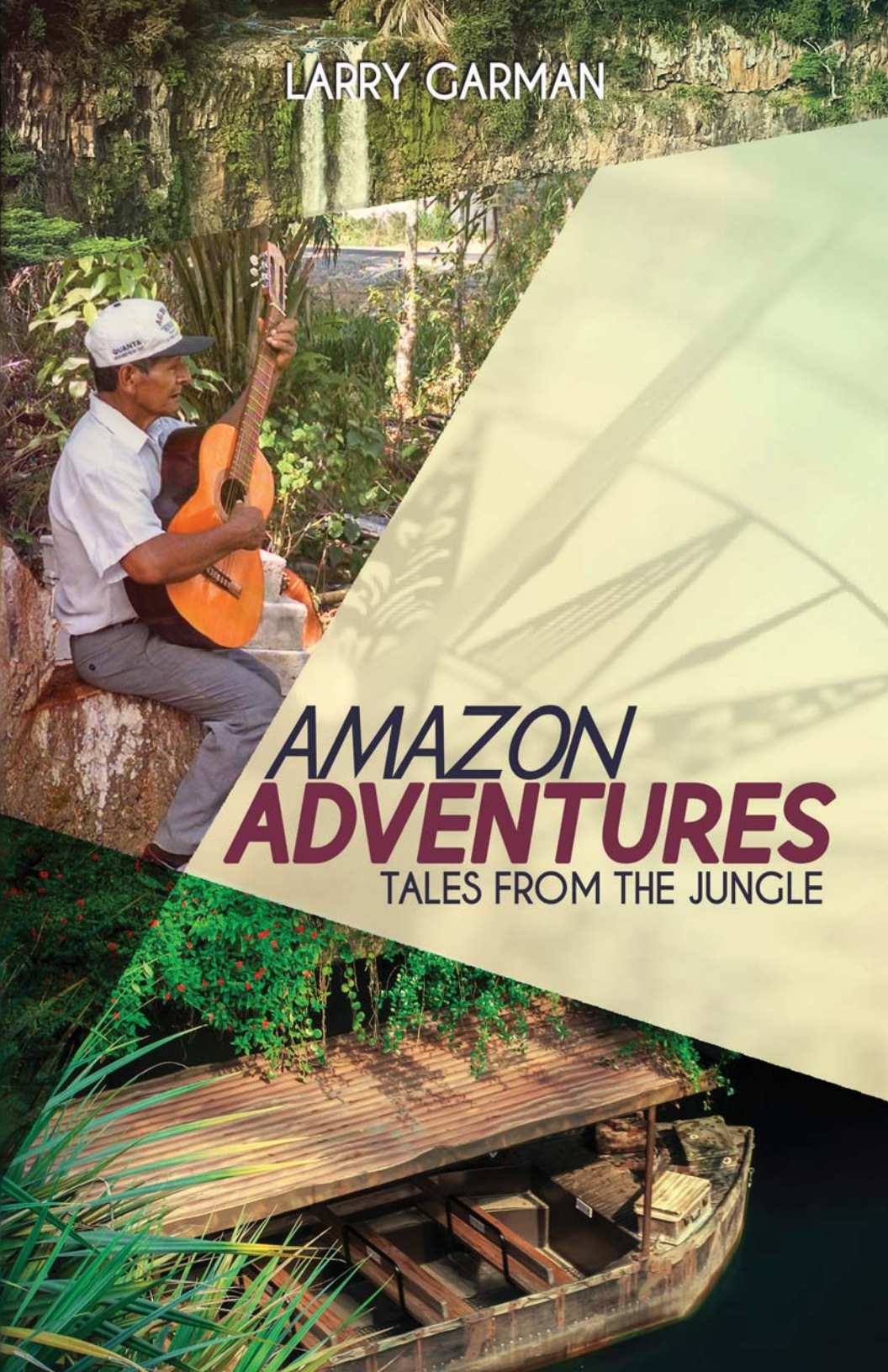
LARRY GARMAN



AMAZON ADVENTURES

TALES FROM THE JUNGLE

Remote. Isolated. Threatening. Intriguing. In the Amazon jungle overlooking the Kusu and Marañon Rivers, Larry and Addie Garman, young missionaries in the early sixties, made their home. Walk through the jungle, navigate the raging Marañon, slip quietly along a remote trail, and celebrate God's amazing grace and one couple's total surrender to His will. God does extraordinary things with ordinary people—folks like you and me—when they are fully surrendered to Him. God has done an extraordinary thing through the Garmans! Your life will never be quite the same after reading these stories. Remote. Isolated. Threatening. Intriguing. In the Amazon jungle overlooking the Kusu and Marañon Rivers, Larry and Addie Garman, young missionaries in the early sixties, made their home. Walk through the jungle, navigate the raging Marañon, slip quietly along a remote trail, and celebrate God's amazing grace and one couple's total surrender to His will. God does extraordinary things with ordinary people—folks like you and me—when they are fully surrendered to Him. God has done an extraordinary thing through the Garmans! Your life will never be quite the same after reading these stories.

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TALES FROM THE JUNGLE

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Tales from the Jungle

by Larry Garman

AMAZON ADVENTURES

TALES FROM THE JUNGLE

by

Larry Garman

Nazarene Missions International

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Dedication

This book is dedicated to our wonderful children, Dr. Guy Garman (who passed away tragically August 14, 2015), Greg, Candy, and Tim and our extended family who have supported us across the years. They are our heroes, along with a great host of Peruvians, who have challenged, inspired, and loved us. To our wonderful Work & Witness friends who have helped change our world, we say thanks.

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About Larry and Addie Garman . . .

Addie Pearl Broussard was born into a wonderful Christian home in Orange, Texas, USA. Her parents and siblings were pillars and supporters of the Church of the Nazarene in Orange, Texas.

The family moved to Whittier, California, USA, when Addie was in the fourth grade, and she accepted God's call on her life to become a missionary at that time. After high school, she majored in education at Pasadena Nazarene College (now Point Loma Nazarene University) in California.

In 1958, she and Larry married, and they soon applied for missionary service.

The couple was blest with three children: Guy Russell, Gregory, and Candy. Later in Peru, their fourth child, Timothy, was born.

In 1964, Larry and Addie were assigned as missionaries to the Amazon of Peru. Addie had many fears, but trusted God to take care of her family in a very remote part of the vineyard.

She was instrumental in starting the very first church among the Aguaruna (ah-gwah-RUH-nah) Indians. With the formation of the Bible Institute, she taught Old Testament, music, drama, and math for about 37 years. She pastored two churches and started a women's ministry that became a model for the tribe.

Larry Maurice Rhinehart was born in Springfield, Ohio, USA. At the age of 12, Larry was adopted by his stepfather, Guy Russell Garman, who died when Larry was 16. Larry attended a small United Methodist Church until high school, when he stopped attending church.

His mother's friend invited the family to a home mission Nazarene Church, where people took an interest in Larry, and he accepted Christ as Savior. The pastor told Larry about a Nazarene College in Pasadena, California (now Point Loma Nazarene University in San Diego). At the college, Larry was sanctified and received his call to missions.

After graduating from Pasadena College, Larry earned his doctor of chiropractic degree from the Los Angeles College of Chiropractic in California and entered private practice. Two years later, he enrolled in Biola School of Missionary Medicine in California, studying tropical medicine, dentistry, and

dispensary. The Garmans were then assigned as missionaries to the Amazon of Peru to work with indigenous peoples and clinical work for 40 years.

Besides meeting physical needs in the jungle, Larry taught in the Bible Institute for 37 years, planted churches, served as pastor and district superintendent, and worked with about 200 Work & Witness teams.

The Garmans worked with building churches along 24 rivers of the Amazon and travelled thousand of miles by river and walking trails to encourage churches. They retired with 45 years of service but still spend a great deal of their time in the Amazon, hosting Work & Witness teams and offering ministry support.

Forward

Remote. Isolated. Primitive. Threatening. Intriguing. This is Kusu. Overlooking the Kusu and Marañon Rivers, it was the home of a young missionary couple in the early sixties. I was a college student at Bethany Nazarene College (now Southern Nazarene University) in Oklahoma, USA, and the campus was abuzz about this adventure into the jungle by Larry and Addie Garman. Larry's sister, Rita, was a classmate so the entire student body was mesmerized by God's call upon the lives of this young couple.

I have been to Kusu. When travelling in Peru as a general superintendent, I made it a point to go to Kusu. It's not the end of the world; but, as a friend says, "If you could stand on a stump, you could see it from there."

It was in Kusu that this remarkable 47-year adventure began for the Garman family. In an earlier book *The Amazon Call*, Larry began to share stories from that 47-year odyssey. My wife and I read that book devotionally with our grandchildren at bedtime when they stay with us. One of our grandchildren, Spencer, gave his heart to the Lord as Patty prayed one night after reading a chapter.

God does extraordinary things with ordinary people—folks like you and me—when they are fully surrendered to Him. God has done an extraordinary thing through Larry and Addie Garman! Your life will never be quite the same after reading these stories.

Come with me, let's walk through the jungle, navigate the raging Marañon River, slip quietly along a remote trail, sit in a native hut for a while, and celebrate God's amazing grace and one couple's total surrender to the will of God.

The surrender of Larry and Addie Garman continues to this day!

"How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!" (Romans 10:15)

—J. K. Warrick, General Superintendent,
Church of the Nazarene

1 Revenge

REVENGE I

The canoe glided smoothly across the quiet waters of the Kusu (koo-SOO) River while its two occupants enjoyed the serenity and beauty of the rainforest. The old man sitting on the hand-carved seat in the back of the canoe dipped his paddle into the water, pulling deep, broad strokes. This propelled his sleek craft closer to the shoreline and the overhanging trees that provided refuge from the intense heat of a blazing tropical sun.

His strong, bronzed arms relaxed after each stroke, which allowed his paddle to act like a rudder, thus steering the dugout in a straight line along the river's edge. Long black hair hung loosely over shoulders stooped with age. Round bluish tattoos highlighted his prominent cheekbones. His face was etched with deep, rugged lines from years of squinting into a bright sun. Bare feet, strong and calloused from endless trails, rested comfortably on the water-splashed floor of the canoe.

The design and shape of the dugout canoe has not changed across centuries of use. These skilled navigators make their ways on many of the streams and rivers of the upper Amazon. Their homes are always built near waterways that provide transportation, fishing, bathing, and sources of water for domestic uses.

Dugouts of various sizes are the main vehicles of travel in the rain forest. They provide mobility from homes to the village, hunting grounds, garden areas, fishing waters, and other villages.

The man's wife sat on a small balsa wood stool in the front of the canoe. She wore the typical one-piece dress made of a rectangular cloth tied over the right shoulder and cinched at the waist with a round stout vine. At night, she would untie the knot to use her dress as a blanket.

She was frail and slight, as years of braving the elements had exacted a toll on her physical appearance. Her kind, grandmotherly eyes searched the skies for signs of changing weather. The sky was a beautiful blue that day, with powder puff clouds lazily drifting overhead. Her attention was drawn to the slightly rippled water that revealed her countenance in its reflection. She gazed for a long moment at the aged face staring at her from the deep.

A small, thin hand so gently touched those wrinkled cheeks that were lined with time. Her slender finger mechanically outlined the blue circle tattoo marks that had slightly faded with the passing of years. She vividly remembered the day those tattoos were made on her face as beauty marks from the plant dye her people used.

Next she observed the small, round hole below the lower lip. She could never forget the day when the hole was punched out to receive a three-inch piece of bamboo or a thin shaft of animal bone that moved up and down when she talked.

She recalled dancing to the beating of the drums after painting her face with the bright red crushed *achiote* (ah-chee-OH-teh; vegetable plant) seeds and adorning the triangular pieces of carved land snail shells in a woven band worn around the waist.

Beyond the reflection, movement caught her attention. The past faded as she saw a large fish swim rapidly out of sight. Excitedly she watched a school of *bocachico* (boh-kah-CHEE-koh) fish dart through the shadowy depths, with each splash of the paddle.

"There!" she shouted and pointed to a dark object on the shallow bottom of the river.

It was a *carachama* (kah-rah-CHA-mah) fish with its round suckers firmly attached to a rock. The memory of the many times she had eaten the white succulent flesh of these fish on communal fishing days, aroused great emotion within her.

Communal fishing events are festive celebrations the entire village participates in together. During the low water season, when the streams become

shallow, the people carefully watch a nearby stream where the water cascades over huge boulders and dumps into a large, deep, cold water hole. Everyone in the village waits, eagerly wondering when the headman will give the signal for the anticipated fishing day.

Finally, the day arrives. The announcement buzzes on everyone's lips and splashes over into nearby villages. The next day hundreds of people will line the stream.

Early that morning, the women go to the gardens to dig up great quantities of barbasco (bar-BAH-skoh), an alkaloid root poison. They load large, woven baskets with the freshly dug roots and carry these on their backs with long vine straps that wrap around and attach to their foreheads.

The women trudge across the trails with their heavy loads, finally depositing them at the stream near the large water hole. The men carry the baskets to the huge boulders where they beat the roots against the rocks. A milky white substance soon runs down the rocks, mixing with the water. After baskets full of barbasco roots have been thoroughly beaten to a pulp, the river takes on a chalky white appearance.

The stage is now set for an incredible scene that unfolds like a well-directed movie. The entire jungle seems to come to a standstill, and the only sound is the crashing of water across the boulders. Women stand on the bank of the stream with machetes poised in upraised hands. Boys fix their eyes on the water with gig spears raised. Little girls crouch near large woven baskets waiting breathlessly for the harvest of fish. Men stand on the boulders staring into the depths of the cold water hole.

An eternity seems to pass before they see the small dark objects emerge from the depths of the water. When the barbasco fills the water and flows through the fish gills, it stuns the fish and they surface, looking for oxygen.

At this point, the shout is given and five hours of bedlam breaks out. Women splash into the river thrashing at the fish with their machetes. They grab the stunned fish and toss them ashore. The boys gig the fish with their spears and throw them on the bank where the girls fill the baskets as fast as they can.

Meanwhile, men dive into the deep water hole looking for the carachama fish that attach themselves to the boulders with strong suckers. The men rip them loose from their attachment and bite their heads to stun them or strike their heads on the rocks and then string them on a long vine that the men hold between their teeth.

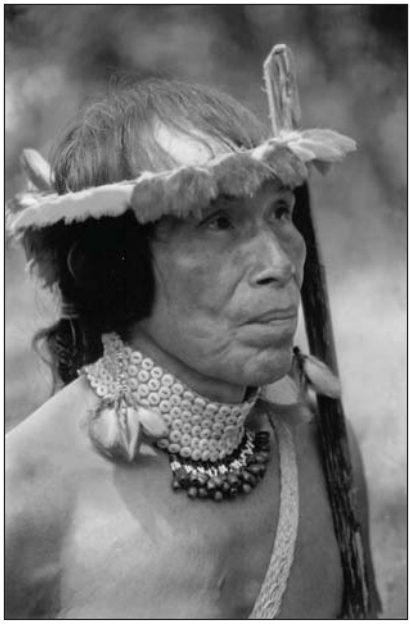
Everyone participates and everyone catches something—some more than others. Soon no more fish are left, and everyone heads downstream about 50 yards away.

Early that morning, while the women gathered barbasco, every man built a two-foot wide bamboo trap. The traps were attached to each other until they spanned the width of the stream downriver. The fish that escape greedy hands upriver eventually end up in one of the traps downstream.

Each man harvests the fish caught in his trap. The bountiful catch of fish is shared with orphans, widows, and the elderly who cannot physically participate in the fishing day. That night under the glow of numerous fires around the village, everybody gorges on fish.

Emerging from the shadows of overhanging trees into the open areas near a bend in the river, the two travelers felt the scorching heat of the afternoon sun.

Silently the canoe knifed through the water, past the beautiful gardens of *yuca* (YOO-kah), papaya, and ripening banana stalks. Occasionally a small flock of parrots flew noisily overhead to a new nesting ground, breaking the monotony of the journey.



Typical Aguaruna Man

Unknown to the weary travelers, two men hid behind the undergrowth around the next river bend. The duo waited patiently, with loaded shotguns, as the unsuspecting couple approached.

The two men were brothers with one common purpose. One was Kunchiwi (koon-CHEE-wee), who, with his wife, Justina (hoo-STEE-nah), and their children, lived only a few bends upriver from the Kusu mission station and were friends of the missionaries.

*We first met Kunchiwi when he came to our church in his etipak (*eh-TEE-puck*), a man's skirt made of a rectangular cloth tied around the waist with a thin vine. He was barefoot, wore a crown*

of parrot feathers on his head, and his face was painted with crushed, red achiote seed paste. He always came to church with his old, rusty 16-gauge shotgun by his side.

One Sunday morning, I was preaching and getting excited about the message, desiring to see these people come to know the Savior and make a commitment to the Lord.

Suddenly Kunchiwi jumped to his feet waving the shotgun and wanting to comment on the sermon. The people had lived for centuries without the written word. They depended on oral traditions to pass on from one generation to another the history, genealogies, customs, war songs, and spiritual activities of their people. In a communal meeting, everyone talks at the same time until they reach a consensus.

I was startled as I watched the warrior wave his gun and quickly decided let him have the floor.

Kunchiwi gave a very animated opinion on the subject, exhorting the people while waving the gun back and forth. Soon he sat down with the gun at his side, and I cautiously continued my message.

Justina was a tall, strong Indian woman who came to church every Sunday with her many children. She was remarkable and resourceful. One day she asked if we wanted to buy a stalk of bananas. I said yes.

Returning to her canoe, she retrieved a large stalk that probably weighed around 100 pounds. I watched in amazement as she slung that huge stalk over her shoulder and climbed two hills, depositing it at my feet.

I went to place the bananas in our washhouse, but could hardly move it off the ground. In my embarrassment, I glanced at Justina and saw that she was six or seven months pregnant. What a woman!

Mother's Day was coming; and my wife, Addie, announced to the congregation that the next Sunday we would have special prizes for the eldest mother, youngest mother, and the mother with the most children present in Sunday School on Mother's Day.

This was something new and interesting for none had ever received a present before. Everyone was excited and could hardly wait to see the prizes.

Mother's Day rolled around; and the people came by trail, canoe, and boat for this historical meeting. The church overflowed with eager, smiling people, packing every backless bench in our small building. Women sat on fresh-cut

banana leaves under the trees on a steep hill that overlooked the church. They could see and hear everything because the walls were only three feet high.

Excitement mounted each moment, as men, women, and children anticipated this special day.

Finally came the long-awaited moment when we asked who was the eldest mother present. The competition was narrowed down to two elderly women, whom we invited to the front of the church. Both were small, bent with age, and wearing the typical one-piece dress. I first spoke to the one on my right.

"Umbaju (oom-bah-HOO; lady friend)*, how old are you?" I asked.*

She looked at me stoically and replied, "Dekatsjai (de-KATS-hay; I do not know)*."*

I immediately turned to the other grandmother and asked the same question, and received the same reply, "Dekatsjai."

Well, we were off to a flying start, since neither one knew how old she was. I realized that in their culture, age is not important. Birthdays and anniversaries were non-existent in a culture that did not have the written word—thus records were not available.

Addie waited anxiously to give one of them the prize, but we had come to a standstill.

Next we went through a long ordeal of asking their many children to help us determine which woman was the eldest. At last, by process of elimination, we awarded one of them with the coveted prize and moved on to select the youngest mother. This was easier because everyone pointed to a girl of about 14 with a brand-new baby.

Feeling better about the situation, we moved to the last category: the mother with the most children present. Justina, Kunchiwi's wife, was the winner.

"Justina," I asked, "how many children do you have present?"

"Dekatsjai," she replied.

"Oh no, not again!" I muttered.

Immediately, I remembered that it is not important to know how many, but who they are. Living in a non-economized society, it was not important to deal with numbers. I stood dumbfounded and embarrassed at my display of ignorance.

"Justina," I requested, "please point out your children and count them using your counting system."

She began counting, holding one finger down at a time. She spotted a little naked boy running in and out of the church and said, "Makichik (mah-kee-CHEEK; one)*."*

Next she spied her daughter sitting with the women and brought down another finger saying, "Hemag (HEE-mahg; two)*."*

She called out one after another, "Kampatum (kahm-PAH-toom)*, Ipatsumat* (ee-PAHT-su-maht)*," and finally held up a doubled fist for "Uwijamwa* (oo-wee-HAHM-wah; five)*."*

Looking around, she noticed another of her children sitting under the trees. Using her doubled fist, she held a finger down on the other hand and said, "Uwijamwa makchiki ijuk (ee-HOOK; six.)*"*

Justina stopped for a long moment with a puzzled look on her face, and she obviously wanted to bring down another finger, but she couldn't find the seventh child. No doubt she had counted them all that morning before leaving for church, but she could not find the child anywhere.

Her eyes darted from the men's section to the women's side of the church, but to no avail. She looked out the back of the church and then to the hillside where a large group of women and children sat on banana leaves on the ground. Desperately she searched every possible place with those dark eyes, but no success.

We waited patiently, knowing she would still win the prize with six children present. Suddenly Justina's face broke out with a big grin. She pointed to the front of her dress and the nursing baby she had forgotten about. She won the Mother's Day prize; and needless to say, we never attempted that again.

The other man lying in wait with Kunchiwi was his brother, Esamat (eh-SAH-maht)*. Esamat lived in the village of Kagka (KAHNG-kah), which was a day's journey over the trails—not too far from the Cenepa* (she-NEH-pah) *River.*

Both men peered through the thick underbrush as the canoe knifed slowly through the water toward them.

She shifted her weight from one side of the small stool to the other to keep her legs from going numb. As they rounded the bend in the river, they both shaded their eyes from the afternoon sun. Squinting, they observed the low

rows of mountains in the distance that rose from the back side of the Chigamai (CHING-kah-mai) village about 20 minutes away.

A beautiful sight greeted their eyes that day in the rainforest. The majestic hills, covered with evergreen vegetation, were reflected in the river that meandered ahead of them in this pristine paradise.

The old man skillfully moved his paddle to the other side of the canoe, gently dipping it into the water, pulling big broad strokes, and maneuvering his aged craft closer to the shore. They looked forward to spending a few days in the village with family and friends. They had visited Chigamai more than once, especially during the month of March, the season of the *tayu* (TAH-yoo).

Every year people migrated to this picturesque village to hunt the *tayu,* or oily, bird. Many years ago, large, deep underground caverns had been discovered about four hours from the village. These deep caves were cold, damp, dark, and foreboding. But the oily birds have habits much like the bats—they, too, are nearly blind and live in these dark caverns where they nest. The oily bird is nocturnal and leaves the cave at dusk to fly great distances, returning before sunrise. They feed on oily nuts, so they are fat and coveted by the people for their delicious oily flesh, even though they are ugly and have scattered, long, facial whiskers.

Each March they nest with their young. The people make long ladders of stout vines to lower themselves into the cave with torchlight or flashlights. Only the very brave descend into the belly of the earth to snatch the oily birds from their nests.

They put the prehistoric-looking creatures into large woven baskets. Climbing out of the caves on the swinging vine ladders can cause even the bravest to wonder if it's worth the effort.

Generations earlier, a few men had discovered these caves, and it became an unwritten law that they determined when the birds could be harvested and who could collect them.

When these men died, the rights to the caves remained in their family. The people, who are extremely generous, usually invited large numbers of family and friends to participate each year in the unusual hunting expedition.

The two men heard the paddle dipping into the water and knew the canoe was near. Their strong, calloused fingers automatically, methodically gripped the stained wooden stocks of their rusted but well-oiled guns.

These weapons had been obtained during the rubber boom days, when the sap from the leche caspi (LEH-cheh KAH-spee; rubber) *trees was in great demand. During the early 1900s, the Amazon was famous for its abundance of this natural product from its rainforest.*

Iquitos (ee-KEE-tohs), Peru, and Manaus (mah-NAUS), Brazil, were key ports for the commercialization of this coveted commodity. The people worked diligently, tapping the trees and preparing the large, grayish black balls that would be transported on large balsa rafts to Iquitos, 600 miles away. A local trader cut down the tall beautiful white balsa trees that graced the sloping sides of the Marañon (mah-rahn-YOHN) *River. The trees were stripped of their bark, which was then used to lash together the 20-foot, round, buoyant logs into a huge raft.*

A platform made of wild cane poles rested on stout bamboo stakes that were driven into the balsa logs at different angles and held fast with strong supple vines. This formed the sleeping quarters for the ten-day trip to Iquitos. The crude rubber balls were weighed and noted in a notebook with the owner's name.

The large balls of latex rubber were loaded onto the raft, along with provisions for the long trek down the river. The provisions consisted of stalks of green cooking bananas, yuca, and dry logs for cooking. A thatched leaf roof protected the occupants from the fierce tropical sun and torrential downpours of rain.

Two large oars were mounted to a tripod affair of stout poles on the left and right corners of the cumbersome craft to steer it through the rapids and whirlpools of the turbulent river.

Finally the raft would be completely loaded and cut loose from the shore, swinging out into the cross currents that sent it spiraling downstream. The oarsmen struggled to right the raft and keep it in the main current, while dodging obstacles, like huge boulders that protruded partway out into the river. Partially submerged trees, uprooted during the high water season and plunged into the soft river bottom, waited to snag any moving object the current spun in their way.

The men fished from the raft and occasionally put to shore to hunt wild game. The river provided them with a place to bathe and retrieve water for their limited domestic use. The trip was tedious, days and nights lonely as the occupants struggled with the blood-sucking gnats during the day and mosquitoes at night.

Past the Cenepa River, the raft would approach the canyon and rapids of Huaracayo (Wah-rah-KAH-yoh) as the sun sank in the western sky. Trees lining the bank cast shadows on the water, and the air became heavy and damp, causing the men to position themselves behind the heavy oars, aware that around the next wide, sweeping, bend the boiling waters of the rapids awaited them.

One man placed vulnerable items on the platform, securing them with strong vines. The water cascaded over enormous boulders that protruded like outcroppings of long arms propelling the current down to the sheer cliff walls of Huaracayo. The men shouted instructions one to another and pulled hard on the oars, desperately trying to keep the floating fortress away from the menacing boulders that lined the downward side of the river. Perspiration pooled and dripped from their bronzed arms as they strained at the oars.

The raft swept dangerously close to the half-submerged boulders, causing the craft to lean precariously to one side before righting itself and plunging downstream, safely caught in the main current.

A sigh of relief echoed across the raft as the men relaxed their aching muscles and their grip lightened on the oars now being used as rudders. Slowly the cumbersome raft floated into the calm waters below Huaracayo. The weary men guided it safely to shore and tied up for the night.

The sky was filled with thick ominous clouds that precluded the low rumble of thunder. A light breeze swept the air, and the men scurried, placing all perishables items under the thatched roof. Fortunately, they had boiled a large quantity of yuca and green bananas earlier in the afternoon, along with a few black piranhas they'd fished from the river that morning.

Lightning flashed closer and lit the sky all around them. Thunder crashed ever so near. The first drops of rain spattered on their tired bodies, chasing them to the security of the thatched roof. They huddled together as the wind blew and rain pelted the roof. Weary hands lifted long, broad banana leaves and used them as umbrellas to help ward off the cold, whipping rain.

An eternity seemed to pass before the storm moved on. Sleepy eyes succumbed to the exhaustion of the first day on their long journey to Iquitos. Frogs croaked in the background, and the raft bobbed gently in the backwater.

Morning arrived with a thick cool fog settling over the banks of the river. Coffee was heated, and a light breeze blew across the raft, chilling the men to the bone.

A scorching sun usually follows early morning fog on the river. The men wolfed down breakfast of sweet coffee, boiled eggs, and yuca while the raft drifted past the village of Urakusa (oo-rah-KOO-sah). The raft floated past Ciro Alegria (SEE-roh ah-leh-GREE-ah) and next the sleepy little town of Nieva (nee-EH-vah) came into view, perched on both banks of the river that bore its name.

The Nieva empties its water into the Marañon, causing strong crosscurrents. The oars were locked into place, and Nieva faded into the distance with the last traces of fog giving way to a blazing tropical sun.

At about 2:00 p.m., Pinglo (PEEN-glow) came into view. Pinglo is a small army outpost at the mouth of the large Santiago (sahn-TEE-ah-go) River. The men could see the last ridge of mountains rising behind the army camp, mountains that separated the high jungle from the low jungle.

The men talked rapidly and pointed to their last great barrier to the flat jungle, the canyon of Manseriche (mahn-seh-REE-che). They pulled hard on the oars to keep the raft in the middle of the river. Soon the force of the Santiago pushed into the Marañon, creating a swelling wave that spun the raft halfway around.

At this point, the meeting of the two rivers is about one-half mile wide from bank to bank. The men knew that in 15 minutes they would go through the rugged, twisting canyon only 100 yards across. They prepared for the assault on Manseriche. They anchored loose items with strong vines. They inspected the raft for any weaknesses that would have to be shored up with extra thick vines carried on board for this purpose. They checked the oarlocks and lashed them down for support.

The raft entered the opening to this long, torturous, narrow pass through the mountains on its downward thrust to the other side.

The canyon is nearly four miles long with high cliff walls on each side. As both rivers push water through the pass, they create unbelievable pressure that causes wild waves and whirlpools. The raft was caught in this downward spiral, twisting one way and then the other; its occupants holding on for dear life.

Water cascaded over the raft as it dipped into the huge troughs formed by the river's steep drops—the river drops about 200 feet in 4 miles. A deafening roar fills the air as water crashes off massive boulders.

The men's eyes fastened on the next straightaway that ended in the deepest drop-off in the canyon. A huge outcropping of rocks forces the water to bounce off their steep sloping sides and propels it into the main current.

"Hold tight!"

The shout rose above the din of crashing, swirling water. The raft rocked from one side to the other, caught up in the aquatic cement mixer. The oarsmen wrapped their arms tightly around the support structure, holding on desperately, aware of the incredible ride awaiting them.

The raft rode high on the crest of a huge wave, then the bottom of the river dropped away; and the raft plunged straight downward, crashing into the hole with bone-crushing force.

Water poured over the raft, and it shook with a violent fury that threatened to dismantle it. When all appeared hopeless, the craft floated to the top of the river and continued its course downstream, as if a giant hand had lifted it from certain devastation.

The open walls of the canyon downriver told the men that the wild ride was almost over. Calm water greeted their arrival, and they continued their journey to Iquitos.

The trader then sold his cargo and purchased supplies and trade goods to transport back upriver by a dugout canoe. The trade goods consist of machetes (mah-CHEH-tehs) *bolts of cloth, shotguns, ammunition, pots, pans, and an assortment of items that are eagerly expected.*

The two men shouldered their guns and pointed them through the thick brush that lined the bank. Eyeing the approaching canoe, Kunchiwi spoke almost inaudibly to his brother.

"Here they come," he whispered. He pointed to a small clump of bushes about 20 yards away.

The long, slender nose of the canoe slowly moved toward them.

What had brought the men to this place and time?

Word had reached Esamat that Ricardo, Kunchiwi's eldest son, had been murdered downriver near the village of San Pablo. Ricardo had married a young girl from San Pablo and had moved there to live with his father-in-law's family for an extended period of time, as custom dictated.

Marriages were traditionally arranged between two families. The fathers were usually good friends and wanted to strengthen their relationship by a marriage. The agreement might be made long before the actual marriage took place.

When the time arrived, the future son-in-law would go hunting deep in the jungle. Upon his return with wild game, a large meal was prepared and shared with the whole family. A bed of split bamboo had been made on one side of the hut for the new couple. When the meal was finished, the marriage was consummated and the occupants of the house retired to their respective beds.

The new son-in-law is obligated to help his in-laws by cutting firewood and doing other chores. After a year or two, he is allowed to build his own hut down the trail from his father-in-law. The men all pitch in to help him.

Ricardo, Larry, Ricardo's Wife, and Child

By then, his wife would have a baby and probably another on the way. As the house nears completion, the women begin preparing a native liquor for the celebratory feast that will occur when the hut is finished. They masticate boiled manioc (MAN-ee-ok; yuca)*, the staple of their diet.*

Yuca is a tuberous root that grows on a stem. The stem produces several long, large roots that are pulled from their underground, hidden chambers after being cultivated for nine to twelve months. The tough bark of these roots is peeled off, and the roots are boiled in water. The yuca is similar to potato, but more fibrous.

After the women thoroughly chew the boiled yuca, mixing it well with their saliva, they spit it into a five-gallon clay pot sitting on a tripod in the middle of the hut. A fresh, green banana leaf is used to cover the pot. The masticated mash ferments for three days and nights.

Saliva contains an enzyme that breaks down the starch into alcohol through the fermentation process. Three days later, the mash becomes a very strong, intoxicating liquor. At that stage, when night falls across the rainforest, the men

gather to celebrate a job well done. The drinking and dancing might last all night and into the next day.

Ricardo's death caused great grief and sadness to Kunchiwi, Justina, and the extended family. Months had passed since his murder, but the memory caused Kunchiwi to reach into his culture to resolve this issue. He had been taught around the dying embers of a hut's three-logged fire, sitting at the feet of his grandfather. The older man recited the long genealogy of his people and the war songs used in revenge killings. These teachings had been ingrained into Kunchiwi's mind over the years.

"You must retaliate and kill any male member of the family that takes the life of one of your own," he had heard the elders say repeatedly.

Esamat had come to help Kunchiwi honor the family name and to take revenge in the death of his nephew. The old man in the canoe was a distant uncle of the man who had taken Ricardo's life, so the stage was set.

Kunchiwi felt Esamat's breath on his shoulder as both men looked down the sights of their rusted guns. They saw the old man sitting there, cradling the paddle on his lap as the canoe glided close to their position.

"Now!" said Kunchiwi.

The explosion of two guns broke the serenity of the rainforest. Birds flew off in every direction. The old man groaned and slumped to the bottom of the canoe. His wife's screams could be heard in the nearby village of Chigamai.

The terrified woman beat her chest and pulled her hair in grief. Dropping to the floor of the canoe, she sobbed over the lifeless form of her husband.

Kunchiwi and Esamat slipped to the main trail that led to Kunchiwi's hut. They ran, knowing they had to escape to the faraway village of Kagka to live with their family and the constant fear of retaliation.

Justina had the baskets loaded with their few earthly possessions. The terrified children clung to their mother's legs. The baskets were affixed to everyone's backs, and the family left their home of many years on the banks of the Kusu River.

"We must stay off the main trail and take the hunting trails until we are far from the village. Then we will double back to the main trail that leads to Kagka," Kunchiwi directed in a shaking voice.

Hearing the cry of death, men ran to the port of Chigamai, untied their canoes and paddled rapidly in the direction of those heartrending cries. Passing through the small rapids and rounding a bend in the river, they saw the canoe with the aged woman clinging to a paddle, desperately trying to make shore.

The men pulled the canoe to the shore, tying it to a nearby tree. They recognized the grieving woman and covered her dead husband with long, freshly cut banana leaves. The canoe had drifted some distance from where the attack had taken place, and the men wondered who could have committed such a crime. They saw no footprints on the bank and decided to take the woman and her deceased husband to their village.

The hunting trail was overgrown so progress was slow, but the family tried to hurry along, ignoring the briars that cut their arms and thorns that dug into their bare feet. They knew time was in their favor when they veered off the hunting trail and onto the main trail that led away from the village and to Kagka.

Back at the village, wailing filled the air far and near as women joined the elderly woman in the death song. The men of Chigamai decided to investigate immediately. They filled canoes, armed to the teeth. They reached the spot in the river where the drifting canoe had been found and tied their canoe to the shoreline. They spread along the bank, looking for signs of where the attackers had been.

There on the ground were two empty sixteen-gauge shotgun shells.

But who could have committed this savagery, they wondered.

A man remembered that Kunchiwi's son was murdered months earlier, near San Pablo. Ricardo had been involved in a love triangle, and the betrayed husband had killed him in cold blood.

"Wasn't the slain old man from San Pablo?" another asked. An older warrior responded that the old man was a distant uncle of the man who had murdered Ricardo.

The men ran to the main trail toward Kunchiwi's hut.

Climbing the small hill, they saw the hut. Quietly, they loaded their guns and approached the hut from two different sides.

Following the main trail, the fleeing party hurried toward the high country that would eventually lead them to safety, far away from Chigamai. Shadows were encroaching upon the rainforest and the sun dipped into the western sky.

The men finally came to the little clearing where Kunchiwi's hut sat silent. No dog barked, and they sensed no movement within the house. Guns poised, the men surrounded the house and called, "Kunchiwi!"

No response.

They entered the dwelling. Empty.

The hut was quiet and emptied of all possessions. Darkness now engulfed the jungle, and the warriors returned to the village.

Justina had prepared well for their long journey to Kagka. They stopped at a small stream to rest and eat the boiled yuca and bananas she had cooked. The sounds of the rainforest at night caused them to be jumpy. They knew that by now the village knew of their treachery. They also knew it was too late for any war party to follow them. They had a head start of many hours.

Splashing water on their faces, the tired group again headed down the trail, traveling long into the night. The evening was damp and cool when they finally reached a small clearing where they would spend the night. They were safe for now since darkness consumed the forest. Exhausted, the tiny group slept on dry leaves under a small lean-to the men hurriedly assembled.

The crying continued long into the night, and the villagers made plans to inform the nearby villages of Listra (LE-strah) and Chipe (CHEE-peh) of the murder. Others would coordinate the task of telling the man's relatives in San Pablo, way downriver.

"It's time to go," Esamat whispered into Kunchiwi's ear, shaking his shoulder. Startled, Kunchiwi clutched his gun, and his sleepy eyes became alert.

"Wake up Justina and the children," he said. "We must leave immediately to make it to Kagka today."

A hint of light was breaking through the dense canopy overhead. The children resisted being awakened, but finally they were all ready. Baskets were tied to the backs of young and old, and the weary travelers set off down the trail again. The dogs ran ahead of the small party, barking at the sudden movement of birds and rodents that fled from this unwanted intrusion into their territory.

Early that same morning, men were dispatched to nearby villages and a great cry went up, especially from Chipe, where the deceased had relatives. The revenge killing was on the lips of everyone, far and near. A group of men from Chipe took a canoe to Chigamai to transport the wife and the old man's lifeless body downriver to San Pablo.

The children were hungry and crying when the fleeing group rested at mid-morning to eat the last of the boiled yuca and bananas. It was late afternoon when they reached a large garden plot and knew Kagka was not far away. Seeing the gardens of yuca, bananas, and papaya lifted the refugees' spirits.

They crossed a small stream and saw more gardens. Finally, they passed a thatched hut and greeted the occupants. News had spread quickly throughout the village of their exploits and flight to safety. Nearly everyone in Kagka was related to Esamat and his brother, Kunchiwi, so the group was welcomed with open arms.

Rounding a large sweeping curve in the river, they saw the thatched roofs of small huts dotting the hillsides along the muddy Marañon River. San Pablo loomed in the distance. The grief-stricken old woman began crying and calling to the people who lined the bank.

Women had just returned from their gardens and were washing the dirt from mounds of yuca piled near their large, woven baskets. Little children yelled and splashed in the water, while the ever-present dogs ran up and down the beach, threatening the approaching canoe.

The wailing drew everyone's attention, and all eyes fastened upon the canoe that was drifting ashore. The elderly woman explained the events of the day before, gesturing to the bottom of the canoe, where her husband was wrapped in a blanket.

The occupants lining the riverbank cried out and ran to the canoe. Village men came from every direction, and chaos broke out along the sandy beach in front of San Pablo.

Where, when, how, and why had this murder taken place? Everyone talked at once. Dogs barked, women cried, and little children stood next to their moms in fear, listening to the sordid details of this seemingly senseless killing.

The residents of Kagka knew what the future held for them. They began to fortify the village for the revenge raid that would come eventually.

The walls of the huts were reinforced with a double row of bamboo, with the men's beds placed on the back wall, away from the entrance to their huts. Long, hard palm wood spears were made and placed strategically around the village. A wooden tower was constructed on the edge of the village to monitor any unusual movement.

The body was gently removed from the canoe, and a long procession of family members carried it up the sloping hill to the village. Little children playing along the trail stopped and stared at the solemn line of crying men and women. The sun shone intensely as the mourning party finally reached the widow's hut.

Tribal customs dictate the burial practices of the Aguaruna (ah-gwah-RUH-nah) people. An infant may be buried in the parents' hut, and the family will continue to live there. But when an older man dies, he will be buried in his hut, and the family abandons the home to live elsewhere.

Burial ceremonies are stressful and predictable. In the case of a child's death, a grieving mother will stand by while the men painstakingly dig a shallow grave, three feet deep. The bottom of the grave is lined with long slats of palm wood. The child is wrapped in any available material, and the body is tenderly placed on the palm wood slats.

The atmosphere is charged with emotion as sobbing parents look on the face of the child. The mother dives to the ground, trying to enter the grave and embrace her loved one. The men restrain the hysterical mother, who then tries to run from the hut.

Quickly the men form a circle around her to keep her within the walls of the hut. She struggles with them, beating on their arms, desperately trying to break ranks so she can escape to the garden, dig up the *barbasco* root, and chew a raw piece of this alkaloid poison to take her life.

The men know her intentions and restrain her until exhaustion takes over and the grieving mother collapses. The top of the tiny grave is recessed about five inches on all four sides. Slats of palm wood are placed on the recessed sides and covered with dirt.

The tiny frail widow stood silently as the men dug the grave inside the hut. They took their time, making sure the grave was prepared properly. The husband was then wrapped in a blanket and placed on the palm wood slats lining the bottom of the grave.

Next, they placed beside him a machete he had recently purchased since custom dictates that an adult be buried with his or her most prized possession.

Days drifted into weeks, and soon several months had passed without a revenge raid in Kagka. The people relaxed their vigil, and life resumed its normal daily routine. The older folk knew, however, that the raid would come eventually, at a time when they least expected it.

REVENGE II

Revenge killings were prevalent when we began living in the tribe in 1965. The age-old customs of an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth were practiced.

An elderly grandfather would tuck his etipak between his legs, pull a little hand-carved stool in position, and sit by the three-logged fire in the middle of the hut to tell his grandchildren the ways of their people.

Eerie shadows danced across the bamboo walls as young, naked boys listened to the tales of these great storytellers. These ancient warriors knew how to hold the young boys' attention with graphic details of their exploits. Their voices rose and fell with emphasis placed on the mysteriously unknown.

The boys were nearly hypnotized by their elders' singsong chanting. They would have to memorize the long genealogies of their people. Into the night, the bronzed-faced, wrinkled men educated them about the legendary and mythological history of the tribe, beginning with *Apajui* (a-pah-WHEE), the creator of these people.

Apajui lived in the great, mist-covered mountain canyon of Manseriche, the mysterious gorge just below the union of the Marañon and Santiago Rivers. He was their creator, but not their God.

The early missionaries told the villagers that they wanted to talk to them about God.

"Whose God?" they asked.

"Who created you?" the missionaries countered.

"Apajui created us," they responded.

Apajui was then inserted into the recent translation of some New Testament scriptures with no apparent problem, until the missionaries spoke about Apajui sending His Son to the world.

The people said, "We know his son, He is the brother of Apajui's immoral daughter."

"No," the missionaries objected, "God had only one child, a holy Son!"

"No," insisted the people. "Apajui had two children, according to our legends."

Apajui was removed from the scriptures, and another word had to be found. The linguists looked to the Andean mountain people, descendants of the famed Inca culture, for the *Quechua* (KEH-choo-a) word for God, *Tatayusa* (tah-tah-YOO-sah). They replaced Apajui in the revised scripture.

However, when reading the name Tatayusa, the villagers rejected him, because he was not their creator. After long thought, Apajui was reinstated and across time, the concept was accepted that the true heavenly Apajui had only a holy Son.

The children were also instructed how to use datem (DAH-tehm)*, toe* (toh-EH)*, ayawaska* (ah-yah-WAHS-kah)*, and tobacco (plant drugs) in important rituals they needed to perform for success in the larger culture. Young boys at the age of 12 used these drugs to become men through the initiation rites.*

Each boy was instructed to take his hammock and a pouch of ayawaska (a strong hallucinogen) deep into the jungle. At night, the young boy was all alone except for the sounds of animals seeking their prey in the canopy overhead and on the damp jungle floor all around him. He would tie his hammock between two trees and prepare the ayawaska from his pouch into a potent drink that would cause him to hallucinate and receive his power from the spirit world.

When the effects of ayawaska took hold, he would lie in his hammock because his body would go limp, and great visions would come forth. The greatest vision every boy wanted to receive on the wings of the eagle or the slithering powerful boa was to become a great warrior to fight and defend his family and people with the lethal palm wood spear. The second desired vision was to become a strong hunter with the blowgun. The third positive vision was to become a forceful orator and speak with authority.

Grandfather also taught the children what foods to fast to ward off dire consequences resulting from snakebite and certain diseases. They were taught about the influence of witchcraft and its effects on life and death.

"Death does not come from natural causes but from witchcraft—thus someone responsible must pay with their life," grandfather said.

The boys memorized the war songs they were to sing when engaging in revenge killings.

The words raced around the village of Chipe: "It's time to avenge the death of our loved one from San Pablo."

Tribal customs decree that the name of the deceased is never mentioned because that is not respectful and could bring undesirable consequences.

Every warrior from Chipe attended the meeting. The older men incited the younger warriors to participate in the revenge killing raid. The men decided they would leave the village the next day in war canoes and solicit more warriors from the villages of Chigamai and Listra on the way to Kagka.

That night in Chipe, the warriors prepared for the upcoming raid. They oiled their shotguns and loaded the *wampash* (WAHM-pahch; hunting bag) with shotgun shells that were wrapped in dry banana leaves to keep out dampness. They did not want their guns to misfire, giving their enemies opportunity to retaliate.

The men gathered spears and tied them into bundles for the long trip. They honed machetes for cutting through the underbrush.

Finally, in the darkness of night, the warriors took ayawaska to receive their visions from the spirit world so they could be powerful and invincible fighters in the raid on Kagka.

Mothers, wives, and children were terrified about the prospect that their sons, husbands, and fathers might not return alive from Kagka. The night was long, damp, and cool in the many huts of Chipe.

The men rose before daybreak to prepare for the journey. They rinsed their mouths with water, purifying themselves from contamination. Custom dictates that you do not swallow your saliva because it is considered a nasty bodily waste and must be eliminated by spitting and cleansing.

The men made a paste from the greasy achiote seeds of the *annatto* (ah-NAH-toh) tree. The seeds grow in a small pod on the tree; and when mature, they're extracted and crushed into the red paste. The men painted their faces, chests, and arms in preparation for the battle.

Chipe presented an interesting scene that morning. Warriors came from many huts and converged on the river bank. They presented a formidable sight to the villagers.

The effects of ayawaska caused them to talk loudly, with great authority and powerful expressions of invincibility. Their painted bodies glowed in the sun that climbed out of the eastern sky. Some wore crowns of beautiful red and yellow parrot feathers. Nearly every man waved a shotgun or spear in the air, shouting about his power to kill the enemy.

The village watched the warriors disappear down the steep hill to the waiting canoes at the river's edge. Small girls clung to their mothers' legs in fear. Boys were speechless under the hypnotic events of this drama as they recorded this scene in their minds for future reference.

The men loaded the canoes, and their strong bronzed arms propelled the frail-looking crafts rapidly down the Marañon River, paddles expertly dipping into the water, stroke after powerful stroke.

The war canoes turned off the Marañon River onto the calm waters of the smaller Kusu. In the distance, the men saw the hills rising beyond the horizon—the trail to Kagka would lead them through part of the jungle.

Two men in the front of each canoe picked up 10-foot-long stout poles and plunged them into the river bottom, pulling on them to propel the craft against the current. A man in the back cradled a large hand-carved paddle, using it like a rudder to steer the slender craft. The poles rhythmically plunged into the river, allowing the canoes to knife through the water with precision.

Each man sat with his personal thoughts, and only sounds from the occasional bird or animal caused him to look away from a nearly hypnotic state. Some of the younger warriors stared straight ahead, wondering about the outcome of this intended raid in foreign territory. They had never been to Kagka and their minds raced with the "what ifs." Back in the safety of the village, they were easily caught up in the excitement of a new adventure. Now they doubted the wisdom of their decision. But it was too late to turn back, and they faced the reality that they might not come home alive.

The canoe rounded bend after bend on the serpentine river. They navigated the rapids successfully and were approaching Chigamai. Word had preceded the war party's arrival, and a handful of painted, armed warriors were ready to join forces. Canoes were loaded with fighting men. Less than an hour later, they pulled into the port of Listra. From here they would travel by trail.

The group from Listra was ready and waiting to join the warriors. Plans were informally laid, and all eagerly got started on the trail, hoping to reach Kagka after dark.

It was a beautiful morning in Kagka. Women were leaving their huts with their daughters to work in the gardens. They had woven baskets hanging from their backs with machetes placed inside. Many had small babies in wrap-around slings attached to the fronts of their one-piece dresses.

Men were going in different directions with blowguns balanced on their shoulders. Hanging from the free shoulder was a quiver filled with poisonous darts they would use on small animals living in the canopy overhead.

Little boys were playing in an open area, kicking a round hard fruit as if it were a soccer ball. Months had passed since the revenge killing on the Kusu River, and life had settled into its ancient routine.

The men scurried across the rough trail, stopping about every hour to rest a few minutes and rehearse the plan of attack that would occur about midnight. Feeling jittery, they refrained from small talk. The air beneath the canopy was still and the humidity high. The men perspired profusely and solemnly marched toward their goal of revenge.

The sun set in the western sky, casting shadows across Kagka. Smoke spiraled up from the cooking fires in numerous huts. Men cleaned animals they had successfully hunted during the day, chattering, gesturing, and laughing about humorous events of the day. Children laughed as they ran around in the last rays of light. Chickens scratched the ground, looking for tidbits of food. Scrawny dogs, ribs protruding, rested in the warm spots on the ground before the sun completely disappeared. Women tended the cooking fires, boiling yuca and bananas for the evening meal. Serene, beautiful darkness enveloped Kagka.

The war party stopped in a space that had recently been cleared and burned for a new garden. They knew the village was near. Juan stepped forward and commanded attention. He was a seasoned and older warrior from Chipe. He was also a distant cousin of the old man from San Pablo. In fact, Juan had organized and encouraged the warriors of Chipe to take revenge on the people of Kagka. He knew the trail well and had visited Kagka several times.

Juan sent two sentries ahead to monitor the trail and make sure they had not been spotted on their hike through the jungle. He laid out his battle plans, drawing stick images on the ground. He told the men what he could remember about the layout of the village.

"Esamat lives in this hut," Juan said, pointing with a stick. "Numerous family members surround his hut, and they will fight to the death. I don't know where Kunchiwi lives, but his hut will be close to his brother, Esamat.

"They are our main targets. Once we eliminate them, we will retreat to this clearing and escape along the trail we just came on. The warriors from Chipe will follow me," Juan said, "and the men from Chigamai will defend the perimeters of the village on this side of the trail. Those from Listra will draw attention away from Esamat's hut while we attack his home. Remember, stealth and quietness are of utmost importance. We must not awaken the dogs that sleep in the middle of each hut, or they will betray our presence and chaos will ensue."

Juan continued, "The full moon will break through the heavy cloud covering around midnight, and that is when we attack, on my signal. Once we are in position, I will fire my shotgun into Esamat's hut. When you hear the shot, wait until Kunchiwi appears with his weapon. When you dispose of him, go quickly to the meeting place in the clearing."

A damp breeze flowed through the openings of bamboo poles tied together with thin vines, which were the walls of the many huts. Looking for warmth, dogs scooted closer to the dying embers of the fires. In each hut, children huddled together on a large, split bamboo bed and pulled a rag blanket over them to ward off the cool air.

Men and women slept on the far side of the room, opposite the doorway. Shotguns and spears were propped up on the walls next to where the men slept. All were asleep in the quiet, dark, unsuspecting village of Kagka that night, deep in the Peruvian forest of the Amazon.

The moon desperately tried to break through the thick, dark clouds that blanketed the jungle. The men shivered. They had just finished eating roasted yuca, a hard-boiled egg, and a handful of boiled peanuts each had carried. They dared not start a fire to keep them warm; that would betray their presence.

Tiny rays of light struggled to penetrate a small opening in the clouds, but vanished quickly. The men nervously waited for the full moon to appear. Occasionally

they touched the cold gun muzzle or held a spear as if they were practicing the art of thrusting it into a victim.

An eternity seemed to have passed since they'd arrived at the clearing. They heard animals seeking their prey in the canopy of the trees. Their hunting instincts came alive at these sounds, but not tonight, because they were about to hunt a larger prey.

In the twinkling of an eye, the moon bathed the clearing with silvery rays. Juan's voice broke the silence.

"Time to move."

He led the way down the path to the sentries. All was clear.

The warriors slipped across the trail, careful not to step on dry branches or otherwise warn the village of their presence. Around the next bend, they saw huts dotting the many hillsides, indicating that the main village was near.

The group from Chigamai hid in the underbrush at the outer perimeter of the village. The Listra warriors positioned themselves away from Esamat's hut, near a cluster of huts close to the center of the village. Shadowy figures carefully took cover near the shady areas surrounding the huts, waiting for the first shotgun blast to advance.

Frogs croaked, breaking the deadly silence.

Soon the warriors were all in place and ready for revenge. Ants crawled across their feet, while mosquitoes fed freely on the statue-still men.

Juan and a few men surrounded Esamat's hut. Two poised on either side of the doorway that was made of upright posts lodged between wedges at the top. Juan slipped to the back of the hut, where he knew Esamat's bed would be.

The moon slid under a cloud layer. He waited for it to reappear. Slowly the moon once again illuminated the clearing.

Juan noticed that the vine holding the cane poles in place was broken, leaving a small opening between two poles. He peered inside the hut and saw Esamat sound asleep. He quickly pushed the gun barrel through the opening and aimed at the sleeping victim.

Juan's adrenalin flowed, his heart raced, and the excitement of months of waiting was finally coming to fruition. A while earlier, he had taken a shotgun shell from his hunting bag and carefully loaded the gun. Now the moment of justice had come.

The men from Chigamai were restless.

"What has happened? Why is it taking so long?" they whispered.

Juan squeezed the trigger of that ancient gun.

Boom!

The explosion reverberated around the village. The victim moaned then lay silent. Screams erupted from the huts simultaneously. Dogs barked. Children cried.

Chaos filled the village of Kagka.

"Esamat's been shot! Esamat's been shot!" screamed his wife.

The men from Chipe, hearing that Esamat was dead, scurried to the main trail, thinking the group from Listra would dispose of Kunchiwi. Juan paused to reload his gun. He fumbled through his hunting bag for another shell.

Bam!

Juan fell to the ground, clutching his leg. He felt something warm and wet and knew he was bleeding from a deep wound. He crawled into the shadows dragging the leg behind him. He saw men running in every direction, but couldn't tell who they were in the pale moonlight.

The men from Listra were surprised at how quickly the Kagka warriors responded. They searched desperately for Kunchiwi's face to appear, but to no avail. They tried to retreat to the main trail, but their path to freedom was cut off.

They were outnumbered.

First Ricardo fell, mortally wounded, then Vicente succumbed to a shotgun blast. Juan knew he had to escape quickly, or he would be the next casualty. He agonizingly crawled to the edge of the forest, wondering what to do next.

Juan heard men running toward him. The moon slipped behind the clouds, engulfing the jungle again in that inky blackness. In the last ray of light he saw the men from Listra coming toward him.

"How did it go? Did you kill Kunchiwi?" Juan called.

They stopped, recognizing him in the shadows.

"No, they overpowered us. Ricardo and Vicente are both dead," they replied.

"I've been shot. Please help me hide."

Two men lifted Juan to his feet and carried him down the trail, away from the village.

"Leave me here," Juan said. "Go back to Listra."

They examined his wound. The bleeding had stopped, but they knew he couldn't make it on his own back across the trail to Chipe.

"It is dark now, and the warriors from Kagka will wait until morning to monitor the trails. We have three more hours until daybreak. Let us help you get as

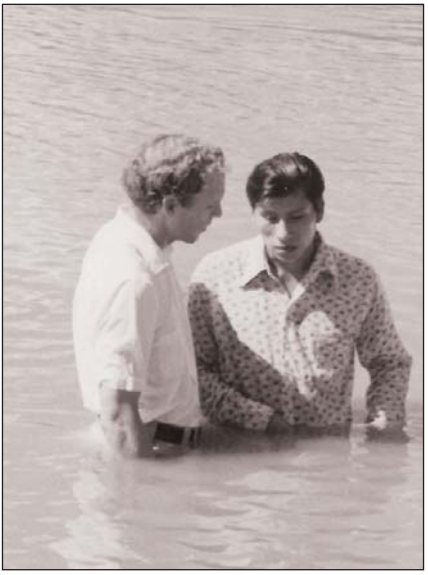
far from the village as possible, so you can hide from the main trail. We will send word to Chipe for men to come and help you get home."

In the dead of night, the men managed to half-carry Juan to a secure hiding place. One man gave Juan some roasted yuca from his hunting bag. They said good-bye and vanished into the night.

Back in Kagka, men lit torches to search the perimeter and make sure no more enemies lurked nearby. Wailing drifted from Esamat's hut as the women beat their chests and pulled their hair in grief. The men found the dead bodies of Ricardo and Vicente and recognized them as being from Listra. They tied Ricardo to a pole, and the women slashed at the lifeless body with machetes, venting their hatred at Esamat's death.

Kunchiwi's life was spared that night, but he would never be the same again. His brother's death filled him with grief, remorse, and guilt. His tears flowed freely, and he remembered those services he had attended so many Sundays on the Kusu mission station.

The fleeing warriors halted to drink from a cool, refreshing stream. The first rays of sun softly caressed the jungle around them, replacing the chill from the night with warmth. Exhausted, they had run though the jungle most of the night. Finally the warriors from the three villages solemnly emerged out of the jungle and reunited at the stream.



Vicente Jintash being baptized just before his death

The Listra men were devastated at the loss of Ricardo and Vicente. The men from Chigamai were all accounted for. Only Juan was missing from the larger Chipe group. The two warriors told about helping Juan escape to safety and explained where his family could find him.

The saddened group of men continued to Listra. Wails erupted as villagers learned that two of their own had been killed in the raid. The dwindling party finally said good-bye to the warriors of Chigamai and headed for Chipe.

They arrived about noon and informed people of the happenings in Kagka. The news of Juan, shot and lying in hiding, brought more wailing from the women.

In the Aguaruna culture, women and children are never targets of revenge killings so the next day, a group of women left Listra to bring back the bodies of their loved ones for proper burial. Every night for a month, crying reverberated in both the villages of Kagka and Listra.

In the village of Chipe, men prepared to send a small rescue party to bring Juan home.

"Hurry!" the women implored. "What if he bleeds to death or the people from Kagka find him and kill him."

Men were selected for their bravery and knowledge of where Juan had hidden.

Throughout the long night, Juan rested on the dry leaves the men had prepared for him. He shivered from the dampness, and every muscle of his tired body screamed out for relief. All through the night, he heard sounds that kept him on edge. Insects roamed over his near-naked body, and he thought daylight would never come.

In the distance, he heard warriors from Kagka searching. His heart raced wildly. He was too tired to escape, and the leg hurt dreadfully when he tried to move. He waited in deep silence, scarcely daring to breathe.

"He couldn't have gotten this far after being shot," someone called. As the sounds of men became distant, Juan breathed a deep sigh of relief and dozed off under the warm rays of sunlight.

The heavily armed rescue party from Chipe set out in a large war canoe that took them to Listra. They hoped the trail would lead them to Juan. The sun dropped quickly in the afternoon sky, casting eerie shadows across the rainforest.

Juan was hungry, thirsty, and exhausted. Fever wracked his body, and the leg was swollen, hot, and painful. He floated in and out of consciousness; nightmares of the Kagka raid snapped him back to the reality of his precarious condition. Hallucinations haunted him as if he had taken ayawaska.

The search party carefully marched along that unforgettable trail. They realized they could be walking into an ambush, even though they were a long way from Kagka. They walked silently, listening for any sounds that might indicate a trap. These were not only warriors, but hunters as well. They were trained to

interpret the noises of the forest. Darkness soon swallowed them, and their pace became slower and more deliberate.

One man who had helped Juan raised his arm to halt the search party.

"The hiding place is around the next bend and to the right, about 50 yards from the trail in a natural thicket," he whispered.

Slowly the men picked their way around the bend, focusing their attention in every direction.

Lying in a stupefied daze, Juan heard footsteps. He clutched his loaded shotgun, determined not to go down without a fight.

"Juan! Juan!"

Through the fog of pain he recognized his brother Luis's voice.

"I'm over here," he faintly called.

"How are you?" the men asked as they rushed to his side.

"I'm tired, feverish, and thirsty," he replied.

They produced a flask of water that he drank with shaking hands. The life-saving liquid flowed over those parched lips and dry throat. Sentries lined the trail, while others made a stretcher of poles and a blanket.

"All is clear," the sentries whispered.

The rescue party trudged back over the trail toward Listra and home, taking turns carrying the wounded man. They arrived at Listra in the early morning hours, their hearts wrenched by the mourning in the village over the deaths of Ricardo and Vicente.

They placed Juan in the long canoe and paddled past Chigamai on their journey to Chipe. At long last, the weary party pulled into the port of Chipe. The crying turned to rejoicing when the villagers saw that Juan was indeed alive.

REVENGE III

Age-old traditions are difficult to cast aside.

The villagers of Listra, Kagka, and Chipe seethed with anger, rage, and a desire to get even. The older men who had experienced many revenge war raids were tired, and the images of that night in Kagka weighed heavily on their minds.

Days drifted into weeks, weeks into months, and life resumed its normalcy in the Amazon. But a fresh wind was blowing across Amazonia. The redemptive gospel of Jesus Christ was reaching into the villages around the Kusu mission station. Many villagers from Chipe, Chigamai, and Listra attended the

Sunday services in the little white church sitting on the hill and overlooking the Kusu River.

Dynamic change was coming to these villages in the form of new teachings, such as "Love your enemies" (Matthew 5:43–45).

Meanwhile, months had passed without any visible results at our altars. It seemed as though our preaching had no effect on the lives of the people. When an altar call was given, the men stared straight ahead, arms folded across their chests as if to say, "We don't forgive our enemies; we kill them."

Forgiveness was unknown in their culture. To bow their knees and ask for forgiveness was a sign of weakness. These warring people had never been conquered or dominated by an outside force, so pride made it difficult for them to bow to anyone.

One Sunday morning, God moved on the scene. From the men's section of the church, a lone figure rose and walked to the front of the church. His bare feet, thick and calloused from many trails that had lead him on numerous revenge killing raids, carried him to the altar. Long, black hair hung loosely over broad shoulders.

Church Altar Call

I saw him coming and could hardly believe my eyes. He knelt in the dirt, shoulders heaving, sobs wracking his body, and tears coursing down his cheeks, splashing from the altar onto the dirt floor. He lifted his arms and desperately cried out to God.

You could have heard the proverbial pin drop in the church that morning. All eyes were focused on the man kneeling at the altar asking for forgiveness. I knelt, prayed, and cried with him as God broke in on that service and began a new work.

The man kneeling there was none other than Luis, Juan's brother. He was known for his exploits as a warrior; Luis had never lost a battle. His name was revered and feared across the tribe for the many men he had killed in revenge war raids.

Luis rose from the altar a changed man.

This was the breakthrough we needed. He started a men's Sunday School class under the trees and taught the men from the villages surrounding the mission station. Two years later, he started a church in Chipe that became one of the first churches planted in a nearby village. Before long, the church was planted in Chigamai, Listra, Kagka, and village after village.

People from those and many other villages began preparing for ministry by taking month-long Bible courses that eventually led to the formation of the Nazarene Bible Institute.

A wave of evangelism swept over the tribe and across the trails and waterways, allowing the Holy Spirit to forever change the hearts of the people and the upper Amazon.

As time passed, so did the desire to continue the age-old practice of revenge. The older warriors struggled with all of the changes. Most thought that since men were killed on both sides, it was time to lay the battle to rest.

Years later, news reached me from Kagka, by way of one of our delegates to the district assembly, that Kunchiwi sent me greetings and that he had accepted the Lord into his life and was attending the church in Kagka. He also informed me that Kunchiwi's and Justina's daughter taught a Sunday School class in the church.

I was overwhelmed at the news and reminded again of the power of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

"I am sending you to them to open their eyes and turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God" (Acts 26:17–18, NIV).

2 The Boat Rescue

Streaks of lightning illuminated our bedroom, and we heard the low roll of thunder in the distance. A light breeze blew through the screen window, warning us of a possible tropical storm in the making.

I reached for my flashlight, always standing on its end on the floor beside the bed. Through sleepy eyes I looked at my watch and saw that it was 1:00 a.m.

Again, lightning lit our bedroom and thunder clapped—nearby this time. The wind picked up, and its cool, damp tentacles drove me to seek shelter under the bed covers.

The sky lit up as if God had set off an enormous fireworks display, followed by blasts rocking the house. Addie and I pulled the sheet higher as if to protect ourselves from the threatening intruder.

At first, large drops of a slow rain pelted the corrugated roof. The sky was now almost constantly lit by jagged streaks of lightning, followed by deafening crashes of thunder. Suddenly the sky let loose, the floodgates were opened, and rain cascaded down on the metal roof with such a fury that we had to nearly scream to hear each other.

With the constant lightning flashes, we saw streams of water pouring off the valleys of the roof. Again, I looked at my watch. At 3:00 a.m., Addie and I both knew this tropical storm might unleash four to five inches of rain in a couple of hours.

Our home was on the corner of two rivers. The Kusu River came out of the last low range of the Andes Mountains on the edge of the rain forest. Many

little streams fed the usually tranquil Kusu, which drained its contents into the larger Marañon River, the headwaters to the Amazon.

We had experienced many a storm and knew the Kusu could rise nine to ten feet in a very short time. Our small port on the Kusu, about 50 yards from where it emptied into the larger Marañon, was right in the path of a flooding torrent.

Our two boats were tied up at the river's edge next to the large raft housing the water pump. This pump provided water to our tanks that gravity-fed the house and clinic. With the rising, raging flood waters, the boats would be half filled with the downpour. And all vessels would be in danger of being ripped away by the growing currents in the Kusu River.

I lay in bed knowing it was time to face reality. In my mind, I could see the boats half submerged, straining at the ropes that tied them to shore. I imagined the swamped boats being ripped away, along with the raft, and spinning into the river, forever lost.

"Addie, it's time to go!" I yelled. Jumping to the floor and dressing, we both knew the routine. She would light the kerosene stove to boil water, while I called for the boys: "Rusty, Greg, it's time to move."

Both boys knew the drill and were waiting for Dad's dreaded call. They dressed in their swimming trunks, and we all converged on the living room.

Lightning flashed on every side and thunder shook the ground. We looked through the large screened windows to see the boats and raft tossing in the turbulent river.

"Boys, be careful. The ground and boats are slick, and you do not want to fall into an unforgiving river."

With flashlights in hand, we left the protection of the house. Stinging drops of rain pelted our near-naked bodies. The cold wind drove away the little sleep still left in our tired bodies. Our adrenalin flowed as we approached the river, slipping and sliding in the mud. We saw the boats and raft straining at the strong ropes.

Together we pulled the boats and raft closer to the shore, tying them securely before climbing on board. The boats were half filled with water and needed to be bailed out, before they sank—no small task while they rocked in the heavy waves.

We placed our flashlights in our mouths, so we could use both hands to scoop out the water with our buckets.

The relentless rain stung our eyes and chilled us to the bone. Lightning still flashed all around, and thunder reverberated off the boats themselves. I kept an eye on the boys as we rhythmically scooped out water.

Addie was heating water on the stove for coffee. She looked out the window and prayed for our safety between flashes of light. Candy and Tim joined her in the kitchen, terrified. "Mommy what is happening?"

Finally the boats were free of water and we jumped ashore, making sure they were safely tied in the calmer backwater before we headed for the house. Addie breathed a sigh of relief and a silent thanks to God for protecting her family once again. She handed each of us a towel to dry off our clammy bodies. I think our goose bumps had goose bumps. She then handed us each a hot cup of sweet coffee. How heavenly it tasted as the numbness retreated and warmth spread back into our tired bodies.

Slowly, the lightning dissipated and the thunder faded. Once again, the serenity of the rainforest resumed its age-old nightly routine. The choir of frogs advised us that tomorrow would be a beautiful, sunny day in Amazonia.

3 The Dreaded Scorpion

"I am going to shut down the generator," I announced to our family one night long ago. "Dave, would you like to accompany me?"

Dave was a university student visiting us for the summer. He was six feet, four inches tall and very muscular. The jungle was a new experience for him, and he wanted to adapt to his new surroundings.

"Yes, I would," he responded.

Living in a remote area of the Amazon, we had to provide our own electricity. Across the years, we had several different small diesel generators that provided electricity to run lights for four hours each night and on Saturday mornings to power the old Maytag wringer washing machine so Addie could do the week's laundry.

Each night around 10:00 p.m., I walked to the small fuel house where the motor and generator were located, to shut down the lights for the night. With flashlights in hand, Dave and I followed the nightly routine.

The fuel house was a dirt-floored, bamboo-walled building with a corrugated metal roof. Inside were numerous 55-gallon drums filled with diesel, gasoline, and kerosene fuel.

Kerosene was used to power our kitchen stove, refrigerator, and lamps. Two to three times a week, I filled the small tank mounted to the kitchen wall behind the stove. The tank was about three feet higher than the stove, and kerosene ran down a metal tube to gravity-feed the burners and oven. The stove required a lot of maintenance; and since we were so far from any supply stores, we kept a lot of spare parts on hand.

The refrigerator housed a removable tank just a little higher than floor level. The tank had a large, cloth wick that absorbed kerosene. We would light the wick and adjust it until we got a blue flame to produce heat. We then placed a glass chimney over the wick element, and it was connected to a metal tube that heated the Freon, producing the cold temperature to maintain refrigeration.

We had to trim the wick once a week to maintain the blue flame. The bluer the flame, the colder the refrigerator. We had to fill the refrigerator's kerosene tank twice a week. We did this by bringing kerosene from the fuel house in five-gallon cans and siphoning it with a hose.

Dugout boat with delegates to District Assembly

We would place the five-gallon can on a stepstool and insert one end of the hose in the can. Then we would suck quickly on the other end to start the kerosene flow. Before the kerosene reached our mouths, we quickly slipped the hose into a funnel to fill the tank. The refrigerator was quite small with a tiny freezer compartment, where we froze a little meat and a few ice cubes.

We used gasoline to power the outboard motors for our speedboat and cargo boat. These two boats were our lifelines with the outside world. The interior had no roads, so we depended on the river for our transportation.

Every three to six months, we took the empty gasoline drums a day's travel upriver to a dirt road that connected us with the outside world. A truck then took the drums over the Andes Mountains for a two-day journey to the coast where they would be refilled and transported back to the river port.

Once the full drums were deposited on the river bank, we would take the long canoe upriver to bring them home. We had to load the drums onto the boat by rolling them on a long wooden plank. Once inside the boat, we turned them so we could carry as many as five to seven in one trip. When we arrived at the mission station, we wrestled the drums out of the boat onto the same wooden plank, ready to roll up two hills to the fuel house for storage.

To roll the drums uphill, we needed a lot of strength. We used a long rope with one end tied to a stake anchored in the ground and the other end pulled under and then over the drum. This gave us the leverage we needed to move them more easily. One man pulled on the rope while two people rolled the drum slowly up the hill.

Once inside the fuel house the drums were stored in a standing position. Sometimes we had to do this during a heavy rainstorm and had to roll the drums through the mud, slipping and sliding all the way up the hill.

Dave and I grabbed our flashlights and headed outside, ambling toward the fuel house. The night was dark and damp. Typical rainforest sounds surrounded us: the frogs croaking, bats flying, and the parade of nocturnal animals seeking their prey in the canopy overhead. We carefully shined our lights on the ground in case a snake lurked nearby.

We climbed the few steps into the open doorway of the fuel house. A large black scorpion rested between us and the diesel motor. Our footsteps and beams of light startled this formidable creature. He took a defensive position with tail straight up and stinger flexed, warning us to not come closer.

We stopped and admired this nemesis of the Amazon, before my heavy foot terminated his existence on this earth.

Dave had never seen a live scorpion, and he was impressed with the size of its stinger. We turned off the lights and shut down the motor before returning to the house.

"Do you ever see scorpions in the house?" Dave asked as we approached the front porch.

"Yes. That's why we never walk in a dark house barefooted and without a flashlight."

I opened the front door. Another large black scorpion was waiting for us on the living room floor.

"Wow! This is unreal!" Dave exclaimed.

We made a quick end of this creature, too.

Our home in the jungle had a unique construction. It had two small bedrooms, a tiny bathroom, and combination kitchen and dining room. In the small hallway leading to the bedrooms was a staircase that led to a loft. From the loft, a person could look down on the bedrooms and kitchen combo.

Our son Greg and Dave slept in single beds in the bedroom downstairs. Addie and I were in the other bedroom. We all exchanged good nights and settled in

for the night. The house was completely dark, and we could hear frogs croaking outside our bedroom windows.

I slipped out of bed and sneaked up the stairs to the loft. I crept to the railing and looked down into the bedroom where Greg and Dave slept. A basket of peanuts we'd purchased was drying in the loft since it was the warmest place in the house.

With a peanut in my hand, I crawled to the railing. I spotted Dave's bed right below me. He had turned off his flashlight. I dropped the peanut right on his exposed chest, knowing he'd gone to bed that night with scorpions on his mind.

"What! What is that!"

Dave jumped up and shone his flashlight in every direction. Greg woke up as Dave continued the show, dancing around and screaming, "Where did it go? Where did it go?"

I was lying on the loft floor about to burst into laughter, but held it in as they both settled back down for the night. When all was quiet, I dropped another peanut on Dave's chest.

Dave came unglued, thrashing at the sheet, jumping to the floor with flashlight in hand, desperately trying to find the scorpion he was sure was there. I shook with uncontrolled laughter at this six-foot, four-inch man so terrified by what was actually a peanut.

Dave was a good sport about the whole episode, but sleep was very elusive for him that whole dark night long ago.

Pleasant dreams!

4 "Daddy, I Called You!"

We bathed nearly every day in the fairly clear, quiet waters of the Kusu River. The water temperature was nice except on days when it rained hard. On those days, the water was on the chilly side. During rainy months, no bugs bothered us; but in the drier seasons of low water, the bugs were ravenous.

We called one hungry bug *mata blanca* (MAH-tah BLAWN-kah; white death). These bugs traveled in huge swarms that looked like a rapidly moving, thick cloud and hung out near the river bank and the sandy beaches. They swarmed us, clinging to our scalps and bodies, making us itch in a thousand places at the same time.

Somehow they knew we usually bathed around 5:00 p.m. I believe they fasted all day and waited for their free afternoon meal.

The children and I would change into our swimming suits, gather at the front screen door, and, on the count of three, bolt for the river. There was no time to talk or lollygag. We ran for our lives and dived into the river, knowing these bugs were just behind and over us.

If our bodies were wet, the bugs didn't bother us. But as soon as our skin and scalp were a little dry, they attacked mercilessly. We'd come out of the water for a quick moment to soap up and then right back in, or the bites and itching would overwhelm us.

After swimming for a while, it was time for us to flee for our lives to the safety of our screened-in house.

At the river's edge, our 30-foot wooden cargo boat was tied in the backwater. It was made from hardwood in the shape of a canoe with sides made of plank

boards. We always bathed on the upriver side of the boat, so if there was any current, it would gently push us to the boat and we could hold onto it to climb out of the river. When we were bathing in the river, we couldn't see over the top of the boat because it was at least two feet higher than the river.

One day, the boys and I went bathing, leaving Candy, my daughter, to change into her bathing suit. It was a beautiful, sunny day; and we were having a ball playing, swimming, and bathing in the Kusu's warm waters.

A moment later, I felt a strange urging to get out of the water. I hesitated just an instant, because the impulse was so strong. I stepped onto the bank and looked around when something caught my attention on the downriver side of the boat. I stepped closer to the river's edge and saw Candy's face below the surface of the water!

Candy Garman with Peruvian Friends

I dove into the water, grabbed her, and dashed up the bank with her. She was choking, spitting up water, and crying. I held Candy in my arms, desperately trying to comfort our little girl that we almost lost to the river.

For some reason when she had come to the river, she had wanted to check the water on the opposite side of the boat from where we were bathing. She stepped into a drop-off and immediately was in over her head.

When she stopped sobbing, she looked up at me and said, "Daddy, I was calling for you and you didn't come."

I thank the Lord for prompting me that day long ago to get out of the water.

After that experience, I made sure that Candy learned to swim. She soon became an outstanding swimmer and water skier.

Raising our children on a treacherous river was challenging. I always told them, "The river is not your friend." It provided us with transportation, but dangers always lurked in its waters.

The Marañon River is filled with incredible crosscurrents, rapids, and whirlpools. We made sure we always had a large blade paddle in the boat before traveling, because we never knew when the outboard motor would stop running. Sometimes the spark plugs would get fouled with built-up carbon, or the carburetor with water, or we'd have a broken shear pin on the propeller, causing the motor to shut down—sometimes leaving us at the mercy of the river.

God protected us across the years in many dangerous situations on the river.

5 Monkey Business

We hadn't lived in the jungles long, when a friend gave our children a cute, ornery, and curious little monkey. They were thrilled with this new pet of the rainforest. He became king of the house and destroyed it at every opportunity.

The children carried, petted, doted on, and absolutely spoiled this little future tree-swinger. When the kids had some sweet food to munch on, the monkey cried and had a fit until they gave him some.

He would crawl up under the overhang on the roof, looking for spiders and all kinds of bugs to devour. He reached into every hole, crevice, and crack looking for some morsel to satisfy his eternal craving.

Addie with Smokey

One day, we saw him reach deep into a hole on the side of the hill in front of our house. A moment later he reacted as if in deep pain, ran from that spot, and hovered closer to the house. Sometime later, he was convulsing.

The children begged me to do something. I didn't know what to do, and soon, the beloved little monkey breathed his last. Our children were devastated and crying uncontrollably. Addie and I felt heartbroken for the children's loss.

"Dad, can we please have a service and bury our pet monkey," the kids begged.

Naturally, I said yes, wondering what I would say at a monkey's funeral.

We waited until no one was around the mission station—after all, how could we explain a funeral service for a monkey, especially when monkey is a coveted food.

The coast was clear, no one around, perfect timing, *let's go.*

I carried a shovel and a Bible to an isolated spot in our yard with Addie and children following. Their eyes were red and tears still flowed freely. I read a short passage of scripture, trying to help the children overcome their grief. The service ended, and the last shovel of dirt was carefully tossed on the small mound that represented the final resting place of our little friend. Everyone took one last look at the grave and turned to slowly, sadly walk back to the house.

Inside the house, no one spoke—only sobs broke the silence.

One of the children looked out through the screen window at the shallow grave and shrieked. We dashed to the window to see some village boys rapidly digging up the grave and running away with the deceased for a meal. They had been hiding and had seen the funeral.

The children were now inconsolable. This was their introduction to cross-cultural living.

After the death of our little beloved monkey, the children got a beautiful green parrot. We cut the wings so that this bird, named Perry, could not fly away and cause more heartbreak. The children liked the parrot, but not in the way they had loved the little monkey.

Perry was extremely jealous of his territory, which included most of our house. He would peck you with one end of his body and mess up the house with the other. For some reason, he loved to sit on our couch, walking from one end of it to the other. Whenever someone sat on that couch, Perry scurried as fast as his two skinny legs could carry him and pecked the intruder.

Addie had purchased a basket of cut sugarcane and placed it on the kitchen floor. Perry soon discovered this sweet treat and decided to appropriate it for

himself. He would perch on the rim of the basket and dare anyone to come near it. Addie walked by the basket one day to prepare lunch. When she wasn't looking, Perry climbed down and ran to where Addie stood. He pecked her leg as if to say, "Stay away from my basket!"

As time went by, Perry become part of the family—we just got use to his antics and jealous nature.

Another sad day arrived when Perry departed from this life. The children were again saddened by the loss of their pet. Rusty, our eldest son, asked if we could have another funeral.

"Only this time, let's bury him at night," he added.

Many more pets lived with us across the years, and many more tears were shed, but our children developed a profound respect for God's creation.

6 My Heroes

Our pickup truck climbed the last tortuous part of the twisting dirt road. The road ended on a small plateau, overlooking the beautiful, rolling valley above the Chingosal (chin-GO-sol) River. We had traveled two hot, dusty days, and now a long trail and hike awaited us.

To the right, I spotted a large group of people and several pack mules patiently awaiting our arrival. Immediately, these wonderful people enthusiastically greeted us.

We were introduced to the pastors and men from the four villages where we were going to build churches. District Superintendent Canicio Tsakim (kah-NEE-see-oh TSAH-keem) presented Pastor Mario from the Naranjos (nah-RAHN-hohs) Church of the Nazarene.

My eyes were automatically drawn to his feet as he stood beside his pack animal. His feet were doubled up and wrapped in rags; he had been born with severe clubfeet. Pastor Mario was perhaps 30 years old and had walked hours on those clubfeet to meet us.

Next came Mario's brother with his pack animal. He was born with a congenital defect that left him blind in one eye, and he had one flaccid leg that dragged when he walked.

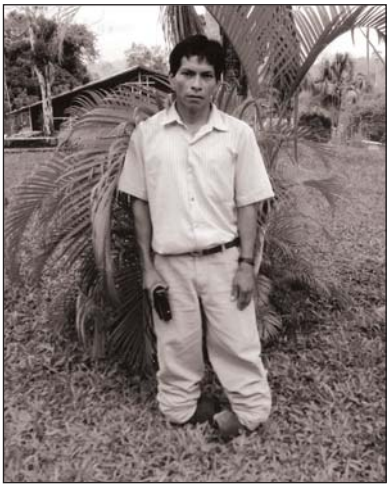
I then spotted Pastor Luis from the Yamakai (yah-mah-KAI) Church. He introduced us to his son, Jorge, who was born with a severe congenital disorder that has left his thin body twisted and gnarled with limbs knotted in every direction. He is the coordinator for the Nazarene churches in this remote zone and visits them regularly.

This trio of men inspired, challenged, and humbled me with their consuming desire to serve the Lord.

We loaded the pack animals with the portable generator, tools, nails, crosses, church signs, sleeping gear, and who knows what else. Those same pack animals had carried nearly 500 sheets of corrugated roofing to the four villages a week before our arrival. Two months before this trip, we had sent two chainsaws, 120 bags of cement, rebar, and a crew into the four villages to cut the lumber from the forests and build the bases for the churches.

I was overwhelmed by the fact that these men with their pack animals had distributed these building items along the twisting trail to the outlying villages.

Our group consisted of six North Americans, the Peruvian district superintendent, and the crew from the mission station. We were on our way to build four churches in four villages along the Chingosal River deep in the jungles.



Pastor Mario

Addie and I had made this same trip about 25 years earlier under very different circumstances. There was no dirt road wide enough for us to ride in a truck, only a trail that led to the village of Naranjos.

We had to cross the Chinchipe (chin-CHEE-peh) River on a small raft attached to a cable. The current pushed the raft downstream and then swung it to the distant shore. We had then boarded a pickup truck that carried us up a precarious rock-strewn, rutted, and narrow, life-threatening area these people had called a road.

The truck rocked back and forth on the edge of precipices that looked over the beautiful river valley 2,000 feet below. Twenty minutes later, after seeing our lives pass before us several times, we staggered off the roller coaster to plant our feet on terra firma. We were met those many years ago by Pastor Segundo Chiwan (she-GOON-doh CHEE-wahn). He was one of my many heroes.

Segundo was a student of our Bible Institute and had invited us to visit this isolated area of the high jungle. Each semester he walked five days sun-up to sundown from his home to the Kusu mission station, where the Bible

Institute was located on the Marañon River. He would sleep on the trail in a lean-to made out of small poles and covered with leaves. On one trip, a pit viper bit him while he was many hours from our clinic. He prayed and trusted the Lord to take care of him. He survived and finally arrived home after a miraculous recovery.

Now, finally, we were going to visit the church he had helped start. He brought a pack mule to carry our equipment across the trail to Naranjos. Segundo had arrived at our prescribed meeting place many hours before, putting the mule out to graze so it would be ready for the long journey back to the village.

We arrived mid-morning and were ready to begin our long hike. Segundo set off to bring the mule in, but he could not find the animal. He searched all day, while we patiently waited under the shade of an adobe hut.

Finally, around 5:00 p.m., Segundo triumphantly appeared with the mule in tow. But it was now late afternoon and the sun dipped in the western sky.

"How many hours will it take us to walk to Naranjos?" I asked.

"Twelve hours," Segundo replied.

"Since it is so late, maybe we should spend the night here and leave in the morning," I suggested.

Our group consisted of seven men, two women, and one mule. One of the men, Tomas (toh-MAHS), had made the trip several times and suggested that we leave and spend the night along the trail, since there was no good place for all of us to stay on that side of the river.

"Twelve hours," I muttered, looking at the high mountain in the distance that we would have to cross in the dead of night. But the consensus was that we should leave immediately.

Well, they know the area and trail better than we do, so let's head out.

The trail was wide and dry and easy to walk.

The ascent was gradual as we snaked around curve upon curve. The evening was beautiful, and soon we retrieved our flashlights from the backpacks. Everyone chattered and enjoyed the slow climb up the mountain.

Before long, we were enveloped in darkness, with only the peaks that lay before us outlined in the distant sky. By this time, the night was quiet except for the occasional question, "How far to the top?" from one of the weary travelers.

We had three flashlights for nine people. We spaced out one flashlight for every three people to give some semblance of light to all. We plodded along hour after hour on our journey to Naranjos.

Thomas finally announced, "We've reached the top of the mountain."

He then told us that this was bear country and that his uncle had killed a bear near the spot where we stood.

One flashlight soon went dead and the other two were dimming as we stepped down the mountain.

"What is that noise?" Addie asked.

We heard a low growl just ahead of us, to the side of the trail.

"It's one of the men trying to scare us," I replied.

Addie stopped and counted the men behind us—all were accounted for. She waved her dimming flashlight 360 degrees in every direction as she clung closer to me.

I heard the steady plodding of our pack mule behind us and the staccato rhythm of feet mechanically pushing ahead along the dusty trail.

One more flashlight died, and the last one cast insignificant yellowish beams that hardly reached the ground. Soon its light faded, and we were engulfed in total darkness.

The air was cool and damp, a warning of imminent rain. It was 3:00 a.m. when our tired band stopped to rest.

"Just ahead is my friend's home," Segundo said. "We can spend a few hours there before continuing our journey."

Around a bend in the trail, I spotted the outline of a coffee farmer's two-story adobe home. The house was dark and quiet, so we tried to find a spot to lie down and rest for a few hours.

Addie and I spread our sleeping bags on the hard ground, and every muscle in our tired bodies screamed for rest. Finally, sleep overcame our heavy eyes.

Before the sun arose, a light, misty rain awakened us. We jumped to our feet, gathered our belongings, and headed for the overhanging roof of the adobe house. As quickly as the rain came, it stopped, and our little group of pilgrims continued the trek to Naranjos.

The sun soon broke through the entangled vine canopy overhead, caressing the ground around us with its warm rays.

With renewed energy, we forged ahead, expecting to soon arrive at our destination.

The trees were alive with chattering birds, and the jungle displayed a vibrant myriad of color. Around 9:00 a.m., we encountered the first of many gardens of yuca, papaya, and bananas, indicating that we were close to the village.

A few moments later, we saw a cluster of homes. People came from every direction. Addie and I were novelties, since this was our first visit to this isolated part of the uttermost.

Now, 25 years later, I was returning to help build four new, beautiful wooden churches. The work had grown since that first visit, and now a number of churches were scattered between the valleys and along the streams. From the top of the mountain, I saw the Chingosal River meandering below us, cutting through canyons and tropical rain forests. Along the river, I made out the trail that was soon gobbled up by the lush green forest spreading before us like a huge wavy carpet.

We followed the steep rocky trail into the valley below. The sure-footed mules led the way, laden with tools, construction materials, and our sleeping gear. The loose gravel crunched beneath our feet, threatening to make us slide down the precarious hill. The air was very hot and laden with humidity.

Our clothes were saturated with perspiration when we finally descended successfully and sought the shade of trees growing by the river. The mules plodded along, followed by us weary visitors.

The hours passed, and the sun dropped in the western sky, casting dark shadows across the rainforest.

The mules stopped, and the people pointed to the other side of the river. Nestled on clearings were many huts of the Naranjos village.

Our bone-tired bodies rejoiced. Finally, we had reached our destination.

Smoke penetrated the thatched leaf roofs, spiraling upward and disappearing into a cloudless sky, indicating the women were preparing the evening meal, cooked over three logs butted together on the dirt floor in the center of their huts. What a welcoming sight that was for these weary visitors from the outside world!

Segundo sent some of the others with the mules on a trail farther downstream where they would cross the river and go to the village. He then led us to a spot about 200 yards away where an old, rusty, hand-pulled cable car crossed the river.

The car was about six feet long by four feet wide with a wooden floor to stand on. We stepped onto the platform and observed the huge, round, rusty, pulley wheel through which ran a twisted steel cable. A large old rag was wadded between the pulley and cable, serving as a brake and keeping the car from moving.

Another thinner cable ran through the middle of the car about four feet above the platform we stood on. This cable was our lifeline, and we soon discovered its use. The car had a small steel handrail on all four sides. We knew what it was for and held on for dear life.

The river was at least 50 yards wide, strewn with boulders and madly rushing water, perhaps 60 feet below us.

We looked at each other, glanced at this ancient transport, and held our breath as the rag was yanked from the pulley. The old cable car lurched forward, dropping slightly on the swaying cable. It picked up speed and rapidly carried us out to where the dropping cable lost its arc and stopped, right over the middle of the river.

Segundo told us to grab the smaller cable and pull. We were happy to oblige. Hand over hand we pulled, laboriously maneuvering the car up the hanging arc of the cable, inching our way to the other side. Our arms ached as we pulled that dead weight against the slightly inclined cable. We heard the water crashing against the rocks below us and gladly exerted ourselves pull after pull.

Triumphantly we reached the other side. The rag brake was jammed between the pulley and cable again, and we gladly placed our feet on solid ground.

Darkness was engulfing the forest when we approached the village, and we were jubilantly welcomed. All weariness dissipated as we were ushered into the presence of wonderful people who were grateful that we had arrived to help build their church.

Soon the mules led by Mario, his brother, and Pastor Luis appeared. We unloaded the animals and strung our lines inside the sleeping quarters. We carefully tied mosquito nets to the lines and inflated air mattresses before we hurried off to bathe. With flashlights in hand, we walked to an adobe home lit with small wick lamps. After a delicious meal of yuca, chicken soup, and boiled green bananas, we bid our hosts good night and crashed onto the air mattresses.

What seemed like minutes later, crowing roosters and slivers of light awakened us. We ate breakfast and were ready to construct the first of four churches on this remarkable adventure.

Men and women gathered. After we had instructions and prayer, a beehive of activity broke out. The portable generator came to life, and circular saw operators promptly cut the boards. Our crew of roofers made the trusses while North Americans raised the walls. By noon, the trusses were set and ready for the roof stringers.

All day, the community worked alongside us to build their church. The women brought slices of sweet papaya, sugar cane, and a tropical fruit drink.

When 5:00 p.m. rolled around, the work ended, we stored the tools and stood in amazement, gazing on the framework. The next day we finished the construction, varnished the lumber, and hung the three crosses and church sign on the front of a lovely new church.

Late that afternoon, a soccer game broke out on the small field in front of the new church. The local people, led by Pastor Mario, played against the visitors. I watched in amazement as Mario, with those clubfeet wrapped in rags, ran up and down the field, handling the ball like a pro.

Is there anything this young man cannot do? I wondered.

After supper, we gathered inside the new building to dedicate it to the Lord. During the service, Mario's father glowed with happiness. Twenty-five years earlier he had been the pastor of this little church. During that visit, I had baptized him and a number of others in the Chingosal River. Now his son Mario was the pastor of this growing flock of believers. My emotions spilled over that night in praise to God for these faithful people.

The next day we were off to build the second church on our schedule.

7 "What Is It?"

"What is that noise?" I asked Addie.

We ran to the river and looked, trying to determine where this strange, powerful sound was coming from. A crowd quickly gathered, squinting into the sun. The overwhelming roar of motors echoed from one side of the river to the other.

"Look," I shouted above the din, "it looks like a plane about to crash into the river."

Everyone gestured wildly at the strange object that hovered above the water and headed in our direction.

We waited for the crash that never happened.

"Look, Addie," I said as it got closer, "it's a hydroplane."

The people were mystified as they watched the plane float about two feet above the water, travelling faster than any speedboat or canoe.

That hovercraft carrying 24 people soon passed our home and sped around the next curve. We could still hear the roaring motors long after it disappeared. Later, we learned that some of the women working in their gardens were so terrified that they had hidden, thinking they were going to die. To see a plane dance across the water and hear the deafening sound, cast fear into many along the river.

We explained to people how a hydroplane functions. A couple of hours later, we again heard the screaming motors as the hydroplane came back downriver. We all watched it disappear, and the terrifying sound soon faded away.

We later learned that the hydroplane had come from Iquitos, 500 miles downriver on a test run to Imasa (ee-MAH-sah), a river port 25 miles from our home.

That was the first and last hydroplane we ever saw in the upper Amazon, but the event lives on in our memories and especially in the memories of the Amazonian people.

8 Tugboat

Our home on the upper Amazon was on a small hill overlooking the valley. To the left flowed the Kusu, dumping its contents into the large turbulent Marañon River. On both sides of the two rivers, rolling hills of evergreen jungle stretched as far as we could see.

The twisting river cut through the rolling hills like a flowing ribbon. You could only reach our home by river since no roads penetrated the interior. We were about as isolated as people could be.

Our station included the clinic, church, and soccer field, surrounded by banana plants on the lower level. On the high hill behind our home and clinic was the Nazarene Bible Institute. The view from the top of the hill was gorgeous in every direction.

One of our students had gone home downriver to visit family; upon his return, he told us of a tugboat pushing a huge barge upriver. We were all eager to see the tugboat since most of the people had never seen anything that big on the river.

Classes were over, and the students were working in the gardens when we heard the roar. Everyone ran to the river bank to witness this memorable occasion. We stood in awe of the monster-sized tugboat pushing a large barge loaded with stacks of huge steel pipes that would be used to build a new oil pipeline we had heard about.

"Look," Addie said, "they're flying the American flag."

The beautiful Stars and Stripes waving in the wind nearly overwhelmed us; deep in the jungle, that was the last thing we thought we would ever see. I almost wanted to sing the "Star-Spangled Banner" right there on the river's edge. We breathlessly watched this incredible scene inch by our home in the rainforest.

The villagers pointed and exclaimed about the enormity of the tug and barge. The largest boat in our area was a canoe with planking for sides and a capacity to carry a mere five tons of cargo. We all waved and shouted as the unbelievable machine slowly disappeared around a curve upriver.

The Bible Institute students were still discussing the phenomenon the next day.

The Institute ran on a shoestring budget, and money was scarce. We bought yuca, bananas, papaya, and other food from the local gardens. Some of the students would hunt at night with my 12-gauge shotgun and would usually return with wild game. Addie and I ate lunch with the students each day.

One day they served me a bowl of murky soup. I dipped my spoon into it and struck something hard. I reached down and lifted it out of the dark broth. It was the large lower jawbone of some animal with black, stained molar teeth still intact.

I shoved the jawbone aside and managed to finish the soup, wondering what animal we had eaten. The students gleefully informed me that they had hunted and killed a *ronsoco* (rohn-SOH-koh) the night before.

They explained what a ronsoco looks like, so I looked it up in the dictionary. It is the largest rodent in the world. The adult grows to 120 pounds (approximately 54 kilograms) and looks like a huge flat nosed rat—in English it's called a capybara (kah-pee-BAH-rah).

During this time, the students had told Addie of their concern that they were almost out of food. She reminded them of Numbers 11:23, NASB, "And the LORD said to Moses, 'Has the LORD's arm been shortened? Now you shall see whether what I say will happen to you or not.'"

The Lord had said this to Moses because the Israelites were complaining that they had no meat to eat. They were grumbling, and Moses also doubted.

A few days later, we heard the deafening roar of motors and watched the same tugboat push the empty barge back downriver. Again, we rushed to the river bank, yelling and waving as the tugboat approached our home.

Addie and I were again overcome with emotion, watching the flag of our home country waving in the breeze. We had been in the jungle for years, far from all that was familiar to us. That flag reminded us that we were not alone. We knew many people in our homeland were praying for us and for these precious Peruvians that we were called to love and minister with.

To our amazement, the tug slowed, turned in the river, and docked in front of our home. The captain disembarked and greeted us. We were so excited to see and hear another North American in our seemingly forgotten part of the vineyard.

"What is this place? What are you doing out here in the middle of nowhere?"

We told him we were missionaries working with tribal people and that these were our students preparing for ministry in the church.

"When we passed this place a few days ago, I wondered what was here," he said. "Your compound is beautiful, well-kept, and I wanted to know who lives here. Would you and your students like to come on board and look around?"

Addie and I had never been on a tugboat, and neither had our students. I translated for the students, and they could not believe we were all welcomed to board the tug.

The captain explained the layout of the tug and expressed how difficult it was to navigate on the headwaters of the Amazon. He said he had been on many rivers, but the Marañon was the most treacherous. They had almost lost the tugboat coming through the great rapids and whirlpools of Manseriche, the granddaddy of all canyons.

We toured the engine room, sleeping quarters, immaculate kitchen, and dining area. He opened the freezers that were packed with meat and fish.

The students couldn't believe all the food they had. Addie and I were also nearly drooling over the incredible store of supplies. The captain told us that a helicopter flew in each week with loads of shrimp and everything imaginable.

"By the way, could you use some food?" he asked.

"We sure could use whatever you can spare," Addie said.

When I translated this for the students, they couldn't believe their ears. He opened the freezer, and out came shrimp and other goodies. He then took us onto the barge and opened the hatch on the storage area. Out came box after box of food items the students gladly carried ashore. They gave us enough food to last for a long time.

We all thanked the captain and crew and disembarked from the tug. We waved as the tug swung the barge around, drifted out to the middle of the river, and headed downstream. Addie and I watched the flag until the tug disappeared around the bend.

Addie reminded the students of Numbers 11:23. "See, how God answers our prayers?"

Lesson learned.

9 Amazon, Oh Amazon

Amazon, oh Amazon, you have captivated my heart and filled my life with unimaginable adventure. I have witnessed your waters cascading from numerous streams and rivers to swell your majestic banks as they flowed along serpentine courses through the velvety, emerald rainforest.

Your vastness overwhelms me as I travel on your muddy torrent of silt-laden waters. The abundance and variety of your plant and animal life defy description. The mysteries locked within your ecosystem are unfathomable. Your sunrises over a misty fog-shrouded forest are mystifying, while your sunsets are beyond the artist's ability to paint.

I have heard the myriad of sounds in the stillness of night, as nocturnal predators silently stalk their unsuspecting prey high overhead in the entangled canopy of the forest. The unmistakable cry of the howler monkey seeking escape from its slithering enemy causes even the bravest to freeze in his tracks.

I have experienced the soft, warm breeze on a tropical night as dark as coal. The absolute silence announcing an imminent storm has penetrated to the very depths of my soul. Seemingly a world away, I see the first rays of lightning, followed by the low rumble of thunder in the distance.

The silent night erupts into a grand display of heavenly fireworks. Closer and closer, the jagged streaks of light penetrate the darkness followed by orchestrated claps of deafening thunder. Standing under the safety of my roof, I count the seconds between the enormous flashes of light followed by crashing roars.

I have felt the fierce wind on my face and watched, nearly hypnotized, as palm trees sway frantically under its incredible force. The pelting sting of

wind-driven rain on my face propels me further into the house to escape the fury of the storm.

I listen to the staccato beat of raindrops striking the metal roof. Now the storm breaks loose overhead. The constant lightning casts eerie figures on the walls of our home.

A boom, followed by another flash. The pounding rain drowns conversation. Gradually, the lightning and thunder fade. Soon the drone of rain striking the roof becomes softer, then silence reigns. The storm has passed. The steady cacophony of frogs breaks the silence, and the jungle resumes its nightly routine.

10 Paul of Tarsus

Looking through the large, screened window, I noticed a tall, stout man approaching my office. Something about his presence caught my attention. Uneasiness settled over me as I recognized Cornelio (kor-NEH-lee-oh), who was from the village of Wawaim (wah-WAIM) on the Cenepa River. I had met him several years earlier under very different circumstances—his name was known far and wide for his exploits.

Cornelio was a member of the tribal political organization and was in charge of promoting human rights at the local village level. The organization's philosophy was to rid the tribal area of all outside influences, including the church and foreigners.

We had become prime targets of Cornelio's wrath and diatribes. He visited village after village delivering speeches and discourses on the evil influences of people like us.

The churches were shaken to their foundations from this negative onslaught. Our pastors and people held night-long prayer meetings, begging God to intervene and preserve the church.

We heard reports about the intimidating and relentless attack on the church and on us as missionaries. We prayed and encouraged our pastors to hold steady and watch God work in the lives of those attacking His church.

I heard the crunch of gravel under his feet as Cornelio approached. His expression was sad, almost depressed, instead of the usual arrogant, self-confident look that sent terror into many hearts.

What has happened to this powerful, proud man?

We exchanged greetings, and I invited him into the office, where he sat down.

"For several years now, I have been a part of the political organization that has denounced you and the church," he began, his voice strong and calm. "Our goal was to liberate our people from all outside influences. I have spoken in many villages trying to turn our people against all that you represent."

I was amazed by his total honesty.

"Several months ago, I was in the town of Nieva. My friends and I were drinking and rejoicing at our effectiveness in intimidating pastors and churches.

"It was late at night when lightning flashed across the sky, followed by loud claps of thunder. The sky was black and the wind began to blow, followed by a downpour. We continued drinking, and the rain pounded the roof.

"I realized that my boat and motor would soon be in jeopardy by the rising water current. I walked out into a downpour of water. Raindrops stung my face and drenched my clothing as I went down a dark trail. The alcohol caused me to stumble down to the river's edge. I saw the river rolling and boiling with large waves. My boat was half-swamped with water and straining at the rope that tied it to shore. The wind was blowing and dark black clouds swirled overhead, making my progress slow. My glasses kept fogging, so I stumbled even more.

"I knew I'd have to bail the water out of the boat and pull it closer to shore, or it would be ripped from its moorings and sent downstream.

"I grabbed the rope and pulled the boat closer to the shoreline so I could jump aboard and begin bailing out the water. In that drunken stupor, I tripped and fell into the boat, striking my head against the railing. The force of the blow knocked me unconscious.

"The next thing I knew, I was being carried to a house. When I regained consciousness, my head throbbed and my eye hurt badly. I shivered from my drenched clothing.

"One of the men who rescued me retrieved my glasses, but one lens was shattered. I tried to focus my eye but the pain was intense, and I saw only blackness. I realized a piece of broken glass had penetrated my eyeball and caused blindness.

"The next day, my friends took me to my home on the Cenepa River several hours from Nieva. The pain in my swollen eye sent me to bed. My wife tended to me, and I stayed in bed, despondent, day after day. My world had crashed in on me, and I felt useless; I wondered why this had happened to me. I recalled the storm and drinking with my friends. I remembered trying to jump into the boat, but that was my last recollection.

"One day the pastor of the church in my village came to see me. *Why would he come to see me?* I wondered. I had persecuted him and made his life in the village very difficult. We exchanged greetings. The pastor was surprisingly gentle and showed great concern. He then asked if he could pray for me and invite God's blessing on my life.

"The pastor regularly visited me. None of my political friends came to check on me, and I felt abandoned by them."

Cornelio's voice choked. "Slowly I regained my health, but most importantly, God has been dealing with my heart."

Tears welled up in those dark eyes and ran freely down his bronzed cheeks.

"Doctor," he said, "would you please forgive me for the harm and grief I have caused you?"

Sobs wracked his body as we knelt together on the floor to pray. I felt only compassion for this contrite man. Cornelio poured his heart out to God in confession. We cried and prayed together with tears flowing freely. The Lord's presence was in that place, and Cornelio became a new creature in Christ. We embraced, and I knew he would be a brother forever.

"Doctor, could you baptize me in the river today?"

"Cornelio, it would be my great privilege to baptize you today in the Marañon River."

I sent word to the faculty, students of the Bible Institute, and families that lived on the mission station that today Cornelio would be baptized. Word spread, and all wanted to observe this incredible experience. Since he was well known for his opposition to the gospel, this baptism would be historical.

A large, excited crowd gathered at the port where our boats floated gently in the backwater.

We read scripture, prayed, and the stage was set for Cornelio's public testimony. I waded out into the Marañon River, planting my feet in the soft mud, observing the scene. The sky was a pale blue without one cloud in sight. But the great cloud of witnesses and Cornelio, waiting to enter the water, was a scene out of the book of Acts.

That great crowd began to sing, "Take this old world, but give me Jesus, I won't turn back, I won't turn back."

Two men accompanied Cornelio to where I stood. I looked him in the eyes and said, "Cornelio, please give us your personal testimony of faith in Jesus."

He looked at the people gathered on the bank and told them the story of his

life. He spoke about his persecution of the church and the accident in the river. He mentioned the pastor's visits to his home and losing sight in one eye. He told about his faith in Christ and explained that now he was one of us.

He held us spellbound as he spoke.

"Cornelio, I baptize you in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit."

What a day, what a moment that was when he came up out of the water, proclaiming his love for Jesus! We embraced, and he left for his village a changed man.

A few months later, Cornelio attended a weeklong course to study Revelation. He was on the front row and engrossed in the scripture, wanting to learn all he could. He went back to the Cenepa River, and a new chapter began in his life. He defended and proclaimed the gospel as fervently as he had opposed it.

Months drifted by, and our furlough to the United States was nearing. Addie and I were trying to tie up loose ends before we spent a year in our homeland. I looked out the window and saw a familiar face—Cornelio. We greeted each other affectionately. It was wonderful to see him smiling and enjoying life.

"Doctor, I heard that you are going to your homeland soon. I have come to pray for my missionary."

Those words struck me. He had made a special trip from the Cenepa River to tell us good-bye.

We bowed our heads, and he prayed one of the most beautiful prayers this side of heaven. We hugged, and I felt the warmth and sincerity of a man changed by God's grace.

I watched Cornelio disappear around a bend in the small road that led away from our home. A lump filled my throat and emotion welled within me, filling my eyes with tears. *Thank you, Lord, for another miracle in your redemptive story of love*.

"I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it." (Matthew 16:18, NKJV).

Jesus said it; I believe it; and we have lived it.

11 The Coveted Letter

We had the privilege to build perhaps the only church located inside the beautiful Pacaya Samiria (pah-KAH-yah sah-MEE-rah) National Reserve. It is located between the Ucayali (oo-kah-YAH-lee) and Marañon Rivers that form the great Amazon River above the city of Nauta (NAU-tah), Peru.

The reserve is one of Peru's natural ecological treasures. It spreads out over more than 2 million hectares (8,000 square miles) in the Department of Loreto (loh-RE-toh). It has a large diversity of animal and plant life: 449 species of birds, 102 species of mammals, 69 species of reptiles, 58 species of amphibians, 256 species of fish, 965 species of wild plants, and numerous species of cultivated plants.

To reach the reserve, we took the small river Yanayacu (yah-nah-YAH-koo) to where it empties into the Marañon River. Our church is in the northernmost section of the park in the community of Buenos Aires (BWAY-nos IE-res).

Pastor Manuel from Nauta evangelized the area, planting a strong work among the Peruvians living there. We sent our construction foreman from Iquitos with steel rebar, cement, and forming boards to make the base for a team from Piqua (PEE-kwah), Ohio, under the leadership of Pastor Paul Jetter, to later build the wooden church.

The local church members built the base. They were excited to work on what would become a beautiful, permanent place to worship. Our foreman came back to Iquitos, praising the people and their commitment to the task. I could hardly wait for the Ohio team to arrive and labor further on the building project.

A short time later, I learned that we would need permission for foreigners to enter the reserve to build. We were not aware of this requirement. Our dilemma was compounded by the fact that the lumber was ordered and supplies were being purchased for the building—and the team from Ohio would arrive in less than two weeks.

I visited the office in Iquitos and learned that we would have to leave a list of the team members' names, occupations, and passport numbers. Pastor Jetter sent me a detailed list that I presented to the office.

I was told the supervisor would be in shortly, so I waited until he arrived, but he declined to see me and turned down our request to build on the reserve.

I was devastated.

What will I tell the team after so much preparation had been made? I knew they would be so disappointed.

Work & Witness Church Construction in Village

I mentioned the challenge to our district superintendent in Iquitos, and he decided to visit the office to see if he could persuade the supervisor to give us permission. Upon entering the building, he was surprised to see the secretary, who was a dear friend of his. He spoke with her about the situation, and she convinced the supervisor to give us permission. So finally, we had permission, but the document was to be delivered to our district superintendent the day we were leaving with the team.

We left Iquitos with the Work & Witness team and headed 100 kilometers (approximately 62 miles) to the city of Nauta, where we would board boats to travel to the Tigre (TEE-greh) River to build a church. Then we would return to Pacaya Samiria to build on the reserve.

I was almost a nervous wreck when we reached Nauta, because I didn't have the written document in my hand and we were preparing to go upriver. While we loaded the boats for our adventure, a courier arrived from Iquitos and handed me the coveted letter.

I opened it and breathed a big sigh of relief, as well as a praise to the Lord for answered prayer.

The trip was one of the most blessed we have experienced. Both buildings were completed with incredible help from our people on the Tigre River, those living in the reserve, and the Work & Witness team.

When we dedicated the Buenos Aires Pucate Iglesia del Nazareno (poo-KAH-teh ee-GLEH-see-ah del nah-sah-REH-noh), I was overwhelmed with emotion and gratitude to God for answering prayer. I am grateful for the many Work & Witness teams that have accompanied us on so many remarkable adventures.

12
"No Way"

Latrines, outhouses, privies, and johns have made our lives very interesting, and even humorous. We have seen them made from every natural material imaginable—from bamboo to wooden structures and everything in between.

On one particular day, Addie and I made a long, exhausting climb up the steep mountainside that took us to an isolated village, far from the main tribe. We received an overwhelming reception, then we were led to the bamboo hut where we would spend the night. We hung mosquito nets and prepared bed rolls for the cool nights that we would experience on this beautiful mountain.

We asked the pastor where the latrine was located so we could check it out during daylight hours. He took us to a small trail and pointed to the direction of the outhouse. Carefully, we stepped down a steep, slippery trail. It certainly was isolated from the village and would provide privacy.

The first stretch of trail was extremely steep. I held Addie's arm so she wouldn't tumble downhill. We followed the many bends in the trail; finally, I saw a four-inch round pole about five feet long, wedged between two trees. The pole was two or three feet higher than ground level.

Approaching the log, we saw that directly under it was a drop-off of perhaps 500 feet straight down.

What an incredible sewer system, I thought.

Addie didn't share my enthusiasm.

"No way!" she exclaimed.

She was holding to me for dear life, exclaiming that there was no way she would sit on that log and hold on to the tree. Needless to say, we found our own isolated spot in the jungles and made our own sewer system from natural resources.

13 "Yes, You Can!"

We were privileged to have many Work & Witness teams help with construction projects at our mission station in the Amazon. The women team members always slept in our home and used the indoor bathroom. The men slept in a building about 80 yards from our house and used the two latrines we had constructed for them. With a large team, the bathroom in our house was not sufficient, thus the two latrines.

The outhouses were behind our home, halfway down a fairly steep hill. The scenery was breathtaking in this very private location. We dug two big holes and covered them with large, stout logs. We used five logs to cover the hole. The two middle logs were each cut in a half moon shape, making a nice round hole. The logs were then covered with boards nailed to them. We built a square box fitted with a toilet seat to place over the hole and make our latrine more like home.

The walls were made of bamboo poles nailed or tied onto support beams with stout vines. The bamboo poles allowed some light in so we didn't need electricity. The roof was made of corrugated sheets of steel.

When you visited the little hut at night, you always took a flashlight with you to make sure no slithering critters were present. Regardless, the latrine stories are many and legendary.

One team was building a church in a village just downriver from the mission station. After breakfast one morning, I took the team to finish the building project. One of the men stayed on the station. Addie was working in the kitchen when he suddenly appeared and asked if he could use the bathroom in the house.

"Sure," she responded. All the ladies, except one who was doing the laundry, had gone downriver.

A few minutes later, he walked back into the kitchen.

"The reason I asked to use your bathroom is because of my experience in the outhouse," he told Addie. "I was sitting there when I heard a noise near the bamboo wall. I looked down and a fairly large snake was coming through a small opening where the poles had separated. That snake came toward my right foot. I lifted my foot, hoping it would slither away, but it struck the heel of my tennis shoe."

Fortunately, his shoe had a thick wedge of rubber on the heel so he did not get bitten.

He looked at Addie and said, "I have always heard that you can't run with your pants down, but you can! Yes, you can! You can run with your pants down!"

14 You Are on Your Own

The Work & Witness team had just arrived to our home on the Marañon River. Their trip was long and tiring, and several needed to use the bathroom.

I directed one man to the trail down over the hill that led to the latrine behind our home.

Addie and I were welcoming the team when the man returned and exclaimed, "I went to the latrine, and my brand new $300 camera slipped off my shoulder and fell into the latrine. Doctor, would you help me retrieve it?"

The latrine his camera had fallen into was well-used and full. I have been asked to do a lot of things as a missionary, but there are limits.

"No," I said, "but here is a long-handled rake. You can fish it out; take your time."

He did, but the camera never took another picture and he disposed of that once clean, beautiful camera.

15 He *What?*

We were preparing for the district assembly in the jungles, when a student from the Bible Institute informed me that our cook was going home.

"What! He can't go home, he has to cook for the entire assembly,"I stammered.

Tuya (TOO-yah), an Aguaruna, was the cook for the Bible Institute, a job he had dearly held for many years. He was one of the finest Christians I have ever known. Tuya was kind, patient, hardworking, and loved by all. He and his wife were prominent members in the Chipe village Church of the Nazarene.

Tuya braved the elements and stood long hours over an open-wood fire with smoke rising, stinging and burning his eyes, while he stirred the rice, boiled yuca, bananas, and pots of wild game that students had hunted. Everyone loved the quiet, faithful, and always happy cook.

Tuya had agreed to cook the meals for the two-day assembly. Delegates would arrive all day, some coming from great distances and looking forward to the evening meal.

"Why is he leaving?" I asked the student.

He hesitated for a long moment and then smiled. Tuya had fallen into the latrine and had hurt his shoulder.

I knew the shoulder was only part of the reason and that embarrassment would be a big factor as well. Tuya knew everyone would make jokes about his unpleasant episode.

"Hurry! Go tell him to wait for me in the clinic, and I will give him an injection and medicine for his shoulder."

This older latrine had been in desperate need of repair. The floor logs had rotted and when Tuya stepped onto them, they had given way and had sent him crashing into the five-foot-deep pit of raw sewage.

He quickly climbed out of that indescribable nightmare, ran down the trail, and dived into the river. He washed and washed some more, trying to rid himself of the intoxicating effects of his incredible ordeal.

I went to the clinic where a sheepish Tuya waited. He stretched out on the examining table while I prepared his injection. As I approached him with syringe in hand, I thought about the scene of Tuya plunging into that forbidden hole.

I tried to hold back the laughter, but I shook with amusement. I am sure that he wanted to run and escape, but it was too late. I gathered control of my shaking hand and plunged the needle into his hip.

Tuya stayed and cooked for the entire assembly. A few years later, he and his wife passed away within a couple of days of each other and went to their heavenly reward. He was one of my dearest friends and a brother in Christ.

16 It Just Kept Coming

Jack was gesturing wildly and breathlessly, trying to communicate with Addie.

"It just kept coming; it just kept coming!"

"Jack, calm down. What just kept coming?"

"The snake," he stammered. "It is the longest thing I have ever seen."

Jack had visited the latrine a short distance from our home. He told us he had walked into the outhouse just in time to see a large, long snake slither out of the dark, murky hole.

The men immediately ran to the latrine but didn't see Jack's snake.

"Jack, it was probably just a long worm you saw; there is no snake in the latrine."

"No, it was a snake," Jack insisted.

Sometime later, another man used the same latrine, and he couldn't get back to the house fast enough.

"I just saw Jack's snake, and he is right—it is black and long and just kept coming out of that hole!"

About an hour had passed between the two sightings, so the men waited another hour and two of them made a trip to the latrine. Sure enough their screams indicated that they had seen Jack's snake.

The men and women ran to the hillside and saw the snake pinned down with a long rake about a foot from its head. Cameras flashed as the snake raised his head off the ground and moved slowly in every direction, as if posing for the cameras.

Everyone kept a good distance from this Amazon creature, which was now probably the most filmed snake in history.

I had been in the clinic and was returning to the house in time to view this incredible scene.

"Doctor, is it poisonous?" they asked.

"No, it is a harmless snake that feeds on rodents."

This most photographed serpent in the history of humanity measured 12 feet long, and I released him into the jungle, a long way from the latrine.

We had told the men to always keep the toilet seat down when not in use. That was the last time we had to repeat those words.

17 It's a Wonderful Jungle World!

By Addie Garman

Christmas was near, so I thought I should prepare a program. Calling all the young people together, I said, "Let's do a drama and a cantata."

"What's a drama and a cantata?" they asked.

I explained that they could memorize speaking parts or do a pantomime; they chose the latter. The choir would sing a few Christmas songs in both Aguaruna and Spanish.

People were assigned parts, and practice began. A young married couple, (she, 14, and he, 20) had a baby girl so they became Mary and Joseph.

Everything was going great until a week before the presentation. The young man told me he was on his way to catch the plane downriver, because the linguistic people called to say that he would be studying at their base to be a teacher.

"You can't! What about the program?" I exclaimed.

"My wife will still be Mary, and my uncle will be Joseph," he said.

That afternoon was the next practice, and Mary did the first scene with the angel's appearance. When the uncle came to walk with her to Bethlehem, she stopped and walked away, saying, "I won't do it! I don't want my baby to get diarrhea."

My mouth fell open. I didn't know what she meant as she kept repeating, "I don't want my baby to get diarrhea."

By now, the people started to laugh, and I wondered what was going on. One of the men explained, "It is our custom. If another man touches a married woman, her baby will get diarrhea."

This custom was to promote marital fidelity.

"The uncle will not touch you; he will only walk beside you," I explained.

She still insisted that her baby would get diarrhea.

"I said, she won't get diarrhea!" I emphasized.

Larry was standing in the back of the church and, in English, softly said, "What if she does?"

I wanted to throw something at him.

I finally got a brother and sister to play Mary and Joseph using Candy's doll for baby Jesus.

The choir practiced hard, and I felt they were ready for the performance. That night, I was popping three large washtubs full of popcorn to serve all of the people the next day after the two performances.

Shaking the pot back and forth on the stove, I thought of the choir. They needed a uniform to bring them all together. Some of them would be barefooted, some would wear the typical one-piece dress, and others would wear patched clothing. I needed something to blend them together.

I told Larry of my plight.

"You have all of those rolls of blue toilet paper upstairs," he said.

"You are crazy," I told him, as I ran upstairs to get a roll of blue toilet paper. I then rolled off a long strip, placed it over my shoulders and let it hang down to my waist.

Not bad, I thought, so I rolled off enough strips for each choir member.

The next day I draped the toilet paper over their shoulders. The choir was so proud that they walked around all afternoon and wouldn't take the paper off.

Choir robes in the jungle. Wow! What a great, wonderful world we have lived in.

18 The Threat

Do not be afraid, but speak, and do not keep silent; for I am with you, and no one will attack you to hurt you; for I have many people in this city. —Acts 18:9-10, NKJV

News reached us from a large village way downriver that the leaders had threatened to send our pastor to the bamboo jail if he preached one more time in the church.

Bamboo jails were notorious. They were made of thick poles planted in the ground with walls of bamboo lashed together. The walls were only two feet wide by ten feet tall. The prisoner had to stand for long hours with no place to sit or lie down since the walls were so close together. Meanwhile, the villagers paraded by, observing who was incarcerated. It was a very embarrassing setting for the inmate.

We were not surprised by this announcement, because tribal leaders had threatened our churches and people for months.

Our early years of ministry had been met with positive excitement and incredible growth. The Aguarunas are wonderful witnesses of God's grace. Everywhere they went to

Typical Aguaruna Family

visit relatives and friends, they carried the gospel, planted the seeds, and started churches. We lived wonderfully overwhelmed with churches springing up in village after village.

As missionaries, we are very much aware that we are not there to change cultural norms; that is the Holy Spirit's business. When people respond to biblical teaching and personally commit to the Lordship of Christ, cultural changes that are contrary to faith in Christ come into question. Issues of personal and communal conduct come under the microscope of the Holy Spirit.

These are the same issues that affect every culture in some way or another, but perhaps in more pronounced ways in the jungle.

A new force came into play as time marched on in Amazonia. A new group of tribal leaders fell under the spell of anti-religious indoctrination. One of these men formed the Indian political organization that was definitely anti-church.

Men with similar ideas were recruited and were persuaded to war against the church and outsiders. Their tribal meetings became volatile, and they decided to expel from tribal areas the church and all who were not of native origin.

Our pastors and people prayed and resisted these attacks. In village after village, the church turned to God for intervention. Tensions mounted and the pressure grew, but the Christians were not persuaded or intimidated by these threats.

After months of intense pressure, one of our pastors was threatened with jail time. Our Huambisan (wahm-BEE-sahn) district superintendent, another missionary, and I made the long boat trip to the village where the tribal council had its headquarters. This was the village where our Pastor Timias (tee-MEE-ahs) was being challenged.

Upon arriving, we asked to meet with the entire village. We were led to the large meeting house. Once we were inside, the village head asked the purpose of our visit. The room was packed with people who wondered why we had come to their village.

I stated our purpose, and murmurs rose within the crowd. We reminded them that the constitution of Peru guaranteed religious freedom for all of its citizens and that we would use all of our resources to defend our people and churches. I asked the leaders if it was true that they had threatened to jail our pastor if he continued to preach.

They tried to dodge the issue, but again I asked the same question. Finally, they answered affirmatively. Immediately, the pastor was placed in the center of

the room and several leaders ranted against him. A few others chimed in, and the atmosphere filled with hatred.

Timias stood tall, alone, and didn't say a word. My heart sank. The church appeared to be in deep trouble.

The leader, sensing the village was with him, pointed a finger at the pastor and asked, "Are you going to preach in the church on Sunday? If you do, you will go to jail."

I looked at Pastor Timias with concern and compassion, wondering how he would respond. Alone and under the scrutiny of all, he spoke humbly and deliberately.

"Yes, I will preach in the church on Sunday."

A hush filled the room, and the village was stunned. I stood there, frozen; my mind racing in many directions at once. Suddenly, from the corner of my eye, I detected some movement. Out of the crowd, a woman came and stood beside her pastor. From the back of the room, a man came to the front and stood on the other side of Timias.

One by one they came, until probably 30 people surrounded their pastor. They didn't say a word, but their presence spoke loudly: *Your jail is not big enough for all of us.*

They represented many families in the village, all with extended families, that would defend the rights of their loved ones.

Again, we reminded them that we would do all in our power to ensure the religious freedom of our people. The leaders knew they were defeated. The meeting was over and the church would never again be challenged in this way.

We headed home, praising God for answering His people's prayers and praising Him for the church that had stood the test. In village after village, the church came out victorious. The back of persecution was broken, and the church was strengthened across the tribe.

Months went by; and we were amazed when the leader of that village, who had threatened Pastor Timias, came to the Bible Institute to prepare for ministry. What an incredible victory God had won.

> *Do not be afraid, but speak, and do not keep silent; for I am with you, and no one will attack you to hurt you; for I have many people in this [village].*
>
> *—Acts 18:9-10,* NKJV

19 Good News

Addie and I were nearing the end of our missionary calling in the Amazon, and we wanted to build a library for the Bible Institute at New Horizons as our final contribution to the work.

God had blessed us with many Work & Witness teams across the years. These teams had changed our jungle forever. Scores of churches were built in numerous villages along many different rivers of the Amazon.

We had only enough funds to build a concrete base for a two-story building. I decided to build the base on faith that God would honor this project.

The students worked hard and finally the base and columns were constructed. We had a little money left over and decided to make our own cement blocks. We hauled sand from the river and mounded it near the construction site. We bought cement and set to work making the blocks from two steel molds.

Finally the blocks were made, cured, and stacked, ready for God to perform another miracle. We were used to God performing miracles, and we waited to see how He would do it.

Ham radio provided our contact with the outside world for four decades. We had a standing contact with a wonderful friend, James Pennington in Ohio, to talk to him nearly every day at noon. He was our lifeline with our family, church, friends, and Work & Witness teams. James had brought several teams to our jungle and knew how desperately we depended on him.

I had finished my work in the clinic early and headed home shortly before noon one day. Usually Addie made the contact with James, but this day I was on the radio before she finished teaching her last class on Old Testament in the Bible Institute.

"W8LK, W8LK, OA9G calling and standing by," I called.

"OA9G, OA9G, this is W8LK."

"Hi, James. OA9G here."

We chatted for a few minutes.

"Larry," he said, "David Argabright (AHR-gah-briet) in Virginia wants you to call him today as soon as possible."

David was our dear friend. He had brought numerous Work & Witness teams to the Amazon, and his company sponsored the building materials for all of the churches we had built together. We had been on many trips the last few years to places like the Santiago River, Morona (moh-ROH-nah) River, and Marañon River and into some very isolated places in between. Our memories of David and his teams were historic and meaningful.

"Hang on, Larry. I will give him a call for a phone patch."

A phone patch works like this: James would call David on his phone line, which was also connected to his radio. James would flip a switch, and we could carry on a one-way conversation. When one person finished speaking, he'd say, "Over." Then James would flip the switch and the other person could talk.

I waited for James to make the call and wondered what David could possibly want to talk to me about.

"OA9G, OA9G, W8LK calling."

"W8LK, W8LK, OA9G standing by."

"Larry, I have David on the line, go ahead."

"Hi, David, great to talk with you today. How is everyone on your end?"

"Larry, I wanted to check with you about the following: We are scheduled to take a Work & Witness team to Colombia in two weeks; but because of terrorist activity, the State Department and our church headquarters advise us against going. The team members have set two weeks apart, paid their airfare, and we have construction funds on hand. I checked with the airlines and they can change our tickets, but we have to act fast so we won't lose our fare. Do you have a need there in the jungle? If so, we will change our flights, bring the construction funds with us, and be there in two weeks."

I was so excited I wanted to shout!

"Do we have a need!" I exclaimed. "You are an answer to our prayers."

I explained to David about the library project—that we had the foundation poured and cement blocks ready to make the walls. I told him we had taken this on as an act of faith.

He was so excited to see how God was directing that he said, "We will see you in two weeks."

"Thanks David, we will be ready for your arrival. See you in two weeks."

"Thanks, James. We'll talk to you tomorrow. W8LK, OA9G over and out."

David and the team arrived two weeks later, and we built the two-story library. It stands today as a wonderful monument to God's providential care and the dedication of faithful laity who have changed our world.

20 Restoration

When Pastor Carlos[1] visited the Church of the Nazarene in Shushaim (shoo-SHAYM), the celebration continued long into the night. The group had just finished sharing a good meal—chicken soup, mounds of yuca, and boiled green bananas. The church was packed with people enthralled by the many stories Pastor Carlos dramatically told.

He had been invited to come and encourage the believers in their faith. Carlos was a dynamic pastor from the downriver area of the Marañon River. All of the tribes sought him because of his contagious spirit and ability to challenge and encourage everyone. He was an outstanding pastor with an uncanny ability to communicate the gospel. The people in Shushaim were held spellbound by his practical explanation of the Word. The night wore on, and all were having a good time.

Carlos's wife excused herself to go and visit family on the far side of the village. The night was very dark. She slowly followed a small path that led to her family's hut. She was just emerging into a small clearing when she felt a powerful blow to her lower leg, followed by a burning, deep pain. She heard the slither of an animal escaping into the brush along the trail.

She fell to the ground clutching the leg. Her screams reverberated through a quiet jungle night and reached the ears of the entire village. The laughter in the church stopped, and everyone rose, wondering who was crying out.

Immediately, Pastor Carlos learned that a large snake had bitten his wife. Carlos and the men ran into the darkness. They soon joined a small gathering of people about 20 yards from the hut his wife had set out to visit.

1 Names and places have been changed

"What happened?" Carlos asked.

Immediately, several smoky wick lamps were produced, casting eerie shadows on the small group of people kneeling on the ground near the tortured body of his wife. She turned and twisted in deep pain.

Carlos bent over his wife and tenderly examined her leg where blood dripped from two large fang marks.

Carefully, the men carried her to a nearby hut and made her as comfortable as possible. A spontaneous prayer meeting began, and they desperately pleaded for her recovery. The lamps were placed around the hut, and the swelling crowd prepared for a long vigil.

The men searched the area for the offending snake, but to no avail.

Everyone recognized the seriousness of her condition and decided to take her to the clinic on the mission station miles away. However, they had no transportation available, and to travel the river in a dugout canoe on this dark night was too risky—the crosscurrents, rapids, and whirlpools were too treacherous.

They regretfully decided to wait until the first rays of daylight to transport her safely to the clinic.

The night was unbearably long, and she drifted in and out of consciousness. Prayers and crying mixed all night.

With the first rays of light, men readied the long canoe for the voyage downriver. Carlos's wife was tenderly carried in a blanket sling to the canoe. Carlos sat in the canoe, cradling his wife's head, while men with strong arms paddled the canoe into deep water and began the long journey to the clinic.

I had just returned to the house from our early morning prayer meeting with the Bible Institute students when I heard excited voices. I walked outside, wondering what the commotion was all about. I recognized Pastor Carlos leading the group.

"Doctor, please come to the clinic. My wife was bitten by a large snake last night, and she is in serious condition."

I noticed that his eyes were red from a night of crying. His voice was emotion-laden.

"Did you find the snake?" I asked. We had instructed the people to always bring the offending snake or its head for identification. Many types of pit vipers fill the Amazon, and we have two classes of anti-venom. It is imperative that we use the prescribed anti-venom for the offending serpent.

"No," they said in unison, "we searched for it, but it escaped."

What snake could it be, I wondered. Large, deep fang marks at night would indicate a bushmaster (*shushupe*—shoo-SHOO-peh) bite. It is the largest pit viper in the Amazon, is nocturnal, and the symptoms are classic.

I retrieved a vial from the refrigerator and dashed with the group to the clinic. Upon examination, I determined that, in fact, it was a bushmaster bite. The fang marks were wide apart and deep.

We administered the anti-venom and monitored her symptoms. Many hours had passed since the bite, and the prognosis was grave. Her blood pressure continued to drop, and her vital signs were fading. She soon slipped into a deep coma and, late that morning, passed into the presence of her Savior.

Carlos was heartbroken and fell into my arms sobbing. I tried to console him, but words seemed so futile. We asked God to wrap His arms around Carlos, his family, and the churches that were devastated by her demise.

"What am I going to do?" he asked. "I have two children, a daughter and a son. How can I evangelize, visit churches, serve God, and take care of them?"

I watched the exhausted party carry Carlos's wife on a bamboo mat to the canoe that would carry them to her village downriver, about one hour away. The women cried incessantly, following the men.

We prayed for Pastor Carlos, his children, and their future. Days passed, and word reached me that he was evangelizing in the tribe. His parents were helping with the children, allowing him to be active in ministry again.

Months passed, and news of Pastor Carlos's outstanding work buzzed on everyone's lips. We were thrilled with how God was ministering to Carlos and through him to others.

Several months later, I heard people talking outside the entrance to our clinic and was surprised to see Carlos and his son, about eight years old, waiting to be treated.

I noticed deep concern etched on Carlos's usually happy face. As I invited them into the clinic, he pointed to his son and said, "Doctor, my son sleeps a lot and is always out of breath. He complains of being constantly tired and wanting to lie down to rest."

I noticed the child seemed listless and without any sparkle in his eyes. His breathing was fast and labored. I suspected a low-grade anemia with parasitic infestation. That seemed to be the lot of many children in the area.

As I examined him, I realized he had a much more serious complication. I detected a severe heart murmur from a congenital valve malfunction.

How do I explain this to Carlos after all that he has been through?

I told him about my findings and added that we would help him take his son to see a cardiologist in the coastal city of Chiclayo (chik-LIE-yoh).

Pastor Carlos took his son on the long journey to the coast. It was so difficult trying to explain a complicated cardiac situation to individuals with such limited knowledge of human anatomy. I knew that the cardiologist had charts and could explain the situation to Carlos.

Days passed, and finally they returned to the jungle with unsettling news. The child's murmur was indeed caused by a severe congenital heart problem, and the prognosis was dire. The cardiologist informed us that no successful treatments were available and that the boy's life would be cut short.

Carlos was devastated, but his faith was intact. He devoted himself to caring for his little boy.

Before long word reached me that the child's heart had given out and that Jesus had taken him home. I went to see Carlos and offered my sympathy for his incredible loss. Sobs wracked his body while he clung to me, pouring his soul out to God.

God is faithful in using prayer, people, and time to bring healing. Carlos worked feverishly, preaching, evangelizing, and encouraging churches far and wide. He also had wonderful leadership and administrative skills.

The day came when he was appointed district superintendent of the large Amazon District, now called Peru Amazonas. Under Carlos's leadership, a new excitement reigned over Amazonia. He visited churches and encouraged pastors and laity alike. Tithes and offerings were at an all-time high. Compassion ministries flourished, and the church experienced renewed energy at all levels. No church was too small or far away that he didn't visit and encourage. We were concerned that he would burn himself out. Night after long night, he preached, counseled, and exhorted the faithful.

Carlos's parents lived in Shushaim and cared for his daughter. Carlos visited his family every time he was in the area. He missed his wife, and the nights were long and lonely. On one visit, he came across a former girlfriend of years gone by. She lived with her husband in Shushaim. Their frequent contacts led to more than just friendship, and their encounters aroused her husband's suspicion.

The husband overheard Carlos mention the date of his next visit to the village. The day before the expected visit, the husband told his wife that he was leaving town for a few days to take care of some documents related to his job as a bilingual school teacher.

Carlos arrived the next day and discovered that the husband was gone. He secretly contacted the wife, and they met at her hut under the cover of darkness. Early before daylight, he left the hut to journey to the neighboring church.

It was a dark, damp morning, and all was quiet on the narrow trail next to the little schoolhouse. Rounding the last bend in the trail before emerging onto the soccer field, he saw from the corner of his eye a shadowy figure running at him.

Instinctively, he recoiled in a defensive posture, but it was too late. The suspecting husband had left the village, but had returned to confirm his suspicions. Carlos saw a hand raised and felt searing pain as some object was plunged into the side of his head.

He reached for his head and felt warm liquid. He took a few more steps and collapsed in a pool of blood.

Carlos nearly bled to death that tragic morning. One of the men from the village was passing and saw what looked like a body lying in the shadows. He found Carlos lying in a vast pool of blood with a gaping hole near his temple.

The man called for help, and a crowd gathered. One of Carlos's uncles tried to stem the flow of blood by putting pressure on the side of his head. Men carried the severely injured man for two hours on the dirt road that led to Bagua (BAH-gwah).

The women of the village were crying and singing the death chant as they waited for some vehicle to pass on the road to Bagua. Finally, a pickup truck loaded with people approached. Carlos was loaded onto the truck bed, and it sped quickly to the local hospital.

When they arrived, Carlos had lost an enormous amount of blood and his vital signs were devastatingly low. The local doctor sutured the ruptured artery to stop the bleeding. Everyone breathed a sigh of relief and waited anxiously. Without warning, the artery ruptured again causing more blood loss but was sutured again, and it held. Carlos hung onto life by a mere literal thread.

Word reached us of the incident and of his precarious condition. We found out that the jealous husband had attacked Carlos with a screwdriver, penetrating a major artery. We were devastated by the news of Carlos's physical condition and his lapse into sin.

A group of us made the long trip to Bagua to see and pray with Carlos. He was now out of danger and would survive this ordeal. He denied the affair at first, but soon admitted the truth and began the healing process of body and soul.

Carlos was disciplined and began the long journey of restoration. I wondered how this tragic situation would affect our churches and the morale of the pastors.

God always has a person prepared for crisis situations. Pastor Enrique was named district superintendent. God used him to bring healing and restore confidence in the church leadership.

Days drifted by, and we had little contact with Carlos, who had now returned to the village where his late wife's parents lived. Months passed, and occasionally we ran into Carlos, who was attending the church his former father-in-law pastored. We were thrilled to know that he had recommitted his life to the Lord and was a great blessing in this church.

Several years later, Carlos married a young woman from that church. The village had grown so much that a new village was established across the river from where his in-laws lived, and he and his new bride moved there.

The long period of discipline came to a close, and Pastor Carlos was reinstated into the ministry. He planted a church in the new village. It grew quickly under his leadership, and nearly everyone in the village attended the new bamboo building they had erected for worship.

We were thrilled to see how God restored Carlos and placed him back into the ministry. Years drifted by, and a Work & Witness team built a new wooden church in that village. Everyone on the team fell in love with Pastor Carlos.

Pastor Carlos visited me on many occasions, and we were grateful to a loving God who gives a second chance to undeserving people like us. Years have passed now, and Pastor Carlos has proven that God's grace is sufficient. He is once again an outstanding, mature, and successful pastor on the Amazon District.

21 Kerosene Calamity

One lazy jungle day, I was enjoying some free time when our neighbor from upriver came to ask a favor. His name was Kunchiwi, and he was one of our dearest friends. He wore the typical etipak (man's skirt) tied around the waist with a thin vine serving as a belt. His feet had never felt a pair of shoes and probably never would. His hair was coal black, long, and hung loosely over thin shoulders.

Kunchiwi flashed me a quick friendly smile, exposing teeth that had been ground down over time from his eating certain hard nuts that had left a permanent black stain on them. He was about our age, but insisted on calling us Mom and Dad, much to Addie's chagrin.

"Doctor, could you take me downriver to Lorenzo's (loh-REN-soh) house in your boat so I can bring my wife and children back upriver? They have been downriver preparing salt from a nearby salt stream, and I have no way to bring them home."

The people in the upper Amazon made their own salt from streams with extremely high salt content. They would go in small groups to boil the water in a large, cast-off, steel oil drum.

After the water was boiled for hours, a brackish, brown residue formed in large crystals on the bottom of the barrel. These salt crystals were then placed into large woven baskets lined with fresh green banana leaves. The salt was covered with the same leaves and tied in place with thin vines. The baskets weighed about 25 pounds each and would last a family for many months. Salt was about the only condiment used to season food.

Upon arriving home, the family takes enough salt from the basket to fill smaller baskets. They tie these baskets to the roof poles right over the three logs upon which they cook their food. The heat from the fire keeps the salt dry, and the baskets become blackened from the smoke that spirals upward.

I love the river and welcome any excuse to take a boat ride. Addie was preparing breakfast and said it would be ready in about half an hour. I turned to our three children, Rusty, Greg, and Candy, and asked if they wanted to take a short trip downriver.

"Yes!" they answered, and they headed for the boat.

I told Addie and our eight-month-old son, Tim, good-bye and headed to the river. I fired up the motor and told Rusty to untie the boat and shove us off. We pulled away from the port and headed into the Marañon River.

No feeling is quite like a cool wind blowing on your face on a hot, tropical day. The sky was blue and clear as we watched the incredible scenery unfolding before our eyes. We saw the many banana plants with their fruit ripening to a beautiful yellow. The children spotted sun-ripened, orange papayas hanging on the tall trees just waiting to be harvested. Smoke arose from a new garden area that was being burned for the planting of yuca, bananas, and corn.

The people of the area use the slash-and-burn method of farming. They select a spot close to the river on a sloping hillside for their future garden. The men cut the underbrush and thick vines entwined to neighboring trees. Once the ground covering is clear, the trees are cut down, exposing the area to the sun's drying effects.

The area is allowed to dry thoroughly for approximate three months under the unrelenting tropical sun. Men and women chop the limbs and underbrush into manageable pieces and make a mound of them for burning. Women carry torches from their home fires to light the brush. The cracking sound of dry wood being consumed by this inferno is awesome, and the carbon produced from the fire serves as nutrient to the soil.

Soon the rain comes and softens the ground for planting. The women plant stems from the yuca plant and dig holes for small banana plants. Corn is then scattered between these plantings, and nature takes over.

Around the bend in the river, the hut and gardens of our friend, Lorenzo, came into view. Lorenzo always came to our house to sell us grapefruit, bananas, peanuts, and other supplies. He was also barefooted, but wore an old pair of pants cinched tightly around the waist with a well-worn belt. The belt appeared as though it were cutting him in two, because he had it drawn up so tight. He and his family usually made the trip by canoe on Sundays to attend the church service and Sunday School class under the trees.

We pulled into the sandy area near Lorenzo's house. Rusty jumped out and held the rope tight while we loaded the heavy baskets of salt into the boat. Kunchiwi, Justina, their children, and their dog jumped aboard for the return trip upriver.

We said good-bye to Lorenzo and his wife and headed back upstream.

Going upriver, we stayed near the shoreline where the current is the weakest. In a long, heavy, wooden boat, we always look for that part of the river where the current is not as fast. That is usually on the inside of big sweeping curves in the river.

Up ahead, we saw our white house sitting under a perfectly blue sky, with the green hills rising gently behind it. We were making good time and were looking forward to a delicious breakfast. In the distance, I saw someone waving to us from the bank below our house.

Who could that be? I wondered.

Kunchiwi and his family were sitting on the boards in the middle of the boat, enjoying the familiar scenery their ancestors had enjoyed for centuries. Our children had focused their attention on the person in the front yard, who was now running up and down along the bank, waving frantically.

I shaded my eyes from the sun and realized it was Addie. She was carrying Tim in one arm and waving wildly with the other, as if to call us to come quickly.

Something is wrong with baby Tim!

I accelerated the outboard motor to full throttle, and the boat knifed through the water. We turned off the Marañon and onto to the Kusu with full speed. I could now hear Addie crying. She ran towards the port, pointing to Tim.

"Rusty! Take charge and tie up the boat," I yelled.

I shut off the motor and ran the length of the boat as it drifted into the shore. When it struck the mud bank, I leaped out and ran up the hill toward Addie.

"Tim drank kerosene," she cried. "He's not breathing!"

I grabbed Tim from Addie's arms and ran to the house with her right on my heels.

"Make a strong solution of baking soda," I said.

"I gave him baking soda, but he didn't take it," Addie cried, tears pouring down her face.

"Do it again," I repeated. I breathed into his mouth and could smell the kerosene. He was limp and ashen, but I continued to give him artificial respiration.

Addie made a strong solution of soda, which I forced down his throat. He swallowed the liquid, then his body reacted. Up came copious amounts of soda mixed with kerosene.

I continued breathing into his mouth, praying at the same time. A moment later, Tim opened his eyes and began breathing on his own.

We were crying, praying, and praising the Lord at the same time. The children were terrified, but when Tim started breathing, relief flooded the room.

When the crisis was over, I asked Addie, "How did Tim get kerosene?"

"While I was making breakfast, Tim crawled around on the kitchen floor."

Our stove was fueled by kerosene that came from a tank mounted on the wall of the kitchen about five feet higher than the floor. I filled the tank with kerosene several times a week, and it gravity-fed the stove.

I was always working on the old stove to keep it running. The tank had a small leak where it connected to the tubing, causing kerosene to drip onto the floor. I had intended to fix the leak. In the meantime, I had placed a metal cup to receive the insignificant drip until I could get to it.

I'd forgotten to empty the cup that morning, and Tim had crawled over and had taken a big drink from the cup. Addie saw him with the cup in his hands but had reached him too late.

I immediately fixed the leaky tank and again thanked the Lord for answering our prayers.

22 Generosity

I had just received word that 34 sheets of corrugated roofing had been stolen the night before from the construction site at the Malvinas (mahl-VEE-nahs) church.

The pastor was very concerned when he called me on the phone to tell me. He said an elderly couple from their church, Maria and her aged husband, were asleep in the old shed and did not hear the intruders slip through the fence and into the new church being built. The couple had volunteered to sleep on the job site and protect the building supplies because thievery was a constant threat.

I returned to the breakfast table where the Work & Witness team was finishing their meal. I casually mentioned the theft to Sherry and Scott who were about to go to the airport to return to the U.S.A. Sherry handed me US$100 and said to use it for the work.

I thanked her and made a mental note that this gift would probably pay for half of the stolen roofing.

Later, I went to Malvinas and told the people not to worry because this was the Lord's work, and He would take care of the situation. They were relieved to know that we were not blaming them for the loss. I learned that, indeed, we did lose 34 sheets of roofing worth approximately S/.584.80 *soles* (SOH-lehs; Peruvian currency).

The Work & Witness team had finished constructing yet another church, and today they were leaving for the States. We loaded their luggage and headed for the airport. We had a final prayer with the team and thanked them for their contribution to the work in the jungles. We then watched the team pass through security, waving to them as they disappeared down the corridor to the plane.

I turned to leave, and Addie came alongside me, handing me a wad of currency.

"The team gave this to me just before they went through security," she said.

It was Peruvian currency that counted out to S/.582.50 *soles.* I took out my pocket calculator and calculated the cost of 34 sheets of roofing. It came out to S/.584.80 *soles*—S/.2.50 *soles* (US$.71) short of what we needed to buy the roofing. That, combined with the US$100 we'd received earlier, allowed us to do even more than the loss we experienced.

Isn't God good?

Thank the Lord for faithful and generous Work & Witness people!

23 That Unforgettable Night

I woke from a deep sleep around 11:00 p.m. to hear someone calling my name outside. I grabbed my flashlight, hurriedly dressed, and dashed to the door.

"Doctor, there are two women from the village of San Rafael (sahn rah-fah-YEL) in a canoe extremely sick," the man in the shadows explained. "They both had teeth extracted earlier today and are in serious condition."

A medical team consisting of Dr. Iman (ee-MAHN), a pulmonologist, two physician's assistants, Jeff and Brenda, and a support group had come to New Horizons to work in our clinic for a few days. They worked three days, treating patients and relieving much suffering in this part of the jungle.

We had previously arranged to visit San Rafael, a large village two hours upriver, to hold a medical and dental clinic. We had planned to send our cargo boat to where the Chiriaco (chee-ree-AH-koh) and Marañon Rivers meet. We would take the team by truck to that spot then transport everybody by boat to the village. This would save a lot of time since boat travel from the mission station to the union of the rivers was slower and farther.

We sent the long cargo boat ahead of us. Then we loaded the truck and left under a very cloudy sky. A half hour into our trip, rain started to fall and everybody huddled together under a makeshift plastic roof in the truck bed. Arriving at the appointed place, we continued our vigil under the plastic because the rain kept pouring.

I climbed down from the truck to see if the boat had arrived at our meeting place. We waited and waited, but no boat. The rain came harder. Soon, our district superintendent arrived in his small speedboat to tell me the propeller from

the outboard motor had fallen into the river. They had forgotten to affix the security pin to keep the threaded nut from coming off.

"Fortunately they made it back to the port by drifting with the current," he reassured. "They were able to change out a prop from another motor. They should be here reasonably soon."

Meanwhile, he and I stood under a small leaky thatch leaf roof in the steady downpour.

In the distance, I heard the low rumble of a motor coming upriver. Finally, our motorist and his helper arrived. Both were huddled in the back of the boat, covered with plastic and shivering from the raw wind. We loaded the cargo boat and started off for San Rafael.

I was not a happy camper because just two days earlier, we had discussed with our motorist the installation of a new prop and the importance of securing the keeper pin.

Now, we were on our way, the rain had stopped, and everything was looking up—until we took the wrong channel in the river and had to backtrack because of sandbars.

The cold wind was damp, and our wet clothing clung to our bodies like icy fingers. We finally returned to the main channel and slowly snaked around the many curves in this tortuous part of the river. I could see in the distance our final destination, the small port of San Rafael.

An eager crowd awaited our arrival, making us feel like celebrities. We steered the long boat into a nest of smaller canoes bobbing up and down gently in the calm backwater.

After greetings, hugs, and handshakes, we were off, walking and climbing a muddy hill. Linda slipped, spraining her wrist. Brenda slid onto her backside in the mud. The Peruvians covered their mouths with their hands so as not to laugh out loud at the sight of these city slickers.

At long last, we arrived at the outskirts of the village. We crossed one last bridge, climbed a small hill, and crested within 50 yards of the center of San Rafael. The villagers led us to our sleeping quarters where we hung the mosquito nets and placed our bed rolls on split bamboo beds along one side wall of the old church building. Children and adults peered in through the cracks between the boards to glimpse these funny-looking people from the outside world.

Pastor Jorge showed us where the latrine was located, down a flooded, muddy trail. It was typical jungle bathroom. This would be a new and unforgettable experience for these brave people from the U.S.A.

Since all of the camping necessities were taken care of, we set up clinic by curtaining off sections of an older building. A couple of sections were prepared for Dr. Iman, the physician's assistants, and Jose, my nurse, who would be doing the dental work. Lines formed, and we began treating the villagers. Jose was pulling teeth as quickly as the local anesthesia permitted.

Dr. Iman and crew examined, diagnosed, and dispensed medicines to the local populace. The atmosphere was electric. This was the first time a professional group of health workers had visited the village, and the people were eternally grateful.

Soon darkness came, the clinic was closed, and we were ushered into a large room where hot, palm heart soup with cut-up pieces of grub worm awaited us. Mounds of boiled yuca and bananas piled on banana leaves were also spread on the table before us. The soup was delicious, but the team members struggled to place these morsels into their hungry mouths.

In the distance, we heard the sharp, clear notes of the large land snail shell being blown, announcing that the church service would start in a few minutes.

The entire village migrated to the largest building in the community, the church. Small wick lamps placed around the church cast off a smoky yellowish light. The service was charged with God's presence and culminated with a great altar service. We all fell into bed exhausted around 9:30 p.m.

Friday, we awoke to the steady drumming sound of rain on the corrugated roof. After a breakfast of yuca, boiled egg, and sweet lemon tea, we started clinic and continued until 11:00 a.m. Jose extracted about 50 teeth, and the two treatment rooms saw a lot of patients.

One team member dressed up as a clown and entertained the children and adults. The ladies gave toothbrushes and toothpaste to the children, showing them how to use these tools. Then the children went to the dining hall and colored with crayons for the first time in their lives. Even the older people joined in on this new activity. People milled around, laughing and pointing at each other's art work.

Some of the ladies played with the children outside with a large smiling face beach ball. It was wonderful to see the children giggling, running, and having a good time. As always, I was so happy to see two cultures blend, though they communicated only with smiles and gestures.

Some of the men and women varnished the front and sides of the large church. When they finished, the building shone with freshness, and all stood back to admire their work.

A lunch of chicken and noodles was served by people who were grateful for the visit of their friends from another country. We packed up the clinic and sleeping gear, said good-bye, and left for home about 2:30 p.m. Many villagers accompanied us to the port and waved as our boat pulled away from shore. We arrived without mishap to the New Horizons mission station—tired, but happy and grateful to God for a marvelous experience in the village.

Addie was sick and in bed when we arrived. She had a terrible cough and was exhausted. She had risen each morning around 4:00 a.m. to prepare breakfast for many teams that year and now her body was rebelling. Addie has a servant's heart and besides cooking for the teams, she carried a full load of teaching in the Bible Institute.

Dr. Iman examined her and found wheezing in the right lung. Diagnosis: pneumonia. He started her on antibiotics, inhaler, prednisone, and vaporizer. I was very concerned but so grateful to have a pulmonologist with us. Isn't it wonderful how God provides for our every need just at the right time?

We all went to bed early. I was fast asleep when someone called my name.

My mind was in a fog, trying to come to terms with the news from San Rafael.

"You say two patients are waiting in the canoe? Bring them up to the clinic," I said, reaching for my shoes.

The man ran back down the gravel road toward the port as I awakened Dr. Iman and we headed to the clinic in the damp air. I opened the door and ushered the two stretchers inside, where the occupants were placed on the examining tables.

One lady had a severe hemorrhage from a tooth socket and was comatose, not responding to external stimuli. The other was semi-comatose. We quickly connected them to intravenous bottles and prayed for the Lord to step in on their behalf. Jose packed the socket of the lady with a hemorrhage, and we sat in for a long vigil.

Sometime later, they both began to respond slightly. We were puzzled as to why the lady without the hemorrhage was in such a low state. Dr. Iman thought she was in sepsis, but she had no fever. We were monitoring their vital signs and trying to determine the cause of this. Though her tooth had been extracted earlier that day, there was no bleeding.

About 12:30 a.m., we were encouraged somewhat with their progress, when I heard a commotion outside the clinic. A group of men had just arrived from

San Rafael. They excitedly explained that many of those who'd had tooth extractions were having severe contractions of the extremity muscles and losing consciousness.

We were stunned. The leader of Job's comforters stated that all were dying.

We tried to calm them down and tell them that the two ladies in the clinic were doing well. The only thing we could think of was that the pain medication was reacting with the local anesthesia. The team had brought a relatively new pain medication from the States that evidently was too strong for the local population.

They wanted us to go to the village or to bring all of the sick ones to the clinic. We chose the latter course, assuring them that everything would be fine. Our motorist left in the speedboat at about 1:30 a.m. for the village, to bring back the ones in danger.

Fortunately the sky had lightened a little, and he knew the river like the palm of his hand. Our two patients were still improving. We left Jose in charge of them and went to the house to rest until the boat arrived with the others.

I tried to sleep a little but couldn't, for fear of what might happen. I prayed and desperately tried to rest, but images of people in convulsions and coma flooded my mind.

Knowing the superstitious nature of our people caused me great concern. I got up and went to sit in the living room, awaiting the sound of the outboard motor.

What if some of these people died? What repercussions would await us?

An eternity seemed to pass until I heard the low droning in the distance. I glanced at the clock—4:00 a.m. I gazed through the window at the great Marañon River stretched out before me like a twisting ribbon in the distance. The hills were covered with a dense cloudy fog that hovered over the valley below like a wet blanket.

"Dr. Iman," I called, rising from my chair. I wondered what the boat would bring in the quietness of this morning of uncertainty.

We headed down the gravel road with flashlights in hand.

Jose greeted us with the wonderful news that both patients were alert and out of immediate danger. Pastor Jorge Wamputsag (wahm-poot-SAHNG) came in the boat with three people from the village who'd had severe reactions to their dental extractions. He reported that all of those who were gravely ill were now on the road to recovery. What wonderful words to hear!

As daylight approached, optimism reigned. Though tired, we felt a great sense of relief. Later that day, all returned to their village except the lady who had experienced the severe hemorrhage. We finally concluded that all had experienced severe reactions to perhaps a combination of medications.

Sunday, the last patient left for the village, and we breathed a prayer of thanksgiving that God did what He said He would do and answered our prayers.

24 Moses and the Caterpillar

Mud was everywhere, and our Suburban slid and bounced from rut to rut, covering the car with coffee brown water. Travel was slow and difficult; some of those ruts had borders nearly as tall as the car itself. It was early morning, and dark clouds hovered over us like a huge wet blanket. We were traveling beside the turbulent Marañon River—its waters rose with every minute, due to an earlier torrential downpour.

Rounding a bend in the road (no, not a road, it was a nasty trail), we saw a few trucks lined up close to the Umuke (oo-moo-KEH) stream that emptied its contents into the Marañon River. The steel bridge that spanned the 30-yard-wide generally tranquil river was gone. We looked about 50 yards downstream where the water emptied into the angry force of the larger river.

Men and tractors frantically tried to ferry trucks across the rushing stream. We had crossed this waterway many times but had never witnessed this—the small stream was now a raging river. Earlier, it had reached a height of more than 20 feet and had easily swept the steel bridge away. We again surveyed the boiling Marañon River and wondered how a bridge could just vanish.

We had left the coastal city of Chiclayo the day before, after loading all of our supplies on trucks that would transport them across the Andes Mountains. Our vehicle was loaded with seven people, suitcases, and perishable items like fruit, vegetables, and Styrofoam boxes of frozen meat.

The first day of travel had taken us to Bagua Chica (BAH-gwah CHEE-kah), a small town on the other side of the mountains, located close to the edge of the jungle.

We parked our vehicle to the side of the road 50 yards from the stream. As the men and Caterpillars worked all day, we watched, hoping the water level would drop for us to cross the raging stream.

Afternoon waned on and darkness engulfed the jungle. We prepared to spend the long night sitting in our car.

Tim, our eight-year-old son, became very sick with vomiting and dysentery. We moved supplies around in the back of the Suburban, making a small area for him to lie down.

All during that long, cool night, we heard the roar of water crashing over huge boulders on its mad dash to the Marañon. Finally, the first rays of light broke through the darkness, and our cramped bodies exited the confined space.

I walked to the stream, hoping to see the water level dropping. Instead, I was greeted with a roar of water and large waves that bounced from one boulder to another. This tropical-paradise-turned-quagmire soon came alive with people moving in every direction. All eyes were fixed on the stream that prevented us from continuing our journey.

Soon, tractors roared to life and the road crew worked feverishly to pull large Volvo trucks across the stream—trucks loaded with perishable items that had to get to market before spoiling.

We all watched this fascinating scene of humanity against nature. Water came up to the doors of the huge trucks as they were slowly pulled across, despite the unrelenting pressure of the fast-moving water.

Just upstream from where the bridge had been, a huge oil pipeline carried crude oil from the lower jungle to the coast. The pipeline, about five feet in diameter and probably 30 feet higher than the stream, was bent by the force of the flood. The pipeline had to be reinforced quickly so it wouldn't rupture and pour mega-gallons of crude into the stream, and thus into the larger river.

Morning soon turned to afternoon. We were tired and hungry, and Tim was very sick. I was concerned. We had made friends with the construction supervisor earlier that day, and he sympathized with our predicament.

"There goes another Volvo truck across the stream!" someone shouted.

We all ran to the bank, watching the large Caterpillar slowly pull this huge truck into the raging waters.

"Wow, look at that, would you?"

The water splashed up onto the door and filled the engine compartment. The driver held on for dear life until the Caterpillar and truck finally exited the

stream on the other side of the river. He tried to start his engine, but water had entered the crankcase, making his vehicle inoperable.

"There is no way we can cross that stream in our small carryall," I exclaimed. "The water would be higher than our roof. We can't continue."

Disappointment settled over us, and we began to mentally prepare to stay yet another night.

A few minutes later, the supervisor approached me and presented a wild idea to get us across the stream.

"The water level is not dropping and looks like it might rise higher. If you are game, we need to act fast," he stated.

I looked at our muddy, tired, hungry family and said, "Let's go for it!"

"Drive your car close to the edge of the river and pop the hood." I did as he instructed, wondering what he'd planned.

He removed the distributor cap and wrapped the distributor tightly in plastic. He then tied a thick hemp rope to the chassis and motioned for the huge Caterpillar to maneuver to the front of our car, where he tied the other end of the rope to this monster of a machine.

The rope was securely tied, and he signaled for another Caterpillar to maneuver into place. It had a solid steel tank attached to the left side—this machine was used to lift heavy telephone poles into place. The tank was probably ten feet long and six feet high from the ground level. It actually was a counterweight used when lifting heavy loads into the air.

"Have your wife, daughter, and young son climb onto the large Caterpillar with the tank. Tell the older boys to climb up high onto the Cat that will pull the car," he instructed. "You sit in the driver's seat of your car and keep the wheels pointing straight ahead."

What in the world is he going to do? I wondered as I slipped behind the steering wheel. My palms were sweaty, my heart raced, and I fastened my eyes onto the raging river. My family perched on the two Caterpillars, high above the raging stream, waiting for this drama to unfold.

The supervisor signaled and those Cats roared to life, slowly inching into deeper water. I was terrified when the rope became taut and pulled me into the stream.

The large tank Caterpillar stayed right beside the car, about 15 feet upstream from our position. As we went farther into the water, the car swayed slightly from side to side.

I grasped the wheel more tightly.

To my left, the wild Marañon was less than 50 yards away.

What if the rope breaks? We'll be swept away!

To my right, an incredible drama was taking place. The Cat with the tank was flanking our car, dividing the current. Walls of water six feet high rushed madly in front of and behind the monster. Our car was in a pocket of protection, and I felt like Moses crossing the Red Sea.

The lead Cat pulled us out of the stream to higher ground and safety. The tank Cat followed us onto the bank and drove away.

The floorboards of the car were not even wet.

The supervisor untied the rope and told me to pop the hood. He then removed the plastic from around the distributor and said, "Fire her up."

I turned the key in the ignition, and that little motor purred to life!

We thanked the supervisor and the Caterpillar pilots and jubilantly drove to our home deep in the rainforest.

25 The Tarantula Bath

Addie was washing the breakfast dishes when she spotted movement on the kitchen wall in front of her.

"Tarantula," she screamed and backed away from the sink.

The large, black, hairy spider crawled slowly down the wall toward the kitchen counter.

We have many spiders in the jungle, but tarantulas are the scariest looking. There are the huge, hairy, black ones, the brown ones with an orange body, and the brown ones with yellow stripes on the legs.

I was cleaning the dirt floor of our garage, picking up dried leaves and bits of trash in the corner when I felt a searing pain in my hand. Immediately a large brown spider with yellow-striped legs fled the scene of the crime with a friend of mine hot on his trail. My friend managed to flush the spider out of its hiding place and put a quick end to its earthly existence.

The pain in my rapidly swelling hand felt like someone was pounding a nail deep into the flesh. I ran to the house, retrieved ice from the freezer, and soaked my hand in ice water. After a few minutes, my hand was twice its normal size. The pain was unrelenting.

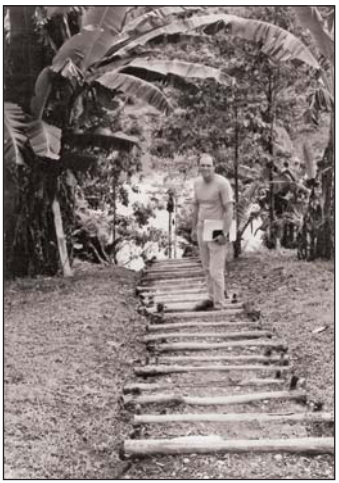
Friends from a Work & Witness team were visiting, and immediately they prayed for me and my unbearable pain. The Bible Institute students heard of my situation and dashed to our home to offer their support. When I described the spider, they told me I wouldn't die from the bite—but would wish that I could.

They made a poultice of jungle plants, but it didn't help. I took strong pain pills—no relief. I paced the floor with my hand elevated. I walked outside, tears rolling down my cheeks. I have a strong tolerance to pain, but this pounding in my hand was excruciating.

Finally, after five hours of exhausting pain and a strong injection, relief gradually came.

As the black tarantula neared the counter, Addie ran to find someone to kill the hairy creature. Usually people looked through the screen windows of our home day and night, just because they liked to see how we foreigners did things, even menial tasks. She knew someone should be near the house who would kill this phenomenon of nature. She wasn't particular about who she could find—even a small child would do.

Would you believe it? No one was outside our house that day. I was on the high hill behind the mission station teaching in the Bible Institute, and Addie was all alone.



Larry on the 325 Steps

When we climbed the 325 steps that led to the Bible Institute, we were rewarded with a bird's eye view of the breathtaking valley below.

The Bible Institute consisted of five small buildings. The library/classroom was the only one with a cement floor. The church, dining hall, men's dormitory, and small classroom all had dirt floors.

Some of Addie's classes were held in the small classroom that had bamboo sides three feet high. There was no ceiling, so everything was open and exposed.

One morning, Addie was teaching when some fine, powdery substance like sawdust fell close to her. She glanced up and saw a black tarantula three feet above her head. Then she saw a second one, screamed, and ran from the classroom.

I was teaching in the library when I heard Addie scream. Running outside, I saw Addie shaking and nearly in tears. She announced that she would not return to the classroom until the tarantulas were killed. The students cut some

bamboo poles and took care of the two terrified tarantulas that doubtless had shattered eardrums.

The next day Addie was in the same classroom and noticed the students intently looking over her head.

"What are you looking at," she asked.

"A tarantula is right above your head," they answered in unison.

"I don't believe you," she countered.

"One is right where you are standing," they insisted. Addie looked up, screamed, and ran from the classroom.

"Why didn't you kill this thing before I came to class today," she asked the students from her safe spot outside.

"We like to hear you scream and see you run," they admitted with grins.

Cautiously Addie entered the house to confront the monster that seemed to be growing in size. Nervously, broom in hand, she approached the wall where the tarantula was still descending. Her heart was racing, palms sweating, and every muscle in her body tense while she formulated a plan. She raised the broom, ready to smash him against the wall…when she remembered that the walls of our home were made of a brittle material that would break after receiving any blow.

I can't hit the wall because it will break, and Larry will have to repair it—which is a big job.

She turned the broom around and decided to squash the tarantula with the end of the handle. But her hands were shaking so much she knew she would miss him, and he would jump on her.

"No, I can't do it. What am I going to do?" she muttered. The tarantula was moving from the wall to the screen window and was about to reach the counter.

Ok, I will swing the broom and kill the tarantula on the screen and will not damage the wall.

She was ready to swing…when she realized that the blow would burst out the screen window and take even more work to repair. But once the spider reached the counter, she knew it would disappear behind the cabinet.

Oh no, what am I going to do? I don't want this spider hiding in my kitchen!

At that moment she noticed the kettle of water boiling on the stove. Steam rose from the spout, calling out to Addie. She poured hot water into a pan and threw it onto the unsuspecting tarantula.

The water struck the creature, and he folded like an accordion. He never knew what hit him. The water went through the screen, causing no damage to the house. Addie then grabbed the broom and beat the boiled spider to pieces.

Later that night, she had a ham radio contact with our son Rusty in Quito, Ecuador, where he was in boarding school. Addie told him of her heroics that morning, stating that she had killed a huge tarantula.

Rusty knew about his mom's mortal fear of spiders and congratulated her on her brave act—until he heard of how she had disposed of this legendary enemy.

"Mom," he said, "that wasn't very heroic."

"I don't care! I killed the crazy thing before it could get me!"

26 The Suitcase

"Doctor! Help!"

I walked to the screen door and peered into the dark night. A shadowy figure appeared, and I recognized him from San Mateo (sahn mah-TEH-oh), a village upriver from our home. He had traveled by canoe on a treacherous river this dark night to tell me his wife was dying.

"What makes you think she is dying?" I asked, knowing the pessimistic thought processes of our people.

Death is so prominent in cultures such as these that they ascribe a morbidity to all major illnesses. Many times in the clinic, family members cried and chanted the death song, informing me that the patient was dying. I had been called upon to travel great distances under difficult circumstances to treat a family member who was supposedly dying—only to find that they were on the mend.

My San Mateo friend told me his wife was very pale, breathing hard and fast, and had nearly passed out.

Convinced that perhaps this time it warranted risking my life on a dangerous stretch of river to offer help, I told my wife good-bye with her "Please be careful!" ringing in my ears.

Flashlight in hand, I sprinted to the clinic to prepare my medical kit. We filled a tank with gasoline from our fuel house and arrived at the boat, which gently swayed in the quiet backwater of our port.

I called to our motorist, Moises (moy-SAYS), who joined us at the river. He fired up the outboard motor to make sure it was running well before we left on yet another adventure. I sat in the front of the boat, shining my flashlight on the river bank. Addie stood in the shadows of our doorway, concern written on her face.

The rope was untied and tossed inside the boat, and Moises backed away from the bank, turning the boat around to face the blackness of night.

I silently prayed as our boat left the calm waters of the Kusu River, and I immediately felt the jolt of powerful currents as we entered the mighty Marañon River. The bow of our boat was shoved downstream for a moment until Moises accelerated the outboard motor, righting the boat and pointing it upriver.

The wind stung our faces. My eyes could barely make out the outline of treetops on the distant shore. Water splashed over the sides of the boat, chilling me to the bone.

Moises concentrated on the large, sweeping curve in the river about a half mile from our position. He knew the huge boulders protruding into the river would have to be cleared, although the main current would try to force us into their path. The deafening roar of water crashing across those boulders surrounded us.

My flashlight's beam was gobbled in the intense blackness of night. I trusted Moises because he knew this stretch of river like the back of his hand. During daylight hours, this boulder-lined curve caused great concern, but at night it was nerve-wracking.

He held a steady course and gradually turned the boat toward the right, careful not to strike the sand bar extending into the river. Plowing into the sandbar and breaking a shear pin would render the propeller useless and leave us at the mercy of an unforgiving river. We had to pass between boulders on the left side of the river and sandbars on the right.

I automatically clutched the side of the boat. Skillfully, Moises navigated the treacherous stretch of river, and we shot free of both the boulders and sandbars, coming around the sharp curve to safer water. We sighed with relief and gratefully murmured, "Thank you, Lord."

Up ahead was the small muddy port of San Mateo, and Moises nudged the boat softly into the bank. We disembarked, glad to step onto solid ground. Rafael led us along a dark trail to his home. After removing the upright poles that formed a doorway, he invited us inside the typical, one-room, thatched-roof hut.

A number of people were present, worry etched on the faces of all. My eyes adjusted to the faint light produced from a small fire of three logs in the middle of the hut. A little wick lamp also cast smoky, yellowish light.

Rafael's wife was pale, weak, and laboring to breathe. She had been to our clinic a couple of weeks earlier. She had given birth and had been extremely anemic, and I had given her medication for the anemia.

After examining her, I asked, "Have you taken the medicine I prescribed for you?"

She glanced away, slightly embarrassed by the question. Finally she said, "No. I was afraid to take the different kind of pills together."

Pointing to an old wooden suitcase, she said, "They are in there."

Rafael opened the chest, and there were all the medicines safe and sound. This was not unusual. The people were terrified to mix medicines, thinking it would cause them harm.

I insisted that she take the medicine. Her husband was disgusted because he had risked his life in a small canoe at night on a dangerous river. I knew she would at last comply with my instructions.

Old Kusu Station—Clinic Lineup

Moises and I walked back to the boat and began our journey home the same way we had come. Once we rounded the big curve, passing the boulders and sandbars, I saw the distant white light of home.

Our boat turned off the Marañon onto the Kusu River, and we coasted into our little quiet port. I looked up the hill and saw Addie standing on the tiny front porch of that lighthouse in the middle of the jungle.

We uttered a prayer of thanksgiving for our safe return and for the privilege of serving God in this very needy part of the Amazon.

The struggles with witchcraft, superstitions, and the fear of the spirit world challenged us from the onset of our ministry in the rainforest.

Customs were instilled into the children at an early age, causing great conflict with new ideas from the outside world. Bacteria and microbes were mysterious concepts to understand. You couldn't see them with the naked eye so, to the villagers, they were outside the realm of belief.

Many times, a patient would come to the clinic, receive medicine, then visit the witch doctor. Or the patients would go to the witch doctor first then come to the clinic, covering all of their bases.

A long time passed before they placed their confidence in us. God helped us cure many patients when the witch doctor had not been successful. Fortunately, the clinic opened many doors for reaching the hearts of the people with the gospel. A compassionate ministry of touching the whole person goes way beyond cultural differences.

Traveling clinics on the river open the door to evangelize many villages. As the years drifted by, we began preparing students in the Bible Institute to serve not only as ministers, but also as nurses at the village level. This gave the church a place of prominence and prestige in the local village.

27 That's Why

The doors burst open and masked terrorists marched into the church that Sunday night. Fear gripped my heart as they surrounded the congregation, pointing their automatic weapons at us.

Addie and I were in Iquitos, which is perhaps the largest city in the world that does not have a road into or out of the city that goes farther than 60 miles, a city in the heart of the Peruvian jungle with a population of nearly one-half million. We were there receiving Work & Witness teams that were building churches in and around Iquitos.

After the last team left, we received word that our daughter-in-law had delivered our eighth grandchild and wanted Addie to go to California to help her for a week or so.

Addie was excited to see this new baby girl and spend some time with our son Tim and his wife, Kelly. I stayed in Iquitos, preparing to take a five-day trip to Pucallpa (poo-KAHL-pah) on the Ucayali River by a large flat-bottom barge with two decks for passengers. I had heard about two small congregations of our church located in Pucallpa. I wanted to meet these people and see how the work was going.

I had also wanted an excuse to go to Pucallpa, because back in 1967 I had taken our two older boys, nine-year-old Rusty and seven-year-old Greg, to the South American boarding school for missionary children of various denominations. At that time, it was a four-day trip from where we lived on the Kusu and Marañon Rivers in the northeastern jungles of Peru.

Pucallpa in 1967 was an isolated town on the Ucayali River. The streets were unpaved, and it felt like a western frontier town. The final leg of our four-day trip had been from Lima to Pucallpa on an old World War II plane, a DC3. We had to suck on oxygen tubes when we crossed the Andes Mountains since the cabins were non-pressurized.

What a trip that was—one that would live in our memories! As the years passed, Pucallpa became a large, busy, important city. A new road came in from the capital city, Lima, thus making it a principal port on the Ucayali River.

I purchased a hammock, paid my passage, and, along with Pastor Rogelio (ROH-heh-lee-oh), boarded the barge.

The deck was filled with hammocks of every description, shape, and color. The boat was packed with 200 people as we threaded our way through the sea of hammocks looking for a space to tie up ours. We ducked under ropes that held the hammocks tied to long iron bars that ran the entire length of the deck. They were hung in every direction conceivable with some semblance of order. Nudging hammocks aside, especially with their occupants inside, was quite a challenge.

Finally, we found a small spot to tie ours onto the long bars. With hammocks in place, we put our belongings on the floor under the hammocks. Now it was time to check out the ship. Rogelio watched over our stuff as I explored.

Of course, the most important place to look for was the bathroom. The common bathrooms for 200 people were in the back of the boat.

"Pardon me, pardon me," I repeated as I gently swung hammocks aside to go through the maze. Triumphantly, I succeeded in reaching the back without stepping on someone.

Each of the six bathrooms consisted of a steel door that led into a small room about four feet square. I looked at the seatless toilet suspiciously. I looked around to see how you flush the commode and found two handles—one for the toilet and the other for the shower. The shower head was just off-center from the toilet.

I later discovered that the water was pumped out of the river into large tanks on the top deck that gravity-fed the bathrooms. When the river is muddy, guess what? It makes showering interesting. It is also a balancing act to try to get your clothes off and on without dropping something into the toilet or onto the floor.

Just outside the bathrooms, six lavatories lined the wall. These were used for everything from washing your bowl, spoon, and cup, to brushing your teeth, and who knows whatever else.

Life jackets were stacked in a room with a large glass window facing the deck. In case of an emergency, the boat would sink before all 200 people could scramble to get one. You would probably be in greater danger of dying from being hung from one of the hammock ropes than drowning.

Darkness rolled around, and with it came the cool, tropical night air filled with dampness. I didn't have a blanket so the cold air went right through my hammock.

Oh no, I need to visit the bathroom.

Nearly flipping out of my hammock, dodging an elbow here and a foot there, I began my dark journey through the maze of hammocks to the little room. Sometime later after ducking under ropes and stepping over bodies scattered all over the floor, I finally reached my destination. The smell led me directly to it.

Then my mind was in a fog of sleep deprivation.

Which handle is it? I thought, not wanting to take a shower with my clothes on. Fortunately, I selected the right handle, and I soon struggled my way back to the hammock.

At long last, I arrived, only to see my hammock pressed together by bodies on either side. I nudged my way forward, gently shoving both hammocks away from mine and trying to get into it before the other hammocks swung back and closed my approach.

Unfortunately, my hammock was not very long and had obviously been made for children. I folded my body in a jackknife position, and the cold air rushed in.

All through the night, the boat stopped to pick up cargo and passengers, giving the mosquitoes an opportunity for a free meal. The bodies wrapped in blankets were no targets, so the hungry horde feasted on those without covering. When the boat pulled away from the bank of these small villages, the mosquitoes gave way to the cold air that rushed through the deck.

What a joy to see the first rays of sunlight. The deck became a beehive of activity with 200 people heading for six bathrooms. My eyelids were crusty and sticking together. My clothes looked like I'd slept in them all night (come to think of it, I did), and my body was trying to switch from an arched position to an upright stance.

Rogelio, my companion, had slept like a baby all night, not making one trip to the little room.

"*Buenos dias* (BWAY-nohs DEE-ahs), Doctor," he said and headed for you know where.

I groggily maneuvered my way to a lavatory and washed away the glue that held my eyelids together.

Around 7:00 a.m., the bell rang, announcing that breakfast was ready.

It looked like a modified cattle drive moving toward the soup kitchen. A long line formed with each person holding his spoon and bowl.

By the time I fumbled through my belongings looking for the bowl and spoon I had purchased before boarding the boat, the line was already a mile long. Rogelio and I joined the crowd. We inched forward until we stood before the cooks.

My bowl was filled with lukewarm porridge made of thinned chocolate, mixed with milk and sugar. Another cook handed me three circle-like breads and a hard-boiled egg. The breads had probably been baked a week earlier and had to be dipped into the lukewarm chocolate to soften them for consumption.

I don't do well with hard-boiled eggs that smell like a sulfur pit and have no salt to make them halfway palatable. Come to think of it, though, the food was really good that morning long ago. Lunch consisted of a piece of chicken, noodles, rice, and half a boiled banana. Supper was a soup made from leftover lunch.

Whenever the boat stopped at villages to load or unload passengers and cargo, women and children came on board to sell toasted grub worms, baked fish, bananas, boiled yuca, Jell-O, tropical fruit, and other local foods.

For entertainment, I watched the crew load lumber, bananas, salted fish, papaya, and pigs that were picked up by the ears and tail and tossed aboard. Sunsets were beautiful, and the river took on a serenity that can only be experienced.

Boat life is full of sights and sounds, some pleasant and some that display the carnality of humanity. Music, loud talking, selfishness, pride, and importance walk around like a peacock in full plumage.

It's sad to think of all that goes on inside the walls of the ship. I saw a young mother with a small child—the mother not much more than a child herself. Many sad faces were evidences of hard lives. There are poor and not so poor, old and young, and all in between. Some were drifting with the current like the logs and debris on the river.

Children ran to and fro as if there wasn't a care in the world. They reveled in exploring the nooks and crannies of the huge ship.

On the other hand, many people were extremely humble and friendly. They were patient, helpful, honest, and easy to talk with.

Traveling on the river is like taking a crash course in cross-cultural studies. These were my people, and I felt comfortable with them. They were the reason we were in the Amazon—to bring them the love of Jesus.

Rogelio and I had prepared to stop halfway between Iquitos and Pucallpa to visit a couple of our churches in the towns of Pedrera (peh-DREH-rah) and Huayuna (wah-YOO-nah), out in the middle of nowhere. I had wanted to see our work on this part of the river and observe what God was doing in this remote area.

The plan was to visit them for a couple of days, and I would then catch another boat to continue my journey to Pucallpa. Rogelio would proceed to Contamana (con-tah-MAH-nah) to check on the possibilities for opening work in this very important port city on the Ucayali and then return to Iquitos.

The Ucayali is the longest, largest river in Peru. It begins in the high Andes Mountains as a trickle from melting snow. It absorbs the Urubamba (oo-roo-BAHM-bah) River that swings around the base of the famous Macchu Picchu (MAH-choo PIK-choo) Inca ruins and flows past Pucallpa. About 50 miles upriver from Iquitos, it joins the mighty Marañon River and together they form the beginning of the largest river in the world, the Amazon.

The sky was beautifully blue, the sun was hot, and the rainforest was a gorgeous patchwork of green as our boat pulled into the mud bank where canoes and smaller boats were tied. A large crowd of people had gathered to sell their wares or to board and tie their hammocks for the trip to Pucallpa.

Rogelio and I disembarked and threaded through the sea of humanity. We then headed down a dirt trail that led us to the Church of the Nazarene.

My heart rejoiced to see a beautiful little church in this forgotten part of the vineyard. We approached the pastor's home, built on stilts about five feet above the ground. Pastor Alder (AHL-der) greeted us like long lost family and directed us to the log propped up against the house with notches cut in it to use as a ladder to reach the palm wood floor where they lived. The roof was of thatched leaves, and the walls were made from palm wood nailed to the round poles that supported the structure. We were invited to sit on straight-back wooden chairs and drink a tropical beverage that Alder's wife prepared for us.

After we'd tied up our mosquito nets and laid out our bed rolls in the church, where we would sleep, Alder took us on a tour of the town and showed us the property where the new church would be built. I later learned that Alder and his

family had lived in what was now the church. However as the work grew, they gave up their home and moved to the little house on stilts.

Lying on my bedroll that night, listening to the frogs croaking outside, I wondered, *Would I be willing to give up my house and make it into a church—and move to less favorable surroundings?*

The next morning, we were invited to enjoy a delicious breakfast of fish, yuca, and other tropical foods. While I sat on the hard bench and looked around at the meager furnishings in this humble setting, I had a burning question for pastor Alder.

"Brother Alder, what brought you out to this isolated, nearly forsaken part of the jungle?"

He hesitated and then explained his burning passion and conviction.

> Missionary, when I was sixteen years of age and recently saved, I went to Pucallpa to study high school. I attended a small evangelical church that nurtured me and took me into their fellowship. During this time, the Shining Path, a revolutionary terrorist group, was intimidating church congregations and killing people indiscriminately.
>
> One night during a church service, the doors burst open. Armed, masked terrorists marched into the church that Sunday night. Fear gripped my heart as they surrounded the congregation, pointing their automatic weapons at us.
>
> That night long ago still lives on in my mind, when those terrorists pointed their automatic weapons at the congregation. We were terrified, knowing what they were capable of if we resisted. The head terrorist said, "Everyone who is a Christian, raise your hand."
>
> Nearly every hand rapidly rose into the air. He then barked out the order for us to throw our Bibles on the floor. Bibles tumbled to the floor. "Spit on those Bibles and jump down and hop around like the frogs you are."
>
> I held onto the bench in front of me so I would not faint. Sweat rolled down my body, my heart beat wildly, and I wanted to escape, but I knew that was impossible. Tears flowed down my cheeks, and I clung to that bench for dear life.
>
> The leader asked, "Who is the pastor of this church?" Every eye focused on the pastor and his wife standing to one side of the platform, clutching their Bibles over their hearts. The pastor spoke, holding his Bible in his hand, "I am the pastor."

The terrorist moved toward them, thrusting the muzzle of his weapon right against the pastor's chest and ordered him to throw his Bible on the floor.

I stood frozen in time, waiting for the pastor to throw his Bible. Instead, the pastor looked that man in the eye and said, "I will never desecrate God's Word."

We all gasped and knew that their lives were over. The man shouted, "I will give you one last chance to obey my order, or your lives will be taken this night."

Silence filled the air, and I knew this terrorist meant what he said. We all waited with bated breath. Finally, the pastor looked squarely into that man's eyes and stated, "You may take my life, but my soul will be with Jesus. You need to know this—God will judge me, and he will certainly judge you."

The terrorist hesitated for a long moment. He lowered his gun and spoke to the congregation. "I was a Christian and read the Bible, but I gave all of that up, and now I am a member of the Shining Path."

Pointing to the pastor and his wife he said, "These two are true believers. They are willing to die for what they believe in, but the rest of you are hypocrites. We will be watching the rest of you; and if you don't behave like them, we will be back to finish what we came here to do."

He turned and led his group into the dark night.

Pastor Alder explained that on that Sunday, the pastor and his wife became his heroes. They were willing to die for what they believed. He looked at me and said, "Missionary, that is the reason we are here in Pedrera. That's why."

Rogelio and I left on our journey, but the words lived in my memory: "That's why."

28 The Rolling Stones

One very dark night, I was returning to our home after turning off the diesel generator that provided light for the mission station. The crunch of gravel under my feet broke the silence of a quiet tropical night.

Upon entering the doorway to our home, I quickly formulated a plan in my mind, one that would live forever. Perhaps I should admit that it had been a very dramatic, traumatic, and long day in our paradise.

A Work & Witness team was helping us with building projects around the mission station. The pastor and women from the team slept in our home. The rest of the men were sleeping in our unfinished dormitory. The dorm had five-foot-high walls with screens above them and around the one end and two long sides of the building. The roof was made of corrugated steel, and the beds were made of bamboo. The floor was covered with fine powdered dirt, making the dorm very rustic, to say the least.

Arriving home that night, I asked the pastor if he wanted to have some fun. Being a prankster, he said yes to my well-formulated plan to scare the men in the dormitory.

We filled several Styrofoam cups with pea-sized rocks. With flashlights in hand, we sneaked to the men's dorm about 200 yards from the house. Quietly, we approached the dorm from a small hill that overlooked the building. We turned off our flashlights and inched within ten yards from the long side where the beds were located.

The men were in the process of tucking the corners of their mosquito nets under the foam mattresses. We waited patiently until one by one they turned off their flashlights, told each other good night, and were ready to sleep.

In that quiet moment, I whispered, "Now!"

We threw the cups full of rocks high into the air onto the top of the corrugated steel roof.

It had been a busy day on the station, starting with an emergency call in the early morning hours for me to attend a very sick lady who had been bitten by an extremely large bushmaster.

The bushmaster is the largest poisonous snake in the Amazon. The adult can grow up to 12 feet long. It is a pit viper, and the venom produces a neurotoxin and causes necrosis, or dead tissue. Fortunately, it is a nocturnal snake so few bites are reported.

The woman's condition was grave, and her vital signs were dropping fast since approximately 12 hours had passed and the venom was in the general circulation. We administered anti-venom, but she was already slipping into a coma.

Later that morning, she passed away even though we had done everything possible to save her. The women began to wail, singing the death cry over and over. They beat on their chests and pulled at their hair.

The Work & Witness team members were working 40 yards from the clinic where this scene occurred. They watched the family members carry the woman on a bamboo stretcher to the river, where the waiting canoe would transport them back to their village. The wailing was heart-rending, and they felt helpless as they watched the Peruvians disappear upriver.

Later that afternoon, two men approached our house, asking for the doctor. The older man's face was almost completely covered by a large white cloth. Only one eye was exposed, and he spoke to me in muffled tones through the cloth. I could not understand what he was telling me, so his son translated: "My father has advanced leishmaniasis (leesh-mahn-EYE-ah-sis) and wants to see Dr. Garman."

The team members stood around, wondering what was hidden behind the white cloth. I asked the father to remove the cloth so I could see the damaged facial tissues. I had treated many patients from this devastating tropical disease. He slowly removed the cloth, and every eye focused on the man's face.

The team members choked off a collective gasp. The man's face was incredibly disfigured. His entire nose was gone, allowing us to look directly into the throat. The upper lip, cheek, and eye socket on the left side of his face were completely destroyed. Immediately, I asked him to put the cloth back in place, not wanting to embarrass him. I then had to tell them that no treatment was available, for

his condition was too advanced. I think they knew the answer before I had even examined the father.

After saying good-byes, I watched them disappear around a bend in the road, leaving me and the team members in deep thought.

That night after supper, the team was sad and pensive. They asked me to tell them some stories about our ministry in the jungle. I tried to share stories that would take their minds off the tragic scenes they had witnessed.

The questions finally migrated to the events of the morning. What was the wailing about, they asked, and what does it mean?

I explained to them that these people believe death does not come from natural causes, but through bewitchment, which means somebody must pay by revenge killings. I shared that when a witch doctor loses a patient, they accuse him of bad witch craft and that his life will be in jeopardy.

"What would they do to a witch doctor whose patient dies?" they asked.

"Many witch doctors have paid with their lives," I stated and told them about tribal customs. At night, when the witch doctor least expects an attack, the grieved family will approach his hut and kill him with a shotgun while he sleeps on his split bamboo bed.

"Would they do anything to you since you treated her and she died?" they asked.

I could see their concern. I explained that they would not hold me responsible since a poisonous snake had caused the death.

The men went to the dorm that unforgettable night with thoughts of revenge running through their minds.

Bang!

The rocks crashed onto the roof and rolled down the corrugated steel. The cacophony reverberated across the jungle. Excited voices broke the eerie silence inside the dorm. Flashlights started shining in every direction, as men tumbled to the floor in crouching positions, listening for the next volley of gunfire.

The night was quiet once again, and we could hear only the labored breathing of men while they waited in stark fear. The pastor and I desperately tried not to laugh out loud and give our presence away.

The silence that followed was broken by a lone voice inside the dorm. They knew that they had been had. "Doctor, tell your wife that we have a bunch of sheets to wash."

29 The Amazonian Call

Addie Garman's Testimony

I was in the sixth grade when God called me into missionary service. It was easy to say "yes" then, but later, in my teen years, I began to argue with God.

I thought I had too many fears to be a missionary. I was afraid of snakes, spiders, bugs, and anything that stings, flies, bites, or slithers. My family had often teased me about my fear of water more than three feet deep—even in an amusement park.

I also knew if God called me to be a missionary, I would be an old maid living alone in a hut somewhere with all of these fears.

Finally, one day while I was in college, I knelt by my bed and prayed, "OK, Lord, if you really want me to be a missionary then show me."

I let my Bible fall open and then, putting my finger down, I read, "How can they hear without someone preaching to them?" (Romans 10:14b).

God asked, "Are you willing for them not to hear because you won't go?"

"Oh, no, Lord, I'll go!"

Well, where did the Lord

Addie, Rusty, Larry, Greg, and Candy Garman—Early Years.

send me, but to the jungles of the Amazon where we have everything that bites, stings, and slithers, and one of the most dangerous rivers in the world.

The day finally arrived when we came to the great fast-rolling Marañon River, headwaters of the Amazon. With three small children, we had to board that large canoe to make our way downriver to our new home deep in the jungle. I became panicky as I stepped into that rocking boat. My heart beat wildly, and I told the children to hold on tight.

"Don't anybody rock the boat!" I yelled as we shoved off from shore. As soon as we began moving downriver, a peace came over me, and I knew I was where God wanted me to be.

Before long, I was bitten by a coral snake inside our home, and we didn't have the anti-venom. God spared my life through the prayers of many people that night long ago. The verse I have clung to across my missionary service is Isaiah 41:10, NASB:

"Do not fear, for I am with you;
Do not anxiously look about you, for I *am* your God.
I will strengthen you, surely I will help you,
Surely I will uphold you with My righteous right hand."

Larry Garman's Testimony

Oh, Amazon, the call of your hidden people weighs upon my heart. I have crossed your mountains, walked your trails, and navigated your many and mighty waterways to visit isolated villages where your people live as victims to fear and superstitions.

The call came in that still small voice to follow the footprints of earlier missionaries, God's servants, who gave the last ounce of devotion to your people that lived in darkness, enslaved to witchcraft and revenge killings.

I cannot forget that Sunday night in California when the Holy Spirit spoke to me about your people and their spiritual darkness and about the challenge, "Who will tell them?"

Oh, Amazon, you broke my heart that night, and I cried like a baby for the needs of your people.

I shall never forget the sounds of the rainforest that greeted our ears when we first arrived. The drums beat long into the night and the *masato* (mah-SAH-

toh) pots overflowed with their intoxicating liquor as your people staggered in darkness and sin. The chanting of the witch doctor and the hopeless cry of death filled the jungle with sadness and despair that penetrated to the very depths of our souls. I thought of Acts 26:17b–18a (NIV), "I am sending you to them to open their eyes and turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God."

Then, when all seemed hopeless, we heard another sound along your rivers and across your trails in village after village. It was the fresh wind of hope sweeping through the jungle in the form of the Spirit of your Creator. Song, praise, and prayer filled the air as God moved upon your people. The drums stopped beating and the masato pots went dry. Hope replaced despair.

I relish the memories of your people kneeling on packed dirt floors in churches across Amazonia, pleading with a loving God to help them. The fervency of their prayers still sends chills down my spine. The hundreds of baby dedications in so many churches are still vivid in my memory. My heart rejoices over the countless baptisms in streams and rivers too many to mention. Thanks for the glorious privilege to treat thousands upon thousands in our clinic and in villages across your land.

Oh, Amazon, you have witnessed the birth of the church among your people, and you will never be the same. Holiness has swept through your forests. Your people have touched our lives and taken us into their hearts, and we will forever be grateful. They have taught us much about ourselves, and their examples have inspired us to a deeper commitment.

My deepest gratitude goes to a loving and caring church that has supported us through the years in ways that defy explanation. To Work & Witness teams, medical and dental teams, church leaders, and a great host of people who have kept us in their prayers and hearts for 46 years. We thank you for your great investment in the people of the Amazon.

30 Christmas Joy

And these things we write to you that your joy may be full. —1 John 1:4, NKJV

The children were grown and gone, and Addie and I were alone for the first time during the Christmas season.

"Addie, do you want me to put up the tree?" I asked.

"Nope. The kids won't be here to see it."

"Are you going to bake cookies?"

"Nope. Why should I? The children won't be here."

She had the Christmas blues; and without the family, Christmas wouldn't be the same.

I went to the clinic that day, leaving Addie thinking about a Christmas without our children to celebrate with us. Later that morning, I asked our district superintendent when he and his family were going downriver to Chipe for the holidays. He told me they weren't going home; that they would be here for Christmas.

I asked each family in our mission station the same question. Usually, the families living on the station went to their respective villages to celebrate Christmas with their families. However this year, for some unknown reason, all were staying for the holidays.

The next morning, I commented to Addie about this unusual happening.

That day the Lord spoke to her about giving the Indian families on the mission station a joyous Christmas.

"Larry! Come here!" she called, her voice filled with excitement and determination. "Get out the tree; we're going to decorate it!"

I wondered what had happened, as she took pots from the cupboard and announced that she was going to bake.

Her excitement spilled over onto me, and I retrieved the large green plastic tree and ornaments from our storage area. We decorated the tree with lights and everything else, placing it in the corner of the living room, overlooking the Marañon River.

Addie began baking cookies of every description. When some of the children wandered by the house, they smelled the cookies baking and pressed their noses against the screened-in windows, looking at the strange, beautiful tree.

Addie's Jungle Kitchen

Addie spotted them and quickly produced fresh-baked cookies for them. Cookies were snatched politely from the plate and devoured. The kids couldn't believe their luck and quickly ran to inform the other children of the gold mine they had discovered. Soon, our house was surrounded by eager faces—and willing hands stretched out to partake of Addie's offerings. They were devouring cookies about as fast as she pulled them from the oven.

Early that afternoon, Addie said, "We need to go to Chiriaco to buy gifts for each child on the mission station."

I fired up the pickup truck for the hour-long trip to the small town of Chiriaco. Rain had fallen, and mud was everywhere as we bounced from one rut to the next. About 20 minutes from town, we encountered a landslide and had to walk the rest of the way.

The town had one small store where we could buy a few plastic toys and dolls. Addie purchased something for each child; and back to the pickup we went, with bags full of inexpensive toys. We crossed the landslide and drove home. Addie couldn't wait to wrap each gift, put a name on it, and place it under the tree.

The next day, a few children wandered back to our home hoping for some more cookies. They looked through the screen window admiring the beautiful tree when their eyes rested on the many pretty things wrapped up under the tree.

Addie noticed the children's curiosity and invited them in. They stood mesmerized, staring at the presents.

Finally, one of the children noticed names on the packages.

"Look and see if your name is on one of them," Addie said.

One by one, they exclaimed, "Look! My name is on this one!"

When they saw names of their friends on different presents, they tore off to tell them about the presents under the tree.

Soon, a large group of children filled the room inspecting the packages bearing their names. Addie told them that on Christmas Day, they, along with their families, were invited to our home for breakfast, a devotional service, and the opening of presents.

Christmas Day arrived, along with 25 Indian children and parents to fill our home. Addie stuffed them with boiled eggs and all the breads, muffins, and other goodies they could eat.

We read the Christmas story and prayed.

"Time to open the gifts!" we called.

Everyone sat quietly as each child opened his or her gift. Eyes were wide and danced with excitement as each one received a small package.

Adriano (ah-dree-AH-noh), a five-year-old boy, received a card with ten little plastic cars attached to it. He started to give a car to each of the children when Addie stopped him.

"Adriano, no! These are all for you! The other boys and girls have their own presents."

His eyes lit up as he ran to his father. "Dad! These are all for me!"

Lumps filled our throats as we realized that this little boy was willing to share his only present with others.

Isn't that what God did for us in sharing Jesus?

About 11:00 a.m., the families went home, leaving Addie and me filled with that great truth. "It is better to give than receive."

The two of us ate our Christmas dinner, consisting of a sandwich, and praised God for the true meaning of Christmas.

31 For Every Action, There Is a Reaction

The children stood by, terrified, watching their mother shake uncontrollably. Her body was wracked violently by the convulsions that seemed to attack her daily.

Fulgencio (fool-HEN-see-oh), the husband and father, did his best to comfort his wife and protect her from the seizures. It seemed like an eternity passed until her body went limp, and she fell into a deep sleep.

Working the rice fields in Bellavista (bay-ya-BEE-stah) was backbreaking and exhausting work. Fulgencio was enticed to plant coca since many of his friends and neighbors made a good deal of money from the illegal crop.

He resisted the temptation to get involved in the illicit drug trade. However, supporting a growing family of six children was a real challenge, so he announced to the family that he was going to Pucallpa, two days away, to look for work. The plan was to have the older children, Waldemar (WAHL-deh-mahr), Francisco, and Fulgencio Jr., work the rice fields in his absence.

In Pucallpa, he worked as a laborer in a paper mill. However, before long, the administrator noticed the work ethic and leadership skills that Fulgencio possessed and made him a supervisor in the plant.

Success became Fulgencio's downfall. He stopped communicating with his family, began drinking, and eventually fell in love with a woman in Pucallpa.

Meanwhile Fulgencio's wife, Carmen, and the children were trying to make ends meet without the support of their husband and father. Carmen sent many letters to her husband but received no replies. She and the children missed him desperately, but all contact was lost.

Fulgencio was so successful as a supervisor that the owner of the mill wanted to send him to direct operations in a famous paper mill near Lima. Fulgencio had no desire to go to Lima and leave the jungle town of Pucallpa. Two years had passed, and Fulgencio felt remorseful over his lifestyle and abandonment of his wife and family. He finally severed the relationship with the woman in Pucallpa and headed home to the Huallaga (wah-YAH-gah) Valley and Bellavista.

Carmen had waited patiently for two years, hoping her husband would return. He humbly asked Carmen to be reconciled with him. Going against her family's advice, she forgave him and they resumed their life together. She loved the outdoors and was especially fond of horses. Riding was her passion, and she skillfully handled the beautiful animals.

Fulgencio and Carmen Between Larry and Addie

One day, Carmen was thrown from her horse and received a severe blow to the head that knocked her into unconsciousness. While unconscious, she had a vision of her mother begging her to come to heaven with her. Sometime later, Carmen revived but she developed terrible symptoms. She was fearful and anxious. The blow to the head left her unstable and barely able to perform her duties around the house.

Fulgencio, at that time, was making brooms, and Carmen would take them to the market to sell. One day, a neighbor asked her to pick up an item at the market. On the way home, she lost the item and became distraught. That night, she had convulsions that left her weak and exhausted.

From that point on, Carmen was afraid to go anywhere alone, and the seizures became more frequent.

Fulgencio took his wife to doctors and hospitals, but with no results. Her condition worsened until she could not function normally. The children had to wash the clothes, prepare the food, do chores, and maintain the household.

In desperation, Fulgencio took her to witch doctors and shamans, trying to find relief from the dreaded convulsions. Nothing worked. Carmen's condition gradually worsened.

Fulgencio was desperate. He had sold nearly everything that they owned to pay for help for his wife.

One lonely night, he thought about his own childhood. He remembered that a missionary had come to his village and had spoken in the native Quechua language. Fulgencio was so impressed by the man that he attended the services for some time, but later stopped going.

Not too far from their home in Bellavista was a small Church of the Nazarene. Reverend Felipe, an elderly man, faithfully visited this group of believers. After service in Bellavista, he would return to his home in Huacho (WAH-choh) with a lantern in his hand. He loved his people and was always willing to serve them, even though it meant walking long hours to encourage his flock.

Several days later, a cousin of Carmen's visited Carmen and Fulgencio and, during the conversation, asked, "Why don't you give your heart to the Lord?"

Carmen, in desperation, responded, "The next time Pastor Felipe comes to your church, please have him visit me."

At this point, Fulgencio was also desperate and willing to do anything to see his wife restored to health.

Pastor Felipe soon made his faithful visit to the church in Bellavista. Carmen's cousin invited Fulgencio, Carmen, and the children, Eloy (e-LOY) and Felix (FEH-leeks), to attend a service in her home.

That night, God wonderfully manifested himself, and they all asked Jesus into their hearts. Their joy was overwhelming, and peace reigned where anxiety had dwelt.

The next week, Carmen's convulsions became more frequent and severe. They were so violent that she bit her tongue and lips, causing nasty lacerations. The thrashing and muscle contractions were almost unbearable. She felt as if she were going to die, but she took solace that she would die in the arms of Jesus.

Fulgencio's mother stated, "It is no use. God cannot heal Carmen."

The convulsions were now almost hourly. The family despaired, and their new faith was severely tested. Pastor Felipe prayed with them, encouraging them to follow Jesus, no matter the cost. He told Fulgencio that all the members of the family needed to follow the Lord and have faith.

The family prayed, trusted God, and became a vital part of the church in Bellavista. They were growing spiritually by leaps and bounds. Carmen had some good days and some that were very challenging.

Fulgencio announced to the family one day that they were going to move to Pulcallpa, where he had purchased a modest home and land to farm. Before they left, Pastor Felipe paid one last visit to the family. The *curanderos* (koo-rahn-DEH-rohs; similar to witch doctors, but they treat people with herbal preparations and incantations) had prohibited Carmen from eating certain foods and prescribed certain superstitions to follow. Pastor Felipe counseled the new Christians to have faith in Jesus and trust Him completely. He told Carmen to eat everything she desired and to throw away the curanderoses' treatments. Carmen followed his advice and put her trust, life, and future completely in God's hands.

The healing was gradual, but soon the convulsions subsided and completely disappeared. Her appetite and strength came back, another of God's miracles in their lives. Their faith was strengthened, and a new chapter began in the Cachique (kah-CHEE-keh) family of Pucallpa.

Fulgencio was a dedicated, hard worker, and soon the harvest from his labor in the fields provided for the family's needs. Waldemar, the eldest son, stayed in Bellavista, farming the old homestead. Francisco married and obtained a good job with enough money to purchase a home in Pucallpa.

Upon arriving in the city, the family attended a small evangelical church since Pucallpa had no Nazarene church.

Pucallpa became a strategic city on the Ucayali River at the headwaters to the Amazon. The government built a road from Lima to Pucallpa that would become the principal highway for the whole east central part of the Amazon. This road made it possible to transport goods from the manufacturing industries on the coast to the Amazon, using Pucallpa as a distribution center.

Lumber and other commodities could be sent to the coast from the rapidly growing city. Good, productive land was for sale, attracting people from all over the central Amazon.

One day Fulgencio said to the family, "Why don't we start a Nazarene church?"

Francisco provided the first floor of his two-story house for the beginning of the Nazarene work in the city. Their little band of believers grew, and they built the very first church with limited funds. Everybody pitched in, led by the Cachique family's sacrificial giving.

The new church took on the name of the sector where they lived, Husares (oo-SAH-res) Church of the Nazarene. Soon another church was planted called La Victoria (lah veek-TOR-ree-yah) Church of the Nazarene.

Today, there are five churches with beautiful buildings all constructed by Work & Witness teams—and several more church plants are underway. Two of the churches are pastored by two Cachique sons, Atilio (a-TEE-lee-oh) and Felix. Another son of Fulgencio and Carmen, Eloy Cachique, pastors in another city a day's travel from Pucallpa. Waldemar, the eldest son, will soon move to a town 30 miles away to pastor the church in Yerbas Buenas (YEHR-bahs BWAY-nahs).

The fact that four pastors from one family are bringing honor to the Savior who brought such blessing into their lives is amazing. Francisco and Fulgencio Jr., along with the lone daughter Edit (E-deet), all attend and are active in the Husares Church.

In 2012, Fulgencio decided to sell his house and part of his farmland to build a new church in Bellavista where he, Carmen, and many of their family came to know Christ as their Redeemer and Healer. The entire family except Francisco, who had job commitments, formed a Work & Witness team that spent five weeks building a beautiful, cement-block church in Bellavista. The members of the local congregation worked with the Cachique family to fulfill Fulgencio and Carmen's dream that took them back to where Jesus made them into one of the most dedicated families that I have had the privilege of knowing and working alongside in our 45 years as missionaries.

In January 2013, the entire family traveled back to Bellavista to dedicate the new church in gratitude to God for what He has done in their lives.

Fulgencio told me, "I wanted to give something to God that cost me for all that He has done for us. My inspiration to do this came from the many Work & Witness teams brought to Pucallpa by Dr. Garman. I saw their love in action."

Thank God for dedicated and sacrificial laity that have made a difference in the Kingdom!

Yes, for every action, there is a reaction!

Act On It

- Larry and Addie Garman are master storytellers. Why not organize an "Amazon Story Night" to encourage others to read this book? Select a few stories from the book and ask people to read them aloud at the event. (Encourage them to be as dramatic as possible.) Provide snacks and comfortable places to sit, even on the floor. Provide a few facts about the Amazon River and Peru and show locations on a map or globe. Close with prayer for the people of Peru, those who reside along the Amazon River, the Garmans, missionaries, and Peruvians who continue the work there.

- The Garmans stress the importance of Work & Witness to their ministry. Consider participating in a Work & Witness trip, either to another country, within your country, or even within your district. Contact the main Work & Witness office at workandwitness.nazarene.org or your district office to learn of needs.

- Just as the Garmans fully surrendered their lives to serving God in a remote location, reflect on what God is calling you to in your own neighborhood or around the world. He is waiting to use you for Kingdom purposes no matter your skill sets or background. Talk with your pastor about opportunities to serve within your own congregation

- The Garmans ministered in Peru for 45 years because of the support received through the World Evangelism Fund (WEF). WEF provides the global Nazarene mission structure and basic financial support for missionaries like the Garmans. Imagine how many Peruvians know Christ today because WEF made it possible for the Garmans to go. Churches receive WEF offerings throughout the year. Pray about what God would have you and your church give.