

# We Believed

Our ten-year journey  
pursuing God's promises  
to adopt four children

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## Dedication

*I* lovingly dedicate this book to my gorgeous, godly, graceful, and giving wife Kristine. You are more to me than merely a partner. You are my joy, my support, my love, my beauty. I could not survive life without you! Thank you for who you are and who you have helped me become.



**Jeffrey & Kristine Moore**

## Epigraph

*And we desire for each one of you to show the same diligence [all the way through] so as to realize and enjoy the full assurance of hope until the end, so that you will not be [spiritually] sluggish, but [will instead be] imitators of those who through faith [lean on God with absolute trust and confidence in Him and in His power] and by patient endurance [even when suffering] are [now] inheriting the promises.*  
Hebrews 6:11–12 (AMP)

## Chapter 1

### Breaking Down Walls

*'Tis so sweet to trust in Jesus...*

#### At the Embassy

Tiny beads of sweat were forming on my brow, as much from the tension and mental strain as from the muggy late-June weather in Lima, Peru. My dress shirt clung tightly to my back. When was my last shower? Personal hygiene was not even in the top-five most important daily tasks during this trip to complete the adoption of our four children. I'd shaved the night before, but my overall appearance was anything but smooth. My custom-tailored navy blazer was uncomfortable, but hopefully, it lent some credibility to my presence, as it often did in business situations.

Desperation was simmering just below the surface, ready to bubble up at any moment. Exhaustion saturated my entire body. There was franticness in my soul like a rat about to go underwater for the last time. The

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**Desperation was simmering just below the surface, ready to bubble up at any moment.**

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thick clouds overhead seemed a perfect metaphor for my view of the future. Like a pilot flying through the night using only instruments, I had to put my full faith and trust in Jesus, who sent my family and me to Peru.

My family's flight back home to Denver, Colorado, was departing in a mere eight hours. Our desire to be home with all five of our children was off the charts. Our time was running out, and we still didn't have approved visas from the United States Embassy that would allow our adopted children to immigrate to the United States. Without visas, there would be no travel.

Earlier in the day, the Embassy entrance area was bustling with activity. Multiple lines formed as people—mostly Peruvians—waited for their appointments. We had arrived early for an 11:00 a.m. meeting with employees in the Immigrant Visa Section to finalize the paperwork necessary to obtain visas for our adopted children. Now, standing at the barren concrete entrance in front of the United States Embassy, I cradled the fragile destiny of my family in trembling hands. I was about to offer it to a stranger.

"Please, help me. I'm an American citizen," I said as I silently and fervently prayed for God's favor while waiting for a response from one of the armed security guards patrolling the Embassy entrance.

Only puzzled looks from the Peruvian security guards outside the Embassy was my response. They glanced at each other, trying to decipher my English.

Earlier in the trip, our social worker in Peru told us that the Embassy was aware of our exceptional case to adopt four siblings and was making special plans to help. Our situation was unique as the vast majority of international adoptions involve only one or two children at a time. Hearing that the Embassy might give us special treatment was incredible news because we had also

heard horror stories from other adoptive parents who found the Embassy to be as impenetrable as Fort Knox! Now it was 4:30 p.m. and the day's scheduled visa interview meetings were complete. Only Spanish-speaking guards were present outside the Embassy's imposing solid concrete exterior wall. Perhaps it was Fort Knox after all.

"Ayúdame, soy Americano. Aquí para adopción." My broken Spanish got the attention of a young female guard.

Her older male partner watched curiously as my wife, Kristine, and our oldest son, Joshua, chased our four Peruvian children around and around the imposing security posts, trying to keep them entertained and out of danger on the busy La Encalada Avenue. A thankless task that was growing more difficult by the minute. From the corner of my eye, I could see our children spreading out in all directions. It was impossible for two people to keep track of four rambunctious children at once, especially in such a wide-open area.

I'm still not sure why the security guards outside a United States Embassy did not speak English, but that was just one of many things we never understood about Peru. Another was why I had to go to five different medical facilities to get my son a simple tetanus shot after he stepped on a nail at the playground. Also, why did I get a 240-volt electric shock when I got too close to the showerhead in our apartment? Why did the Peruvian passport office need a fingerprint from our nine-year-old daughter, but not the younger children? Our family had a lot of experience visiting developing countries and other cultures, but the challenges we faced in Peru, especially in the city of Huancayo, were distressing.

More questions in Spanish from the security guard. More fragmented replies in Spanish from me. I was surprised that the guards seemed genuinely interested in understanding and assisting

in whatever way they could. I guess I expected that they would be cold and dismissive, but from my very first contact, they were compassionate, especially the female guard. I wish that I had asked her name, but I only remember her smile, which was a ray of encouragement that I desperately needed at that moment.

After several attempts, I was finally able to communicate that we had attended a visa interview meeting with our adopted children that morning and were told to file two more forms online and return in the afternoon. Which was...mostly true. At the meeting, we had been told to go to the shops across the street, find a location with Wi-Fi, and submit the forms online. *If* the forms were received and approved in the Embassy computer system by 3:00 p.m., we could return and obtain the visas. Otherwise, we would have to wait until the next day.

The request seemed reasonable. Then again, the forms we had filed online that morning took three hours to post to the Embassy system. Not a good sign. The layers upon layers of often redundant requirements necessary to complete an international adoption are not for the faint of heart. It had been over five years since we put a pen to the first form. We had our fingerprints taken five times before we ever stepped onto Peruvian soil, where we were fingerprinted a dozen more times.

When we officially accepted this sibling group of four children for adoption back in January of 2017, we were required to write a letter of acceptance to the Peruvian government. Then Peru wrote a letter of acceptance of our letter of acceptance. We considered writing a letter of acceptance of their letter of acceptance of our initial acceptance, but that seemed over the top!

The bureaucracy was a challenging part of international adoption. We just wanted to bring these precious children into our family and provide new opportunities in their lives. The fact that

our children even needed visas was only a tribute to government regulation. They would only use them for twelve hours—the very moment they arrived on United States soil with us, they would become United States citizens. Yet without the visas, we could not even board the aircraft. We would have to wait.

## **Waiting**

Waiting just one more day to return home might seem like no big deal, but my family was crumbling around me. After thirty days in Peru, I had lost fifteen pounds. Even our teenage son had lost weight. Our first three weeks were spent in the city of Huancayo, at 11,000 feet above sea level, which is twice as high as the elevation of our home in Aurora, Colorado. That height, referred to as “tree line” in most regions, is the point above sea level at which trees are incapable of growing due to colder conditions, reduced moisture, and thinner air. It was a perfect metaphor for our lives at that moment. Those weeks felt bitterly bleak both physically and emotionally. They felt dry and void of life-giving moisture. It felt like the air was thin and we could hardly breathe. Yet there we were, climbing up four flights of stairs to our apartment, chasing five children around the playground, and walking the city day after day.

In addition to the physical demands, we were completely frazzled by the overwhelming strain of parenting a teenager plus four newly adopted children (ages two to nine) who were orphans for three years until they joined our family just three weeks prior. As most children do, they needed to test the boundaries of their new parents. And test they did! Every moment that we were not in the room or had our backs turned, they were exploring, testing, and openly defying our rules to see how we would react. They had a continual need to touch everything new and to put most things in

their mouths and chew. Anything that we didn't want to be torn, chewed, or destroyed had to be put behind locked doors. Even then, we had to monitor the door to make sure it stayed locked!

I wish I could say we always reacted with the unconditional love of the Father during those abysmal weeks, but that would be a lie. Our experience in parenting our oldest son, Joshua, had been amazing. Of course, parenting him had been challenging at times, but our experiences were filled with love and passion. We knew for sure that God had called us to adopt these four beautiful children, but the reality of being thrown in the trenches and going from one child to five was completely uncharted territory. We knew several families with experience in adoption and other large families that had expanded biologically, one child at a time. However, we had nothing to guide us in growing from one child to five in a single moment. We were learning by trial and error. There were many moments of, "That didn't work very well, better try something else, and quick!"

At the moment that I stood in front of the Embassy, we had been in Peru for thirty days. Staying longer would begin to unravel the delicate balance of our situation. Our apartment in the Miraflores area of Lima was only rented for one more day. Waiting would mean moving all seven of us for the third time in just two weeks. New rooms, new beds, and a new environment were no problem for our family that had traveled to many countries around the world over the years. However, it was a big problem for children coming from an orphanage where everything was routine and where very little ever changed. We were told by the Peruvian social worker that assisted with our case that we were the very first family to adopt children from that orphanage—*ever*. Our children truly had no context for what was happening to them or what to expect next.

Waiting would also mean changing our booked airline reservation. A few days before, I had stepped out in faith and booked our return tickets because when I looked at seat availability on future flights, I found very few seats were available. I had no idea when we could actually return home if not this night. With only one flight a day to Houston on United Airlines, it could be another week before we could find enough seats on a plane to Houston and then home to Denver. When we did find flights, it would cost thousands of dollars more to change seven plane tickets. I suppose that was why our adoption agency told us not to book our return airfare until we had the visas in our possession! Needless to say, we didn't always do what we were told.

### **Our Journey of Faith**

In fact, our entire journey of faith had always proceeded differently than others thought it should. There were many decisions that Kristine and I made in our lives that were criticized as odd or wrong in the eyes of others. From our decision to not celebrate Santa Claus to our decision to take our three-year-old son on a two-week personal mission trip to Burkina Faso in West Africa, we had grown accustomed to pushback even from well-meaning friends and family who hadn't yet experienced the revelation of Jesus that we had.

Following Jesus as closely as possible has become the deepest longing of our lives. Because of that, obedience to Him was always more important than pleasing others or even having our lives appear "normal." Believe me, when you tell most people you are adopting four children from another country all at once, you have to give up your expectation that you will look normal!

During our forty-something years of life, the Father has trained us to care more about His voice than any other voice around us. I once read a quote from Bill Johnson, a pastor who we greatly admire. He said, “I want to be remembered for being faithful, that I did what He [Jesus] said.”<sup>1</sup> That short sentence is incredibly profound. We are certainly not there yet, but if there can be any standard that we want to be held to, it is that one. The standard we seek is to follow the word of God, both the written word in the Bible and God’s spoken voice, as closely as we possibly can no matter the cost or consequences. Our greatest joy will not come in this life, but in the next one if we hear, as did the servant in Matthew 25:21, “Well done, good and faithful servant.” Following God’s voice was the only reason we were in Peru.

Waiting is not always bad. Patience is part of the fruit of the Spirit listed in Galatians 5:22. Hebrews 6:12 discusses “inheriting the promises of God” through faith and patience. Sometimes, waiting is God’s opportunity to sharpen our character before He releases His promise into our lives. At other times, waiting can be a spiritual attack like when Daniel had to wait twenty-one days for the answer to his prayer given by God the moment he prayed (Daniel 10:12–13). In that case, delays can be overcome through prayer.

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During our ten-year journey, we experienced many seasons of growth while waiting. There at the Embassy, I felt strongly it was time for action. Before we left for Peru, our adoption agency had

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<sup>1</sup> Bill Johnson, “The Truth About Bethel’s Bill Johnson by Jennifer LeClaire,” last modified August 26, 2016. <https://www.charismanews.com/opinion/watchman-on-the-wall/59517-bill-johnson-burning-to-see-the-nations-on-fire-for-jesus>. Pastor Bill Johnson leads Bethel Church in Redding, California.

provided a basic itinerary for the trip. They made clear that we might experience delays at every step. I created a calendar based on that itinerary which had us departing Denver, Colorado, on May 27, 2017, and returning home on June 27. There was nothing magic about that return date. I had no supernatural revelation that June 27 was the correct return date for our family. However, I had written it in on our family calendar by the front door before the trip began.

Sometimes in life, you have to draw a line in the sand. Especially when the waiting seems to be a result of a spiritual attack. June 27 is where I drew the line for our family. I didn't know for sure that June 27 was the date that God had ordained for our return, but it "seemed good to the Holy Spirit and us." That concept was appropriate for the apostles in Acts 15:28 and I believed it was suitable for our situation. We put all our faith toward returning home on that date.

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Exterior of the United States Embassy, Lima, Peru  
*Photo Credit: Derrell Thrasher*

Outside the Embassy, I prayed as I waited, asking God to break open the door that was quite literally sealed in front of us. The security guards called a supervisor from inside the Embassy security room who spoke a little English. While this was a simple and logical next step, my spirit leaped at the thought. It was like that moment in the middle of a storm-clouded sky when, off in the distance, a single ray of sunlight breaks through the clouds and you are reminded that the clouds are only temporary and behind them, the sun still shines.

As I waited, I continued to pray and stand strong in faith—believing breakthrough for us was imminent. Meanwhile, our kids were becoming more animated as a whole day away from our apartment with little to do, and no naps, was quickly catching up. Kristine flashed me an anxious look as minutes ticked by. I knew the question on her mind was “How much longer do I have to do this alone today?”

My mind raced to discover what was God’s best in this situation. Yes, I had already planted that stake in the ground, but I still reevaluated moment by moment! Do I continue to stand my ground and press for the visas or was it time to call it a day? My heart ached for Kristine as I knew how much she was suffering from exhaustion. Standing across the concrete apron from me, she was feeling overwhelmed and near the edge of faintness. I quietly prayed the words of Psalm 79:8 over her, God, “may your mercy come quickly to meet” Kristine, for she is “in desperate need” (NIV).

When I awoke earlier that morning of June 26, I set my eyes on the primary goal of the day—obtain four visas. I told myself that I wouldn’t take “no” for an answer. In fact, I determined to push and push and push against any barrier that would budge, up to the point that I would be threatened with arrest. If that happened,

I would stop since it would do my family no good for me to be in jail in a foreign country! Otherwise, I wasn't going to be like King Joash in 2 Kings 13:18 who only struck the ground three times. No sir, not me. I would keep striking until I saw the victory manifest. That is how determined I was to get us home on June 27. Despite our exhaustion and other challenges, I determined to press on.

Our thirty days in Peru were harrowing in a number of ways including lost bedroom keys, dangerous living conditions, physical sickness, orphans grieving the loss of everything they once knew, and visits from the local police. It was by far the most challenging thing that Kristine, Joshua, and I had ever experienced. Months after returning home, when we viewed photos from the trip, my heart would race, my blood pressure rise, and my stomach knot up because of the intensity of the memories. We wanted to be home. We needed to be home. Ultimately, I knew that the sooner we reached home, the more quickly and more easily our new children would be able to make the transition to their new life with us. And just as important—us with them.

Standing pensively outside the Embassy, I oscillated between interceding for our case with great faith and pleading to God for a breakthrough. I watched intently as the supervisor stepped out of the main entrance door, and the door quickly slammed shut behind him, not unlike a prison door. He was a middle-aged man with a carefully groomed salt-and-pepper mustache. He looked sharp in his pressed uniform. He seemed no-nonsense, but in a gentle, easygoing kind of way. I was able to communicate a little better with him in English, and I gave him a simplified version of our day.

When we left the Embassy earlier at noon, we found a McDonald's across the street which had three things we really needed: kid-friendly food, Wi-Fi, and a PlayPlace. We bought

our kids their first McDonald's Happy Meals, and I quickly began to work on filing the online forms from my Samsung tablet. The sooner they were complete, the higher our chances of completing the visa interview today. I was burning up the onscreen keyboard as I furiously typed out answers to questions and made selections from drop-down menus, hoping that my accuracy was not suffering in the process.

If you have ever filled out an immigration application, you would know that there are pages and pages of important questions such as, "Are you a terrorist?" That is not a joke. That was a real question. "Are you the child of a terrorist?" "Do you plan to engage in criminal activity in the United States?" More real questions. It seems silly, as I am quite sure that an actual terrorist would never answer yes to those questions! It was even more ridiculous when you are answering those questions for a three-year-old! It was 12:30 p.m. when I finished the two forms. We ate lunch and took our kids to the PlayPlace.

Having completed the forms, I was relieved that I had fulfilled the necessary items, but I also felt a pressing urgency to pray that the online approval process would happen quickly since it was entirely out of my hands. We waited and played with our kids. Then we waited more, and we played with our kids—right through naptime at that McDonald's PlayPlace.

Periodically, I would check the Embassy website to see if our forms were processed. The Embassy staff told me to call around 3:15 p.m. and they would confirm our status. They also mentioned a staff meeting at 3:30 p.m.—they would be unavailable after that. I began calling around 3:10 p.m., from a pay phone near McDonald's, and could not get anyone to answer. Panic rose in my throat mixed with irritation at the refusal of the Embassy operator

to give me staff names or provide any help other than connecting me with a specific extension number.

After fifteen minutes of increasingly urgent phone calls and not a single live person except the operator, I went back to our table at McDonald's and checked my e-mail. My Embassy contact had e-mailed at 3:00 p.m. saying, "Your forms have not been received. Please return tomorrow." My heart sank.

I read the message three times—willing it to change—before I read it to Kristine. Praying to God that it would transform in front of my eyes. I clicked the download button to see if there was a last-minute update telling us to "come on in." Nothing. Another string unraveled from our situation.

Our adopted kids sing a fun counting song from Peruvian culture about an elephant balancing on a spider's web. Each verse adds another elephant. That was exactly like our situation: seven elephants balancing on a spider's web and the web was stretched to the limit. On the surface, it looked grim. In the natural realm, there was absolutely nothing to do except return to our apartment and come back to the Embassy tomorrow. In the natural realm, there was absolutely no reason for hope—not even a glimmer. What authority did I have to challenge the written edict of a United States Embassy?

Authority derives from proper alignment. Think of an ambassador to another country. The ambassador is installed to assist the president in carrying out the purposes and interests of their home country. As long as the ambassador acts within his or her authority, they have the full support of their president, but that authority has limits. As Christians, our authority is the same. Second Corinthians 5:18–20 says in part, "All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation...Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ,

God making his appeal through us.” We are genuinely ambassadors of the Kingdom of God. As long as we are operating within our proper authority—which is advancing the Kingdom of God—we have the full support of the King to back us up in any situation. God called us to this adoption—He would back us up.

God has taught Kristine and me to approach life with an expectation that things on earth should look like Heaven. So, when they don't, we have the authority to do something about it. In Heaven, there are no delays in transforming orphans into sons and daughters. So, when the Embassy said, “wait,” I simply said “no.” Is that bold? Maybe. It was an exercise of faith, just like our whole journey has been about faith and believing in the promises of God. It would have been easy to focus only on the natural situation as it was sitting right in front of me—blocking my view like the stone in front of Jesus' tomb. However, when I closed my physical eyes, I could see in the Spirit and in that place, the stone was rolled away, and our hopes were resurrected! It was time to step out and demonstrate just how genuinely we believed.

Hebrews 11:1 is the classic biblical passage on faith. I created my own version of that verse by combining several Bible translations. “Faith is the confidence of the things we hope for, the proof of things which have been done (or accomplished) already, but are not seen yet with the physical eyes—faith perceiving as a real fact, what is not revealed to the physical senses.”

Faith begins in the spiritual realm, but then is worked out in the physical realm. It allows us to call things that are not yet—but that are hoped for—into existence. Faith can cause the things which truly *have already been done* in the Spirit, to become a reality in the physical realm. This is the area where miracles occur. Physical healings are a good example. God has already provided the healing in the Spirit, but there comes a specific point in time

when that healing manifests in the physical realm and becomes visible to our physical senses.

For example, in Luke 17:14, Jesus heals ten lepers, saying, “Go and show yourselves to the priests.” Since everything Jesus did was perfect and effective, I believe the healing occurred—in the spiritual realm—the moment Jesus told them what to do. Verse 14 continues, “And as they went they were cleansed.” Their healing did not manifest in the physical realm at the exact moment Jesus prayed—rather it was as they activated their faith and obeyed His command to go, that the healing became visible in their bodies.

I drew deep on that mountain-moving faith. Ten years ago, I would have returned to our Lima apartment with disappointment. Even five years ago my response would have been weak and unimpressive, but not now. Ten years of learning, growing, and training had led me to that moment, and I wasn’t going to back down. I continued praying, declaring open doors for our case and for the forms to come through. I kept calling every few minutes from the pay phone and talked to several operators, but never did reach anyone in the Immigrant Visa Section of the United States Embassy.

Around 4:00 p.m., while the kids’ loud yells inside the PlayPlace echoed throughout the McDonald’s, I checked the Embassy website and saw that the forms had finally been received and approved, and we were cleared for an appointment! Of course, that only meant that we could meet if the Embassy staff were prepared to meet with us, but that was the crack in the dam that I needed. It was the tiniest foothold, but I was going to stand on it and reach as far as I could.

Kristine and I discussed what to do. I peered into her eyes and exhaustion was prominent. Not only from watching our kids mostly by herself that day while I was busy with paperwork and

forms, but from the past thirty arduous days. She was ready to go back to the apartment and try again tomorrow. I didn't blame her. We were both exhausted, but often on this trip, just when she needed my help the most, I had to go to a government office or attend a meeting or appointment by myself or with one of our kids. Before this trip, I had great respect for the emotional strength that Kristine often exhibited and the limits to which she could push herself when necessary. Now, I am convinced she is none other than Superwoman!

Nevertheless, my Superwoman needed a recharge. While another night and day in the apartment would provide a temporary solution, I knew that complete recharge was not going to happen in Peru. We needed to be home. As much as we loved the people and culture of Peru, it was not our home. There was still an opportunity—though razor thin—to get the visas today and be on a plane tonight. I had not yet pressed as far as I could—after all, I hadn't been threatened with arrest!

Although my case was weak because I would be going against the specific instructions of the Embassy staff, I also remembered one of the greatest lessons that my mother taught me: "Don't be afraid to ask. The worst they can do is say 'no.'" Despite our exhaustion, I made the decision to go back to the Embassy across the street and try one more time to get in before we took a taxi for an hour drive back to our apartment on the other side of Lima.

\* \* \*

Outside the Embassy, the security supervisor seemed sympathetic when I explained that we had a flight that night, but did not have our visas yet. He called yet another employee inside the Embassy, and after a while, a young Peruvian man in casual

business attire came and spoke to me through the bulletproof glass. Another tiny ray of sunshine was breaking through the clouds as now I was talking to someone *inside* the Embassy rather than *outside*. I summarized my case as quickly as possible, and he listened intently in English. The biblical story came to mind of Nehemiah praying silently while King Artaxerxes asked what he wanted. I, too, prayed inaudibly for God's favor and blessing so we could quickly complete what we confidently knew He had called us to do.

The Embassy employee asked for our passports and made several phone calls. I tried to wait patiently even though my heart was racing with nervousness, and my soul was tightened like the highest string on a guitar. Though I could not hear his conversation, I could tell he had authority here and was likely on the phone trying to verify our case. I felt hope rising in my spirit—did I dare embrace it? Would my faith suffer a blow if this man said no?

As I waited for minutes to tick by with this Embassy man on the phone, I was hesitant to even turn around and look at Kristine out of concern that she might actually be beyond her limit for the day and tell me, "Let's go." When finally I stole a glance, she had our children calmly playing Simon Says together! How she came up with that idea must have been a miracle. How she communicated it in limited Spanish was another.

Tears came to my eyes as I could see a visible demonstration of the beautiful partnership that God had established in Kristine and me during twenty astonishing years of marriage. We have such different skill sets, and God's design of marriage is not that two people become precisely the same. Rather, that two people with different skills and giftings graft together in such a beautiful and holy way, they function as one individual with an even greater purpose. There is no way I could—or would want to—walk this journey without Kristine's hand in mine walking side by side.

## Inside the Embassy

After what seemed like an eternity on the phone, the man inside the Embassy turned back to me. I could see him writing something. It seemed to happen in slow motion as I had no idea what he was going to say. My mind sprinted through the possible options. Would it be a simple “no”? Perhaps a referral to yet another staff member? Or a miraculous “yes”?

My heart leaped when he gave me a slip of paper which would allow entrance through security and said, “Go inside to Window 11.” This *had* to mean that someone would help us, because they just wouldn’t let us in if not. I said thank you through sharply exhaled breath and immediately yelled to Kristine across the plaza, “Bring our kids and let’s go!”

Entering a United States Embassy is no small feat. Embassy employees are hypersensitive about security and for a good reason. Absolutely no electronics of any kind are permitted out of fear of eavesdropping by another country. Unfortunately, I had my Samsung tablet with me.

Earlier in the day, there was a booth outside where you could pay to store your devices. Translation: there were a couple of local guys in a pop-up tent who charged whatever they wanted to watch your backpack, purse, cell phone or laptop. But even they were gone now. I asked the smiling female security guard who had been so helpful earlier if she could keep it for me, but she said she wasn’t allowed to. Panic rose again. Would I have to lose my tablet just to enter the Embassy? I wouldn’t need a stress test at my next annual medical checkup. If I survived the stress of the trip, my heart would be just fine!

Fortunately, there were some local police officers nearby that were willing to watch my tablet while we went inside. In retrospect,

this seems such a little thing. Was it really a big deal if I lost my tablet in the grand scheme of things? Not really. Sure, it has value, but it could have been replaced. Yet, at the moment it seemed huge. This was typical of the daily spiritual attack that we experienced in Peru—little things that increased my stress and threatened to draw my attention away from what was most important. There were moments of direct attack, but always a low hum of noise in the spiritual background throughout the trip.

We tried to counter these attacks with spiritual warfare—recognizing when opposition to God’s plans for us was originating in the spiritual realm and then praying to overcome the hurdles. At times it seemed spiritual warfare was a moment by moment requirement.

The guards inside watched with amusement as we removed our items for the X-ray and tried to corral seven of us through the metal detector. Pretty much wherever we went in Peru, we were a spectacle. We were three tall Americans with four Peruvian children. There was no way *not* to attract attention, so we had become accustomed to it. We cleared the metal detector and made our way inside toward the Immigrant Visa Section.

Although we were inside the gate, I still had no idea what answer we would hear once we spoke with someone else. Would we be told the same thing in person that we had been told by e-mail—“Come back tomorrow?” Would I have to keep pressing for the visas? The waiting and mental questions were maddening. It was already past quitting time, and we had watched a steady stream of Embassy workers file out of the building over the past thirty minutes while we tried to gain entrance. I couldn’t help but wonder how many federal employees would possibly still be working at 5:00 p.m. to help us. We neared the second metal detector.

Our faith in Jesus had led us to this defining moment. Would we be on a flight tonight or would everything unravel? We had no choice—or desire—except to put all of our faith in the Father, and we silently prayed again for His unmerited favor. We believed we had it. We believed.

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