



Church Planting Along the Ucayali

By Steven Shepard

On January 31, Christy and I and six Shipibo co-workers traveled about 150 miles up the Ucayali River to visit the church in Puerto Nuevo. This church was planted in the summer of 2016 by one of our Word of Grace Bible Institute students, Adolfo Canayo. I'm glad to report that not only is the church still going strong, but Adolfo recently reached out to another unchurched village, "Dos de Mayo," and a number from that village have come to Christ. They were going by boat to services in Puerto Nuevo, but now they want their own church, so CPI helped with roofing materials. Also, in February a young man from Dos de Mayo made the long river trip to Pucallpa to receive training at the CPI Center.

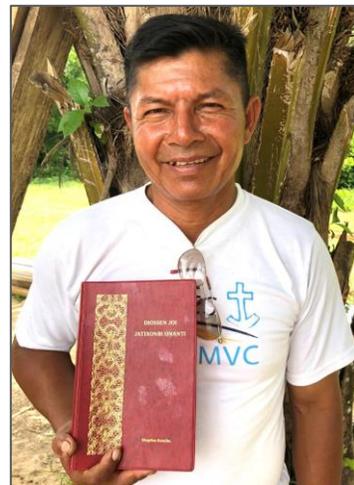
During our stay in Puerto Nuevo, Christy and I taught the Word for two days to a group of about 30 spiritually hungry people from the two villages. On Sunday sixteen new believers were baptized, making a total of 31 people who have now been baptized in Puerto Nuevo. Adolfo shared the following: *"There are still communities that are whitened harvest fields, where the gospel has not gone and older villages too which had no churches before, but where now God has planted churches. And there are communities from other tribes. I have started to pray for them. Some day God will plant churches there too. This is what I aspire to. God is the One that does the work and He will do it in His time."*

Training Leaders

Then in February we conducted three weeks of training at the Word of Grace Bible Institute in Pucallpa, teaching Apologetics, and repeating Attributes of God and Doctrine of Salvation. When the students gave their final oral presentations, I saw how much they had grown in understanding, enthusiasm and confidence in giving God's Word. In all, there were about 16 students from two tribal groups, including three from the Yora tribe. The Yora have only recently begun to meet in their village. One of the Yora, Jorge, testified how he came to understand that Jesus is God at last summer's Yora conference and that's when he surrendered his life to Christ. I was not aware of this at the time, but God's Word did the work in Jorge's heart.



Above: Shipibos from Puerto Nuevo and Dos de Mayo gather on the river bank to be baptized. **Below:** Group of new believers that came from Dos de Mayo and Adolfo holding a Shipibo New Testament. To date CPI has distributed Bibles in six languages.



Left: Young Shipibo leader Danny Fernandez giving his final oral presentation at the Word of Grace Bible Institute at the CPI Center in Pucallpa. Danny has taken all 12 courses to date.



New CPI Center in Lima

In March, Carl Catoe, Ronney Mackey and Steve Goff, all from South Carolina, came to work on CPI's new mission center in Lima, which was dedicated to the Lord in a special service on March 14. The upper two stories of the building serve as housing for the families of Pastor Winder and Fanny, and Elizabeth Zavaleta, who is the widow of CPI co-worker Samuel Rios. They will also serve as a guest house for CPI missionaries. The ground floor is the meeting place for the church and will soon become the primary location for the Word of Grace Bible Institute in Lima. In 2005 Pastor Winder, his wife Fanny, and two daughters moved to Puente Piedra on the northern outskirts of Lima where they erected a makeshift wood house. At the time, there was no running water or electricity. By 2008, outreach to the

children in the hillsides began and soon was thriving. Through reaching the children, Winder and Fanny were also able to reach the parents, and the church was launched. When in 2016 the roof of their makeshift home began to collapse (due to termites), Winder and Fanny decided it was time to build a better structure. They had a big vision, and through a series of loans put in a foundation for a multi-story building, not knowing where the rest of the funding would come from. Then in December of 2018, thanks to the Lord and a generous donor, CPI began to partner with Winder and Fanny to complete the building in Puente Piedra, which has proved to be a fertile harvest field to reach new people with the gospel.

I was scheduled to return from Peru on March 27, and then changed my reservation, not knowing at the time

that all of Peru was going to be quarantined. By the providence of God, my flight took off from Lima on March 16 – one hour before they closed down the airport. Otherwise, as of this writing I would still be in Peru!

Uganda Flood Relief

In December 2019, massive flooding and landslides struck communities in western Uganda taking lives, destroying homes, and affecting about 4,000 people. One man lost 11 family members and just happened to be away when the mudslide came. CPI has worked in the area since 2014 and thanks to generous donors; was able to help over 500 people from eight villages with building materials, mattresses, bedding, food and household supplies, all of which was distributed by co-worker, Pastor Isaac Mugisa.

Left: New three-story mission center in Lima, Peru dedicated on March 14.

Below: CPI Lima team (top row from left): Winder Diaz, pastor of the Puente Piedra church; Otoniel Pardo who will direct the Word of Grace Bible Institute in Lima; Steven and Pastor Marcial Vasquez. Bottom row: Winder's wife Fanny and Elizabeth, widow of long-time co-worker Samuel Rios.



What Kind of Churches Will God Use? – By Steven Shepard

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

Jesus is building His Church, which is His people, born of His Spirit, and called by Him from among all nations. Jesus uses local, visible churches as His instruments to build His one, universal and invisible Church. What are some of the characteristics of the local churches that Jesus uses to build His universal Church?

- They are churches where members love Jesus above all else and dedicate their lives to obeying His Word.
- They are churches where believers are convinced of eternal realities.
- They are churches that fervently proclaim the biblical gospel of salvation in Christ alone through faith alone. They do not allow the culture to define their message.
- They are churches where God's love is demonstrated in acts of compassion.
- They are churches that are more than impersonal gatherings in a building, but rather that experience community and work together as the body of Christ.

In short, local churches should reflect the nature of Jesus' one universal Church: a people set apart from the world, living in spiritual union with Christ and one another, and taking seriously their purpose of proclaiming the gospel to a dying world.

**PARTNER IN
PLANTING
CHURCHES
WITH CPI**