

After Many Prophecies, Peru Sees Spiritual, Economic Revival

Take note, world: Peru is on the rise.

Once known as one of the poorest countries in South America, Peru's economy is now the fastest growing in South America, having tripled in size in the last decade. In 2009, when the debt crisis sent many countries into a tailspin, Peru's economy actually grew by .09 percent.

Along with economic revival in Peru has been a spiritual revival that has seen the estimated number of born-again Christians rise dramatically. According to the CIA Factbook, Peru's evangelical population grew from single digits to 12.5 percent in 2007. The official 2013 estimate is 17 percent, but the actual number may well be over 20 percent.

Is this a case of a country turning to the Lord and then experiencing material blessing? No, it's the exact opposite. God's goodness leads to repentance, and that's just what is happening in Peru, says minister Johnny Enlow. Born and raised on the mission field in Peru, Enlow's father, Jack, planted many churches in remote areas in Peru and is known as the man who brought the Holy Spirit to Peru.

Ten years ago, Johnny Enlow prophesied in small towns in Peru that economic revival was coming and would spread to the entire nation. Twice he prophesied that a major gold mine would be discovered, and twice that happened.

In 2000, Enlow told Peruvian church leaders there was "a magnet from God on this nation. They're going to come from all over to pour life into this nation because its Peru's time."

The blessing of God in material things is causing Peruvians to look to the source of those blessings.

“He is a God who wants you to spend eternity with him, but He’s a God who cares about practical life,” Enlow says. “It becomes easier for people to see God in that context.”

After ministering in the U.S. and other places for years, God touched Enlow in 1995 at the Toronto Revival and gave him a new passion for Peru. Since that time, he has made over 40 trips there. Enlow told village mayors and pastors, “World attention will come, and you will be considered the top economy in all South America.”

Robert Barriger and his wife, Karyn, moved to Peru in 1983 and now pastor Camino de Vida, a church in Lima of over 10,000 with 12 services on three campuses on a typical weekend. Barriger echoes Enlow’s comments, adding that this revival is not like the miracle meetings in Argentina in the 1980s but more “a real healthy, church-growth revival.”

“For the first time, the fastest-growing church in the world is third world, especially Latin America and especially Peru,” Barriger told Charisma. “God has arranged it to such a point that not one person can take credit for it, which is good. It’s not based on a personality or a person, but it’s God doing stuff, and it’s happening everywhere, and it’s happening across denominational lines.”

While many poor areas in Lima and beyond are experiencing unprecedented economic growth, the poor in Peru remain plentiful.

Enlow believes it is important for evangelicals to not judge Catholics but to work with the Catholic “new guard” for the sake of the gospel.

“Evangelicals are so used to being at war with Catholics they really don’t realize there’s a whole lot of good going on in

the Catholics of Peru,” he says. “Particularly with the new pope, he’s really steering the church in a lot of good directions.”

Enlow says there’s an awakening of Catholic charismatics all throughout South America. Because of this, the number of Christians in Peru is likely higher than the official government numbers of Protestants.

Barriger sees division of nationals and missionaries, cultures, races and other walls being torn down.

“We want these antiseptic, sanitized groups where you’re Latin, you’re white, you’re black, you’re Asian, you’re a national, I’m a missionary, and we put people in groups and God mixes the salad. He loves to mix the salad,” he says.

Barriger feels youth are the same no matter where you go in the world, noting that “social media is tearing down all borders.” He also feels American and Peruvian Christians can learn from each other.

“Peru has a lot to give to the States. Latin America has a lot to give to the States. And the States have a lot to give to us ... so we’re better together,” he says. “Nationalism separates people, and heaven unites us.”

Barriger is thankful for Peru’s new economic fortunes but has a concern: “I’ve got five Peruvian grandkids, and my fear is they grow up in a prosperous country that knows not God.”

Richard Daigle and his wife, Jan, have made 20 trips to Peru over the last 10 years. The Daigles run Face to Face Missions, an Atlanta-based ministry that works to bring “the love of Jesus to Peru and beyond.” Face to Face tries to incorporate medical clinics on each trip.