

A Partnership of Incalculable Value

I remember the morning well. I was spending some time with God in the Scriptures when I started thinking about the day before me. Christy and I were in Peru and we were going to meet the church that morning. Questions swirled through my head: What would the church be like? What will the pastor be like? Will we agree on things? What surprises did God have in store?

The next day we left to come back home. As I said my good-byes, I knew I was saying goodbye to a new friend.

The church, **Iglesia Evangelica Pentecostal Misionera Templo Si3n (Temple Zion)**, and its pastor, **Justiniano Rodas Cerna**, are in Barranca, Peru. Barranca is a three-hour drive north from Lima and is on the coast.

This church has a burning passion for Jesus and for the city. It was a joy to watch them worship. They give their lives to God and they trust He will provide. They wanted to reach out with the Gospel to the city. They discerned that the way God was leading them to do it was through children. Thus began their partnership with **Compassion**.

Compassion is an organization with a clear mission. In response to the Great Commission, Compassion International exists as an advocate for children, to release them from their spiritual, economic, social, and physical poverty and enable them to become responsible and fulfilled Christian adults.



Compassion is working alongside Temple Zion. Temple Zion has started an after-school program for more than 225 children. They teach the children about Jesus as well as important life skills.

One of the things I love about this church is how they have been good stewards of their God-given resources. They do not have much money, yet they gave sacrificially so that they could build another floor onto their

school building in order to reach more children. Even more than that, they have given of *themselves* toward this. The whole school is staffed by volunteers who work tirelessly for the children.



Some of you have asked me how we can partner with this church moving forward. One of the ways we can come alongside of them is by sponsoring some of the children that go to the school. Christy and I look forward to supporting some children and then seeing them in person. Also, we will have more trips to Peru so that we can spend time with Temple Zion and work alongside them for the Gospel.

I get excited when I think about what God could have in store for us in this relationship. He has told us in Ephesians that He can do far more abundantly than all we ask or think. Who knows what joyful surprises He has up His sleeve?
—**Pastor Deryk**

For a very revealing article about this concept of relationship-based church partnerships, go to: www.firstchurch.org/church2church. You will discover how God is changing lives and building His Kingdom worldwide in this remarkable way.