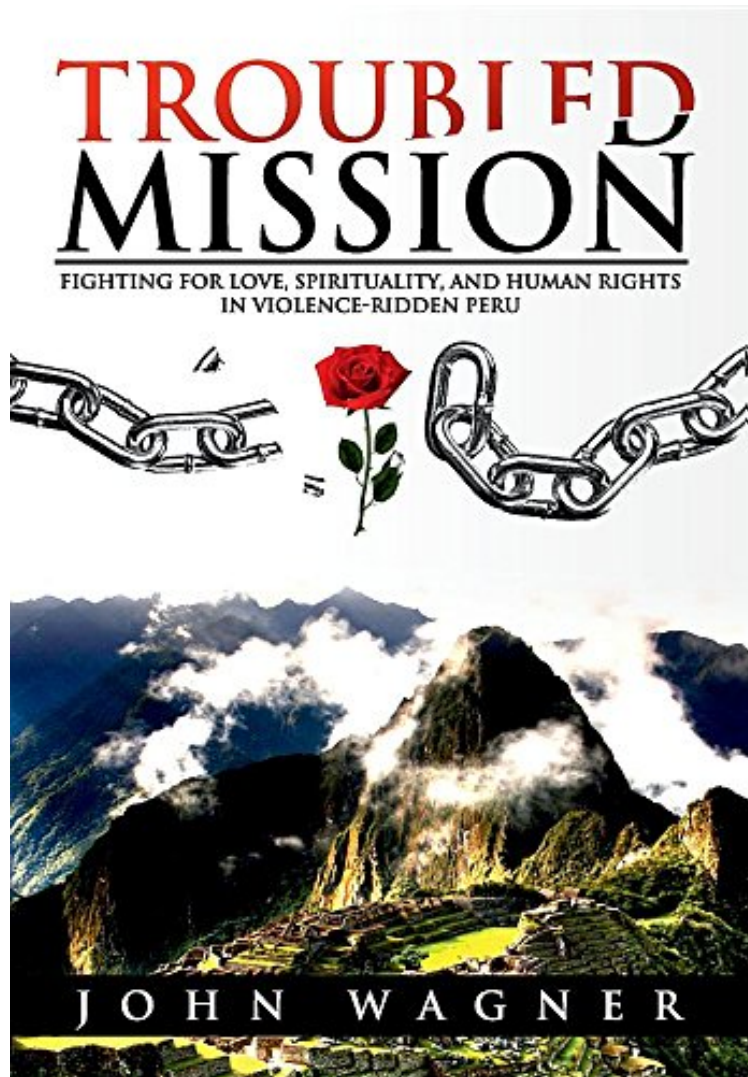


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## TROUBLED MISSION: Fighting for Love, Spirituality and Human Rights in Violence-Ridden Peru

*John P Wagner*

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**John P Wagner : TROUBLED MISSION: Fighting for Love, Spirituality and Human Rights in Violence-Ridden Peru** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised TROUBLED MISSION: Fighting for Love, Spirituality and Human Rights in Violence-Ridden Peru:

5 of 5 people found the following review helpful. A squeeze to the heart!By Mary W. HaugThis book was a squeeze to the heart!The author recounts his year as a lay missionary working as an attorney for human rights. He stripped himself

of his possessions and his privileged American lifestyle in order to fully enter the journey of the poor in a small rural area of Peru. At the time of this story, poverty, corruption, terrorism by Sendero Luminoso and subsequent military crack downs infected every area of the country. With Wagner's desire to "do something!" he began the journey to learn the language and culture of the people of the altiplano. Quite unexpectedly, he fell in love with a beautiful, deeply compassionate woman whose life soon entwined with his. As he labored to overcome bureaucratic indifference and opposition, the danger quotient ratcheted up steeply against human rights workers. After the author previously received a Sendero death threat, other workers faced probable arrest, jail and torture from corrupt government entities for doing what they are there to do...protect the rights of the poor. Wagner successfully fought against time and immovable opposition in order to illuminate and force action against engulfing corruption. His firsthand account of viewing the carnage after bombing attacks, and his deep reverence and awe for the victims, both living and dead, resonates with the reader and cannot be forgotten. Wagner speaks from the soul as he wrestles with his own spirituality. His painful feelings of self-doubt seem universal....who among us has not struggled with these very same thoughts, although perhaps not so insightfully as he? He lived Pope Francis' later exhortation to priests, to "be shepherds, with the 'odor of the sheep.'" The author humbly fulfilled the way of love: to truly live among God's people; to touch them, tell them and show them that they are valuable and loved.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. I found out about this book since the author is ...By Mark D. Walker I found out about this book since the author is also a graduate of Western State University in Gunnison, Colorado. He left a lucrative legal professional to fight human rights abuses in some of the most isolated parts of Peru dominated by the Shining Path. His memoir tells of his internal struggles as well as how he deals with the Catholic church and local culture with limited cross cultural and linguistic training. As a former Peace Corps Volunteer I could relate to that. He not only survived some terrifying circumstances but met his future wife--an inspiring informative journey worth a read. I related to much of his story as I was in Guatemala the year after he was in Peru and would make it to Peru the next year where I saw first hand the tragic impact of the Shining Path and the President Fujimori.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. A beautiful and touching story of one man's quest for human ...By Richard K. Turner A beautiful and touching story of one man's quest for human rights in spite of the odds. John made a life changing decision to give up a lucrative and successful law practice to help people in a faraway country who needed an advocate in the midst of violence and poverty. An uplifting story!

What happens when, after a life-changing study-tour of Peru, a successful US attorney abandons his law practice to volunteer with a religious organization and travel to Peru to fight for human rights in the midst of a culture of violence and terror? Not what he expected. In his sometimes romantic, sometimes terrifying, always inspiring memoir, John Wagner searches for love, spirituality, and the chance to fight against injustice and oppression in a country not his own, while working for a religious organization he could not fully trust. Wagner lives under a death threat from the fanatical Sendero Luminoso terrorist organization that he must keep secret from his religious community. He develops an on-and-off love affair with Bella, a beautiful but mysterious Peruvian teacher. He faces dramatic betrayals. He accidentally travels into the heart of the drug capital of the world. Day by day, he sees the increasing violence in Peru and overnight, he sees Peru's president become a dictator, shredding the rule of law. After a terrorist attack in a small town, he confronts Peruvian Army officers head-on to gain access to the scene. Then he must help prepare for burial the bloody, ravaged, body of a Campesina woman killed in that attack. Wagner skillfully interweaves his inner struggles, including coming to grips with a new language, a new culture, a lower station in life, and a new perspective on his native Catholicism. Finally, he stumbles into what would become a landmark human rights case, stopping the Peruvian government from persecuting human rights lawyers. Ultimately, *Troubled Mission* is the story of human redemption. Many people seek personal change only to find unexpected obstacles. *Troubled Mission* shows how we can find redemption or redemption finds us in so many unexpected ways.

About the Author John Wagner was a successful lawyer with a prominent U.S. law firm in the 1990s. A frequent adventure and spiritual traveler, his life changed dramatically during a study tour on the history and culture of Peru, including studying Sendero Luminoso, the violent terrorist group. He gave up everything, and risked his career and his life, to join a mission organization to work for human rights in Peru-in the face of a death threat if he did so. In Peru, he deepened his spirituality, worked on a landmark human rights case, and fell in love with Bella, a local teacher. After his work in Peru, he returned to the U.S., resumed his legal career, and married Bella. He holds degrees from Western State Colorado University, the University of Chicago, and the University of Wisconsin Law School. An early Baby Boomer, he has been a civil rights and antiwar activist, a disc jockey (loving rock n roll, jazz, and opera), a world traveler, and a motorcyclist. He is now retired from practicing law and lives with Bella in Sacramento, California, near their children and grandchildren. Find out more at [www.johnpwagner.com](http://www.johnpwagner.com).