

<sup>8</sup> Taste and see that the LORD is good; blessed is the man who takes refuge in him.

<sup>9</sup> Fear the LORD, you his saints, for those who fear him lack nothing.

<sup>10</sup> The lions may grow weak and hungry, but those who seek the LORD lack no good thing.

Psalms 34:8-10 NIV

## *We Made it! Thanks for Praying!*

Rick: Wow! A lot has happened since our November newsletter and our December Christmas greetings, and we have much to praise the Lord for.

Greetings from our new home in Bogotá, Colombia! We are beginning to get settled in, and have unpacked nearly all our boxes, and only today we have started putting up our pictures.

It almost seems like a dream: for so many months we waited on the Lord to provide our financial support and other needs. And then in a very short time it was provided, I accomplished the next step in my ordination process, which was the licensing to preach, our visas for Colombia came through faster than we have ever gotten visas before, and here we are! “Taste and see that the LORD is good!” “Those who seek the LORD lack no good thing”!

## *God's Ways*

And yet, God never gives us a chance to get complacent, or to forget that he is in charge, and not us. After we arrived here with full support, a large donor unexpectedly needed to stop their giving, so suddenly we find ourselves in the situation of needing about \$800 per month in additional monthly support, again! However, our international director reminded us on a recent visit that with all that God has done to get us here, it is clear that he has led us here and wants us here, and he will provide this also! Please let us know if you can help us with a new or increased monthly pledge.

## *Old Memories*

It has been very interesting: I lived here for many years a long time ago with my first family, but Betty and the kids had never been here before. And now Anne and Nathan are enrolled in the very same school that Heidi, John, and James attended some two decades ago, a private Christian school in English set up primarily for missionary children, although quite a few Colombians attend also. The lady who was the director then is still there, and a young lady I worked with to set up their Spanish program is still there also! When we went to enroll the children, a lady came up to me and showed me our old file, with a lovely picture of Heidi Marie, Heidi, John, James, and me that we had taken years ago, with James at about Nathan's age now! She said, “You hold the record. No other family has ever returned after an absence of 19 years to enroll more of their children in the school!”



Anne and Nathan's "school bus", a lot different from the one they rode in Wallace, Nebraska!  
They travel almost an hour each way, which is also a lot more than in Wallace!

Betty: Thanks to those of you praying for our kids' adjustment to school. It has been going very well. They both have teachers they like and have adjusted quickly to the academic and cultural differences. Two main differences: they are required to wear uniforms here. We had to clothes shop when we arrived. Also, they have to get on the school bus at 6:25 AM, so we've all had to adjust to an early morning schedule.

### *Praise God that...*

- additional support was pledged so that MTW cleared us to return to the mission field! Thanks for the generosity of so many of you who have made this possible.
- our visas for Colombia were approved in less than an hour when Rick applied for them in Atlanta on January 30, and he was able to pick them up the next morning!
- Rick passed his oral exams on January 29 and was officially licensed to preach (the last major step before ordination) at the February 12 meeting of Evangel presbytery in Birmingham.
- we arrived in Bogotá, Colombia on February 20, exhausted as expected but happy to finally be here! Travel went without a hitch: thanks for praying! The next day we moved into the house God graciously provided us, which we are renting from some old missionary friends that Rick has known for many years. Praise God for his bountiful blessings! Anne and Nathan started school the next Monday.
- our household goods arrived safe and sound by truck from Ecuador on March 13. They had to travel some very windy, steep mountain roads to get here. It has been fun to set up our household again with our own things after being pilgrims in the U.S. for almost two years!

### *Please Pray...*

- for all of the adjustments we will be making as a family as we settle into a new home, school, country, and missionary team.
- for clear vision and guidance from God for our team, as we seek the best strategy to start several brand new church plants here in Bogotá. We have already had several meetings with our team members, and are very excited by their attitude and vision. Pray especially for an initial service on April 7.
- for Rick as he plans an upcoming trip to Ecuador to renew contacts with those we have worked with in the past, and who we want to continue working with when we return to Ecuador after our two-year internship here in Bogotá.
- that the remaining amount still needed in monthly pledges will be provided.



### *Cultural Closeup*

Rick: Now that we have arrived in Colombia, we have had to redo our family budget. Our rent is now \$1,300,000 per month. We recently purchased a car, and it cost us \$12,000,000. We had sold our major appliances in Ecuador last summer, so we had to buy them again here. Our washer-dryer cost us \$2,500,000. A gallon of gasoline costs \$8,912. And we recently set our 7-year-old Nathan's allowance at \$900 a week.

"Those can't be U.S. dollars!" you will say. No, they aren't, they are Colombian pesos, which are worth a whole lot less than the U.S. dollar, even though they use the same "\$" symbol. As I write this the exchange rate (which changes daily and even hourly) is about \$1830 pesos to one U.S. dollar.

So grab a calculator and see what our costs actually are in dollars. We have to use one every day just to figure prices, although we are starting to get used to thinking in pesos instead of dollars. (In Ecuador they use the U.S. dollar, so we didn't have to mess with exchange rates or money conversion when we lived there.) Actually, we are getting a wonderful deal on our rent, since we are renting from some old friends; some others on our team are paying twice as much for half the space, and we are very thankful for God's provision! In general, prices here are higher than in the U.S. As you can see, gasoline is currently \$4.87 a gallon.

You can see a picture of some of the coins on the Internet at <http://coins.about.com/od/worldcoins/ig/World-Coins-Gallery-Index/Columbia-Money-Coins.htm>. The smallest coin we have yet seen is a \$50 peso coin, worth about 3 U.S. cents. Anything smaller than that is pretty much out of circulation. The largest bill we have seen is the \$50,000 peso bill, worth about \$27 dollars.

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[www.Aschmann.net/Rick/Newsletter](http://www.Aschmann.net/Rick/Newsletter).