



# Merry Christmas from the Aschmanns!

December 2009

“For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways,” declares the LORD.

“As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.” Isaiah 55:8-9

Rick: New things are happening thick and fast around here! The biggest thing is that I am helping produce a new translation of the Bible into Central Highland Quichua! So far the New Testament has been completed in rough draft, and we expect it to be published sometime next year.

So why a new translation, when the Bible has been available in Central Highland Quichua for many years? As you may recall, we mentioned in our April 2007 newsletter that the Bible was out of print, but that a revision had been completed, but had not yet been printed because of complications. Well, for reasons I can't explain and don't fully understand, that revision never was printed, and will not be. This was very frustrating for us, since there is a great need for Bibles among the Quichuas.

Shortly before we left for our Home Ministry Assignment in September of 2007, I was approached by a Quichua friend named Daniel, who told me that he had been hired by the International Bible Society to do a new translation for the Quichuas, and he asked me to work with him on it. I told him that we were leaving for a year in the U.S., but that on our return I might be able to help.

After we returned, I heard that Daniel was working on the translation in collaboration with Günther Schulze, the German missionary who had translated the original Bible. Brother Günther, now in his 80s, was retired in Switzerland, but they were doing the translation over Skype. I was glad to hear this, since our life was complicated enough at that time, as you know from our newsletters.

One day in October the doorbell rang, and there was Daniel. I invited him in, and asked him how he was doing. He told me that Brother Günther had had a heart attack, and though he was expected to recover, he could certainly no longer work on the translation. Daniel asked me if I would take over. I said that I would be delighted to do so.

I didn't tell him that if he had asked me just a few months earlier, I might not have been able to do so, because of

## Home Ministry Assignment

Who: The Aschmann family  
Where: Midwestern United States (Nebraska, Colorado, Kansas, Oklahoma, Texas)  
When: June-August 2010  
Why: To visit and report to our churches, supporters, and friends

(We plan to visit our churches in the Southeastern U.S. the summer of 2012.  
If this plan won't work for your church, please let us know!)

## Prayer & Praise

- Please pray for the new Central Highland Quichua translation, that God would give us great wisdom in producing the clearest and most usable translation possible, and that it would be used mightily to strengthen and equip the Quichua church.
- Please pray for the *Paltapamba* church, that God would guide them and us through this important step of joining with us, and that it would be a beacon for the gospel throughout the central highlands of Ecuador and beyond.
- Please pray that God would provide our needed additional monthly support. We have lost a bit of support through deaths and other factors, and our children's schooling costs have gone up unexpectedly. Our best estimate at the moment is that we are short about \$1,500 per month.
- Continue praying for *Paúl Chiriboga*, for daily encouragement and guidance, and for additional local support.

our family issues. Nor did he tell me that he was terribly discouraged at the time, for a number of reasons, and was feeling like giving up on the whole project. He told me later that if I had said no, or even if I hadn't happened to be home, he might have done just that. He just happened to be in our neighborhood, and decided to look me up almost as a last resort. God's ways are not our ways, are they? But they are perfect!

My dear friend and former missionary colleague Dave Strumbeck, who preached at John's funeral, is working on it also. Dave just happens to be the greatest natural language learner I have ever met (and I've met a lot), and he is fluent in Quichua. Dave is fitting this task in among his pastoral responsibilities in the U.S., and his help will be essential. Without Dave's help the work would take months longer. We are communicating over the Internet on Skype. Again, God had everything arranged, in ways we could not have imagined.

Another exciting thing that has happened is that the Paltapamba church, which was featured in our last newsletter, has definitely decided that it wants to be a Presbyterian church and formally join with us.

In the past we have run into the difficulty that Quichuas want to become Presbyterians without having the first clue what that means, like joining a club or something. We have found that there is a lot of misunderstanding about many very basic Bible doctrines, so we have mainly focused on simply teaching God's Word and not worrying, in the short run, about labels and affiliations.

However, the Paltapamba church has a long history with our mission, reaching back more than ten years, and we are really excited that they are ready and eager to take this step.



Ángel, one of the elders in the Paltapamba church, and his family. He also has several adult children!



## Cultural Closeup

Rick: One day Segundo and I were teaching the Paltapamba church about the covenants in the Bible, and I asked, "Now do all of you know what the word circumcision means?" All I got were blank stares.

Then one of the church leaders said, "Brother, why don't you go ahead and explain it to everybody, because there are some here who don't know what it means." (He didn't clarify whether he was one of them.)

"Great!" I thought. Now, why did I even bring it up? Because I had no choice: It is a central concept in the Bible. It is mentioned all through the New Testament, and is often used as a metaphor in explaining the gospel, so as Christians we need to understand it.

But I was embarrassed. There were a lot of people there, of all ages, from little children to old people. But I gritted my teeth and went for it. As I explained, I could see some eyes getting really big, and several started whispering among themselves, and a few started giggling.

Then I asked Segundo to explain it again in Quichua. There was a whiteboard marker there that had more or less the right shape, so he showed exactly where you needed to cut. More eyes got really big, and more whispering!

"Why did they do that?" someone asked. "Because God commanded them to. It was God's idea," I said. "Oh..." Quizzical looks. (God's ways are not our ways, are they?)

This wasn't the first time I had been in this situation. Once, many years ago, I was teaching a group of Quichua young people. We got to the part in Luke 2 where Jesus is circumcised. One of the young ladies said, "You mean they do that on the eighth day? We do that as soon as the child is born." "You do what?" I said. "We cut the cord," she said. "Oh. No, that's not what this is talking about." "So what is it talking about?"

The problem is that the term isn't clear in the existing Central Highland Quichua Bible. The translators, in order not to make the term too vulgar or offensive, tried to make it less direct, but as a result the reader doesn't know what it's talking about! Please pray that in the new translation we would find the right way to say this important concept, balancing clarity with propriety!

E-mail address:	<a href="mailto:RASchmann@mtwsa.org">RASchmann@mtwsa.org</a>
Personal web page:	<a href="http://www.Aschmann.net/Rick">www.Aschmann.net/Rick</a>
Quichua web page:	<a href="http://www.Quichua.net/Q/Ec/English.html">www.Quichua.net/Q/Ec/English.html</a>
Mailing address in Ecuador:	<b>Rick &amp; Betty Aschmann</b> (No packages please, or check with us first) Casilla 17-08-8403 Quito, Ecuador South America
Home phone:	(011)-593-2-225-2198
Virtual U.S. phone:	972-535-4356
Mission address:	<b>Mission to the World</b> PO Box 116284 Atlanta, GA 30368-6284
Mission web sites:	<a href="http://www.mtw.org">www.mtw.org</a> <a href="http://www.hcjb.org">www.hcjb.org</a> <a href="http://www.mtwla.org">www.mtwla.org</a> <a href="http://www.wycliffe.org">www.wycliffe.org</a>



This newsletter can be seen on the Internet at:  
[www.Aschmann.net/Rick/Newsletter](http://www.Aschmann.net/Rick/Newsletter).