

Aschmann Action

June 2010

„...And they admitted that they were aliens and strangers on earth. „People who say such things show that they are looking for a country of their own. „If they had been thinking of the country they had left, they would have had opportunity to return. „Instead, they were longing for a better country— a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he has prepared a city for them.
Hebrews 11:13b-16

Rick: Please forgive me if I begin this letter in a somewhat philosophical mood. There are times when we feel more like aliens and strangers on earth than at other times. Probably the fact that we are preparing to pull up stakes again and head back to the United States for another whirlwind Home Ministry Assignment largely explains my present mood.

But an even better example of someone living as an alien and stranger on earth is our good friend Paúl Chiriboga. Those of you that have been reading our newsletters since April of last year have been hearing about Paúl and his vision for ministering to the Quichuas, using his expertise as an agricultural expert as a tool to see God's church grow among the Quichuas. I know many of you have prayed for him as he struggled to learn the Imbabura Quichua language and to adjust to life in a small Quichua village on the slopes of Imbabura Mountain.

He embarked on that mission with very little financial support, a bit from family and friends, and he got pretty hungry and pretty tired quite a few times, and often felt like an alien and stranger in the land. I know this because throughout this experience I have been his constant sounding board and encourager. But one thing convinced me that he was called by the Lord to this kind of work: He constantly refused to quit, and kept on plugging away at his ministry and his efforts to improve the lives of the believers there in Naranjito.

But, as I have expressed many times before, God's ways are not our ways, and his plans for our lives are often not foreseeable. Two things happened recently that radically changed Paúl's situation. The first was that some problems arose in Naranjito that made it a lot more difficult for him to continue living there. At the same time, his home church here in Quito, San Marcos Presbyterian, where we also attend, decided to call Paúl as their missionary to a completely different Quichua community, speaking a different though related Quichua language. As part of this they pledged to support him fully, financially and logistically. He called me up and said, "I think I should do it. What do you think?" I said that I agreed, and that I thought God's leading was pretty clear.

Home Ministry Assignment

We are looking forward to seeing many of you in Nebraska, Colorado, Kansas, and Texas this summer. We will be in the U.S. June 12-August 30. (We plan to see our friends and churches in the southeast the summer of 2012.)

We are thankful to many of you for some sizable one-time gifts, which have really helped our account balance, but we are still lacking over \$1,100 in monthly pledges.

Please contact us if you are interested in supporting us. If you could pledge to give yearly or monthly, it would help us to return to our ministry in Ecuador on time. Please send pledges or support to:

Mission to the World

PO Box 116284

Atlanta, GA 30368-6284

Rick and Betty Aschmann, account #10107

But it's a huge change. The new ministry is to a mission church in Mondayacu, down in the hot, wet eastern jungle, a far cry from cold, dry Naranjito, high in the Andes Mountains. The languages, though related, are also quite different,* about as different as Spanish and Portuguese, so Paúl will have to do a lot of re-learning of the Quichua he has already learned, but the basic structure and vocabulary of the two languages is very similar, so he can build on the base he already has. Another difference is that in Naranjito there is a large, thriving church, whereas in Mondayacu there is a tiny, struggling church in a town where most of the population does not know the Lord.

We had some involvement with the Mondayacu church many years ago, and mentioned it in a couple of newsletters way back in 2001. Since then the church has had its ups and downs, but has never really been able to build local leadership, and has now dwindled to the point that it needs a whole new strategy, and is almost like starting from scratch. Rather than being discouraged by this, Paúl is excited about this new challenge. He recently took a training

* There are 8 different Quichua languages spoken in Ecuador. For a map, see www.Quichua.net/Q/Ec/English.html. Naranjito is in Imbabura province, Mondayacu is near Tena in Napo province, and Paltapamba is in Bolívar province.

course to teach adults to read in their native language, and he has already talked with the community leaders about the possibility of helping in the areas of literacy and agriculture. The response was enthusiastic. So we are excited to see what God will do in the Mondayacu community. Please be praying for Paúl!

The San Marcos church leaders have asked both Segundo and me to be involved in helping Paúl in his work there, and we will be adding this to our other responsibilities as God permits! It is a four-hour drive away from Quito, down an extremely windy mountain road.

What else have we been up to?

- The new Central Highland Quichua New Testament continues to be distributed and read, and we are excited to see how God is using his Word in people's lives.

- We still haven't really gotten started with the Central Highland Quichua Old Testament translation. Daniel has been busy recording in audio format the entire New Testament for distribution to the many Quichuas who find it easier to listen to God's Word than to read it. We are planning to start helping Daniel with the Old Testament after we get back in September.

- We are continuing to train the leaders of the Star of Bethlehem church in Paltapamba, mentioned in previous letters, as they continue the process of joining with us as a Presbyterian church.

- Our team has started a new initiative with all of the Presbyterian churches here in Ecuador, called Crecer Juntos en Cristo (Growing Together in Christ). The purpose is to revitalize them and build a vision for evangelism, church planting, and missions. It will be a big challenge, and will involve taking some significant risks, as does any new Christian outreach. But we are anticipating how it will build the faith of all concerned.

- Segundo and I have recently been asked to be involved in the reprinting, with minor corrections, of the Imbabura Quichua Bible, which has been out of print for many years. We are excited to help with this, but are also concerned about how to balance this with all of our other responsibilities!



Elders and deacons of San Marcos Presbyterian Church commissioning Paúl Chiriboga as their missionary in Mondayacu

Prayer & Praise

- Pray for us as we travel throughout the Midwest during our Home Ministry Assignment, that God would give us the energy we need, and that he would give us times of rest and refreshment in between the travelling and sharing with many of you.
- Continue praying for our needed monthly support.
- Pray for each of the ministries and tasks listed above, that we would see God's hand at work, and that he would give us wisdom in balancing all of our responsibilities.



Cultural Closeup

Betty: Mealtimes here in Ecuador are a bit different from many places we will be visiting in the U.S. this summer.

Breakfast is served to children and working people in the city before they leave the house, but the typical breakfast, especially for country folk is much larger and later. They eat a full meal sometime between 8:00 and 10:00, including a couple pieces of chicken or a steak, rice, an egg, vegetables, and juice.

Lunch is typically later. It is normal to eat lunch at about 1:30, or even later if it's a special event.

The supper hour is usually late, too, about 7:30 or 8:00. Special events normally run 9:30 or 10:00, and the special Christmas Eve supper is traditionally started at midnight.

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Our newsletters can be seen on the Internet at:
www.Aschmann.net/Rick/Newsletter