



¹¹ He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him. ¹² But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God...
John 1:11-12

Church Plant Milestones

We've had exciting developments in our church plant over the last few months. Some new families have visited, and after several years of being basically just a Bible study,

we are now taking steps to become a proper church. We celebrated the Lord's Supper for the first time in November, which was a special blessing. Several people have made professions of faith and are preparing to be baptized. So exciting!

With some loosening of the government's restrictions on social distancing we were also able to move inside for our meetings. We are thankful for this, especially since we got seriously rained on a few times, even with the tents!

Another thing Segundo and I have started is a "leadership training" meeting, currently on Saturday afternoon. As yet we are not sure who all may have leadership potential, so we opened the meeting up to anyone who wanted to come, and we have had a good group each time. One thing that I knew we would need to work on was simple reading fluency in Quichua, and that did indeed prove to be an important part of those meetings. A few of the adults had never learned to read at all. Fortunately we had prepared literacy materials many years ago, and are now using them again. Laura, Segundo's wife, has taken on the task of teaching two of the older ladies to read, and they are excited to see that they can actually succeed in this when they thought that they never could!

But very few of them were in the habit of doing a lot of reading. Quichua presents special challenges for reading, even for native speakers (see Cultural Closeup below), so we are practicing reading with everyone who comes for training. After we challenged them, one young man, Patricio, has really been practicing reading. One Sunday recently he actually read all of Acts chapter 2 to the congregation in Quichua, with very few mistakes. When he first started attending our meetings, just reading one verse was an ordeal for him!



For many months we could only meet outside.

Prayer & Praise

- Please pray for safe travel for Anne as she flies back home to Quito for Christmas. And pray for wisdom for the doctors in their continuing treatment of her eye condition and diabetes.
- Please pray that in this Christmas season God would speak to the Quichuas in our fellowship in a special way as they continue to learn more about him.
- Please continue praying for health and safety for our whole family.
- Thank the Lord for the continued progress of the Old Testament translation project. Please pray that we can keep up the momentum in order to finish as soon as possible.
- Thank the Lord that Nathan is back in class in person this year. It is much easier for him. He even got a part in the Christmas play.



Patricio and María volunteered to bring the food for a fellowship meal for the whole congregation after our first Lord's Supper.

Update on Anne

The surgery on our daughter Anne's right eye in September to prevent deformation of the retina went very well, and we're waiting to hear about whether or when she should have surgery done on her left eye. She sees very well out of the right eye, and actually drove by herself to and from college 5 hours each way to celebrate Thanksgiving with family.

Her first semester of college has gone quite well. Thanks for your prayers.

Bible Translation Update

Progress continues on the Old Testament translation, though it has slowed up a bit as Daniel is working through all of the suggestions and questions that we, the editors, have made so far. And we are all working through consistency in terminology and spelling. I am constantly reminded what a big job this is, and how much we must depend on God's wisdom and guidance to do it well. Thanks for praying!



Fluent readers of English very seldom need to sound a word out: they know most words by sight. This makes the process of reading much faster and easier. In Spanish the same is true. But in Quichua this kind of sight reading is impossible. Why? Because Quichua has many more different words than English or Spanish, and these words are often very long. English has around

100,000 different words, whereas Quichua has trillions of possible words! I explained this in detail in two previous newsletters: aschmann.net/Rick/Newsletter/NLet-2010-03.pdf and aschmann.net/Rick/Newsletter/NLet-2004-02.pdf, so I won't repeat that explanation here.

The verse on the right above contains two words with 16 letters, one with 17 letters, and one with 29 letters.

These are not technical words, they are ordinary words that Quichua speakers use all the time in daily conversation. Words of 20 letters are quite common. These words are made by starting with a root and adding up to 8 or even more suffixes, each of which adds its meaning to the word. Native Quichua speakers know how the suffixes work, so when they hear or read any of these words they immediately know what they mean without even having to think about it. But a reader may never have actually seen a particular combination before, so this makes sight reading impossible! Instead, the only way to read fluently in Quichua is to learn to read words one syllable at a time: **ch'i-can-yachish-ca-cu-na-lla-ta-taj-mi**. I had learned to read these long words this way through many years of practice, but the Quichuas do not do this naturally. Instead, they often try to guess what the word is, and since there are so many possibilities, they pretty much always guess wrong. But when I taught them this method, they were much more successful. But it takes a lot of practice, which means they have to really want to do it to gain such fluency! That was why I was so thrilled to see how much progress Patricio had made.

Cultural Closeup

Romans 8:30: Ñaupaman Pai **ch'icanyachishcacunallataajmi** cayarca. Chai **cayashcacunatami**, ima juchachina illajta rurarca. Ima juchachina illajta **rurashcacunatami** **sumajyachircapish**.

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