

EQUADOR

By David Wilson

My first trip to Ecuador (Quito) was arranged through the radio station HCJB. This short-wave Christian station was one of the first to be established in the world and was greatly used to disciple me when I was a teenager. Later, I was privileged to give my testimony over the airwaves and to thank them for reaching me far away in New Zealand. After a small seminar with them and a well-attended open-air meeting, I immediately saw the great potential for an OAC branch in Ecuador.

Returning there, again, in October 1988, I taught a seminar in Quito in which David Proaño and many others attended. I was told that our first open-air meeting in the plaza would be stopped by the police. Later, when I saw two policemen arrive during our meeting, I prayed for God to overrule. Then a very large drop of rain landed in the middle of my sketchboard message, and, again, I was cast upon the Lord. After preaching and giving out decision booklets to those responding, I noticed that one arm stretched out before me was in uniform. Looking up, I saw the two police officers. They had come forward to receive booklets, and both thanked me for being there! God was confirming that this was a wide-open harvest field. A few days later, two pastors, who had been trained at the seminar, preached with similar results. Over 100 decisions were recorded during the training. I taught another seminar in Guayaquil at a seminary. Rarely had I seen a greater response to the Gospel, and counseling went on for almost an hour. As I left Ecuador, I had high hopes that many of these choice students and church leaders would continue to reach multitudes for Christ. Sadly, only one continued, but this was unknown to me. His name was David Proaño.



DAVID WILSON BEFORE A NINE-HOUR TRIP BY CANOE WITH DAVID PROAÑO TO AN INDIAN TRIBE



DAVID PROAÑO PREACHING ON A MILITARY BASE

I decided not to return until God provided the evangelist to pioneer OAC in Ecuador. Eleven years later, Monica Vargas traced me through the new OACI website and told me that their college group at church had been burdened to do open-air evangelism. Her youth pastor was David Proaño! He had been taking them out on successful open-air outreaches for several months, and they had seen many respond to Christ. I immediately planned to return to Quito. Upon arriving and going out with them, I found out that it was all true. The fields were still ripe for harvest. After one meeting, with Monica translating, a whole group responded for salvation and followed us to a nearby church, where they received a warm welcome. We held open-air evangelism seminars in six churches. Finally, the OAC ministry in Ecuador was about to take off!

After another visit, I began the process of registering OAC Ecuador through Monica's mother, a very capable lawyer with a doctorate in law. I was told that the registration for an evangelical mission was impossible in this strongly Catholic country. As God would have it, Monica's mother recognized a classmate of hers when she went to the government office, and our application was moved to the top of the pile. A few weeks later, in 2001, OAC was registered.

Monica was approached by different missions with great promises if she joined their staff, but she chose to join OAC, where I could promise her nothing except God's faithfulness. David and Monica were married, and David joined OAC. Soon God provided a new Chevy double-cab truck and all the film equipment. The ministry expanded into different towns and even jungle villages. Wherever possible, the ministry was linked with local churches. OAC Ecuador had begun!



MONICA SHARING CHRIST



REACHING INDIANS IN THE OPEN AIR



DAVID PROAÑO PRESENTING THE GOSPEL TO AN INDIAN COMMUNITY

We were told that no religion was allowed in public schools by law. Approaching the first school in Quito, we asked for an assembly based on biblical values. We would show a film on drugs and AIDS, which were now facing the principals, and then present a Gospel message on 'Choices.' The principal quickly said, 'No!' Monica went on to explain we were not promoting religion but a relationship with God. He pressed a button, and soon his office was filled with staff. Amazingly, they soon agreed that we should do the assembly. Over 450 high school students sat that night under the stars at 10,000 feet in Quito and watched the film! They became silent and locked on, even applauding at the end. I, then, preached on the broad and narrow ways of life and that we must choose which way to go...that only Christ was the answer to the void in our lives and the only One who could give us eternal life. I wondered if this would be our first and last school assembly in Ecuador. The students, however, were extremely positive and responsive, with many coming to talk with us. One girl said to David, "I'm pregnant, and nobody knows. What should I do?" Then a man approached me and introduced himself as a government school inspector. I held my breath as I waited for his response!

Incredibly, he was full of praise, declaring that this is what the students need to hear. Truly, God had shown us how to reach the multitudes of high school students with the Gospel. In the next school, after Monica spoke, a girl stood up and asked, "You say that only God can fill the void in our hearts. How can I know God?" She was quickly told how she could, through surrendering her life to Christ, as all the students listened. Finally, when the time was up, the students cried out for more. Three assemblies were held, and we received another good reference letter to open up more schools.

Open-air meetings continued to reach many. In the red-light district, one man told Monica that he had come to Quito so that his mother would not have to watch him die. He was on his way down through drugs and immorality. Monica told him that Christ could give him 'living water.' Sitting down on the sidewalk and crying, he received Jesus Christ as his Savior. This was a pattern that we saw as people kept divine appointments in these outreaches. Drama was also introduced into the programs,



SCHOOL ASSEMBLY TO SHOW STUDENTS THE WAY OF SALVATION

as David and Monica used their young children as actors with them. This proved very effective both in schools and in the open air.

The first American mission team came to Ecuador in 2002. Using the 'Redeemer' drama, large crowds were attracted in the plazas, which stayed on for the illustrated gospel messages. We also flew the team on Mission Aviation Fellowship (MAF) to three tribes in the jungle. It was a thrill for me to sit alongside the pilot, as being a MAF pilot used to be my dream when I was an airline pilot before God called me to be an evangelist. As these mission teams continued to come, David and Monica received their full support.



REACHING CHILDREN WITH THE GOOD NEWS

As the work of OAC Ecuador continues ('Campanas Al Aire Libre' in Spanish), people are being reached, even in the mountains. Indian families sat under the stars watching our film on the life of Christ and responded to the Good News of salvation. In another place, when it started to rain, the people picked up the tarp we had put out for them to sit on and held it above their heads. We continued the film, with an umbrella over the video projector, and preached in the rain.



OUTREACH IN A PLAZA

In 2007, David began a new method of follow-up. After preaching in the plaza to mostly men, he immediately began a Bible study with those responding to

Christ. A study book on the Gospel of John and a pencil were given to each person. Sitting down, they followed David as he took them through each question. Some excitedly called out the answers, as they found them in the Gospel. Thirty minutes later, the ten questions in the first lesson had been answered. They were told to continue the study on their own, and where they could find a good church. Another meeting was begun with a new crowd, and the whole process was repeated. I also saw this done at night, where after a two-hour film and message, 50 stayed to study the Gospel of John. At 10,000 feet, with the temperature dropping, they still remained for 30 minutes to learn from God's Word. It was probably the first time they had read the Scriptures. This now has become common practice, with adults, youth, and children eagerly doing the lessons.

David also felt led to approach the military bases, and doors opened to present Christ to hundreds of servicemen. He has also used the fore-mentioned Bible study method after preaching to the men. One commander said this program had more impact than any other he had seen and asked David to return and reach the rest of the men on the base. Now more Army, Air Force, and Navy bases have opened their doors to OAC for programs!

God is providing new vans totally through David and Monica's supporters. We continue to work together and have even traveled nine hours by canoe to a remote village in the jungle. He has also traveled with me as I opened new OAC branches in different Latin American countries.

At the time of this writing, David Proaño serves as the OAC International vice-president. He assists our current President, Rob George (an Australian), and has been nominated to be the next OACI President. He will continue his ministry in Ecuador and also minister in the other OAC branches around the world.

Monica continues to be fully involved and a vital part of this great ministry. How I thank God that she contacted me years ago and for the multiplied thousands of souls that have been reached through their ministry!



SCHOOL ASSEMBLY