

Ecuador 02/03/18

The trip from NC to Salasaka was mostly uneventful except for a new traveling companion, Wenda. It was nice to have her traveling with me this time. All the bags made it and we arrived safely in Salasaka about 11:30 pm.

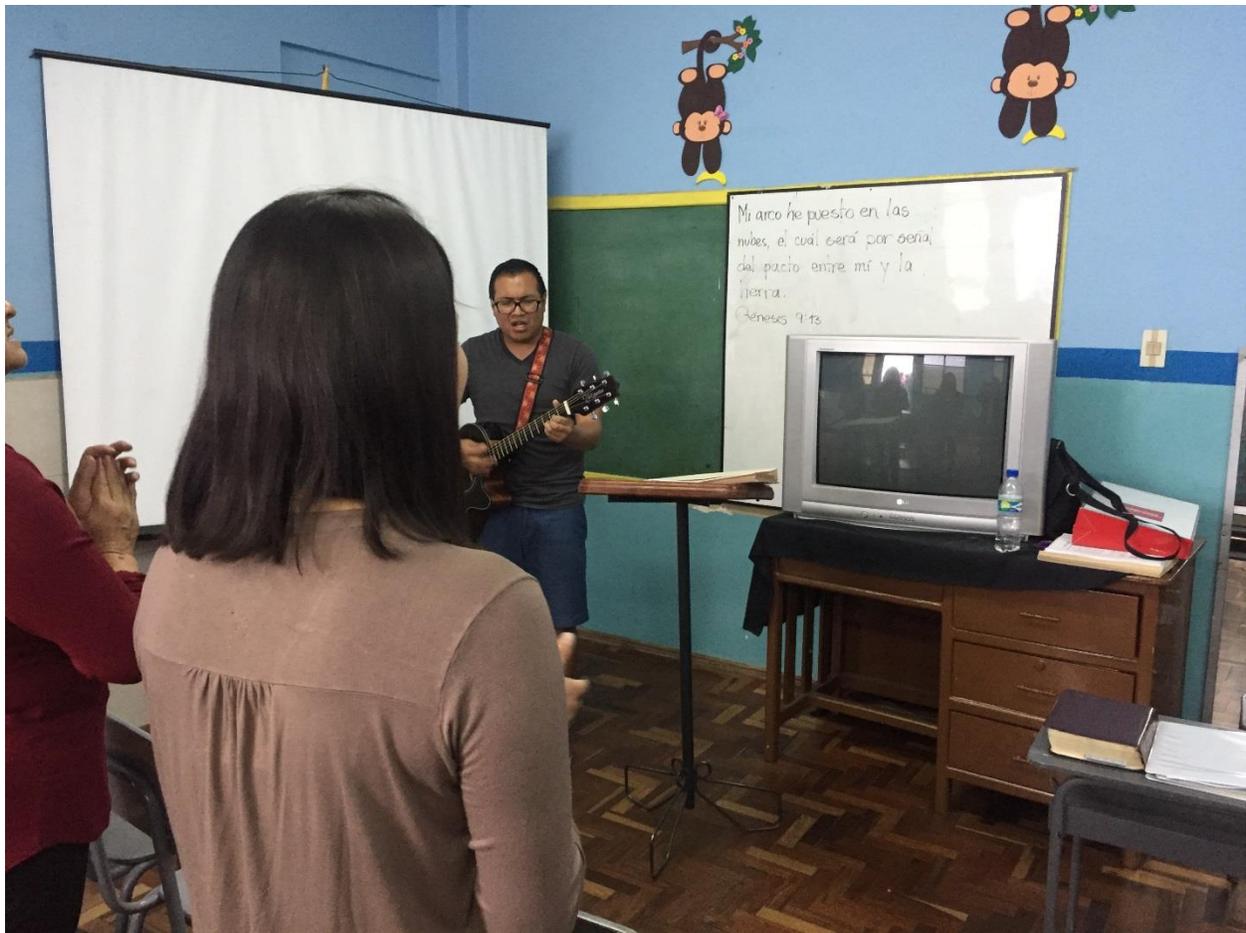
Today started with the unpacking of our clothes and training materials for the women's study this afternoon in Ambato at PIBA. Wenda will be leading some women there in a study on Sanctification.

Pastor Guillermo and I helped get things set up for her there and came back to Salasaka to get the chairs and materials together for her to teach the women in Salasaka tonight. She will be teaching on Sanctification in Salasaka the rest of the week.

Tonight, I was with the men trying to finish the Old Testament overview. We started with Zephaniah who like Habakkuk ministered to Judah looking at the day God's judgement would come by way of the Babylonians. Again, God in his mercy, tried to turn His people from their wicked ways warning them of what would be their fate and their hope. There were 8 men there tonight because the women were with Wenda.

We had 13 ladies attend the study on sanctification at PIBA.





Fabian, who leads the praise and worship Sunday mornings at PIBA, led us in several songs before we started our study. That left me two hours to go through what will take me five days to complete in Salasaka! We were able to go through the material with thoughtful questions and comments within our two-hour limit.

I made it to Salasaka just in time to set out supplies before the ladies started to arrive. We had 12 in attendance. Our time of fellowship, bible study, and prayer was a blessing. The ladies had many questions about being "set apart" so we will definitely need all five days.

Pray for both groups that the Spirit of Truth would guide them into all truth.

Blessings,

Guido and Wenda

Ecuador 02/04/18

Today we attended church service in Ambato at PIBA. The sermon was on being a servant, dying to self, and taking up our cross. Pastor Jonathan spoke of altruism, the belief in the unselfish regard for others using Luke 9:23 as the basis for the sermon.

After the service he and Ivonne invited us to lunch at a restaurant overlooking Ambato.





The city of Ambato, Ecuador.





We had a very enjoyable time discussing spiritual/church issues, catching up on things going on in our lives not to mention the great food.

After returning to Salasaka, the afternoon was spent going over the sermon for tonight at SBC. The sermon was on Forgiveness and based around Colossians 3:12-17 with additional references from 1 John 4:20-21 and 1 John 2:4-5. There were approximately 40 in attendance. The church has pretty much reached capacity.

Attached are some pictures taken before everyone had arrived. Please pray for the church to find a new place to meet.



Klever leads a time of worship.



Katty helps Klever to lead singing. Children join at this time until they go to their class during the sermon.



After the sermon, as is our custom the first Sunday of the month, we celebrated the Lord's Supper and afterwards Edwin and his family provided bread and coffee.

Today was a very good Lord's Day,

Guido

Ecuador 02/05/18

Today Pastor Guillermo met me in Ambato at the Toyota Dealer. My truck needed service so he picked me up in his 1981 VW bug.



He is driving the VW because he all but totaled his Toyota Prada last month.

He was coming back to Salasaka and fell asleep crashing into a power pole. His car is being fixed but he is having to get parts from all over Ecuador. Here, the body shops fix the vehicles but you get the parts for them. Thankfully he was not hurt.

After dropping off my truck in Ambato, Wenda and Elvia went with us to La Florida to have a Bible study with Pablo's family. Pablo is excited to open a box containing a new truck radio he ordered.



Pablo has to do some counseling of young adults for his seminary class and wanted some scripture verses for various situations that he may be presented with. (Wow) I advised him to get familiar with Proverbs and showed him some examples of life situations that Solomon counseled his children on. I advised him to show God's love by sharing the gospel and showing them the truth in The Word.

Afterwards, Aurora served a wonderful lunch of soup, chicken and rice.

After lunch we went to Ambato, picked up my truck and drove to Condorahua to visit Orlando, Elizabeth and their new baby boy named Liam. This is their first child.





Wenda holding baby Liam, 5 days old.



Leaving Condorahua.

From Condorahua we returned to Salasaka to prepare for the training tonight. The men had 11 in attendance and we were in the book of Zachariah.

Zachariah and Haggai ministered around 520 BC after being released from captivity by King Cyrus. The rebuilding of the temple had stopped for about 16 years so God used Zachariah to encourage the people to start again and finish the temple, which they did in four years. In order to inspire the Israelites and give them hope, Zachariah's message was about obedience, repentance and the vision of the coming King who would bring full freedom and blessings to God's people.

There were 19 in attendance for the ladies' study on Sanctification. This is the second night of learning how the believer is sanctified (set apart) to God by justification.

The emphasis tonight was how the truth of God is the sanctifier. We cannot grow in sanctification apart from the truth. "We only progress in sound living as we progress in sound understanding."

We had good discussion with practical application and closed with prayer. Looking forward to Tuesday night!

Blessings,

Guido and Wenda

02/06/18

Today started with a drive to Ambato to join Pastor Jonathan and his wife Ivonne at their home for breakfast. We had a good time visiting and enjoyed a home cooked breakfast instead of the usual Nabs!



From there we drove back to Salasaka and picked up Pastor Guillermo and traveled to Chiquicha to visit Orlando and Marcia, Segundo's son. He was the one who was in a motorcycle accident a couple of years ago.

Orlando and Marcia have been having problems in their relationship to the point that Orlando is being abusive. When I asked Orlando what he is thinking, he shared that as soon as the note at the bank is paid he is leaving. I asked Marcia the same question. She said she is tired of his abusiveness, his not paying attention to her or the children and is afraid of him.

God gave me the opportunity to show them, one more time, that their life is never going to get better without Christ. I told Orlando that God didn't spare his life so he could go on living in the flesh and ignoring the mercies God shows him day by day.

I told Marcia that she couldn't use Orlando as an excuse for not reading her bible or going to church. I told her that she is accountable to God, herself, and her children. (They have been living together for 8 years but have never married.)



Orlando sewing jeans while Pastor Guillermo looks on.

After reading scripture and assuring Orlando that he has choices to make, as to his eternal destination to avoid hell, we then prayed for them and left.



Marcia praying.

From Orlando's we went to lunch and then to La Florida to visit with some of the congregation but no one was home. We ended up visiting with Nelly, Aurora, and Pablo.

From La Florida we went back to Salasaka to prepare for the training tonight. On the way back, Pastor Guillermo had forwarded me some pictures of his wreck that I had mentioned in the last report. Because of God's protection, he was not injured!

The study tonight was attended by 11 men and we started in the book of Malachi. The last of the Old Testament prophets. Malachi was sent by God 100 years after the completion of the second temple at a time when the Israelites were starting to become complacent in their worship and not giving God their best.

Malachi documents accusations by God against Israel and Israel's denials. Their denial of idolatry, improper worship, marital infidelity, failing to tithe, and questioning God's righteousness. It brought to light the question: Are we giving our best to God or are we giving Him the leftovers?

The ladies continued their study on Sanctification and the role of the Holy Spirit.



Blessings,

Guido and Wenda

Ecuador 2/7/18

Pastor Guillermo received a call early this morning from Orlando (the one we met with and warned him of his eternal destination). Pastor Guillermo and Elvia drove to Orlando's and met with him and Marcia. He shared the gospel with them and prayed again before leaving.

Please remember Orlando, Segundo's son, and Marcia in prayer.

After this, Pastor Guillermo, Elvia and I went to Ambato to take my laundry. While in Ambato we decided to go by and check on truck insurance. After Pastor Guillermo's accident I'm thinking insurance might be a good idea.

We returned to Salasaka to pick up Wenda then drive back to Ambato to meet Carlos and Mariuxi for lunch. Carlos has been living and working in the Galapagos but came home Monday for a 40-day vacation. (He works for the government as a police officer.) He has 5 more months to work in the Galapagos and then will be transferred to another unknown destination.

We had a good time catching up and encouraging them in their walk with God. Mariuxi has been attending the ladies study on sanctification and Carlos has been attending the study with the men.

After lunch, we returned to Salasaka to prepare for the Bible Studies.

Tonight, there were 13 men in attendance. We finished the book of Malachi and the end of God speaking through His prophets for 400 years...until the next prophet, John the Baptist, came preaching, "Repent, for the Kingdom of heaven is at hand!" (Matt. 3:2)

Tomorrow night we will have a Q&A time and how we apply the word of God to our day to day living.

The ladies also finished their study on sanctification with a reminder that their perfect example of sanctification is Jesus; the foundation for sanctification is the Word of God and that the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit works in us through the word of God and our obedience.

Tomorrow night the ladies will have a team competition to answer questions we have been asking all week. They tend to be pretty competitive and even though this is not a "soccer match" they tend to be just as aggressive to win the "Bible match!"

Blessings from Ecuador,

Guido and Wenda



Enjoying the picturesque country-side.

Ecuador 2/8/18

Today we drove to Ambato to pick up my laundry then went by the Insurance company to pay for insurance on the truck. It turns out that the lady that helped me at the insurance company was Pastor Hernan's daughter. She told me to contact her first if anything happens and not to make any deals with anyone. It is great when God provides an inside person with inside knowledge to a foreigner!

After taking care of business in Ambato and having lunch at a local chicken restaurant Pastor Guillermo, Elvia, Wenda, and I drove to Sarangay. We had an appointment to meet with America and her daughter, Vanessa. We had noticed some tension between two families in the church and needed to meet and sort things out. Apparently, Vanessa has been the victim of bullying to the point of being afraid to leave her home. Her father has had to meet her at school to make sure she was safe.

The very sad thing about this is that a young woman, who claims to be a Christian not to mention she is a relative, is at the center of the problem and turning others against Vanessa. This has been going on for a couple months. She was counseled to not try to bear this burden alone, that there are those in the church body who can help.

Ecclesiastes 4:12 says, "And though a man might prevail against one who is alone, two will withstand him – a threefold cord is not quickly broken." A visual demonstration gave Vanessa a little better understanding.





After a couple hours of listening to Vanessa and America explain the details of what was going on and that with many tears, we prayed and shared a meal prepared by America.



When we finished our meal, we returned to Salasaka to visit with Nelly at the bakery and pick up goodies for the ladies' class. Nelly was not there but her daughter Karen was working. Karen is a new Christian baptized in October along with her mom, Nelly. Her brother Rodrico was also at the bakery working on his school studies. Rodrico is not a Christian but has had many questions and attended 2 nights of the men's study.

After purchasing our cookies, we returned to our room to prepare for the final night of bible classes.

We had 10 men in attendance and finished up our question and answer time. The ladies had 19 in attendance and Team 2 won the Bible Study Competition. They enjoyed refreshments after the game, had a time of prayer, and said their good-byes.

We leave early tomorrow morning for a trip to the jungle. We are planning to take a boat ride up the Amazon to a village and make it back to Quito to fly out on the "red-eye" flight! Pray for our travels. Lord willing, we will be back in NC Saturday after noonish...

Blessings,

Guido and Wenda

Ecuador 2/9/18

We left early this morning for our trip to the jungle and the small town of Misahualli. We also took a canoe ride on the river. There were 20 of us on the trip and a wonderful day of fun and fellowship. We left around 6:00 pm to make it to Quito airport by 10:00 pm for our red eye flight. A long day but a great time enjoyed by all. Enjoy attached pictures...





After climbing the stairs that were wrapped around a tree we could look out over the jungle for miles.



Stairs winding up tree to see out over jungle.



Because of all the wild monkeys, the small town of Misahualli has this statue in the town center.

Getting ready for our canoe ride up the river...





Patricio and Mercedes' daughter Sara with Pastor Guido.



Amazon waters...





Boy sitting in hand-hewed canoe.



Village along the Amazon.



Murky waters....



One of many monkeys and many varieties of monkeys in the jungle.



Walking a trail in the jungle to visit an animal rehab.



Ecuadorian Cacao.



Before heading back to Misahualli we took time out for a swim...for those who wanted to test the waters.



Trying to cool off.





Klever taking the plunge.



River rocks galore.



A thatched roof provides shade for swing.



Sun going down...





A fun day had by all...