

Chapter 13

Ecuador

— 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



DAVID WILSON SPEAKING ON HCJB



FIRST OPEN AIR-MEETING WITH HCJB

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.



MEETING MONICA



OPEN AIR MEETINGS WITH MONICA



MONICA COUNSELING AFTER A CHILDREN'S MEETING

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.



DAVID AND MONICA MARRY



DAVID WILSON AND DAVID PROAÑO IN QUITO



MONICA SHARING CHRIST

Monica was approached by different missions with great promises if she joined their staff, but she chose to join OAC in 2000. I could promise her nothing except God's faithfulness. David and Monica were married, and David joined OAC in 2001. 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!

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 drug use and AIDS, as both were current issues being faced by school leadership, and then present a gospel message entitled 'Choices' related to the material. The principal quickly said, 'No!' Monica went on to explain that 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



*SCHOOL ASSEMBLY TO SHOW STUDENTS
THE WAY OF SALVATION*



REACHING CHILDREN WITH THE GOOD NEWS



OUTREACH IN A PLAZA

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



SCHOOL ASSEMBLY



DAVID WILSON BEFORE A 9-HOUR TRIP BY CANOE WITH DAVID PROAÑO TO AN INDIAN TRIBE



REACHING INDIANS IN THE OPEN AIR



DAVID PROAÑO PRESENTING THE GOSPEL TO AN INDIAN COMMUNITY

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, 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 an 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.

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.

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 has now 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 aforementioned 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



DAVID PROAÑO PREACHING ON A MILITARY BASE

on the base. Now, more Army, Air Force, and Navy bases have opened their doors to OAC for programs!

God is using David and Monica's financial supporters to provide all the funds needed in order to purchase new vans for the ministry. 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.

David Proaño began serving as our OAC International president in 2020 while continuing his ministry in Ecuador. His role as OACI president gives him the opportunity to minister in 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! Ecuador is experiencing a spiritual awakening, and OAC is assisting the church to bring in the harvest from the jungles to the mountains.



CALEB AND ISABELLA

As reported above, David Wilson has observed firsthand the dedication of David and Monica. What a powerful testimony to see this committed couple include their children as part of the open-air ministry. They have knit their family into a close team, which God has used to minister in many different ways through the years. Their daughter, Isabella, even became an official OAC Ecuador staff member. She was married in February 2025 to Caleb Boles, who came on staff with OAC Ecuador in January 2025, and so the family legacy of ministry

continues. Both Caleb and Isabella are deeply passionate about reaching souls in this country and have committed their best years to proclaiming the good news of the gospel wherever there is an opportunity.



ISABELLA IN THE OPEN AIR

Caleb has been involved in street preaching from a young age. After he and his family moved from the US to Ecuador and met the Proaño family, he began preaching in the streets, plazas, and schools as a team member.



CALEB BOLES AT THE BOARD

In recent years, God has led additional workers to Ecuador, who have helped with ministry outreach. Isabel Romanchuk and Leah Weiss have been a great blessing and assistance to the team in this country.

Isabel Romanchuk, whose father was a volunteer with OAC Canada during his Prairie Bible College years, was the first of the two to serve in OAC Ecuador's ministry. In 2019, she was led to volunteer for a short time with David and Monica Proaño in the open harvest fields there. Accompanying them on outreaches has proven to be a major influence on her later calling to evangelism. On returning to



LEAH (LEFT) & ISABEL (RIGHT)



Canada, she providentially met Leah Weiss, who, shortly after her conversion at a young age, had desired to be a missionary and, by faith, began studying linguistics to prepare for her future ministry. Isabel introduced Leah to WP Director, Chip Welton, and, after much prayer, the two were sent to South America in 2021. At first, they served short-term in Bolivia and then relocated to Ecuador. The Proaños embraced the girls as family, integrated them into the team, and provided evangelism mentorship for two years. During this time, their understanding of the beauty of the gospel was deepened. In late 2023, the work in OAC Ecuador was multiplied. A new branch was formed as Isabel and Leah were called to propagate the same love for Christ but in a separate new field within the country. In 2024, they both officially joined OAC Canada and, being seconded to OAC Ecuador, have worked as full-time staff by proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus Christ. All Glory to God!



