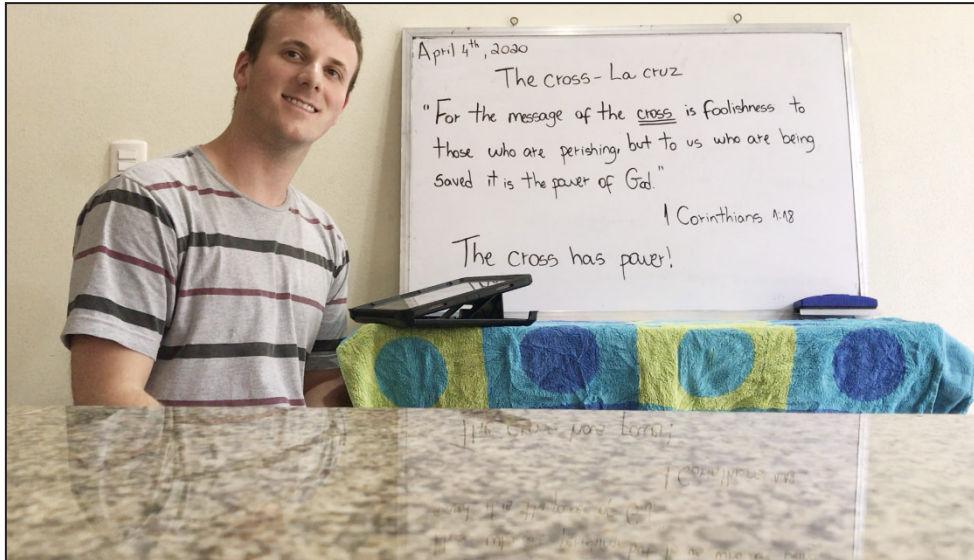


THE MACKENSEN MEMO

RONNIE AND JAQUE MACKENSEN • JUNE 2020 • CHIRIQUI, PANAMA



English class via YouTube due to the coronavirus

Greetings to all!

We are writing from Nicaragua...still. As many of you might remember, our plan was to move to Nicaragua in Spring 2019 and spend one year studying Spanish, working with the Grace Ministries International (GMI) church Arraigados and GMI missionaries Milo and Raquel Seravalli and Lily Ortega. After that one year we planned to move to the new GMI field of Panama to join up with Alvaro and Mauren Barrantes. However, at this moment we are still in Nicaragua. So the question is—why haven't we left Nicaragua? Let's get you caught up!

When we last wrote to you, we were progressing through our intermediate Spanish course. Since then we have finished our intermediate course and moved into the advanced course. During the transition to the advanced class, we actually changed from taking our Spanish class through the language school to instead having private classes in our home learning directly from our teacher. Taking private classes has allowed us to have our class in our home. This change was really great for us because having our classes like this has helped us to be more comfortable and has given us more confidence when speaking and practicing. Also having our class one on one with the teacher rather than through the language school has allowed our teacher to design the class as it is applicable to us rather than the school. She chose to use a more challenging book that has helped us perfect our grammar and understanding of the language. Since having class like this our Spanish has drastically improved. We aren't perfect, of course, but we are making progress towards fluency. Having our classes in our home has also allowed us to become very close with our teacher. God has given us many opportunities to share the gospel and biblical truths with her. Our teacher's name is Darling. She

is a wonderful young woman and we thank God for her life and that we have been able to meet and spend time with her. We ask that you pray for her walk with the Lord and that she always seeks to be closer to Him.

The ministry at the Arraigados church in Nagarote has been really great to be participate in. In January, we started an English class for people in Nagarote. Many of the people have the desire to learn English. This ministry has allowed us to provide a service for free to people who normally would not have the chance to learn English. This ministry also gave us another opportunity to practice our Spanish. When the coronavirus began to spread, much of the world was brought to a screeching halt. Because Nicaragua is a very poor country it remained unrestricted so that business could continue. Although Nicaragua wasn't restricted, we decided to stop having the ministries (in person) to help protect the people. All ministries were continued through



Video Bible study



English class via video

video, and for a time this included our English classes, but unfortunately many of our students did not have access to the internet. After not meeting for a few weeks, many of the youth wanted to restart the ministries. We (the missionaries) decided to continue some of the ministries which included the English classes, kid's club, youth groups, and Sunday services. Attendance in these ministries has been scarce but we continue to share and teach those who want to hear God's Word.

As we mentioned in the beginning of this letter our goal was to stay in Nicaragua for just one year. This year has now passed but we are still here. Yes, it is true that Nicaragua does not have any travel restriction but all other countries around us do have restrictions due to the coronavirus. As a result, all land borders of surrounding countries are closed. At the same time, all of the airlines that normally operate in Nicaragua have left and are closed, with no flights in or out of Nicaragua. Thus, for the time being, we are staying in Nicaragua.

Looking ahead, our plan is that we will move to Panama as soon as it is safe and the borders open. Before we move, the Nicaraguan team hopes to be joined by GMI missionaries Matt and April Sykes. We hope that we can



A piece of land in Panama

welcome them here in Nicaragua and show them the lay of the land. Panama is a completely new mission field for Grace Ministries International. Alvaro and Mauren Barrantes (our partners) moved there in September of last year. Our team will be starting from scratch, building connections and friendships, sharing the gospel of Jesus Christ, and discipling the Panamaians. Our hope is to be able to plant a church and train Panamians to be pastors and leaders at that church. To effectively accomplish these goals, we will need your prayers and your support. Right now we are beginning to raise funds for a mission-

ary vehicle. These days having a vehicle is essential for functioning in day-to-day life. Having a car will greatly help us in starting ministries. If you would like to help and donate towards the purchase of our missionary vehicle you can donate at <https://gracem.org/project/mackensen-vehicle/>. Another important resource for starting a church is land to build on. The Panama team is also raising funds to buy land in Panama so that we will be able to build a church. If you would like to donate and be a part of helping with the purchase of the Panama Land you can donate here: <https://gracem.org/project/panama-land/>. We have raised \$21,712 out of our \$30,000 already! Almost there!

As we close this letter, we ask that you pray for our health as we continue here in Nicaragua. We also ask that you pray for the people here in Nicaragua. Many people are poor and can't afford good healthcare. Pray for the ministries that they may be revitalized as the coronavirus slows. We ask that you pray for our transition to Panama when the time comes that we will be able to find a home and move there relatively smoothly. We ask that you pray for us as we begin to develop relationships with the Panamaians and that God will use us to bring glory to Him.

Love,
Ronnie and Jaque Mackensen



Another view of land in Panama