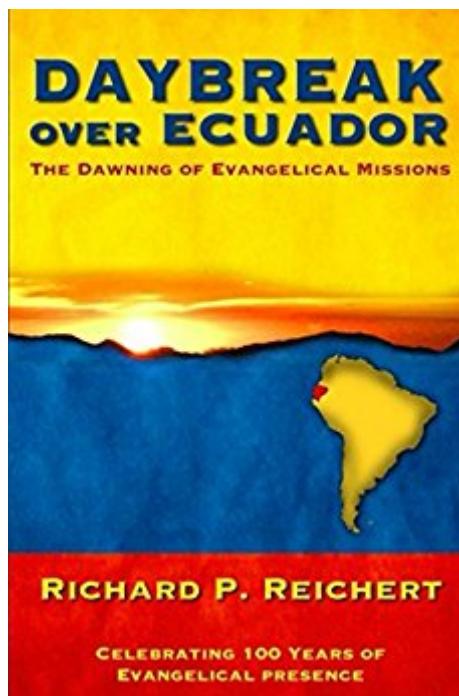


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Daybreak Over Ecuador



Synopsis

Daybreak over Ecuador is a historical narrative of the first protestant foreign missionaries to attempt to enter Ecuador after the lessening of religious control in the country. Ecuador was the last Latin American country to open its doors to protestant missions. Those who dared to come faced hostility and deprivation. This is the country where a native indigenous person had to apply for permission to dress like a Spaniard, and an Ecuadorian was not a citizen if he was not a Catholic. Here is where a customs official boasted that “as long as Mount Chimborazo stands the Bible will not enter Ecuador.” It was not until 1895 that foreign missionaries were allowed on its soil. This is the story of some of those people. It is a tribute to the faithful men and women who risked their lives in order to establish the evangelical church in Ecuador. There are stories of persistence and meagre beginnings in some of the most isolated places till a national church arose that is today a formidable missionary force in its own right. It is the story of the people who came, and who came to stay. Ecuadorian writers who understood the milieu into which they were coming provide the historical backdrop for the story. The book foreword is written by the president of the Ecuadorian confraternity of evangelical churches, Eduardo Lafépez who says that “AS EVANGELICAL CHRISTIANS IN ECUADOR we ought to be grateful to God for the life and testimony of the first missionaries who came to our nation for the solitary purpose of sharing the Gospel of Christ with Ecuadorians. Daybreak Over Ecuador transports us by way of its pages to an understanding of the life and testimony of these men and women of God, as well as of the events that signalled important milestones in the advance of the missionary enterprise in Ecuador.” Daybreak over Ecuador is a primer to understanding evangelical mission effort in Ecuador. There is a serious attempt to set the religious context of the book. Rather than a comprehensive account it is anecdotal and selective. It touches on the original individuals who came, highlighting instructive moments in their careers. Three representative figures form the centrepiece dedicatory. The second half of the book traces some of the attempts to engage the populace with the Gospel in different spheres of endeavor. The resulting national church becomes a watershed mark in 1945. From there the mission family expanded exponentially and the resulting growth pains of the church are noted as missions organizations navigated the landscape. The author is a career international worker who himself lived and researched the stories in the course of his journey and experience as a missionary. As a participant in the drama he offers insights and insider perspective on what was happening and had access to C&MA mission files during the investigation. Daybreak over Ecuador is part of his journey and is a tribute to the men and women of the Gospel Missionary Union, the Christian and Missionary Alliance, and many others who spent

their lives in the face of great opposition to establish the evangelical church in Ecuador. The fierce fanaticism of the times was matched by the steadfast defiance of the early pioneers. Theirs are stories of loneliness and loss, isolation, persecution and tragedy. There are also stories of perseverance and meagre beginnings in some of the most isolated places till a national church arose that is today a formidable missionary force in its own right. These are the stories of ordinary foot soldiers who are honoured today as heroes of faith because they constructed the footholds and built the beachheads on which the church today stands.

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