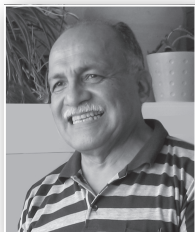


Juan Samuel Escobar Aguirre



Juan Samuel Escobar Aguirre was born on November 28, 1934 in Arequipa, the “white city” in southern Peru where he resided until he was sixteen years old. At the age of five Samuel went through the bitter experience of the divorce of his parents, Juan Escobar Peña and Domitila Aguirre. He attended the International School of the Evangelical Union of South America (today Latin Link) for his elementary education and the *Colegio Nacional de la Independencia* for his secondary education. He committed himself to Christ in 1951 and was baptized at the Ebenezer Baptist Church in Miraflores, a neighborhood of Lima. He was ordained as a Baptist minister at the same church in 1979. In 1953 Samuel was sent to Río de Janeiro, Brazil, to represent Peru at the Baptist Youth World Conference.

During his studies in philosophy and education at the San Marcos University in Lima, Samuel taught elementary school at the *Escuela Angamos de Miraflores*. After his graduation in 1956 he taught high school at the *Colegio San Andrés* and the *Colegio Nacional de Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe* in Lima. For the last two years of his university studies he participated in the beginnings of the Peruvian student ministry of the International Fellowship of Evangelical Students (IFES) through the work of Ruth Siemens.

On March 1, 1958, Samuel married Lilly Artola Díaz, and over time the Lord gave them two children, Lilly Ester and Alejandro. In 1958 Samuel also participated in a congress of student groups in Cochabamba, Bolivia, which formally launched IFES ministry in Latin America. There in Cochabamba Samuel met René Padilla from Ecuador, and the two began a friendship and ministry partnership that has lasted to the present. The following year, based in Lima, Samuel became a traveling staff worker for IFES in Peru, Ecuador, and Colombia. In 1959, he had the opportunity to go to the World Assembly of IFES in Paris, and Lilly and Samuel visited Cuba a few months after Fidel Castro took power.

In 1960 the family moved to Cordoba, Argentina, where Samuel participated in the publishing house of IFES, *Ediciones Certeza*, under the supervision of Alejandro Clifford. Samuel's friendship and ministry with Clifford was decisive in his formation as a publisher and writer. Samuel served on staff with the IFES Brazilian movement, *Aliança Bíblica Universitária* (ABU) from 1962 to 1964. In 1962 he published his first book, *Del hampa al púlpito* (From the Underworld to the Pulpit), with biographical material of Jim Vaus, a famous convert of Billy Graham's evangelistic campaigns. The publishing of this book coincided with Graham's campaign in Argentina.

Samuel traveled to the prestigious Complutense University in Madrid, Spain to pursue doctoral studies (1966-1967), receiving a Ph.D. *Cum Laude* in 1990 with a dissertation on the Brazilian educator Paulo Freire. While in Spain, Samuel was invited in 1966 by Carl Henry to participate in the World Congress on Evangelism in Berlin, Germany, where he presented a short paper on evangelism and totalitarianism. This conference provided Samuel with