



Monthly Missions Focus: Mexico



Area: total: 1,972,550 sq km: slightly less than three times the size of Texas. Latin America's fourth largest country.

Population: 104,959,594 (July 2004 est.)

Peoples: Mestizo (Spanish/Amerindian) 61.1%; Amerindian 28%; Euro-American 9%; Afro-American 0.5%; Other 1.4%.

Official language: Spanish, the world's largest Spanish-speaking nation.

Religion: Secular state with freedom of conscience and practice of religion.

Religions: Christian 94.26%, non-Religious/other 3.6%, Traditional ethnic 1.79%, Muslim 0.26%, Jewish 0.05%, Baha'i 0.04%

➔ Answers to Prayer ➔

- 🌐 The peaceful democratic change of government in 2000 with expectation for positive change
- 🌐 The steady growth of Evangelicals along with the lowering of legal and social barriers for ministry

➔ Challenges for Prayer ➔

- 🌐 This dynamic, growing nation is searching for an identity in its Hispanic and Indian roots
- 🌐 The election of a new government in 2000 ended 83 years of unbroken PRI (Institutional Revolutionary Party) control of the country
- 🌐 For 300 years the Catholic Church dominated Mexico
- 🌐 Persecution of Evangelicals has been a growing feature in Mexico
 - At a national level the media regularly, in vitriolic terms, portray Evangelicals as anti-Mexican spies and destroyers of the culture
 - At a local level, and especially in the poor Amerindian-majority southern states of Chiapas and Oaxaca, there have been numerous incidents of mob violence
- 🌐 The specific challenges for Evangelicals:
 - Unity
 - Discipleship and biblical commitment which impacts family life is a great need
 - Leadership training is the key to the future health of the Church
 - Develop missions vision

Statistics are compiled from *Global Prayer Digest* and *CIA – The World Factbook*.

Ameri Tribes Work Among the Tarahumara People

"What was I thinking? As a government doctor in Mexico, I wasn't supposed to interfere with the local religion." The Ameri Tribes doctor had granted the request of a Tarahumara chief to conduct a funeral for one of the Tarahumara women. True, this doctor had often prayed, "Lord, please give me a chance to know some of the leaders of this village." Now he couldn't refuse a second request to give medical aide to another relative of this same chief. He was thus used of God to save the precious life of a Tarahumara elder who had been dying of pneumonia.

Today, because of the loving outreach of Ameri Tribe workers, a Wellness Center is being built—a project this chief personally presented to his people. A Learning Center is also under construction—a place for healthcare and literacy training. A Microcredit program has been initiated, a carpentry shop opened, and a well rig purchased. And a church is being born! (*Global Prayer Digest – August 28, 2004*)

Over a half-million Scriptures are placed in Monterrey, Mexico Mexico (MNN)

The Bible League is celebrating the success of "Project Philip Monterrey".

The model is based on the example in Acts 8, when Philip helped an Ethiopian understand the Scriptures he was reading.

A two-year Scripture placement project, it was designed to further develop the Bible League's ministry in Monterrey, Mexico. The host city has five million residents, which is an exciting prospect for churches in the area.

Original goals were to place a half million specially designed and easy-to-read Spanish New Testaments; final totals exceeded that goal by several thousand.

Church leaders say the discipleship process in Latin America takes about two years, so they expect continued results.

Through Project Philip, the Bible League partners with churches to place Scriptures with those who attend small-group Bible studies. That means, unlike traditional approaches, the Bible League does not randomly distribute Bibles.

In Monterrey, there were more than 151,000 Bible study groups between 2002 and 2004. (*Mission Network News – May 17, 2004*)