

Bits from Bill

Using Information Technology to Help Bring the Word of God
to the Indigenous Peoples of Brazil

December, 2024



Endings... and New Beginnings

The year is coming to an end, and as usual, we celebrate the birth of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, on the 25th of this month. Whether or not it was the actual date of His birth, what is really important is the event. We celebrate because He *came*. He came that time to pay for our sins. And He will come again—this time to reign over the world in glory. As we look back to His first coming, let us never lose sight of His return.

As for me, I am approaching the end of my current four years in Brazil. On February 10th, I will fly back to the States, where I will spend most of the year, returning at the end in order to participate in the next Mother Tongue Translator course, which will begin in January of '26. It's hard to believe that four years have already passed. But they have been full years. Not only have I had the opportunity to serve, but God has been teaching me a lot during this time.

So as usual, please join me in giving thanks for God's gift of eternal life through Jesus. And give thanks for what He has done in and with my life during the past four years. And pray that my time in the States would be productive, so that I will be able to return to Brazil at the end of the year, ready to get back in the saddle again.

Eyeballs

A couple of months ago, the ophthalmologist began removing stitches from my right eye, with the goal of reducing astigmatism. He started with two. A few weeks later, two more. On the 6th of this month, he removed three.

I can definitely see a big difference. Stitches deform the cornea, which causes astigmatism and "ghost images". As they are removed, the irregularities are smoothed out. In the end, he may need to "sculpt" the cornea with laser treatment, after which I should end up with essentially zero astigmatism. This is what I have been praying for.

I have a return appointment on January 14th. At that time, he will decide whether or not to remove any more stitches. If he is satisfied with my progress, he will prescribe a new lens for my glasses, which should enable me to see much better, perhaps already even better than before the transplant.

So please give thanks for this ongoing process, and join me in praying for a good end result.

Preparing to Finish Well

Some of you have probably been wondering when this old man would finally retire. This is something that I haven't really thought about much over the years. But in this life, all things must come to an end. And so when I return to Brazil in '26, it will be for the last time. And instead of returning for four years, I will return for only two.

My main goal when I return will be to find a competent replacement. Only then will I feel peace about leaving this ministry behind. But my trust must be in the LORD. It is really *His* work, not mine. *He* is the one who will call the right person to take over for me and continue the work of supporting Bible translation with ALEM.

Before I can return, I do have financial needs that must be met. My quota has increased, and I am only receiving 71% of what I will need. On the positive side, I will not need long-term commitments. I will only need additional people willing to invest in what will effectively be a short-term, two-year ministry trip, to help me finish well. So please join me in praying that He would call new partners to join the team for this final stretch.

And when I say "new partners", I mean *new*. Those of you who currently support me have been very generous, and I am immensely grateful both to you and the LORD. But it would be good to "spread the blessing". So please pray that God would provide opportunities to share with new people and congregations about the work of supporting Bible translation in Brazil. And please feel free to share this need with others, to help me find these opportunities to share about the work. Thank you.



"I'm Dreaming of a Green Christmas..."

Praise

- For eternal life in Christ, and the work that He has been doing in my life in recent years.
- For continued progress in my right eye, and the stitches that have already been removed.
- For all the years that God has given me to serve supporting Bible translation here in Brazil.

Prayer

- That my upcoming time in the States would be both restful and productive.
- For a right decision about removing more stitches in January, and for a truly helpful lens.
- For a good finish to my years of service, and the financial support necessary to return to Brazil.

I hope that you had a truly blessed Christmas, and are looking forward to a wonderful New Year,
Bill

And he who was seated on the throne said, "Behold, I am making all things new."

Revelation 21:5

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