



GUATEMALA

Theological Education for EVERYONE

Elsa Ramírez de Aguilar describes the key concerns of the Seminario Teológico Centroamericanos publication program, Estudios CLASE, in Guatemala City, Guatemala.

After a few decades of growing ministry in Guatemala, the leaders of the Seminario Teológico Centroamericano (SETECA), became concerned for the people who, for various reasons, could not attend formal institutions to prepare for

house. The publications have the specific goal of providing good materials to people who have difficulties in participating in classes provided by formal biblical theological institutions. The publications aim to communicate the doctrine, Bible background knowledge, and methodology that will equip students for the work of the ministry.

Production constraints

Estudios CLASE seeks to produce material within reach of everyone. It has to take into account the financial resources of readers, as well as their literacy level. These important factors influence the editorial task.

First, SETECA educators write the manuscripts. They receive some monetary compensation for their work but not an excessive amount.

Second, production of material for audiences with low education requires critical evaluation of the vocabulary

used. Reader comprehension is critical. SETECA's publications need to be useful in many different ministry training and Bible formation settings.

Third, the need for low production costs means that the publications, though highly respected for their content, will not necessarily stand out due to their design. Presentation is important in attracting readers, but their desire to learn about a particular subject or topic is more important.

Fourth, editorial work is conducted in a small office with MS Office software. An aging press is available for reproduction of the material. Estudios CLASE has sought to offer quality products at low cost, incorporating new technologies in production. Unfortunately, new software and equipment is not affordable.

Fifth, SETECA students who receive scholarships offer their assistance for editing, text revision, and desktop design.

Results

Since the publishing work is the result of the

teaching programs of SETECA, it is not a for-profit enterprise. Every edition is distributed with the realization that profits will be low, and is produced so as to maintain the program and sustain its development and growth. The program is self-sustaining, without any subsidies for future projects and expansion.

Study centers located in different Spanish-speaking countries in Latin America distribute the publications as they add Estudios CLASE to their course offerings.

The result of all this work has been incredible. The local teaching ministry extends throughout the continent through the literature ministry. Estudio CLASE's publications to equip Christians for the work of ministry now reach local churches throughout Latin America. The training materials are being used by God to equip church leaders and laity. Many persons are reached daily, not only for training but to bring new people to a saving knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ. ❖



Pictured above, the SETECA facilities in Guatemala City, Guatemala.

service in local churches. Thus, over 25 years ago, SETECA began a program of theological education by extension, Estudios CLASE.

After some time, this theological training by extension project developed into a publishing