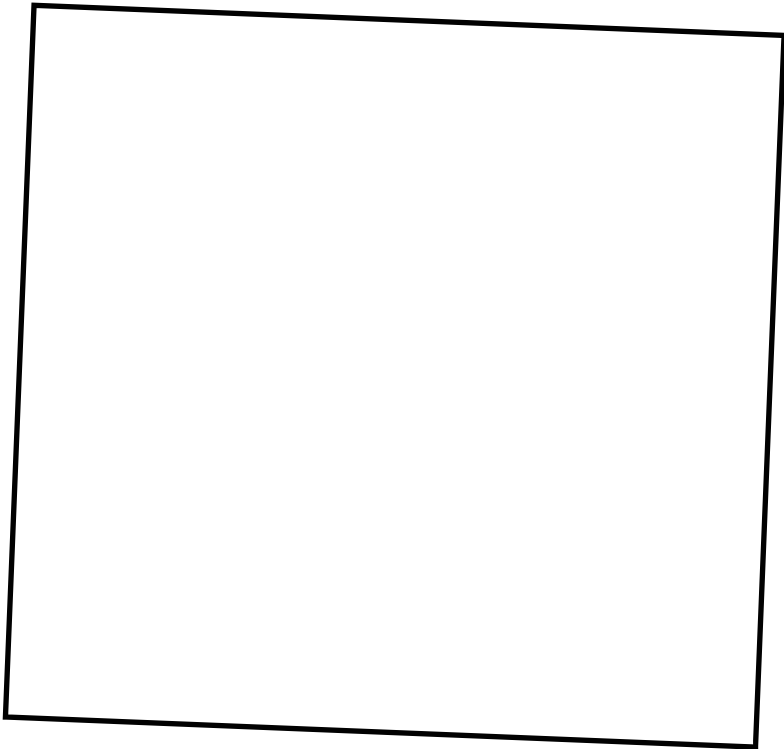


Missão Aracaju

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To God Be the Glory...cont.

2Timothy 1:12

would prefer something like Pentacostalism which is like an emotional experience or a party every time you gather, and Brazilians LOVE to party. Or Catholicism which basically as long as you attend church a couple of times a year you can live any way you want to the rest of the time. Or something that offers them rewards in this life- "if you give enough money to the church you will receive blessings from God"- like the Universal Church of the Kingdom of God.

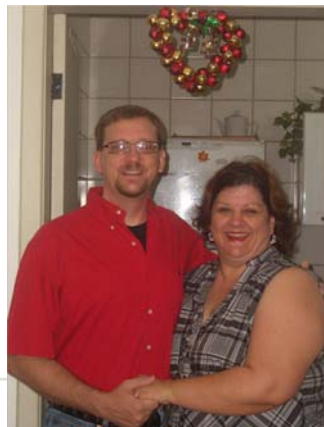
The sexual immorality that is so interwoven into this society is still shocking to me. As I discover layer upon layer of it that they all consider so innocent, it grieves me the strangeness it has on these people. I struggle not to put my own culture up on a pedestal. I am from the Bible Belt and my reality of our culture is not so balanced. Jesus is the pattern

not America. Yet these people are so enamored with America. We have started using that fact to meet more people and teach them the truth about Jesus.

Pray for us as we prepare to start meeting in the neighborhood of Bugio. We plan to rent a building there. Pray for us also as our oldest daughter Amber plans to be married soon. It is difficult to be so far away from them and helpless to assist when they need it. I give my children into God's hands and I know that He is able to keep that which I've committed to Him. Jesus is faithful. I praise His beautiful name for all the abundant blessings of the past year! Thank-you all for being a part of those blessings in my life. Thank-you for all the cards, and surprise care packages and letters of encouragement that you have all showered on us. You make it

possible for us to do this work. We are teamed up with you and partnered with God himself. What an amazing honor!! Rob and I always remember that we are only the feet and that you are the hands and heart that make our job possible. I love you in such a special way! May God receive all the glory!

Marie



Aracaju, Brasil

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Prayer Requests:

- * Pray that the church here would continue to grow and have unity.
- * Pray for the people in the class at Luciano's school.
- * Thank God for the truth-seeking people He has led us to meet.
- * Pray for Amber and Phil as they plan their wedding in Grass Valley, CA.
- * Pray for Johnathan as he juggles work and college.
- * Pray as we plan to rent a place to meet in Bugio.
- * Pray for Morwyn as she completes her Lubbock time in AIM.

Robert & Marie Ledbetter

Missão Aracaju

Vol 5 Issue 7

Watching the Son Rise in Aracaju

Nov/Dec 2009

Brothers, Pray for us...

1Thess. 5:25

I can't tell you how many times I've taught from Romans 12 and used the thought there that we each have a skill set that we can use for the kingdom. What strikes me is that, even though I've taught it, I've never really applied it to myself in that sense. I've always just been a teacher of the gospel in that text. Now, I realize that Paul is talking to some there about the gifts that were given to some in the Roman churches through the laying on of the apostles hands, so please don't go off thinking that I'm saying that I'm some kind of gifted teacher. Ha! I know better than that. Not only are all of the apostles physically

dead (and their hands with them), but many of you have heard me teach (haha!). Richard Rogers used to say, "What the apostles had by inspiration, we have by perspiration."

What I would say of myself is that I have a willingness to do that job of teaching. Specifically the bible. A willingness to perspire, so to say. So I teach.

I would also say that I have a willingness to live in Brazil, consistently far from my family, culture, and society. I eat food, participate in cultural rituals and teach using parables that aren't

natively mine. I struggle to understand the rationale that Brazilians have for doing things the way they do them. The logic is different, the morality (can you call it that?) is different, the language is different. My home is not even my own. I am far from the bones of my people Jacob might say. Which can be especially troubling during the November and December holidays. But I've learned to be flexible and live in this context. Actually, I love it. So I am a sojourner.

A bible teaching sojourner. I am a missionary. And by God's grace through you I can be that.

Devote yourselves to prayer, keeping alert in it with thanksgiving; praying at the same time for us as well, that God may open up to us a door for the word, so that we may speak forth the mystery of Christ, for which I have also been imprisoned; in order that I may make it clear in the way I ought to speak. Col 4:2-4

cont. on pg.2

To God be the Glory

The end of 2009 has been like we are stuck on fast forward. I don't know how time flies through my hands like it does. We had a lot of disappointments in December. I think that Rob has dealt with those better than I have so far. It's hard to pick yourself up and find the will to re-invest in someone else when you feel rejected. I know they are not rejecting us.

Most people stay on friendly terms with us after they decide that they do not want to be a Christian, but it feels like they have rejected you. Plus, you have grown to love them and you want them to look past their culture and past this temporary life around us and think of eternity and not many of them are willing to even try that. Most of them

cont. on pg.4

Rob's Article cont...

But I need to be more than that. I think that is the nature of what Paul was getting at. How can I use what I naturally have for the kingdom? Well that's easy. Among other things, I already teach in the body.

How can I use what talents I naturally have to serve the sinner condemned to an eternity in hell? That's why I'm here after all isn't it? (I know that isn't politically correct, but I need to face the truth that anyone not in the church has an appointment with that destiny. That's why Jesus had to die, right?) What can I do? I can teach the word, but only if there is a connection, a venue, or a reason for them to want to listen. So again what can I do?

I can teach English. I almost hate saying that because it wasn't my forte in school. But it's true. I have something that almost every person I know wants; they want to speak my language. Thank goodness it's not grammar. Surprisingly enough they almost all have 3 or 4 years of English grammar, they just don't know how to speak. So I teach conversational English for free. And

I'm not talking about using the "Let's start Talking" material. Not that I have anything against it.

Even though I was initially reluctant to "waste" my time getting involved teaching English last June, it has really evolved into something very, very useful to build relationships with so that I have "earned the right" to share the gospel.

This is where I come to the fine point of what I want to share with you in this newsletter. In the midst of my other bible studies, I have now developed three English study groups with lots of new friends. And that is what is so frustrating.

For the last year I have really poured my entire life into lots of people with very little return. I actually taught the group out in bairro Bugio (sometimes as many as 26 people) the story of God's plan to save man culminating with the resurrection of Jesus and the preaching of Peter at Pentecost. We examined carefully the response of faith commanded by Jesus and taught by all of the apostles.

No response. Three weeks have passed and no response.

And that is my FRUSTRATION!!! It's not that I'm hoping to throw up

a bunch of pictures of baptisms, although that would be nice. Really, I want these people to be baptized into Christ because they are my friends. I want them to be saved because I love them. And that love sometimes just makes me want to shake them and say, "Hey, don't you understand what the word is saying here?"

I am your missionary, such as I am, here in Aracaju, Brazil doing what you can't be here to do. I know that many of you would love to be here serving these people, but jobs, family, age, or ability or some other thing makes that impossible.

So here it is. Something so hugely earth shattering that makes you intimately involved with me in the streets, homes, and schools in Aracaju. This is my sole (soul) request of you for the following month. I need you to pray, maybe like you've never prayed before, that God would shake up these people's lives in some way so as to make them receptive to the message.

Praying is not the pre-cursor to the work, it is the work. Pray with me.

Watching the Son rise in Aracaju

-rob

Pictures and names are on the opposing page.

Pan American Lectureship 2009

Now may the God who gives perseverance and encouragement grant you to be of the same mind with one another according to Christ Jesus; that with one accord you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Rom. 15:5-6



Area Wide worship in Recife, Brazil

This trip to Recife was a blessing on so many levels. We spent a week in air-conditioning. We spent a week speaking English. We met and got to know many wonderful, encouraging brothers in Christ and got to hear their stories. Recife was amazing and the missionaries there did a super job of hosting us and showing us their city. Sunday we joined their area-wide worship service and it was so encouraging to see what 20 years of mission work looks like. Because it was here in Brazil, most of the missionaries who attended where either working in Brazil

or had been missionaries here so it was neat to share a love for these people as well.

I want to say thank-you again to Southgate who really pushed for us to attend this annual event and who paid for us to go. It was really good for us to get away and just be fed for a week from God's word. I don't think I realized how tired I felt and how much I needed to be with other Christians who are passionate about the same thing that I am. May God be glorified by all that we are and all that we do!

Picture Gallery



Above: Danielle, Katia, Pamela, Luana, Luciano, Lucas, Jackson, Rob, Gean, Graciene, Jadson, & Savio.

The Group in Bugio.

Below: Georgie, Aurenice, Líbia, Marie & Robert



Top: Enilma is a lady that Rob studies with weekly.



We have a prayer page on the Southgate Church of Christ website that has everyone's pictures and a little bit about them.

www.southgatecofc.com

Grace to you and peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us out of this present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father, to whom be the glory forevermore. Amen. Gal 1:3-5

A Hole in the Road - A Brazilian Tale



Someone was driving along and a piece of the road just caved in. Rob helped some men lift the car out of the hole. A stick was put in it so other cars could avoid the hole. It stayed like this for 1 week.



Then the backhoe came and hit a water line. Note the spray of water and the extra workers watching as they are seated on the sidelines.



The now rather large hole is staked off and it remained exactly as you see it here for 3 more weeks. It was eventually fixed. They say you can lose a car in a pothole here.