

Leland, Naomi, Lincoln, and Lauren Johnson

missionaries to **Brazil**

April 14, 2017



The work of the ministry is exciting and enjoyable but not always easy. For the last eight weeks, I have been teaching the basics of the Christian faith to a group on Sunday mornings. If you remember from our earlier letters, our church has a Spanish service on Sunday mornings, which gives me an opportunity to teach in Portuguese. We average between four to six people each week, and I always joke that it is amazing that anyone comes back! The forced effort of having to speak continuously for 30–45 minutes each week to a group is exciting because it not only helps you to see how far you have come but also encourages you to keep working because there is still a lot to learn. At the beginning of the class, we offered a new Bible and certificate to anyone who completes the course as an incentive to be faithful each week. This past Sunday night, we were able to graduate our first person, a lady named Queilla, who was faithful each of the eight weeks.

One of the notable things that giving lessons in Portuguese has forced me to do is to rely on Bible verses to explain concepts rather than words. Many times, during preaching and teaching, we read verses and then explain them, and since we have a full English vocabulary, we can explain the concept in our own words. When enough words are not available—like when learning a new language, for example—you must explain God’s Word with ... other verses from God’s Word. Imagine that! It is a great reminder that the Bible is quick, powerful, and sharp without our aid.

It has also been wonderful since language school ended to be able to start going out door knocking with the pastor during the week in addition to the weekends. In the beginning, it was mainly listening to what was said and trying to understand the responses of the people. Soon, however, you think to yourself, “I can do that.” It is funny that you can hear people give the same response door after door, but as soon as I start to speak, they decide to start a conversation! You want to tell them, “Please, I am only prepared to answer these three responses. If you would please choose one of these, this would work a lot better!” A few weeks ago, the pastor and his wife went out of town. Instead of canceling visitation for that week, our family (in a moment of courage) decided to go door knocking anyway. We had a young Brazilian lady to go with us, but how would it look for Missionary Leland Johnson to hide behind an 18-year-old Brazilian girl at the door? She stayed with Naomi and Lauren, and Lincoln and I headed to the other side of the street to work alone. We were able to meet many new people and plant some seeds, and we know that God will give the increase.

While we have been able to see about ten people saved while out on visitation, I have a strong desire to lead someone to Christ in Portuguese, not just be there while it is happening. Please be in prayer about that. Please continue to pray for Naomi, who is working hard on the piano and now plays the offertory in each service and is also starting to play the invitation. It is difficult for her to play at a fast-enough tempo while people are singing, so offertory and invitation are a good place to start, but we know that she will have to make that jump eventually.

Thank you for your prayers and support. We are always thankful to be representing you here in Brazil.

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