

**1998 MISSIONARY TRIP
TO BRAZIL**

**THE PERSONAL LOG OF
PASTOR LAURENCE A. JUSTICE**

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Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.

INTRODUCTION

In January of 1998 the Victory Baptist Church of Kansas City, Missouri voted to send its pastor, Laurence A. Justice and any other member who wished to go to visit missionary Calvin Gardner in Catanduva, Brazil. The purpose of the trip was to enable representatives of the church to observe firsthand the work and needs of brother Gardner on the foreign field. The church voted to pay \$1,000 toward the cost of each member who could make the trip. Those who volunteered to go were John Cecil, Jack Godwin and Don Hendricks. Pastor and Mrs. Justice paid the way of their daughter Rachel to go and did this as a gift to her upon her graduation from William Jewell College. Plans for the trip were coordinated through correspondence with brother Gardner via e-mail.

For several years Pastor Justice had desired to go on a preaching tour to some foreign mission field. One day Mrs. Justice who is the church secretary at the Blue Ridge Bible Church in Kansas City was asked by a lady in that church if she knew of anyone who would like to travel to Brazil with a group from their church. They needed one or more persons to go with them in order to make up a group for a package tour. Mrs. Justice asked Pastor Justice if he would like to go, he prayed about it, consulted with several men in the church and asked the church to send him. Since the church had several thousand dollars in a missionary fund at the time, the church treasurer recommended that the church send all who wanted to go and pay the above mentioned \$1,000. The dates for the trip were chosen because of the dates of the group tour.

The following pages contain the log kept by Pastor Justice during this trip. It does not contain a record of everything that happened. It was kept in order that the wonderful things which he experienced on this trip could be preserved for the church, his family and whoever might find it to be of interest.

FRIDAY JULY 3, 1998

We met at the Blue Ridge Bible Church at 10 AM and were transported in vans with a group of 20 members of that church to Kansas City International Airport. While we were awaiting the arrival of the plane which would take us to Newark, New Jersey we were approached by an airport security officer with a German Shepherd drug dog. We were kidding around when we asked the officer to have the dog check us for drugs. He laughingly brought the dog over and had him sniff our baggage. We were surprised when the dog made a hit on John Cecil's carry on bag. We later learned that he was carrying some fried chicken to be eaten on the flight to Newark. The dog was not hitting on drugs. He just liked fried chicken.

Our departure from KCI took place at 1:25 PM on Continental Airlines flight 490. As we flew toward Newark Rachel and I were sitting in the same three seat section as a weird looking middle age man with whom we struck up a conversation. He implied that I looked like a preacher so I said, Let me guess what you do. When asked what I thought he did for a living I said, You're a college professor. In speaking with him we learned that he was a Jew who claimed to be a Deist and did not believe in any life after death. When he said that he could see little real difference between the Jewish and Christian religions I reminded him that the main difference was the Messiah to which he then agreed. We were able to give a good witness to him and left him promising to send him a book by the late Francis Schaeffer because of his interest in philosophy.

After landing in Newark at 4:30 PM we had a five hour layover before departing at 9:55 PM on Continental Airlines flight 31 on the all night flight to Sao Paulo (pronounced San Pah'-low), Brazil. We were issued eye shades and ear plugs to aid in our attempts at sleep but none of us really rested because of the upright positions of the seats. Other than total darkness the only things we could see from the plane were a gigantic forest fire somewhere in the Amazon area in Northern Brazil and then when dawn began to break we could see the Amazon River itself as we cruised at 39,000 feet and over 600 miles per hour.

SATURDAY JULY 4, 1998

Arriving at Cumbica Airport in Sao Paulo, Brazil at 8:30 AM we waited for over an hour for our baggage to be unloaded. Here we got the first of what were to be many demonstrations of the terrible bureaucratic inefficiency of Brazilian socialism. The large number of airport employees could not function effectively because they were all jealous of their own jobs and would not lift a finger to help anyone else do their jobs. One person was employed as the driver of the small truck which towed the baggage containers from the plane. Another man was designated to unload each container. Several others, each carrying CB radios, seemed to be employed to direct all the workers in what to do. What took these people one hour to do in Sao Paulo took far fewer employees ten minutes in Newark, New Jersey when we returned to the country.

When we finally had claimed our bags and had gotten through customs we began what was supposed to be a four and a half hour drive from Sao Paulo to Catanduva, Brazil. We drove through Sao Paulo which was a crowded city of 20 million according to some sources. It was also a very dirty city in which the river running through it was an open sewer which smelled to high heaven. A dredge was working the river at one point bringing up old tires and rags and paper and piling it into a mountain on one bank.

Just West of the Sao Paulo city limits we passed a sign which identified the location of the Tropic Of Capricorn and we knew that we were much farther South than we had ever been. A few miles on down the road we came to a roadside fruit stand at which we sampled Coco Gelada. A Brazilian man took a coconut and with a very large sugar knife lopped off one end clear down to the juice. He then placed a straw in the hole and invited us to drink the coconut milk which was very cold because he had been keeping the coconut

on ice. A little further down the highway at Campinas we stopped to eat lunch at a fried chicken chain called Frango Assado. Frango is the Portuguese word for chicken.

Along the highway we saw sugar cane fields, Banyan trees, coffee plantations, orange groves, Poinsettia trees, large Hibiscuses and several different colors of bougainvillea trees. These were the first of a multitude of luxurious plants and flowers to which we would be exposed over the next two weeks in this beautiful Latin American country.

By the time we had gotten to within about forty miles of our destination of Catanduva the sun was beginning to sink rapidly in the West. Suddenly we heard a noise like a loud swoosh and then we lost power in the Kombi, the name brother Gardner used to describe the aged 1982 Volkswagen Bus in which he was taking us to his home. When we got out and checked the aluminum engine we found that we had thrown a rod through the block. We were literally in the middle of nowhere. Brother Gardner and John Cecil walked to three farm houses in the area, none of which had a phone available so they persuaded a ranch foreman whom they found to take them to a filling station some ten miles down the road. The rest of us including brother Gardner's fourteen year old daughter Joy were left beside the highway as darkness came on.

While we waited there beside the road I became a little concerned about our vulnerability to those who might wish to do us harm due to the fact that we were obviously foreigners. Brother Gardner returned after about an hour of waiting and told us that the Highway Patrol tow truck would be there right away. While waiting it got dark and brother Gardner pointed out a truly beautiful sight in the night sky which can only be seen by those in the Southern Hemisphere, the Southern Cross by which navigators for ages have steered their ways through the Southern seas. I determined to look at this constellation every night while I was in Brazil, knowing very well that I might never see it again after going home.

We waited another hour but he did not arrive. A large truck pulled over and offered to tow us to the next filling station. Brother Gardner accepted the offer and asked Rachel and his daughter Joy to ride with the truck driver. I flatly refused to let Rachel do so and later agreed to ride with her instead of sending Joy. After a few moments in the truck I realized that we were in good hands. The driver had his wife with him and they were only desirous of helping us though they could speak no English and we could speak no Portuguese. Here for the first time I was to realize the difficulty of the language barrier in this country.

This truck towed us no more than three or four miles before the Highway Patrol tow truck pulled us over and demanded to tow us. He then towed us the remaining six or seven miles to a filling station and restaurant beside the road still far out in the country. Here we waited another hour for Mrs. Peggy Gardner, her eighteen year old son Benjamin and Ricardo Farrinazzo, one of the men in the missionary's church to pick us up in two cars and take us the rest of the way to the Gardners' house in Catanduva.

We finally arrived at the Gardners' home at around 9:30 PM very tired but very grateful that the Lord had delivered us safely at last after a four and a half hour trip had turned into a thirteen hour trip instead. Once we had taken our bags into the house and washed up we delivered the many gifts which the people of Victory Baptist Church had sent by us to the Gardners. These included all kinds of clothing, toiletries, CamCorder batteries and other items which were not available in Brazil or were too expensive for them to afford. We finally dragged into bed at about 11:30 PM.

SUNDAY JULY 5, 1998

Sunday morning we attended the services of the Catanduva Baptist Church of which brother Calvin Gardner is pastor. As we drove across town on the way to the public school where the church met all the stores were closed but it seemed that everybody in town was out in the streets either walking or in cars or in horse carts. Brother Gardner and some of the others i walked the two and one half miles to church but I remained behind and rode in the car with Mrs. Gardner.

The first service was intended to be a Bible study time. I used it to teach on the topic, the proper subjects of baptism. For the first time in my life I spoke through a translator. Brother Calvin Gardner is an expert translator. The Sunday School hour which followed at 11 AM was attended by quite a few more native Brazilians and my subject was the proper purpose of baptism. These topics along with the ones I preached on in the two evening services seemed timely for the situation and were very well received by those present.

We had some interesting people present including a Methodist college student from Erasinuba, Brazil and an elderly lady from the First Southern Baptist Church of Catanduva which has become Pentecostal in doctrine. The people were very attentive and very receptive to my preaching even taking notes during the services.

The names of the native Brazilians who attended at least one of the morning services were as follows: Ivanil Scandelli, Maria do Brado Costa, Edeval Pereira, Josefa Pereira, Rene Passeto, Ricardo Farrinazzo, Tarsila Farrinazzo, Camilla Miranda, Daniel Saad, Mauricio Barreto, Cacilda Berreto, Diego Barreto, Albano Pria and Osvaldo Camargo.

Lunch that day was the first of many wonderful mealtimes at the Gardner house because of the Christian fellowship we enjoyed around the table. The food prepared by Mrs. Gardner was uniquely Brazilian and very tasty. During this particular meal the five of us from the United States were presented gifts by and from the Gardner children; Benjamin aged 18, Charity aged 16, Joy aged 14, Daniel aged 11 and David aged 10. These gifts consisted of carefully thought through letters to each of us introducing Brazil and themselves to us. They included many innovative things such as Brazilian coins, photos of various scenes in Brazil and a lot of background information on themselves and their families. All of us shall always cherish these unique gifts.

After lunch I sat in the breezeway along the side of their house listening to the canaries and parakeets in several cages and enjoying the breeze. Here I realized that the windows of the Gardner house along with those of all the other houses had no screens and were standing open. There were few if any flies or other pestiferous insects and the temperature was about 72 degrees during the afternoon hours which seemed to brother Gardner and the natives to be chilly. They asked me several times if I was cold because I wore short sleeved golf shirts while most of them wore sweaters saying, It's winter here! The sun seemed to me to be brighter and maybe closer to the earth there than at home in Missouri. I was impressed by the Poinsettia tree in the Gardner's backyard.

In the evening services that night of which there were two I preached on The Proper Mode Of Baptism and The Proper Administrator Of Baptism. One man present for three of the four messages this day took exception to what I had to say about the necessity for non Baptist Christians being re baptized if they wished to join a Baptist church. But praise the Lord at least he was listening to what I was saying from God's word.

I was impressed by the warm, friendly, appreciative, hospitable attitudes of all the native Brazilians I met during the entire trip. Some of them including Ricardo and Tarsila Farrinazzo presented us with generous gifts from time to time throughout our stay.

Brother Calvin Gardner served as my interpreter on all the occasions on which I preached or delivered devotionals in the city of Catanduva. He is an excellent interpreter or translator and I consider myself blessed to have had him as my first translator. I never was able to stump him and he kept up no matter how fast I spoke or how many thoughts I would express without a pause for breath..

There was one amusing incident involved in his communication with the Brazilians in their Portuguese language though. During the evening service he was announcing that on the next Sunday morning the church would baptize brother Rene Passeto who was a new Christian and that the baptism would take place in a nearby river. He asked two or three of the men to go out on the next Saturday afternoon and clean up the baptismal sight and, attempting to add a little humor asked them or at least thought he was asking them

to skin any crocodiles they might find in the process. What he actually said was, shave the hair off any crocodiles you might find. When all the people started snickering and laughing he asked what he had said and then realized that the joke was on him.

One other example of the good humor of this missionary is the description he offered of the modern so-called church growth movement when he said, The church growth movement is the Barna and Balaam circus and the greatest show on earth.

We closed the day late at night with evening devotionals which were led each night by one of us four American men. Brother John Cecil, brother Jack Godwin and brother Don Hendricks each did excellent jobs with their devotions.

MONDAY JULY 6, 1998

After a breakfast of Nestone, Granola, dry oatmeal, raisins, brown sugar, bananas, a number of other fruits and hot milk we had morning devotional led by brother Don Hendricks during which the Gardners taught us a chorus and then after we had sung it we sang it again this time as a round.

Since Monday is brother Gardner's day off the men in our group walked through the streets of Catanduva with him looking at the houses and multitude of luxurious flowers. Castor bean plants were growing wild all over the city.

We intended to pass out tracts and witness to any with whom we might come in contact and it was not long before we visited a bakery in which we encountered a man named Flavio Modesto who was a vendor or what we would call a salesman. He received our materials with great interest and through brother Gardner's interpretation told us that he was a Presbyterian but had several Baptist friends whom he would invite to our special services scheduled for next Saturday evening.

At this bakery we were introduced to the very tasty and unique Brazilian pastries which included cheese balls and fruit filled rolls and several things filled with coconut. I don't see how the Gardners keep from gaining too much weight with all the great foods and pastries available to them wherever they go!

About a block down the street we visited a rice mill whose machinery looked a lot like the nineteenth century machinery in Watkin's Mill near Kansas City back home. The owner was an older man who took time to explain to us the process of milling rice. We gave him and the others in the mill some tracts and invited them to attend the services of the Catanduva Baptist Church.

Turning down a street and heading in a different direction we passed and visited many shops which were all open to the street with no doors. One was a place where a man was selling palitos (pronounced pah-lee'-toes) which are barbecue sticks made out of strips of bamboo which grows native all over Brazil. We passed a filling station where eighty two cents a liter or as brother Gardner calculated about \$2.95 a gallon. I wished at this point that I had brought along my pocket calculator to figure things like this.

At sunset John Cecil and I walked about a mile through a poorer section of the city. Unbelievably beautiful flowers were everywhere filling vacant lots and spilling over the tops of the high walls that surrounded every house. We noticed that many in this part of town used horse drawn carts as trucks for their work. Many of the men in this section were just coming home from work. Each house in this section and in all sections of town has a dog, a big dog in most cases and each and every dog seemed to have mange and sores. We concluded that the reason is probably because there are no yards around the houses, only concrete and so lying on the concrete produces at least the sores.

We learned today that Brazilian money is based on the Real (pronounced hey-all') like US money is based on the dollar. One American dollar is worth one real and fifteen centavos. We also learned that the dollar has increased 35% in value in the last four years here in Brazil.

One of the thoughts most prominent in both our minds was, How blessed America is. Another was, The gospel and its influence is the difference in our two countries.

TUESDAY JULY 7, 1998

We arose at 5:30 AM though most of the men woke up at 4:30 and while others were dressing and preparing for breakfast I sent my daily e-mail message to my wife Lyndy. At about 6:30 we drove to downtown Catanduva to attend brother Calvin Gardner's English class at the Wizard language school. Brother Gardner teaches several classes in this school in order to supplement his income. Jack Godwin and Don Hendricks attended the class but there was not room for John Cecil and I so we walked through the streets of the city while the class was being held. We saw many interesting sights such as plazas and apartment buildings made entirely of concrete and of course the ever present riot of colors in the flowers. Upon returning to the language school to meet the others we met and spoke in English with the secretary of the Wizard school who told us that she was the pianist at the First Baptist Church (Southern) in Catanduva.

After breakfast at the Gardners' home we walked the two miles back downtown and visited several miscellaneous shops and in the public market which was large building with a number of shops under one roof I purchased a straw Palheta (pronounced Pah-yeta) hat with a broad brim to wear in the expected hot sunshine which never materialized. The merchant who sold it to me was very happy to make the sale and beamed broadly when someone took my picture with him.

On this trip we visited three different local banks at which we had hoped to cash our Travelers Checks and convert our money to Brazilian money. At each bank there were long lines, sometimes clear down the block, waiting to get in to pay utility bills and transact other business. It seems that this is one of the glories of the Socialistic system in Brazil. On a number of different days we found this same deplorable condition when we tried to transact any type of business connected with the banks.

Lunch this day was one of the most enjoyable meals I have ever experienced. We ate at the Colossus Restaurant in downtown Catanduva. It was an outdoor sidewalk restaurant and the meal was what is called Brazilian Bar B Cue. The meal was served in courses which were many in number and great in variety. There were at least seven to ten different meats which were cooked on steel spits which looked similar to what we would call Shish Kabob when brought to the table only there was just one large piece of meat on the metal rod and the waiters cut off whatever portion each person wanted. Five or six waiters served us and it seemed that before we got started with each course the next was brought. Meats included beef, meat from the hump of the Brahma cattle which are almost exclusively used in Brazil, lamb, pork, and several variations of each. We were also served rice, red beans, pineapple, French fried potatoes, salad, Brazilian salsa, Picante catsup, cheese balls and bottle water. The entire meal took about two hours which is typical of Brazilian meals and I did not feel stuffed when I had finished.

This afternoon we visited the barber shop owned by brother Ricardo Farrinazzo who is a very dedicated Christian and member of the church. Ricardo had on display in the shop a large blue butterfly from Brazil which was strikingly beautiful and when we commented on its beauty he offered to give it to us because it is the custom for Brazilians to give whatever their visitors complement to those visitors. We were finally able to convince him not to give it to us after some effort.

We passed out tracts until we ran out. We hope to get a fresh supply tomorrow and Rachel and Daniel Gardner, aged 12, are going to stamp the name and address of the church on each one.

Brazilians are absolutely crazy over soccer. Such is the extent of their enthusiasm for the game that patriotism in Brazil and love for the national soccer team are virtually one and the same. Brazil had made it to the semifinals in the World Cup soccer tournament and this was the day of the game with Holland. The city of Catanduva and indeed the entire nation of Brazil virtually shut down this afternoon for the game. Before the four o'clock game businessmen and people in the streets could be heard everywhere talking about the game as if it were an international crisis. People everywhere had purchased fireworks for celebrating the expected victory after the game but they could not wait for the game to be over and fired them off all during the game. Every eye was glued to Televisions and when the game had ended and Brazil had won people erupted into the streets all over town. I went outside just after dark at the moment the game ended and the Great number of exploding fireworks the screaming of women and the honking of horns could be heard from all over town. Some were running through the streets waving Brazilian flags.

After the game had ended brother Gardner and I visited the homes of some people for whom he had been praying. Instead of knocking on the doors or ringing door bells he clapped his hands which is the custom and people would then come to their doors. Brother Gardner showed no fear of walking in the neighborhoods at night. He said there was virtually no danger of crime in the streets here.

We walked to the top floor of a certain apartment building and visited with a man of about 30 years of age and his mother who lived with him. His first name was Rodrigo and was of course pronounced Hodrigo. We were warmly received and had a wonderful opportunity to witness to them. After introducing me to Rodrigo brother Gardner said, All right Pastor Justice why don't you just preach the gospel to them? I had prepared no sermon but turned to I Corinthians 15:1-4, read aloud the way the apostle Paul defined the gospel and took off from there explaining the gospel to them for over thirty minutes. This man and his mother seemed to really appreciate our coming and speaking with them about the gospel. They were former Catholics who had become interested in studying the Bible and were definitely open to the truth. Brother Gardner invited them to attend the special service we were planning for the following Saturday evening and they promised to come. I'm sure brother Gardner will follow up on our visit.

CONVITE

CULTO ESPECIAL

IGREJA BATISTA

Pastor: Calvin Gardner - Fone 523-2675

Este Sábado

11 DE JULHO

às 19 HORAS

ENTRADA FRANCA

EEPSG "VITORINO
PEREIRA"

Rua Alagoas, 1.675 - Vila Paulista

-- Pastor Americano --

Pastor Laurence Justice

THIS FLYER WAS DISTRIBUTED BY THE AMERICANS
AND MISSIONARY FAMILY TO HUNDREDS OF HOMES
IN CATANDUVA, BRAZIL DURING THE WEEK OF
JULY 6-11, 1998

WEDNESDAY JULY 8, 1998

At 7 AM I sat in on one of brother Gardner's English classes at the Wizard school. There were two students in the class whom brother Gardner wanted to converse in English with someone from the states. One was Mario Luiz Dantonia and the other was Luis Henrique Cripa Crispino. Luis wanted to discuss his great concern for the "great racial and other social problems in the USA." I told him that he needed to remember that the American media who report all these so-called problems is leftist in ideology and wants to discredit any semblance of American idealism. I told him that we do have our problems but that they are not nearly as pronounced nor serious as the leftist media wants to make them appear.

Both of these Brazilian nationals worked for a large Brazilian conglomerate called the Votorantim Group. Their particular company was one which produces orange juice. Mario related to the class five principles his company was trying to implement by the year 2001. Two of them which made an impression on me were: Please The Customers and Increase Profits. It was good to see that capitalism is growing and catching on in this largely socialist country.

Back at the Gardner home we had breakfast and then at 9:30 morning devotions were held and Rene Passeto, a new Christian came by and made arrangements to prepare a place for his own baptism with the help of John Cecil and Don Hendricks. These men planned to clean out a spot in the Rios dos Macacos (River Of The Monkeys) some five or six miles South of Catanduva and to do this on the following Saturday.

After devotions we drove downtown to take care of various matters of business. One was purchasing some summer weight blouses for Rachel Justice who had brought only heavy winter clothing due to the fact that brother Gardner had told us that this time of year was winter in Brazil and we had dressed accordingly. Brother Gardner and the men dropped Rachel Justice and Charity Gardner at a local mall so they could look for some blouses. After going to several banks and other places and finding long lines we picked up Rachel and Charity at the mall, returned to the Gardners' house and hired Moto-Taxis or motorcycles with drivers to take us to visit the large local cemetery in downtown Catanduva. This very inexpensive

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means of transportation has become a matter of great concern to the Taxi companies in Brazil because Moto-Taxis charge a flat rate of one Real to go anywhere in the city. The regular taxi companies have gone to court and gotten the courts to rule that Moto-Taxis are illegal but the Moto-Taxi companies have been given a stay till the matter can be finally disposed of by the courts. Though they could speak no English, the Moto-Taxi drivers all paid a lot of attention to our blue eyed blond headed Rachel. We had a lot of fun when Jack Godwin got on one of these motorcycles and donned a helmet. We began referring to him as "the wild one."

Over the front gate of the Cemetery in large gold letters were the words "We Were What You Are – You Will Be What We Are." I decided to ask if what I had heard about cemetery space in Latin American countries is true. I have heard from travelers to Mexico and other Latin countries that the cemeteries charge rent and when a family can no longer pay the rent of a family member the cemetery, controlled by the Catholic Church, would dig up the body and place it in a place called The Bone Pile. Brother Gardner said, Yes he had heard that this is true and I asked him if we could try to verify this matter by asking someone who works at the cemetery. The sexton for the cemetery said No at first but upon continued pressing by brother Gardner he admitted that up until just recently this had been the practice in his cemetery and that other cemeteries in the area still have such a practice.

This is an unusual cemetery in that many tombs were very large and had larger than life size bronze statues of various Bible characters placed on them. Such statues of John the Baptist, Christ and of the Black Virgin of Aparecida were plentiful. These statues were placed, not by the cemetery but on individual graves. In many cases tombs had two and even three such statues on them. The tombs were made of polished granite and there seemed to be more Italian names than any others. There were also a sizable number of Japanese graves. In connection with several of the tombs we saw grottos or shrines and inside

were idols both from Catholicism and Spiritism. Sacrifices are made at these places. Romanism has incorporated Spiritism into their own religious system so that one can be both Spiritist and Catholic. What terrible spiritual darkness the people of Brazil are in!

The rampant heathen idolatry of Brazilian Catholicism was blatantly apparent in the cemetery both on the graves and in the huge statue of "Jesus" which stands guard over the cemetery. This huge white statue which is several stories high was struck by lightning in a thunderstorm in recent months and its head was knocked off, falling to the ground, striking and killing a young man standing below. The head was soon attached and a lightning rod attached. The underlying messages of this event are plentiful for those open to seeing them.

Leaving the cemetery we went to a clothing store in downtown Catanduva still seeking some lighter weight blouses for Rachel. When the five clerks in this store saw that we were Americans they all left what they were doing to come and look at us and try to speak with us. Not many Americans come to these interior towns and cities we are visiting. The store clerks wanted especially to hear us speak. They were not so concerned with what we said as with the fact that we would talk to them. They love Americans and when we would talk with them through brother Gardner or Ricardo Farinazzo or Charity or Joy Gardner they would drop everything to listen. This attitude toward Americans gave us many very good opportunities to witness to them about Christ and to give them tracts which most of them began reading almost immediately.

Most of the clothing items for sale in this store and in all the stores were made to imitate American products they had seen in the movies. Virtually every pair of blue jeans I saw in the stores had a little red tag on the back pocket and a light colored leather patch on the waist band making them appear to be Levi Jeans. The tennis shoes all had a check mark logo on the sides to make them look like Nike shoes. The advertising posters for underwear in this store were disgusting because they were large color photographs of men who were completely naked and women who had on only skimpy underwear. John Cecil bought his wife a nice leather purse here.

From the clothing store we went to the Plaza of Hand crafts in the center of town hoping to purchase some souvenirs for our loved ones back home. There were a number of vendors with booths in this plaza and their renters were selling their home made wares to whomever might pass by. Here I purchased some beautiful crocheted doilies for Lyndy Justice and Leah Tucker and Beth Justice and my mother and Lyndy's mother. The doilies were made of silk and had various colors woven in. We left tracts with all the vendors from whom we made purchases.

Next we visited a store which was a combination bakery and soda fountain. I truly enjoyed looking at the various breads, pastries and candies for sale in this place. We purchased some green figs which had been crystallized in sugar or sugar cured and the next day we ate them for breakfast.

Everywhere we went we saw young boys flying kites. They seemed to be all or mostly home made kites with tails made of plastic grocery bags. We found that kite flying is serious business for Brazilian boys who "play for keeps." Not only do boys compete as to who can fly his kite the highest, they seek to possess the kites of other boys who are flying theirs at the same time. To do this they attach bits of broke glass to their kite strings and try to cut the strings of other kites around them. Whoever cuts a kite string gets to keep the kite whose string he cut. The Gardner boys learned about this practice the hard way the first time they went out into the streets to fly their kites.

On our walk through the streets today we purchased what Brazilians call "refrigerants" which means cold drinks. I got a pint of maracuja (mah-rah-coo-ziah') juice which I will explain later. It was simply wonderful to the taste.

At some point brother Gardner informed me that there are presently two publishing houses in Brazil which publish puritan and grace and Baptist literature in Portuguese. I was totally surprised and at the same time totally delighted to discover this fact.

This evening we had prayer meeting in the home of Pastor and Mrs. Gardner. So many people were crammed into their relatively small house that they were seated in three different rooms and some could not see me as I preached. All were very reverent and attentive. We made a pulpit by turning a book case over on its side and placing a table cloth over it. Brother Gardner who interpreted for me and I both stood at this makeshift pulpit. My text was Jonah 2:9 and I preached a sermon to which I gave the title "Salvation Is Of The Lord." I preached for an hour and fifteen minutes and no one seemed to mind. Our church back home had better look out!

THURSDAY JULY 9, 1998

While waiting for breakfast today John Cecil and I walked through a wealthy neighborhood near the Gardner home and looked at the different houses. There were some palatial homes in the area including one which really stood out. Its cold gray stone exterior was patterned after a medieval castle in England and it had three steel garage doors giving the impression that the house had special security needs. Another house was a huge subdued orange colored compound covering an entire small city block.

Today is a national holiday in Brazil called Constitutionalist Soldier Day which is similar to Veterans Day in the USA. Virtually everything in town is closed. This is the second holiday they have celebrated since we arrived.

Before breakfast I went out into the area in front of the Gardner house and it was raining. At the same time there was a beautiful sunrise which could be seen through the falling rain. What a paradise this place is!

Breakfast consisted of long bread rolls (11 inches), bananas, star fruit jelly, pumpkin jelly and sugar cured figs. We finished breakfast and morning devotions at 10:15 AM. During devotions John Cecil and Jack Godwin told how they came to believe the doctrines of grace and how the Lord had led them to join Victory Baptist Church.

As we traveled around the city passing out tracts each day including today we continually noticed the huge size of the tangerines which were sold here. They were two and a half to three times the size of the ones we are able to get in the USA. The smells of the city were strong and mostly pleasant. They included pollens from the many fruit and flower trees and plants, roasting coffee from the local coffee factory, various foods and fruits in the market. The only unpleasant odor was that wafting up from the river which runs through the city and into which the local sewers obviously empty.

Our friend Ricardo Farrinazzo paid for motor taxis for all five of us and took us to an ice cream parlor. These parlors which are plentiful in Catanduva are open air side walk café type affairs called Sorvetaria. Each of us bought cones having two different flavors of ice cream in order to taste as many different flavors as possible. My cone had papaya and maracuja flavors and Rachel's had papaya and milhoverde. We struck up a conversation with the young woman who operated this Sorvetaria and left a stack of flyers advertising our special service to be held the coming Saturday night on her counter top.

As we walked through the streets eventually to head back home to the Gardners' house we noted the many different trees and plants growing in special places in the sidewalks. One that really caught my eye here was a cock's comb plant that had woody stems and was ten to twelve feet high.

We came to the Plaza Damatriz which surrounds the Catholic Church on the highest point in the city and there we sat down to observe the plants and watch a little six year old boy flying his kite. We began to speak with the boy when he grew tired of flying his kite and he told us his name was Alexandre Ripiero. We asked him if he had ever been to the USA and he replied, Only to Disney World in Orlando. His father was near by and came over to see who Alexandre was talking to. We found out that the father owned a

local pizzeria and spoke some broken English. We visited with the father and witnessed to him also inviting him to attend our special service on Saturday and giving him a tract.

Moving on through the streets we passed one of many stores having signs on the front with the word SKOL which is actually a Brazilian beer. Ricardo knew the owner whose name was Mr. Nelson and who came out on the street and spoke with us. We gave him a tract and he agreed to place a stack of our flyers on his counter top near his cash register.

A few blocks later we came to a street vendor who was selling T shirts modeled after the shirts of the Brazilian soccer team. The vendor wanted 17 Real for one with the name and number (9) of the most famous player, Renaldo, on it. After much haggling Ricardo talked him down in price to 10 Real.

About two miles through town we came to another Catholic church on the top of another hill. As we passed through the large church yard we saw and heard a group of about eight or ten green parrots fussing in the trees. Over the next few days we saw several more groups of these parrots.

Moving on through the streets we came to the house of Ricardo's mother. It is a lovely upper middle class home with banana trees and all kinds of unrecognizable other fruit trees growing in the yard. We were met at the front gate just inside the walls by her huge dog, probably the biggest dog I have ever seen. He was docile and lovable and posed no threat due to the fact that both Ricardo and his mother were present. He stood on his hind legs to greet Ricardo and he matched up head to head with him.

By the time we reached the Gardner house we had walked all the way across the city of Catanduva. It had been a most educational trip because of all the various sights and experiences we had enjoyed.

We have not seen or heard the news since we have been here. Before supper the Gardner had the television turned on and were watching the national news but none of us Americans could understand the Portuguese commentator. The only thing we could understand was a photograph of Roy Rogers which appeared on the screen with "Roy Rogers 1911-1998" written across the bottom. This is the way we discovered that the "King Of The Cowboys" had recently died.

At supper time a group of church members and visitors gathered at the Gardners' house unannounced. They were mostly young couples who were either married or going together and they wanted to look at us and hear us talk. Suddenly brother Gardner announced that brother Justice would now lead a Bible study for the next thirty minutes. He also asked me to sing a solo accompanied by his fourteen year old daughter Joy. The song I chose was "In Times Like These" and I chose Romans 8:28 as the text of a study on "The Sovereign Providence of God" and explained how God's sovereign providence and election bring hope and comfort and meaning in life.

When this group finally left at about ten PM I went outside and looked up at the Southern Cross as I tried to do every night that I was in Brazil. It was always there and I grew to see it as an acquaintance, almost a friend because of all the exciting stories I had heard and read about it while growing up.

Before retiring for the night Brother Gardner invited me to place a full color ad for our church's annual Sovereign Grace Conference on his home page on the Internet. I included all information including the names of the preachers and their topics and it thus made available to people all over South

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American and even all over the world. I have had a lot of trouble adapting to brother Gardner's Brazilian computer whose software and even hardware is very different from that on computers at home.

FRIDAY JULY 10, 1998

Dawn broke in perfect clearness today. Not a wisp of cloud could be seen in the cool but not crisp morning air. This was the best winter I have ever experienced.

This morning we traveled forty miles to the city of Sao Jose Do Rio Preto (Saint Joseph On The Black River), a city of about 500,000 souls. On the way we saw and stopped to take pictures of a rubber plantation which looked very much like a place in New England where the maple trees were drained of their sap to make maple syrup. The sap in this case was latex. The rubber trees seemed to be the only trees in Brazil which had lost their leaves in this winter season. We also saw many miles of sugar cane fields. We got out of the car beside the road and cut a piece of sugar cane and sucked on it. Everywhere we looked we saw a vine with bright orange flowers which was somewhat similar to our trumpet vines in Kansas City. We also saw a dead Jackal and thousands of termite nests made of mud and from 12 inches to 18 inches high with an occasional one even higher. They were shaped like cones turned upside down.

The first place we visited was a modern, gleaming shopping market similar to a Walmart but cleaner than those we are used to in the USA. A wide variety of goods was beautifully displayed for the customers. Here I purchased hunting knives for our son Eddy and our son in law Joel Tucker. We distributed some tracts and then started back to Catanduva.

Arriving back in Catanduva we ate lunch at a place called Cia de Chopp in an American style shopping mall. The meal consisted of chicken fried chicken, beans, rice, French fries, fried eggs, carbonated mineral water and the favorite drink of Brazilians, Guarana (Gwah-rah-nah').

Brazilians are fascinated with American cowboys. Three different stores in Catanduva were called "cowboy stores" and sold things having to do with cowboys like belt buckles and cowboy hats and even saddles.

Ricardo Farrinazzo was gracious enough to take Daniel and David Gardner and myself to a pottery on the other side of Catanduva. It surely must be just like those in Jeremiah's time and Paul's time except for the fact that an electric motor turned the wheel. Everything else was just as potters' houses have been operated for six thousand years.

Only wood from Orange trees was used to fire the kiln which was located in the very center of this small factory. The reason for this is that wood from Orange trees heats the fire to just the right temperature for firing the pottery. The potter was there that morning and was a native of Portugal but had been a potter for the past forty six years. We watched in amazement as he turned out piece after piece even looking away from his work at us as we asked him questions and he answered us through Ricardo's translation. I purchased a Brazilian water pot which answers to what we in the USA would call a canteen. Sugar cane cutters and other laborers in Brazil take one of these to work each day filled with cold water which the pot keeps that way all day long. We gave the potter, his assistant and the owner of the pottery some tracts and Ricardo invited them all to the services of the Baptist church.

About 3:30 in the afternoon I saw the need to spend some time with the Gardners' two youngest boys, Daniel aged 12 and David aged 10 so we got brother Calvin to take us out a couple of miles into the country and let us out so we could walk back to the house and explore things on the way. We came to a driveway near the back of a local cemetery that had been covered with gravel made, not of limestone but of some brown and red colored stones. Upon closer examination we discovered that this rock was Brazilian red agate and we found several very nice specimens to take home.

As we walked toward the Gardner home we passed through a small city park in which there was a shed type building filled with older men. We were curious as to what they were doing and went into the shed to see where we found that they were playing a popular and old game called Bosca (Bow'-sha). This game was played on a court of tightly packed wet sand with two teams of about five men each. There was one small porcelain ball and several large porcelain balls about the size of bowling balls. The object of the game was to hit the small ball with the large ones, a feat more difficult than at first appeared. Some men would loft their balls and others would roll them firmly on the ground. The men playing were amused and

pleased that we who were obviously foreigners had taken enough interest in the game to stop and cheer for one team.

Before going home for supper the boys and I hiked into a field where we saw and photographed two stands of green bamboo. I also took a photograph of the two boys sitting on top of a mud termite nest which was about three feet high and about three feet across. Out in this field we encountered four Brazilian boys aged from about eight to about twelve. We struck up a conversation with them and they were very interested in talking with an American. One was named William and another was named Jefferson. We brought up the subject of the World Cup soccer game and Brazil's place in it and they were absolutely delighted. As we left them they held up both arms, placed the first two fingers on each hand in the shape of a "V" and continuously shouted, Brah-zeel, Brah-zeel!

As we walked toward the house I realized that there were no wooden houses in the places where we had been. I asked one of the boys about it and he said that they did not have wood houses or even very much wood at all in their houses. With the thousands of termite nests everywhere I could certainly see why. The houses are made of concrete and clay tiles and ceramic tiles. The heat and humidity would no doubt rot out wooden houses or doors or anything very quickly.

Supper tonight was a time filled with jokes and spiritual discussion. What a happy time the meals were in the Gardner home! After supper brother Gardner and I had the privilege of visiting in the home of Benedito and Lydia Moreis dos Santos who sometime previously had expressed an interest in having a visit from the missionary. Brother Gardner asked me to speak with him about salvation and baptism. As I did this he told me that he had once made a profession in a Pentecostal church but that he was concerned that his profession was not the real thing. He said he had tried to conquer his sins but again and again had been a failure at doing so. I spoke with him about Philippians 4:13 where Paul said "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." I asked him to place a New Testament in the pocket of his shirt when he went to work the next day and when he reached for his cigarettes there to go ahead and take out the New Testament and look up Philippians 4:13 which I asked him to underline and to read it and to do this every time he wanted a cigarette and to claim that promise each time he did so. The whole visit was truly a blessing. He and Lydia then took us to the back of their house where they were growing a beautiful garden of vegetables some of which they brought to us the next day.

SATURDAY JULY 11, 1998

Early This morning we went downtown to walk around and see the sights and take care of some business. There was a chill in the air which was a little nippier than it had been on previous mornings but we Americans still had our short sleeve shirts on. I began to wish I had brought a sweater but as the morning wore on the air quickly warmed up to pleasant.

While standing in the Plaza of Hand Crafts we heard sirens and saw lights on about five police cars. As we looked at the cars I noticed that men inside three of the cars were throwing stacks of papers up in the air out the windows and yelling as they did so. I rushed to pick up one of the multicolored flyers and when I asked brother Gardner what it said he replied that the flyers were advertising a new housing addition in town and those sponsoring the flyers were trying to get the public to come and see the houses. He also said that this is a common practice when people have something special to sell. He allayed my suspicions that political favoritism allowed only certain persons the privilege of police cooperation in such operations.

When the police cars had passed we began looking through the wares of the people who had booths on the plaza and we purchased various gifts for loved ones back home. Some had seen the doilies I had purchased and wanted to come and get some for themselves.

We walked from the plaza back to where the Kombi was parked near the Wizard language school building. We had been shopping while brother Gardner was taking care of one of his English classes. Brother Gardner came out and spoke with us for a few moments and then when we had gotten into the

vehicle Benjamin Gardner aged 18 was now driving. The Kombi had been parallel parked and as we pulled out from the curb a car sideswiped us doing little damage to either car. Calvin had not yet gotten back inside the building and heard and saw the whole thing. He came immediately back to us and began talking with the woman who had been driving the brand new automobile which had hit us. She and a man who had been following her were almost irate but brother Gardner's calm demeanor and soft words soon defused an otherwise volatile situation. It wasn't long before he had even witnessed to the man, given him a tract and invited him to church.

As we drove through the streets we spoke for a few moments about politics and the news. I realized here that we had not been exposed to any news of the world for over a week now. Benjamin told us in this conversation that the mayor of Catanduva was a Communist and member of what is called the Workers Party. He rehearsed several examples of how badly the government had been run under this Communist's leadership.

For lunch today we had Brazilian pizza which had been made in a Brazilian bakery. It was very tasty but the chief difference in it and what we were used to in the USA was the fact that there was very little cheese in it and the crust was not nearly as thick as that of pizza at home.

We are all feeling sorry for Mrs. Peggy Gardner who is cooking and washing and cleaning for all of us plus her own family of seven. She is dead tired and we still have a week to go. In preparing her our meals this week her electric blender burned up so we chipped in a few dollars apiece and bought her a new super blender. She really appreciated it and immediately whipped up a batch of fresh fruit juice for us. Our planned two day trip to the city of Ourinhos next week should be a welcome break for her.

During the early afternoon we all distributed tracts and flyers announcing our special services to be held tonight at the public school where the church usually meets on Sunday. We paired off and I was put with David, the youngest Gardner son. He took one side of the street and I took the other and we covered the neighborhood near the church's meeting place leaving our papers in the gates of 300 homes in this poor neighborhood. We had left them in 400 homes yesterday. We left them in businesses and beer joints, gave them to people on bicycles and handed them to people we passed on the streets. I even ran out into the street at one point and gave one to the driver of a horse cart or carroca (Cah-ho'-suh).

Next we visited the lots where the brother Gardner's church hopes to build a church building someday. The lot has been paid for, the land has been cleared of the tall brush that had been growing there and a new sidewalk across the street side has recently been built. I took slides of our group standing on these lots. I hope that next time that I travel to Catanduva there will be a new church building at this location.

Some of the miscellaneous things I have observed today include the fact that there is only one fire station in this city of 100,000. I was told that this is because wood is not used in construction and thus the danger of fire is far lower than in comparable places in the USA. I also realized that since we had been in Brazil we had not seen one jet vapor trail in the sky. One of the most obvious things about Brazil which is close to exasperating to me is the fact that life is so slow here. Everything runs late in this country. Everything starts from 15 minutes to an hour late including and especially church services.

Our special service for which we have prayed and worked and visited and distributed the flyers and invited so many people was set to begin at 7:30 tonight. All of us Americans plus the Gardner family arrived at the school building at about 7 o'clock only to find that the padlock securing the building had been tampered with and broken in the locked position. After trying all the keys five times John Cecil finally took a timber block from the back of the Kombi and began pounding the lock trying to break it open but all to no avail. Next he got the tire tool from the Kombi and forced the lock open by prying it.

At 7:30 no one had arrived for the special services. At 7:45 a couple of Brazilians began to drift in and by 8 o'clock a crowd began to grow. By the time everyone was in which took another full hour we had more people present than the church had ever had in a service. There were many visitors which was encouraging both to the missionary and to the church members. I had to laugh when everyone sat on the back rows. Brother Gardner was not impressed and had two of his men simply remove the front row of

seats so everyone would be closer to the front. One family of four had driven for one and one half hours to get to the service and another man had come from the city of Aracituba, Brazil. One family arrived for the service at around 9 o'clock but unconcerned about their extreme tardiness they entered the auditorium and went right down to the front and sat down.

We were especially gratified that so many persons whom we had visited and invited had actually come to the services. Some of these included Benedito and Lydia Moreis dos Santos, and Osvaldo Camargo's wife Sueli, daughters Talita and Tatiane and son Gustavo. The mechanic who had repaired the Kombi for brother Gardner came with his family. Their names were Jose Roberto Sechim and his wife Denise Fernandez plus their daughters Mariane, Milena and their son Mateus. Benjamin's former soccer coach and his family, Carlos Alberto and Maria Vaquerio were also in attendance along with their daughter Ingrid.

For my sermon at this service I took I Corinthians 6:9-11 as my text and preached on "A Great Savior Of Great Sinners." It was very well received and after the service almost everyone present lingered until I had had personal conversations with each. Ben Gardner translated for me and I enjoyed these conversations as much as almost any I have ever had. Most of these conversations concerned spiritual matters important to each individual. One stands out. It was with a man who was a Pentecostal who wanted to argue that the special gifts of the Holy Spirit are for Christians but when I stood up to him quoting scripture at every turn he backed down and said he didn't really believe what he had said. He was just playing the devil's advocate. I lingered in these conversations until I was sure that I had personally spoken to every person present and then I went home. It was after eleven o'clock when I left. John Cecil and Don Hendricks remained behind to clean up the building for church the next morning and after stopping on the way home to help some poor woman having car trouble they finally arrived at the Gardner house after midnight. By this time I was already asleep.

Brother Gardner said that more people attended this special service than had ever attended the services in Catanduva. He also said that all of those who came were good prospects for salvation and/or church membership.

SUNDAY JULY 12, 1998

Breakfast this beautiful Sabbath day was served at 8 o'clock. During our very delicious and healthful meal of fruits and dry cereals we discussed the existence and number of independent sovereign grace Baptist churches in Brazil and "Pastor Calvin" as he is affectionately known by his members said that he personally knew of at least twenty five such churches in the state of Sao Paulo alone..

The Bible early Bible study at church this morning which was usually attended only by brother Gardner and Ricardo was attended by about 20 persons. I taught a study to which I gave the title of "The Christian And God's Law" and based it on Romans 3:31, "Do we then make the void the law through faith? God forbid, yea, we establish the law." Ricardo was greatly blessed by the study and told me several times over the next few days how much he had been profited by the study.

During the morning worship service I preached using Isaiah 61:10 as my text and I gave the message the title of "Rejoicing In Righteousness." Brother Gardner did his usual expert job of interpreting the message into Portuguese and a good crowd gave careful attention to the message. Following the sermon those present adjourned to the front of the building where we had met and the Americans took slides and photos of the whole group.

We then traveled in a car caravan to a spot on the Rio dos Macacos about six miles south of Catanduva for a baptismal service. This was the spot which Benjamin Gardner, John Cecil, Don Hendricks and Rene Passeto had cleared and cleaned yesterday during the day. The place where the baptism took place was under a concrete highway bridge and had been used by the church before. The full name of the nineteen year old man whom brother Gardner baptized was Rene Marcel de Arajo Passeto. Since this was winter in

Brazil, the water seemed very cold to brother Gardner and Rene and Rene shivered almost violently soon after descending into the waters. Before immersing Rene in the waters of the river Ben Gardner led the congregation in the verses of their customary baptismal hymn which was “Fidelidade (Faithfulness).” Even the elderly members, Edival and Josefa Pereira made the trek down to the river’s edge under the bridge and we all rejoiced as Rene came up out of his watery baptismal grave.

After lunch and some time for reflection and Bible reading I walked through the streets of the Gardners’ neighborhood with Ben Gardner who showed me various sights in the area and giving me the opportunity to speak with him about his ambition to go to college back in the United States someday. He was undecided about what he would do but was interested in the names of any truly Christian colleges that I might know. One thing of interest he showed me in the neighborhood was a green leafy parasite growing in one of the large jungle trees nearby. It was a parasite like mistletoe in the USA but it had broad leaves about six to eight inches long and two to three inches wide. It grew in large clumps in the forks of the limbs and it stood out because its leaves were of different size, shape and color than the leaves of the host trees. I was never able to find anyone who could tell me the name of the parasite. To us Americans the weather had warmed some after two days of nippy air when the thermometer dipped into the upper fifties at night.

Returning to the meeting place of the church for the traditional two Sunday night services I continued the study of “The Christian And God’s Law” and the sermon “Rejoicing In Righteousness” from this morning. All during our visit and in the services of the church the importance of understanding the tongues or languages used in the services of the church was made abundantly clear to me as never before. Tonight 100 % of the members of the church were present plus a number of visitors and this was another attendance record according to brother Gardner.

During this Sunday evening service the members of the church represented by spokesman Ricardo Farrinazzo present each of us Americans with beautiful ceramic cups and plates skillfully hand painted by a local artist named Ana Vano with multicolored Brazilian birds and flowers. The name of the bird pictured on my cup is the Arara (Ah-rah’-ra). We were all exceedingly pleased with these gifts which were a surprise in the first place because they were given out of love and as the idea of the people of the church there in Catanduva. The fact that they were made by a local Brazilian artist and depicted Brazilian birds and flowers which we had come to love so much made it even better. I plan to proudly display my cup in my study for all who enter to see. Lyndy will display the plate at home.

MONDAY JULY 13

This morning the first thing we went to revisit the potter’s house, this time Ricardo and Benjamin taking all the Americans. A different potter was at work today, much younger but seemingly equally skilled as the one we watched the other day. This man had amazing skill and made several items as we watched. He told us that potters in Brazil are often referred to as “Mud Johns” after a Brazilian bird that makes a hard mud nest in trees and on power poles. In a few days when we drove through the countryside we would see a number of these Mud John nests and would even see them offered for sale in tourist stores. We all thought continually of the passages of scripture in Jeremiah 18 and Romans 9 about the visits of God’s men to the potter’s house as we watched and listened to this man. While he was working he made three small pots of some kind and set them aside. Then after making something else and finishing it he reached over and smashed one of the original three with his hand. One of the men asked him why he had done that and he responded, I didn’t like it. Of course we were reminded of our sovereign God who does with the clay what he wills making one vessel to honor and another to dishonor.

Next we drove about 11 kilometers North out of Catanduva to the town of Catigua (Ca-chee’-gwa) for the purpose of visiting a bamboo factory. Here a man and two teen aged boys were cutting bamboo in strips and weaving it into beautiful baskets of various sizes and for various uses. They would use various shades of colors of the green bamboo to give variety and design to their work. They also worked with both

green bamboo and yellow bamboo which seemed to be different varieties of the bamboo plant. At the rear of this small factory or business I noticed a large pit which had been dug in the ground and in this pit which was about four to six feet deep there were a large number of long green bamboo poles which were being cured for later use. The poles were covered with bamboo and brush evidently to protect them from direct sunlight.

Returning to Catanduva while it was still early morning we went to the bakery we had visited the first Monday morning and bought many different rolls and sweets and cheeseballs and Guarana to drink. The pastries we purchased were filled with things like bananas and figs and we bought so many that the lady shopkeeper gave us two

huge pastries free. One of the things we got was corn cake which was like corn bread except it was in the form of a small cake and very light like cake. We then walked several blocks to a local repertoire theater building which had a large set of steps on its front and sat down there to eat breakfast. The air was cool and very pleasant as we sat in the warm sunshine and bantered about with wise cracks and fun. While standing in the bakery choosing our breakfast delicacies something very unusual happened. A car sped by and those in side were scattering papers out the windows all over the streets. Rushing to retrieve one of the papers I discovered that it was an invitation for the public to attend the funeral of a local military man who had died. His name was Comendador Raul Waldemar Paulatti and the funeral was to be held that very day. Upon asking Benjamin about this practice he said it was customary in Brazil to do this but it all seemed very strange to me.

At some point during this day the group fell to discussing the warning brother Gardner had given us before coming to Brazil not to give money to beggars that might accost us on the streets. Benjamin told us at this point that one of the main reasons for this warning was the fact that many if not most of the beggars we would see on the street were actually hired by other persons for the purpose of raising money for them. Benjamin said that his dad had found out from a reliable source that one beggar who was a regular in a certain area of the city was actually the owner of a nearby apartment building and very wealthy. We saw a few beggars in Catanduva, probably not more than four to six of them.

One of the very picturesque things which I will remember about Catanduva and all the cities in the Brazilian countryside is the red clay tile roofs which virtually all the houses have. They make a unique and very attractive sight as one looks at any particular city from a distance.

One of the really enjoyable things for me on this trip was looking for and purchasing gifts for loved ones back home in the States. The fact that Catanduva is not a tourist center and thus that there are no "tourist traps" there made shopping a real pleasure because we were limited to things made in Brazil and thus characteristic of that country. I enjoyed purchasing pocket knives with the unique and unusually shaped blades of Brazil for my father Anson, my son Eddy and my father in law Preston Eddy.

After another very relaxing and enjoyable lunch in the Gardner home I had the opportunity to carry on a profitable and edifying conversation with brother Calvin Gardner concerning both ecclesiology and eschatology. It became readily apparent that even though we do not necessarily agree on the finer points in these matters we are nevertheless kindred spirits in the Lord. Brother Gardner is a believer in Christ who is open to the truth if it can be shown to him in God's word. I pray that the same is true of myself.

At about 5 PM I sat out on the porch at the edge of the breezeway at the front of the Gardner home and read my daily Bible readings and prayed over my sermon for the service to be held the next day in the far off city of Ourinhos, Brazil. All afternoon I anxiously awaited the daily e-mail from Lyndy.

Some miscellaneous observations made today include the fact that there are evidently absolutely no English language newspapers in the city of Catanduva. I checked every one of the numerous news stands in town and could not find a single one. Since the TV was only turned on twice in the two weeks we were in the Gardner home and since I could make nothing whatever out of the Portuguese language newscast I saw there, I was completely cut off from any news of the world for two weeks. The only exception to this was the items mentioned by Lyndy one day in her e-mail concerning the Bill Clinton moral scandal in

Washington. Another miscellaneous observation has to do with a term used freely by all Brazilians and that is "OK." Everyone uses OK in communicating with others. When I asked about what I thought was an American expression I was told that it had actually originated in Brazil. I wonder.

Tonight was one of the highlights of the trip because we ate supper in the home of Mauricio and Casilda Barreto. All the Americans plus Ricardo and Tarsila, Camila and Daniel, and Jose Devalir Delfino and his family of five. Jose (Joh'-suh) is a very strong Roman Catholic, a purple Catholic as Ricardo described him. The Lord gave us the whole evening to witness to this very intense but very warm and open young business man. It was one of the most moving and meaningful witnessing opportunities I have ever had. I pray that the Lord will use it to bear fruit in many lives.

Jose owns a factory which manufactures clothing such as dresses, sweaters, pants and shirts. He started in his kitchen at home four years ago with Mauricio helping him and now has a large building which takes up most of a city block and over 100 employes work for him. He has modern computerized equipment for a number of his operations.

Mauricio's house was an intriguing dwelling at least from an architectural standpoint. It had a small kitchen and average sized living room and bedrooms but it had a room or rather a three fourths room called an edicula. I call it a three fourths room because it has three walls and where the fourth would be is open facing the rest of the house. By open I mean open to the sky with about four to six feet between it and the rest of the house. This area is entered from the kitchen by going into a breezeway that runs down the side of the living and bedrooms and opening into the edicula and space between it and the house. The walls of the edicula were covered with shiny royal blue ceramic tiles about a foot square and in the middle of the back wall was a large open barbecue pit. The dinner table was set within the edicula so that no one was seated under the stars unless they chose to be. It was an absolutely beautiful room and concept.

The sumptuous meal consisted of a special Brazilian dish called Feijoada (Fay-jew-wa'-duh). It was made up of a combination of rice and beans and bits of pork and beef and a number of other things and reminded me very much of the Cajun Gumbo often made by brother Art Doyle for our conferences back home. If one were to remove the shrimp from brother Doyle's dish he would basically have Feijoada. The dish was cooked by Tarsila and Ricardo Farrinazzo aided by the others involved. The drink served with this dish was the ever present and ever popular Guarana but that which was served here was specially and locally made and put up in dark brown bottles rather than mass produced in cans as most of what we had been drinking. Both the dish and the drink were just out of this world as far as taste and enjoyment were concerned.

For evening devotions tonight I read and commented on the tenth Psalm, we sang some hymns and then prayed for our loved ones at home and especially for brother Larry Morris who was facing a serious intestinal surgery the next Monday after we would arrive home on Saturday.

TUESDAY JULY 14

We were awakened today as was the case everyday by Jack Godwin who gets up at 3:30 each morning no matter what. Before breakfast all the men went with brother Gardner to a nearby funeral home for a visitation for the father of local business associate of brother Gardner's at the Wizard language school. The associate's name was Maria Emilia and we had met her one morning while attending one of brother Gardner's English classes. Her deceased father had been a Roman Catholic and his body had burning candles placed at the foot of the casket in which it lay. The casket seemed to have been filled with flowers similar to white Spider Chrysanthemums before the body had been placed in it, giving the impression that the body was sleeping on flower blossoms. A rosary had been wrapped around his folded hands. Brother Gardner made a bold witness for Christ there in front of all the family and visitors. It was received well by all.

According to brother Gardner the Catholic Church has lost much of its dominating power over Brazilians in the past thirty years or so. Economic prosperity has opened things up and cultural change has cause many young people to reject the old Catholic ways. American rock music and clothing styles as well as Pentecostalism which has come it largely through television preachers have come in to fill the void left by a dead and sterile Catholicism. But many Catholic and cultural ways still hold this country back.

Ricardo joined us for breakfast at the Gardner's home when we returned. Jack Godwin brought a devotional on God's sovereign providence and reminded us how God had sent or allowed lightning to destroy the air conditioning unit back home in our church building so that it would be repaired and working and would not break down during our upcoming annual Sovereign Grace Conference. He also reminded us that the recent sale of the vacant lot on Evanston Avenue in Kansas City had provided the money needed for the purchase of the new air conditioning unit just at the right time. He referred appropriately to our visit to the potter's house there in Catanduva as an illustration of God's sovereign control of all things.

This is the day on which we will travel to the city of Ourinhos, nearly 300 kilometers from Catanduva in the Southern part of Sao Paulo state and just across the line from Parana (Pah-rah-nah') state. This motor trip (we took the Kombi) gave us the opportunity to see the interior of this part of Brazil and on the way we stopped and viewed and photographed a rubber plantation and saw the multitudinous Brahma cattle which were everywhere. The great majority of cattle in this state at least are Brahma though we did pass through the city of Santa Gertrudes where we saw a few of the cattle of the same name. We wondered if maybe this is the city after which that particular breed is named.

As we traveled toward our destination we came to a police roadblock and had to stop and speak with the local highway patrol. The two officers asked brother Gardner why he had no license plate on the front of the Kombi and he told them that we had thrown a rod on a trip from Sao Paulo to Catanduva the other night and that evidently the tow truck which had come after us had somehow knocked the license plate off the Kombi. The officers then asked to see the engine evidently to check his story about throwing a rod and being towed home. At about the time they looked into the engine compartment I stepped out of the van and asked the officers if they minded if I took a photograph of them. This evidently played on their vanity a little bit and they were delighted and they became much more friendly and helpful. This was a practice which would come in handy a couple of more times on this trip.

Other things we observed on the drive to Ourinhos included passing through the vast sugar cane country and seeing the hundreds and probably even thousands of sugar cane workers being brought into the fields on large buses which looked like modern Greyhound buses. They would set the fields on fire and evidently burn the leaves off the lower parts of the stalks and then would load the slightly charred cane onto large piggyback trucks to be hauled to sugar mills and alcohol plants. We also saw many orange pickers being transported to the fields, climbing ladders and picking oranges. Sometimes there were sugar cane fields as far as the eye could see and sometimes there were orange groves with trees all covered with oranges as far as the eye could see. The main tree in Brazil other than those raised for produce seems to be the Eucalyptus tree which is everywhere along the roads and around farm houses as well as in the city streets and yards. We also saw the Mud John nests on power poles and in trees all along the highway in some areas.

We passed through many whole cities where brother Gardner would tell us there was no gospel witness whatever. There were many large cities with high rise buildings as well as small towns along the way. One large city, far larger than Catanduva, to which we came was Bauru (Bow'-roo). Here we at lunch at a chain restaurant called Graal (Grah-ahl'). This is a combination filling station, restaurant, grocery store and bakery and they are found in several places in Sao Paulo state.

The lunch was buffet style and we had all kinds of foods I had never heard of. We had fried bananas and boiled cabbage which was spiced differently than I had ever eaten. We had Brazilian salsa and rice and pork and baked chicken all seasoned with olive oil. After lunch I visited the grocery store area and Rachel and I sampled all kinds of chilled fruit juices such as mango and guava and tamarind and of course Guarana. About an hour on down the road we stopped at a roadside stand and drank sugar cane juice which we watched the vendor squeeze by placing sugar cane stalks in a squeezer that looked like a large old

fashioned coffee mill from the USA. He fed three stalks into a funnel like opening at the side and turned a crank on the all steel machine until the cane had passed through and all the juice and soft parts were taken out and nothing remained but the hard fibrous part of the stalk. He then poured the juice into cups from which we drank. I remember thinking at this point that if any of us were to get sick on this trip this would be the place and the time. Sure enough I did not feel 100% for the next two days after this. The sugar cane juice was delicious nevertheless and I am glad I had the experience of drinking it.

At Ourinhos we were the house guests of missionary Steve Montgomery and his wife Jeannie who have been in Brazil for over thirty years. Their 42 year old son David and a young Brazilian man named Flavio joined us soon after we arrived. Here we drank real Brazilian coffee for the first time. It was served in little demitasse cups and was very strong but did not taste bitter or offensive in any way. As a matter of fact it had a wonderful flavor and taste. I asked Mrs. Montgomery why it tasted so much better than the coffee we were used to and she explained that in Brazil the beans are roasted darker and the coffee is ground much finer and this is what gives it the great flavor. A little later we ate supper and were served a very enjoyable meal of "golden calf soup" while we enjoyed an edifying conversation concerning eschatology, particularly as to whether the rapture will come before or after the tribulation.

Brother Montgomery is pastor of the Ourinhos Independent Baptist Church where we held special services this night. A good crowd assembled in the beautiful new and well furnished church auditorium and the singing was close to heaven. Brother Steve Montgomery translated for me as I preached a message to which I had given the title Snow White Salvation For Scarlet Red Sinners, taking Isaiah 1:18 for my text. This was truly a wonderful service and I have a video tape of it which was provided by one of the men in the church. The names of some of the Brazilians present were Osvaldo and Zilda and Antonio, a man about 90 years of age and great grandfather and grandfather and father to a good portion of all the members. After the service we stayed around and visited for a long time having much edifying conversation with the Brazilians. We observed that the pews in the auditorium of the church were made of solid Brazilian mahogany and the baptistry was placed in the floor of the platform at the front of the auditorium much as was once the custom in churches in Texas in the USA. The men of the church were very proud of the baptistry with its special pump and water heating mechanisms.

Tonight before going to bed I went out into the driveway of the Montgomery home and looked up at the Southern Cross once again, knowing that I probably will never see it again once I have left Brazil. What an amazing and beautiful and thrilling sight it always was!

WEDNESDAY JULY 15

We spent Tuesday night in the home of missionary Steve Montgomery in Ourinhos Brazil. During the night and even during the day yesterday I kept thinking and meditating on the thought that God put me in Kansas City, Missouri in the USA instead of putting me in Ourinhos or Catanduva Brazil as a sugar cane cutter. Only God's sovereign goodness and grace can account for such an incalculable blessing as this.

This morning after a fine breakfast in the Montgomerys' home including Brazilian coffee brother Montgomery took Jack Godwin, Rachel Justice, Don Hendricks and myself on an auto tour of Ourinhos and environs. We traveled in brother Gardner's Kombi while brother Gardner slept in and tried to catch up on some much needed rest after driving all day yesterday.

Ourinhos has a population of from ninety to one hundred thousand people. It is located on the Pardo River which along with the other rivers in Sao Paulo state, runs West from Sao Paulo. This city seems to be a little more progressive than Catanduva in that it has a lot of industry and business but Socialism is still rampant and is evidenced in the huge political bureaucracies which encumber things like the city water department whose head is a political appointee whether he has any knowledge of water purification or not. We drove through the city looking at the many brick factories and their kilns and crossing the Paranapanema River into the state of Parana, our farthest point South on our entire trip. Brother Steve informed us here that the biggest crop in Parana state is soy beans instead of sugar cane and rubber as was

the case in Sao Paulo state. The weather in both Sao Paulo state and Parana state was very mild. We thought it was perfect.

As we were winding up our auto tour of Ourinhos we were just a few blocks from the Montgomery home when we began to hear strange sounds coming from the area of the Kombi engine. Over about a three or four block distance the noise grew louder until there was a loud noise and then the motor died. We were at an intersection which was at the top of a long gently descending slope. Brother Montgomery noted that we were just a few houses away from where a mechanic who was a member of his church lived and that he would probably be at home for lunch at this time. We coasted down the hill until we came to rest in front of Osvaldo Buzato's house. Sure enough Osvaldo was at home and after looking over the engine he diagnosed our problem as being that a bearing had burned out of the alternator. He got right on it in hopes that we might still be able to make it back to Catanduva in time for the Wednesday evening prayer service there.

Repairs took four hours during which time we all walked the few blocks to the Montgomery house and enjoyed a detailed theological discussion of various things including whether God based his election of certain persons on foreseen faith in those elect. At some points the discussion became quite spirited.

Leaving Ourinhos at 3:27 PM we headed for Catanduva thinking we still might make it in time for prayer meeting at 7:30. We again passed through the city of Bauru where we saw both MacDonald's and Walmart stores. We felt just a little less like we were in a foreign land when we saw them. Several miles after passing through Bauru we were stopped by the highway patrol and again asked about the absence of our front license plate. We tried the same tactic of brother Gardner showing them the clean new engine and my jumping out of the car with my camera asking them if I could take their picture. This time I noticed that I had run out of film so I had to quickly ask brother Don Hendricks if I could borrow his camera. The tactic worked just fine again and everyone was all smiles by the time we left the roadblock. As in the previous cases we gave the policemen gospel tracts as we left them.

Soon the sun went down and we were riding in the dark moving as fast as the Kombi could take us toward Catanduva and prayer meeting there. After dark we began to see what brother Gardner called smudge pots but what I call torches here and there along the highway in the sugar cane areas. These brother Gardner said are used to mark the places where the buses which haul the sugar cane cutters and orange pickers would come to pick up the workers after dark. There was no other possible way they could possibly know where to pick up their passengers out there where it was many miles to any electric light. It seemed like a very long trip.

We arrived at the school building where the church meets only five minutes late and the singing had just begun. The beautiful Portuguese hymns came rolling out of the windows as we entered the building. I changed clothes in the rest room and entered the auditorium just before time for me to preach. In the auditorium was a large crowd waiting for us. I took Matthew 11:28 as my text and preached a message entitled "Come Unto Me."

Following the sermon I asked each of the three men who came in our group to make a farewell statement of appreciation for all that the people in the church had done for us during the previous two weeks. Each man thanked them for their gracious hospitality and it was a very emotional time for both the Brazilians and for us. I was sorry that our visit had just about come to its end and I was deeply grateful to the Lord for allowing us the great privilege of making such a glorious trip and meeting so many fine brothers and sisters in Christ so many miles from home. This was a very difficult time because we had to say Good bye. There were many tears from grown men.

THURSDAY JULY 16

Ricardo had requested of brother Gardner that he have a private conference with me concerning the difference between apostasy and heresy. I went to his shop early in the morning and he was just finishing cutting the hair of a customer who spoke fairly good English. He could not ask me enough questions about the USA. His goal is to come to the states and get a job and stay. This seems to be the goal of a great many Brazilians. I gave him a tract and Ricardo tried hard to get him to leave so we could talk.

Ricardo took me to several shops owned by friends of his in an effort to try to break some of my large Brazilian Real bills but no one had the change. We finally arrived at one of the city parks and sat down on a concrete park bench in the warm morning sun and talked evidently to his complete satisfaction about what God's word says about heresy and apostasy and especially the difference between the two. It was one of those rare blessings God gives us to speak without interference about important biblical subjects.

In the afternoon we got the promised tour of the clothing factory owned by Jose Devalir Delfino. Rachel Justice, Jack Godwin and I made this tour along with David and Benjamin Gardner. We walked into what looked like the front door of one of the houses on a certain street but inside the first small room were about nine or ten young women squatting on the floor sewing or hemming. Through the next door we entered a large room that looked like it occupied the entire center of the city block and in it were about seventy five or eighty women sitting at sewing machines working frantically. Jose explained the entire operation to us through Benjamin who served as our translator. The factory had some very modern machines including some new computer operated ones and was very clean. They were manufacturing all kinds of clothing including shirts, athletic shorts, sweaters, and slacks.

We showed so much interest in Jose's work that he asked us to go with him to his nearby home and have coffee with him. I cannot drink coffee by doctor's orders but there is no way I would ever turn down such an invitation. His home was very nice by Brazilian standards and he gave us a tour of it after serving us some more delicious Brazilian coffee. He had several relatives living in the house with he and his wife and children. While there Jose sang a song which he had written to his four year old daughter accompanying himself on his own guitar. It was a folk song type of piece and was actually very good both as to his singing and his playing.

Taking us back to the factory where our car was parked Jose gave all of the Americans a set of dish towels made in his factory. I shall cherish mine. We finally had to say good bye and this too was a rather emotional time for all of us.

When we arrived back at the Gardner home I used the next couple of hours to pack my bags for the flight home tomorrow. I also made up some boxes in which to pack my glass and pottery treasures for protection on the trip home. I the corners out of a heavy cardboard box and made two smaller boxes out of them using packing tape which I had purchased this morning at an office supply store where brother Gardner trades. I placed the items in the boxes and filled in around them with some wood shavings I procured from David Montgomery in Ourinhos a couple of days earlier and was satisfied my valuables were secure for the trip.

After supper I went with Rachel Justice, Jack Godwin and Ricardo Farrinazzo to the home and studio of Ana Vano, the local artist who had hand painted the cups and plates which the church had presented us as gifts. She gave us a tour of her studio and showed us a lot of her outstanding work. She paints on cups and pottery and lavatories and bathtubs and just about anywhere which can be beautified with painting. She mostly paints flowers but she also paints a few pastoral scenes and other things.

At 7 PM all of the Americans attended the advanced English class taught by brother Gardner at the Wizard language school. We had a very interesting and gratifying and lengthy discussion with the eleven students in that class which included a doctor, a school teacher, and several business women. I was most impressed with a brain doctor in the group whose name was Milton Maguollo and a very articulate black man named Edivaldo Souza de Pinto. Brother Gardner paired us off with two Brazilians to each American and told the Brazilians they could ask us any question about any subject no holds barred and that we Americans could do the same with the Brazilians. The idea was to get the Brazilians to speak only in English with some Americans in order to sharpen their English speaking skills.

I made it a point to ask every Brazilian this question: Do you think that the Roman Catholic Church should control the government of Brazil? to which every Brazilian answered, No. I was pleasantly surprised and gratified. Surely thirty years ago I would have been mistreated for even asking such a question! Another interesting comment by the Brazilians concerning religion in their own country is the statement with which most of them agreed that evangelical religion now controls their country. I was not able to pursue what they meant by this statement. It would be interesting indeed to find out just what they meant by this.

The Brazilians had many questions about the USA prominent among which was the question about race relations there. I was grateful for the privilege of informing them to beware of the fact that the American media is leftist in ideology and that they present only the view of our country which meets their agenda. Most of the Brazilians seemed to be surprised by this fact.

We all had an unusual opportunity to witness in this particular situation. Unbeknownst to each other we Americans were each asked the same question by one of the Brazilians whose name was Nelson Olinari. This middle aged man asked each of us individually, Are you really happy in life and if so why? Each of us had answered in the affirmative that we were indeed happy and that the reason is because we know Jesus Christ who gives real meaning to our lives. When the entire class reassembled at the conclusion of the class period Nelson reported that he had asked this question and had received the same answer from every American. Brother Gardner asked, Did you find this offensive? to which Nelson replied, ,Oh no, I just find it very interesting. Later that night Nelson made an appointment for brother Gardner to come to his home and visit with him. We were all thankful for this unusual opportunity to witness for our Lord.

FRIDAY JULY 17, 1998

Arising at 5:10 AM we left for Sao Paulo at 8 AM for a rendezvous with Continental Airlines flight 30 from Sao Paulo, Brazil to Newark, New Jersey in the USA at 8:55 PM. When we had traveled maybe fifty miles down the road the Kombi horn suddenly began honking. The problem was that brother Gardner was not touching the horn on the steering wheel. We immediately realized that we had developed an electrical short. Pulling over to the side of the road under some Eucalyptus trees brother Gardner took the horn honking mechanism apart and made some adjustments in the wiring. While the rest of us were waiting we amused ourselves by observing the giant ants crawling around outside and gazing at the deep blue sky through the branches of the gray barked trees.

After thirty or forty minutes we were back on the road again. Sometime later we made a rest stop at a place called O Castello (The Castle). It was a large stone building with Latin mottoes over the front entry making us think at first that it had at one time been a Roman Catholic institution of some kind. While here we asked someone to tell us the name of a certain exotic looking pine tree in the vicinity. I had been looking for what brother Gardner called an Umbrella Pine. The man we asked referred us to the owner of the castle who was an American who told us that the specific name of the Umbrella Pine in Brazil was Pinus de Parana (Pee-nos-dee-pah-rah-nah').

In our conversation with this man who had been born in Utah and raised in New York we found that this building had actually been built by his great grand father who had had a large ranch in the area and that the buildings and area had a very interesting history. The castle was a regular stop on the bus trips from surrounding cities to Sao Paulo and there were a lot of people coming and going. Here we saw more green parrots fussing in the trees. One of the buildings on the property of O Castello had a large three story tower and on one of its exterior corners was a large wild bees nest made of mud which looked rock hard. While inside O Castello I drank some Maracuja which some say is the same thing as the juice of passion fruit but I have never tasted anything to match it in the USA. It looks just like orange juice but tastes sweeter. I wish it were available at home. It is usually sold in waxed cartons similar to our milk cartons at home.

Back on the highway to Sao Paulo once again we passed through areas where there were orange groves as far as the eye could see in every direction and the trees were all covered with ripe oranges. Soon we came to a plateau country which had great expansive vistas including mountains in the distance. White Brahma cattle were everywhere and I thought of the Psalm which says that God owns the cattle on a thousand hills. After awhile the huge city of Rio Claro (Hee-oh-Clah-roh) came into view and then a little after that the city of Limeira (Lee-may'-rah) spread its typical red tile roofs before us as far as the eye could see. Again I was struck with the great number of vast cities with little if any witness for the true gospel present in them.

The next place of interest was the city of Americana of which I had heard for many years but never had any idea that someday I would actually visit here. Americana is a city founded by members of the old Southern Confederacy in America who had refused to surrender after the War Between The States and had come here with their families shortly after the cessation of the war. We had heard that there were still people here who speak English, have blond hair and blue eyes and still sing "Dixie."

When we arrived in Americana we began to stop and ask at various places how to get to the cemetery where all those old Confederates were buried. After getting directions from a man at a roadside tire shop brother Gardner set out to drive us there not knowing just how far away it was even by the directions he had been given. I was surprised when the blacktop ended before we had arrived at the cemetery. I became concerned when we began to drive out across country on first one dirt road and then another. I became alarmed when the road became almost a trail and passed through tall sugar cane crops which were so close to the road that we could not see anything but sugar cane up close and it was like we were in a tunnel. Now my concern was that we might get lost and not get to the airport in time for our departure that evening. I began to advise that we turn back before losing our way but brother Gardner persisted in following the directions he had received and after awhile we found the cemetery which has a sign near the gate stating its title, Cemeterio Do Campo.

There were many more graves than I had expected in this well maintained cemetery in the middle of the back country, many of which had scripture passages inscribed on them. Near the center of the cemetery was a nice monument listing the names of the original Southern soldiers who had come to this place so long ago. A nice full sized Confederate battle flag in its actual colors was etched on each of the four sides of this obelisk. Near the monument was a courtyard with a stone floor made up of red white and blue tiles in the shape and image of the Confederate battle flag. This was all very pleasing to us who have roots in the Confederacy.

While walking through the cemetery we found the home of the caretaker and asked him several questions which had come to mind concerning what had by now become a very meaningful place to us. We found that the original settlers had been Baptists and that upon coming here they had established the first Baptist church in Brazil. It had been an Independent Baptist church all these years but lately had been joined to the Southern Baptist Convention in the USA. It is now called the First Baptist Church of Nova Odessa, Brazil. It had originally had a meeting house on the grounds of the cemetery but had been moved somewhere else. We saw what we thought were probably the remains of the foundations of this old church building. We asked the caretaker if there were any other Baptist churches around the area and he said that there were many in such nearby cities as Santa Barbara Oeste and others which he named so quickly that I could not remember their names.

After reluctantly leaving this wonderful place we found our way back onto the main highway and continued toward Sao Paulo and our scheduled departure for home in the USA. In about an hour we came to the same Frango Assada where we had eaten on the day of our arrival in Brazil. It was located in a place called Nova Odessa. Our meal here was much the same as it had been when we had first eaten here two weeks before. We had baked chicken and rice and black beans and olive oil and palm hearts and corn mush and of course Guarana to drink.

During the previous several hours and even the day before I had been having some discomfort in my stomach and intestines and believe that it resulted from having drunk the sugar cane juice on our trip from

Catanduva to Ourinhos a few days earlier. I was not really sick. I just felt out of sorts and uncomfortable. Brother John Cecil had felt the same way a day or two earlier.

When we got into the Kombi this time we knew that we were on the last leg of our drive to Sao Paulo. We soon began to descend from the plateau region down to sea level where Sao Paulo was located. On the long approach to Sao Paulo the steep hillsides were often covered with the houses of the estimated twenty million people who live in the metro area. This very picturesque scene included dwellings, each having a large TV satellite dish on top, crowded close under deep blue skies which were filled with the kites being flown by children and streets filled with teen aged boys playing soccer. Smoke was rising everywhere from both trash fires and sugar cane harvesting. Between these heavily populated neighborhood areas were hundreds or thousands of grape vineyards which at this particular time of the year had no leaves nor fruit on the vines.

Coming to what was obviously the bottom of our descent we became caught in a colossal traffic jam due to the fact that it was now about five o'clock in the afternoon. We came to a dead stop and only moved periodically and very slowly from time to time in the eight lanes of what looked like an interstate highway back home. Because of this situation scores of enterprising young Brazilian men had become street vendors selling pop, peanuts and crackers to drivers in this rush hour fiasco. Brazilians call these young peddlers *Vendedores Ambulantes* or walking salesmen. The cars trapped in this river of vehicles could move only occasionally and slowly but a lot of young men were riding motorcycles and they were thus able to zip between the lanes of cars and go on quickly to their destinations. While creeping ever so slowly through Sao Paulo we saw the terrible shanty towns where millions of poor Brazilians live. They were made of nothing more than wood and sheets of corrugated metal scrounged from who knows where and nailed or tied together. When someone else moves into the area he just attaches his dwelling to the one on the outside of the veritable beehive of dwellings already connected to each other. Peering into these shanties as we slowly passed we could sometimes see a single electric light bulb hanging from a ceiling. I wondered how many people had been burned alive when fire had broken out in these places because the whole area must burn, not being accessible to fire trucks if there are fire trucks in these areas. Compounding the misery and squalor of these shanty towns is the fact that they are built along the banks of a large river which runs through Sao Paulo and is nothing more than an open sewer which smells to high heaven. We could see so many tires and papers and rags floating in the river that it looked like vegetable soup. At two different points along the river dredges were operating and actually dredging the garbage out of the river and piling it up to dry before other crews would load it on trucks and carry it off somewhere.

While facing this traffic jam with increasing impatience we began to talk about various things among ourselves and brother Gardner told us that when Brazilians are giving directions for how to get to some destination and want to tell you to turn right they will say, Break your right arm! I took my remaining money out of my money belt and counted how much I had not spent the total of which came to about \$250. I never saw my money again and have no idea what happened to it.

Before arriving at Cumbica (Coom-bee'-kah) Airport in Sao Paulo at around six thirty we began to notice the thick smog which had enveloped the city darkening first the sun and then the moon in this time of twilight. Entering the airport we began the process of having our passports checked and checking in at the ticket counters. When I attempted to pass through the ticket counter I was told by an airport employee that I would have to pay an airport tax of 36 Real in order to board the plane. When I told the person working there that our travel agent had already paid this tax he said, It doesn't matter, you have to pay 36 Real now or you will not be allowed to board. When I finally resigned myself to the fact that I would have to submit to this hijacking I opened my money belt and was shocked to find nothing there. My money was all gone. After searching everywhere all the way back to the parking lot John Cecil and Don Hendricks paid the crooked tax saying, We want our pastor back so we're going to pay his fee! I searched through everything I had at least five or six times even after boarding the plane but to no avail.

Once on board the plane we noted that the takeoff was delayed. After a full one hour of waiting some of the group from the Blue Ridge Bible Church in Kansas City who made up the other part of our travel group finally boarded the plane. They reported to us that they had been caught in the same traffic jam and their

Brazilian bus driver had told them when they noticed they were going to be late, Don't worry. I'll just call and have the airport hold the plane which they evidently actually did.

In all the confusion and frustration over being ripped off and getting away late Rachel and I had the presence of mind to reserve our seats at either end of the same row of six seats in the middle section of the plane near the rear of the aircraft. She sat on one end of the row and I on the other and no one took the seats between us. By doing this we both were able to lie down fully extended enabling us to sleep all night while others struggled to take short naps from time to time.

I was thus able to sleep during nearly the entire flight from Sao Paulo to Newark, New Jersey which took eight hours during which the pilot made up for the lost hour by increasing our speed because we arrived on time at 6:35 AM Newark time. During our descent into Newark Rachel and I were able to see the Statue of Liberty out the window as well as the New York skyline and Ellis Island. Some of the Americans on board applauded as our wheels touched down on American soil once again.

Passing through customs with hardly a question being asked we rode the tram to the terminal where we were to catch our flight to Kansas City, Missouri at 10:55 AM. During our layover here we rested in the terminal waiting area reading the newspapers and talking over our experiences during the past two weeks.

As we ascended into the heavens from the airport at Newark on Continental Airlines flight 1179 we again saw the Statue of Liberty, this time much clearer than before. The Captain of the plane said over the loudspeaker that our estimated time of arrival in Kansas City was 1:30 PM Kansas City time. Just as we took off from Newark at least for me, the fatigue of the last 15 days began to set in.

At 1:30 right on schedule we arrived at Kansas City International Airport, deplaned and I was met by my sweet Lyndy. Ken Rogers took Lyndy, myself and Rachel home and before going out to eat a meal we spread and explained our souvenirs. Thanks to the Lord for this safe, enlightening and rewarding trip of a lifetime!