



Dennis Allan's Report from Brazil

April 28, 2012

dennis.allan@terra.com.br

Three days from now, Benita and I are to be on U.S. soil for the start of a visit to parents, other relatives and brethren in ten states. We are excited about the trip, but a bit overwhelmed by the length of the list of things to get done before we board the plane! I want to use this report to update you on recent work here and to give our travel itinerary.

I've sent out lots of little reports via Facebook, but the last more formal version was in November (that is embarrassing), so this one will have to cover some ground.

Focus on Building Character

Since much of my work and travel last year was dedicated to challenging audiences to examine and change their convictions on a number of points of doctrinal error, this year's focus is on the needed followup of building character among disciples. Not only among recent converts, but with all Christians, it is important to balance the controversy with introspective application of teaching to mold us into the servants the Lord wants. I've been working especially with the Sermon on the Mount, in personal and congregational studies and in public studies as I travel. It is good for me, and I believe serves to challenge brethren and visitors in important ways.

Highlights of this report:

- Studies to Build Up
- 18 Recent Baptisms
- Travel in Brazil
- Itinerary for US Visit

18 Recent Baptisms

In the different places we are privileged to teach or as a result of contacts through our website and publications, there have been at least 18 baptisms since my last report. A couple in Manaus that contacted us through our website and participated in studies I taught there last year returned in November when Gary Fisher was there, and brought another couple. Both couples (**Gelson** and **Nilci**, **Antônio** and **Ana**) were baptized while Gary was there. Unfortunately, Gelson and Nilci ended up separating from brethren just a few weeks later, apparently with some ambitions to have a church of their own and defend some ideas that do not come from the Scriptures. Antônio and Ana, however, continue to grow.

Three more website contacts were baptized in Rio de Janeiro in recent months. **Zacharias**, **Renata** and **Renato** all contacted us through the site and studied with brethren there before obeying the gospel. Benita and I spent a good weekend with brethren in Rio in March. Just before the start of Sunday worship, Benita asked me, "How many of these people were website contacts?" I looked around the room at about 10 people converted in the past year and a half, plus a couple of visitors, and answered her: "All of them." That group faces some real challenges, but we are encouraged by what we are seeing.

A little congregation in the nation's capital is another example of a church made up of people who made initial contact through our website, some as far back as 2006. Three more were immersed recently (**Adrielle**, **Conrado** and **Auressandra**), bringing the number of Christians in that group up to nine. Auressandra was baptized on my last trip there after participating in a full day of public studies, a worship assembly and then studying privately with me to resolve her final questions. She said she had been studying our material for some time and praying to find a church that follows the Scriptures and to get help resolving her own need to be baptized. When she got the invitation to the studies we scheduled in that city, she saw it as an answer to her prayers. As she came up out of the water, she covered her face in a towel and shed tears of relief.

Two more couples who contacted us through the website were taught further and baptized by brethren in Porto Alegre. **Vitor**, **Tais**, **Eduardo** and **Meri** live in a neighboring city. In Fortaleza, brethren followed up with personal studies leading to the baptism of **Rafael**.

And there are cases that remind us of the latter part of Acts 8: isolated individuals who learn the truth and are baptized,

but are temporarily unable to assemble with other saints. Two such cases have been very encouraging to us. **Meire** studied for quite some time and corresponded with me until Benita and I made a trip to her city to study further with her. On the same trip, two days later we also baptized **Leise**, who lives about 25 miles away. We thought it would work for them to worship together, but Leise turned back just a few days later when she realized what practical sacrifices she would have to make. It is one thing to say you will leave all to follow Christ, but the practice is not easy. Meire, however, continues in her determination. The second case is a teenager named **Rômulo**, who lives in the north of the state of Bahia. Gerson, a preacher in the southern part of the same state, made a long bus trip on rough roads to follow up with Rômulo, who had already expressed his desire to be baptized. Gerson's story of the trip and the determination of this young man (an orphan who has been raised by his aunt) brought tears to my eyes.

Recent Trips

Due to the less-productive summer holiday period and some family considerations, I travelled less in recent months. However, I was encouraged to be able to make two trips to **Brasília** (the first one was a car trip that also included studies in three other states – **Goiás**, **Minas Gerais** and the city of **São Carlos** here in the state of São Paulo). Benita and I studied with contacts in some cities in the state of São Paulo (the trip that included Meire's baptism in **São José dos Campos**), and have returned other times with larger groups to do door-to-door work and study with Meire. We also made two very profitable weekend trips for intensive studies with brethren in **Curitiba** (also did public studies there) and **Rio de Janeiro**, and I went alone to **Manaus** and **Ipatinga** to encourage those brethren and to do public studies in Manaus.

Our Trip to the US in May and June

There is so much more I would like to say about work here, but I'll use the rest of this report to give our basic itinerary for our trip to the US, which begins next week. I'll include the churches where we have confirmed visits, some of which have asked me to preach or discuss the work in Brazil.

May 2 – arrive in Tampa, visit church in Seffner, FL

May 6 – Embury Hills, Atlanta, GA (morning) and Martinez, GA (evening)

May 7 - 19 – visiting relatives in KY, IN, IL and WV and worshipping in different congregations

May 20 – Paden City, WV

May 23 – Mill's Road, Cincinnati, OH

May 25-27 – Northside, Colorado Springs (series of lessons)

May 30 – Oak Avenue, Dickson, TN

June 1 and 2 – possible visits with some brethren in northern Alabama – details not yet confirmed

June 3-5 – Pepper Road, Athens, AL (series of lessons)

June 6 – Hughes Road at Gooch Lane, Madison, AL

June 7 -9, 11-12 – Tampa, FL (with my folks). We return to Brazil on June 13.

June 10 – Spring Warrior, FL (at least for the morning assembly)

We so much look forward to seeing many of you and being refreshed by our brief visits with so many of Jesus' disciples.

Thanks for your prayers and every other way that you help us in this work.

Dennis Allan (São Paulo, Brazil)