

Facing the Challenges

We left Brazil in July of 2014 to go to the States for Sharon to have a check-up and spend at least two months. We bought our return passage for September 2014. Well, it ended up we had to stay until the 18th of December. Sharon had to have 39 radiation treatments and then wait to talk to the doctor about going back to Brazil.

It was good to be in the States and to see our family and friends, but we missed being in the church works here and doing what God has called us to do. Of course, we could do church work in the States; and we did, but if the Lord has called you to an area of service that is where you desire to be working. We waited another 3 months and tried to be patient. That was a hard lesson to learn. We tried to encourage others while we waited.

We read articles and came across this article which we thought fit us and most other missionaries.

When at “home”, the missionary dreams about their host country.

When in their host country, the missionary dreams about their home country.

People will ask you “Isn’t it great to be home!” After you’ve had a few of your favourite foods, and visited with a few old friends, there are fewer reasons to stay “home”. You start to miss those things about your host country that you have come to love. Certain foods, friends and the ministry you are involved in.

Home is no longer home. And sadly, that other place on the mission field will never truly be home either. Home is both places, and neither place, at the same time. Home is everywhere. Home is nowhere.

Missionaries are forever caught between two worlds. They can no longer completely identify with the people whom they left behind in the home country nor with the people in their host country.

While here on earth, we will always feel a bit unsettled and out of place. Missionaries living away from the place where they grew up may experience that more than others. But someday, all those who trust in the Lord Jesus Christ will finally be home again.

We are back in our “host” country, Brazil. We have had several challenges since our return.

What is a challenge: To arouse or stimulate especially by presenting with difficulties.

A task or situation that tests someone’s abilities.

Challenge 1 – We had to get our house and yard back in living condition. After being closed for 6 months and the yard not taken care of it definitely looked abandoned. We couldn’t do a lot of the work by ourselves due to our health. We did have one young man volunteer to come two days and do some trimming of the trees and etc. One of the branches fell on the neighbour’s roof, so we had to replace two sheets of roofing. We did appreciate his help; even though we didn’t get everything done those two days. We are still watering the yard and enjoying the breeze; even though, it creates a lot of dust in the house with the doors and windows open because of the heat.

Challenge 2 - One of our Pastors was getting married again in December after his wife’s death almost three years ago. We thought he would be able to bring his new wife to our area and continue on at the church, but the Lord saw fit to send him and his family to a new area of service. So now we have church facilities, a few families but no Pastor. Pray that the Lord will lead us and the church to find the right Pastor. We do have a young Pastor preaching for the services and filling in for us at this time.

Challenge 3- Bill had an allergy on his hand while here in Brazil before going to the States. He did get some medicine while there, and it seemed to be clearing up some. Well, his nose started having an infection and turning a purplish red. After returning to Brazil, his nose became worse; and we found a dermatologist that is treating him for fungus. He had to have some tests taken of the skin to confirm her diagnosis, so we trust he will soon be better with that problem.

Challenge 4 -Bill’s gum started hurting him more after returning to Brazil. He went to see the dentist, and he told him he needs a root canal. He will have to have some treatment done on his gums because he

has a cavity deep in the tooth. So we will be having several visits to the dentist over these next few weeks. Pray that Bill will be able to do well with the treatment and that the dentist will be able to do what needs done for him to get better.

Challenge 5 - We want to finish the new auditorium before our church anniversary in April. We had to leave things on hold until we returned to Brazil. We still need benches, air conditioning units, tile for the front of the church, gravel for the parking area and the sign with the name painted on it. This all takes time to get the people needed to do the work and to find the right day and hour they can do it. We feel the new facilities will help the church grow and get the people more involved in inviting their friends and neighbours



There are many other challenges ahead of us, but we know the Lord is able to take care of these things and of us. We enjoy living in Brazil and working with the Brazilian people and we trust the Lord will give us a few more years in which to serve Him.

Written by Bill and Sharon Smith – missionaries to Brazil since July of 1971

