

Dickens Digest

Feb/Mar 2018

Hurry Up and Wait

Isaiah 40:31, But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint.

Many who have done mission work have come to the realization that sometimes our timeframe and plans do not always coincide with what the Lord allows or the foreign government permits. The Lord blessed us with a wonderful love offering toward our building fund and we found a piece of land in a great location. However, as we began to work on the registration of the church and getting our tax exempt status approved, we discovered that this process was going to take longer than anticipated. Thankfully both of those things were resolved by the beginning of December. Once those two things were taken care of we had to get our bank account opened to receive the funds from the US. It took nearly a month to finally get the account opened and get the bank to approve the receiving of the funds into our church bank

account. As Americans we expect that at the first of the year all business resumes as normal, but in Brazil there is a saying, "The year doesn't truly begin until after Carnival!" We have found this to be very much the case. Our expectation was to purchase the land before the New Year and begin building as soon as possible. Finally, after Carnival, we were able to make the final purchase of the land. We are currently trying to work with an architect friend to plan the building and then get started. Please be in prayer as this next stage begins. We need the Lord to quickly help us get the plans done, to get the name transfer approved and registered with the city and then purchase building materials and build. Our people are excited about the possibility of no longer paying rent on a facility. We must always be ready to "wait" on the Lord.

The land we have purchased.



Prayer Requests

- ◆ Evangelism
- ◆ New Converts and Discipleship
- ◆ Family Health
- ◆ Joel Smothers Family support
- ◆ Building and Construction
- ◆ Car Fund for vehicle in Brazil
- ◆ Cynthia and her mother



In Other News

Antonio and Luciene came to Christ in the fall and we were able to baptize them in February. Antonio has been playing guitar with Morgan to accompany our church services and we recently found out that he has composed and written several songs which reveal his love for his Savior.

All of the children are getting older as you can see in the photo.

Morgan just turned 17. Aydan just turned 15. Daniella is now 13 and Abigail just turned 12. Are Cynthia and I getting old?

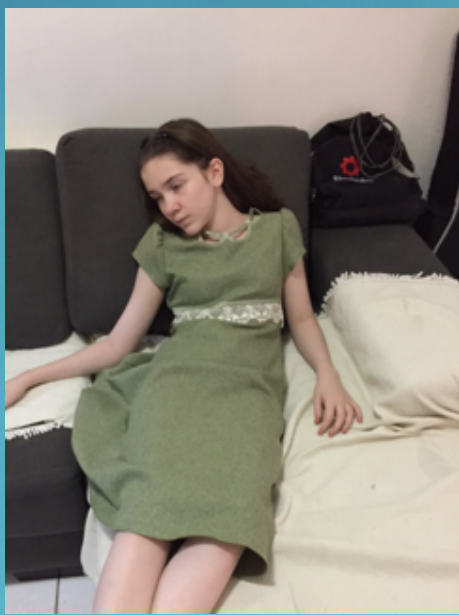
Joel was invited to teach at a teen retreat for a sister church in Salvador, Bahia and enjoyed spending time with those young people.

We have heard that the Smothers family is now above 50% of their needed support for which we join them in praising the Lord!

We ask that you pray with us as we organize some things here in the church for future growth both spiritually and numerically. May the Lord richly bless you all!

Kidz Korner - My New Years Eve

Daniella Dickens



In Brazil, New Years is a really big holiday. It is even more important than Christmas! Brazilians like to stay up all night and have a barbeque. Last New Years Eve we were invited to a barbeque at a friend's house. It was really fun, but after eating a little bit of food (before midnight) I started to get really tired. I went into the house and lay down to rest. Eventually, the music that was playing lulled me to sleep, and I didn't wake up until the fireworks went off at midnight. I got up, stood at the door of the house until Daddy finished praying, and joined my friends outside. Soon Daddy took Abigail and me back home (where Mommy had stayed) to go to bed. I REALLY slept in the next day.

In Her Words - Cynthia Dickens

"It's just a phase. He'll grow out of it." Probably every parent has heard this pacifying statement, usually in regard to some distressing behavior from their child; and it's frequently true (although the "growing out of it" can, at times, be helped along by Biblical parenting). :) But the phases that come to my mind right now aren't phases of behavior but, rather, more simple, basic phases - infant, toddler, school-age, teen, etc. Every one comes with its own joys and challenges, and sometimes - in my own experience, at least - due to the day-to-day challenges, I feel like I'm just putting in time until we get through a particular phase! In the moments that I catch myself with that attitude, I give myself a stern talking-to for feeling that way! After all, the years do pass more quickly than we realize, whether we're in the midst of the joys or the challenges. Shouldn't I have an attitude of investing my time, rather than just "putting in"? Clearly, I should. But I'm human, and the attitude battle is a moment-by-moment one that I look to God to help me win!

But what would happen if a child really DIDN'T grow out of a particular phase? You've probably heard it before, but it's still an apt analogy ... would you not take your child to the doctor, if he or she simply stopped growing? So how can we glibly ignore spiritual stagnation in our own lives? Just as most children are born equipped (with the help of good care and nutrition) to grow from infancy to adulthood, every newborn Christian is equipped with everything they need to grow in Christ. They need some babying at the start, yes; but with proper discipleship and applied spiritual nutrition from God's Word, they will grow to understand that said growth should never end. When I look back on the phases of my own spiritual life, I'm supremely grateful for and humbled by the ways my Savior has invested in me - the methods He's used, the people He's placed in my life, the mercy He shows me daily. I look forward to and pray that I will continue keeping my hand in His through each phase, because the phase of spiritual growth is one I never want to grow out of.

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