



WHITMORE family

April 2020



Dear Praying Friends,

“For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast.” (Ephesians 2:8-9) Praise the Lord for the Internet, which has made it possible to keep in touch with many friends in Brazil while we are in the United States. PRAY with us that these families with whom we have talked in the past month will understand their urgent need to trust Jesus!

During the New Life Baptist Church (Taubaté) online services on March 22, I noticed that Nina was watching and commented once or twice. She and her husband Flavio are not saved but visited our church twice shortly after their daughter Mona, who is a year and seven months old, was born. Later that week, I had about a 45-minute phone conversation with her husband, who is of Japanese descent and follows some of their traditional beliefs and Catholicism. On Thursday, April 16, Flavio sent a note telling me that he was at the hospital with his wife because of her severe back problems. However, because of the pandemic, the public hospitals could not do any non-emergency surgeries. I told him I would ask our church and some friends to pray for them. On Saturday, April 18, I was able to speak with Nina for an hour and a half about her health condition and her need to be saved. She told me that she had been visiting a church across the street from their home with their little girl until she could no longer carry or hold her child in the service. She also mentioned that when they read the Bible and prayed, they used the BEAMS Bible they had received when they visited our church.

Friday, April 10, the day after my 52nd birthday, I noticed that a neighbor lady, Ivonete, had simply written *PARABÉNS* on my Brazilian Facebook page. What drew my attention to her message was that not only has she never visited our church, NLBC, but our family has had almost no communication with her and her husband Ivanildo or their three children, Iolanda, Ian, and Iasmin, in over two years. After sending her a message of thanks, I noticed on the Facebook pages of her nieces, Janaina and Jenyfer, who came to church for several months in 2015-2016, that their mother Josi had passed away on March 18. Later that day, I was able to call and speak with their father Jose. A few years ago, Josi got very ill and almost died. Since then, she goes to the home of one of our neighbors, Claudio and Roseane, twice a day so the wife can give her a diabetes shot. At least two times, we spoke with Josi in her home about her need of salvation, but I'm not sure that she ever trusted Jesus as her Saviour. Jenyfer, age 16, gave birth to a baby girl, Heloísa, on April 22.

Easter Sunday evening, Maria Vitoria, age 19, a young mother with a two-year-old who is now living in Campinas, asked us to call her. We met her and her sister Mara, age 25, and about 18 other children 11 years ago while they were living in a children's home in São Paulo. For three years, our family and the church close to the children's home spent time visiting them and taking them to church every week. After Karlene finished talking with her, she told me that I'm still her pastor, but when I asked her if she was 100% sure that she was saved, she did not know. I was explaining the Gospel to her until her phone stopped working. Mara has also reached out to us but is not yet ready to listen to the Gospel. The same evening, a young man named Julio, age 21, who lives in Taubaté and who trusted Jesus during a phone conversation on Tuesday, March 10, sent some questions that he and his girlfriend Larissa had. We have not yet met them personally, but Julio's mother Michele and some of her friends visited NLBC over two years ago. Larissa still believes that her good works will help her get to Heaven.

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Around April 15, I became aware that the father of four other young adults, Marcos, Lucas, Tatiane, and Gislaine, who were also in the children's home, died on April 3 from throat cancer. Though we had three years with all the young people and even visited their parents in their home and brought them to church one time, to my knowledge, none are going to church, and their four more older siblings are probably not yet saved. Lucas, in his early twenties, is trapped by a drug addiction.

From the two days that Dawn and I had with my father's first cousin and his wife, Sam and Peggy Weckerly, last September when he trusted Jesus, God continues to open doors to befriend our family. This month I have spent about three hours talking on the phone with one of their granddaughters about salvation and some past and very recent, seemingly unending hurts.

March 6 – 8, God gave me the opportunity to spend Friday and Saturday in Jefferson, Georgia, helping my first cousin Julie, whom I had not seen in 35 years, and several other family members with the "Celebration of Life" service for her husband John, who passed away on February 16. Sunday I was blessed to say "THANK YOU" to two different supporting churches in the area. Many of our relatives in that area still need to trust Jesus as their only hope for forgiveness of sins and eternal life.

Dave + Dawn and Zachary