

We began in the slums of Sao Paulo, participating in a free medical clinic. A small, humble church was converted into many smaller stations where one could see a doctor, acupuncture, or dentist. Untrained in any medicine, I followed around a group of local college students doing street evangelism. The streets of Sao Paulo struck me as young and old alike sat outside their houses doing manual labor, hanging out with friends, or watching their shops. However, the environment was open as people were willing to take their time to talk to us on the streets and let us pray for them. Many seemed interested in learning more about the gospel, and I was encouraged by their enthusiasm to receiving our prayers. I felt that God was telling me that if I could talk about Him to any random stranger on a street in Brazil, I could also do the same at home. To me, it seems hard to talk to God to people in America because the environment doesn't seem as open. People do not want you to knock on their doors and just talk; they are busy going from one task to the next. However, I pray that God would give me the courage to be bold for Him.

During the first camp, I was able to talk to many of the kids about their background and life experiences. Many of them told me that they had grown up in China and had immigrated to Brazil within the last year. I imagined being uprooted to a different country in my teenage years and could not even begin to fathom the emotional pain from losing friends and familiarity. But they all seemed to be okay with moving to Brazil. To them, doing whatever their parents told them to do was the norm. Since they could not have a say in the matter, they felt it was useless to fight or feel sorry for themselves. I admire them for having to deal with such a big move to a different country where they had to learn a different language. In addition, many of them did not grow up with their parents because their parents were in Brazil while they were in China. At home, when describing God, we call Him our Father in heaven who loves us like our father on earth. But to these kids, it was harder for them to comprehend because their view of "father" was someone that provided money. There was no love or sense of family with the idea of a father. At the end of the camp, a girl came up to me and told me that she sensed that the missionary team "seemed different" in a good way. It seemed like we had something more and she said that she wanted that for herself. I think that it is an honor that we are able to reflect Christ and his love and that she sensed this.