

Ricky Ko

My heartfelt thanks to God for giving me this opportunity to serve in this short-term mission trip to Brazil, which ran from June 30 to July 15. Words alone cannot describe my joy in my learning and experiencing.

Sau Paulo and the Mogi Church (7/2-7/3)

Our team of eleven served together during these two days at the Cantonese-speaking Chinese Church in Mogi das Cruzes. Originally we had only planned for visitation on Saturday and worship service on Sunday. After we arrived, we found out that we were to lead an evangelistic meeting on Sunday. Because many Chinese churches in Brazil have different prototypes, having to make changes as we went along was unavoidable. Thank God the unity of our team members was revealed quickly. After a brief 15-minute discussion, we immediately divided the work accordingly. The “Sunday Worship Service Team” was changed to the “The Evangelism Team”. Partnering with the local believers, we split up to distribute gospel tracts and the invitation to Sunday’s evangelistic gathering. During these two days of serving, I give thanks to the unity and camaraderie of our team. It was such a joyful experience in serving that was difficult for me to describe. Not only that, the number of attendees exceeded our expectation and it was the most ever attended the church service. Praise God also that one person accepted Christ that night.

Happy Kids and Happy Teens Ministry (7/4-7/7)

The weather was very cold during those few days of serving in Sao Paulo, July is their winter. This was on top of the fact that everyone was lacking in rest and tired from all the traveling. Gradually we all were not feeling well. I also began developing a sore throat and a headache. Thank God that I brought some cough drops. Together with the ten bags of Emergency C from Christine and prayers from brothers and sisters, I beat all the sickness.

Happy Kids Center is a Christian nursery but it also has tutoring classes for youth. During the few days we were there, our daily schedule included these four areas—workshops to teachers and VBS for children 3-6 years old in the morning; VBS for children 7-14 years old and English and Bible lessons for youth in the afternoon. What I would like to share here is the youth ministry. There were about twenty youth. When I met them for the first time, I discovered that most were unbelievers. They did not even know the most basics of the gospel. After discussing with the members on our team who was responsible for the youth ministry, we decided to use these few days to teach them the Bible stories of the Good Samaritan and Zachaeus. We divided the youth into two groups and they would use English to do a skit on July 7 in front of everyone. They were very interested in learning English and they were very serious during rehearsals, which was great. But what troubled me was that they were not that interested in the topic of faith. There was clearly a difference from their eagerness to learn English. On the last day of our rehearsal, I specifically arranged to have a section of time for a “Faith Q&A” to answer any faith-related questions they might have. Then I used the colored beads to explain the entire gospel. In the end, one young man raised his hand to accept Christ. Praise the Lord!

The Chinese Gospel Christian Church in Rio de Janeiro (7/8-7/10)

Before our trip, we knew nothing about the Chinese Gospel Christian Church in Rio de Janeiro. After we came into contact with the pastor and brothers and sisters of the church, we deeply felt the warm reception they had for us. At the same time, only after we arrived did we realize that the meetings on Friday and Saturday nights were to be held with four different churches. After we learned of this change, we were quite nervous. Friday night's meeting was more evangelistic while the one on Saturday night was more of a sharing and teaching of praise and worship. With God's grace, we did finish well.

Under the arrangement from the church coworkers Saturday morning, we had the opportunity to tour the famous Jesus the Redeemer. Jesus was depicted with two hands wide open, symbolized holding a cross on one hand and the world in the other. May the gospel quickly be preached to every corner of the world, including here in Brazil.

The Chinese Baptist Church in Belo Horizonte (7/11-7/13)

From July 11 to 13, one of our teams (which consisted of Ricky, Judy, Christine, Elim, and Gallant) went to Belo Horizonte while another team (which consisted of Wang, Lily, Philana, To, Ester) went to Curitiba.

Belo Horizonte is famous for mineral production. Even though this is a place with abundant minerals, it is a place that is poor in spirit. The church we visited was made up of ten families. Because they had not have a Chinese pastor to lead them, there were only Bible studies on Sundays. But our Lord looks after the righteous and what a big miracle He did in these few days.

Under the assistance of CIM's coworker Pastor Loo and a Brazilian pastor couple, a two-day free clinic was arranged on July 12-13. Pastor Loo brought a four-people medical team to partner with our team of five and brothers and sisters from the local church. While the patients were being seen or just waiting in line, we went to work and share the gospel with them. I deeply felt God's presence in these two days. On the 13th, I was able to share the Good News with six people one-on-one and they even accepted Christ as their personal savior! Our team led 13 people to Christ altogether. In addition, several children raised their hands to accept Christ as their personal savior during the children program, also held on the 13th. We greatly experienced God's presence with us in Belo Horizonte.

As I said, due to the lack of a Chinese pastor at the church for a long time, the number of converts during these two days brought a revival spirit and joy to the brothers and sisters there. I was responsible for the revival sermon in the evenings. As I was preaching, I felt deeply the thirst they had regarding spiritual matters. Their eyes told me how they longed to hear God's

word. During the last night of the revival meeting, the whole congregation arose and asked for more. Revival had truly come to this place.

As I was reflecting back to the great victory during these two days' revival, I believed these brothers and sisters know the power of prayer. Even though our team did not arrive until July, they began praying and waiting for us since March.

A church without a pastor but yet depend so much on prayers and thirst so much for spiritual matters had greatly allow me to realize what it means to love the Lord.